



FRASER WILSON MURAL

The cover is sampled from a water-color by Fraser Wilson, 1947, and is the artist's view of a worker's waterfront in Vancouver at that time. The painting is the artist's proof for a significant mural that is currently the centre piece for the Maritime Labour Centre. The text below is from the plaque that hangs beside the mural:

This mural depicting the mid-1940s British Columbia Industrial scene was originally painted on the wall of the Pender Auditorium by Fraser Wilson in 1947. The building, owned by the Marine Workers and Boiler Makers, Industrial Union Local 1 until its sale in 1969, was at the time the center of trade union activity in Vancouver.

In 1985, the mural was threatened with destruction as the wall space was required for other uses by its tenants. Recognizing that the mural represented a priceless part of B.C.'s labour history, a group of trade union activists, civic politicians and representatives of the cultural community were successful in having its presentation and restoration accepted as a 1986 City of Vancouver Centennial Commission Project.

The Centennial Commission agreed to employ Petrov Restoration Galleries, an art restorative firm, if the labour and business community would provide the balance of funding and services for the project. The necessary commitments were obtained.

The plaster board panels, on which the mural was painted, were carefully taken down from the wall and the painting removed from its plaster backing first with a specially constructed saw, then with chemical solutions to remove the residual plaster, and finally with fine sandpaper scraping. Each section was then glued to canvas to provide an appropriate backing, and in turn glued to special non-buckling plywood. The painting was finally cleaned and restored as close as possible to the original. One panel, seriously damaged during the restorative process, was repainted by Fraser Wilson.

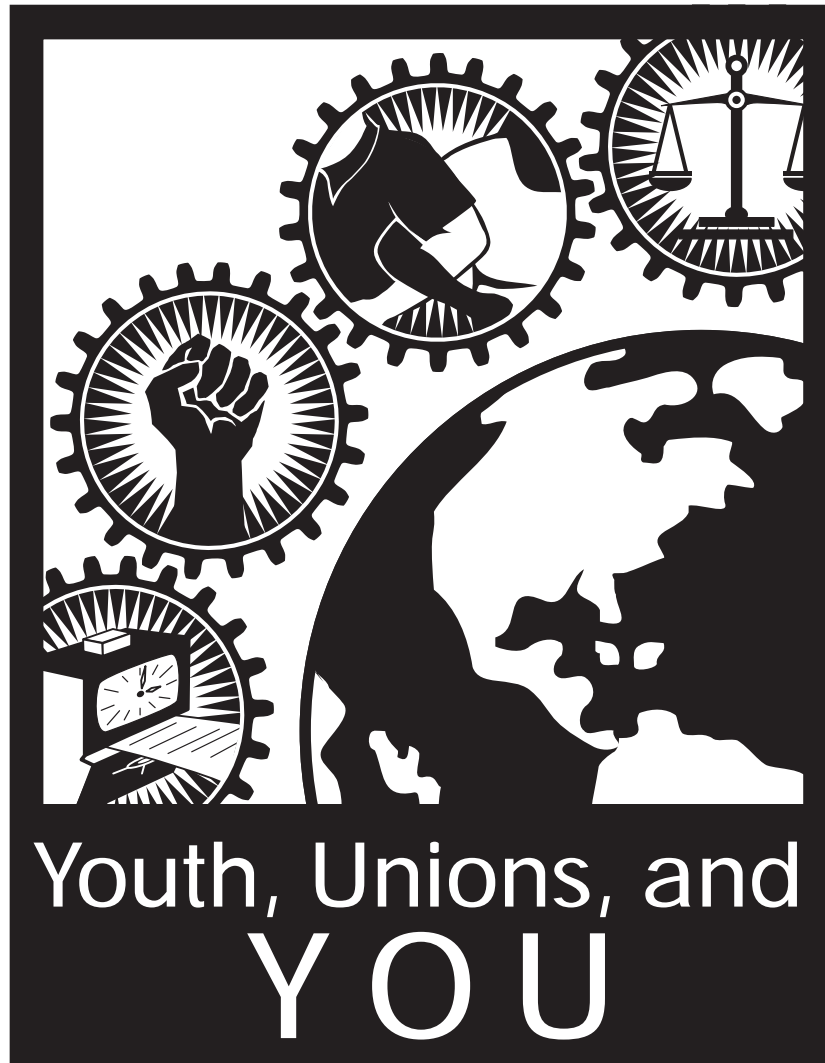
Upon completion of the Maritime Labour Centre Auditorium, the mural was shortened from its original 98 ft length to its present 82 ft to fit the wall.

The restored mural was re-dedicated by Fraser Wilson at the opening of the new Maritime Labour Auditorium on January 22, 1988.

There is more information on Fraser Wilson and the story of his mural in the guide's introduction "What the People Did, While the Leaders Led."

The B.C. Teachers' Federation and the B.C. Federation of Labour express deep gratitude to the painting and mural's owners, the Marine Workers and Boilermakers, Industrial Union Local 1, for so promptly giving us permission to use the mural free of charge for this guide. Given the need to continue repair and restoration work on the mural, the BCTF and BCFL, through this project, have made a solidarity donation toward a fund for this work.

A Secondary Teacher's Guide to Labour Studies for B.C. Schools



A Joint project of the
BC Teachers' Federation and the BC Federation of labour
May 2001

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YOUTH, UNIONS, AND YOU

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