



**PEOPLE OVER PROFIT**

**- Panel Nine -  
Bread and Roses:  
Hearts starve as well as bodies**

"What the woman who labors wants is the right to live, not simply exist — the right to life as the rich woman has the right to life, and the sun and music and art. You have nothing that the humblest worker has not a right to have also. The worker must have bread, but she must have roses, too." — *Rose Schneiderman, 1912*

These words are associated with the Lawrence textile strike that united many migrant communities and was largely led by women. They have come to symbolise the demands of workers all over the world for political inclusion and dignity in life, in addition to the more traditional demands for better wages and working conditions. The demand in its broadest sense includes political inclusion, education, freedom of expression, and access to a rich cultural life.

But in a world where market fundamentalism and commercialism increasingly intrude into all areas of life, both the nature of these activities and access to them is narrowed. Museums charge entrance fees, libraries and swimming pools are closed, art is commercialised, national parks are underfunded, the press is run for profit, sport is big business and education is privatised.

Guaranteeing equal access for all, and ensuring that art and culture do not simply reproduce the dominant economic and social paradigm, requires public support and finance. In an age of austerity, these are often the first casualties. What is more, education, culture, media and art are powerful forces for social change that are too often underutilised by the left in the face of these attacks.

Public sector workers, artists, educationalists, journalists and culture workers embody these values, are fundamental to their provision and are often at the forefront of defending them. Their contribution extends beyond a market transaction and they often make massive sacrifices in their work.