

OPENINGS OUT TO REALITY
FRED LONIDIER STRIKE

CLASS STRUGGLE TRADE UNIONS AND THE IMAGINARY IN THE U.S.

Sergio Bologna, Bruno Cartosio, Fred Lonidier

Thursday, May 28, 18.30
Officine Zero, via Umberto Partini 20, Rome

When we think of the 1930s and of the last century's Great Depression, we remember fascism and, in the case of the United States, Roosevelt and the New Deal. But we don't remember the extraordinary struggles that turned the New Deal into a moment of discontinuity – of a conquered “economic democracy” – in the history of capitalism. Months and months of strikes and harsh clashes with the police and the National Guard, from San Francisco to Minneapolis in the west, and Georgia to Rhode Island in the east, succeeded in reshaping Rooseveltian policies to match the demands of the working class. From longshoremen to textile workers to auto workers, the people who had distanced themselves from the labor movement (the AFL) in the late twenties re-conquered it on a new field. We cannot understand the New Deal (and the Wagner Act in particular) without also considering the CIO (the Congress of Industrial Organizations, founded in 1935). The question of how to organize the unorganized, the emergence of new practices of struggle, such as the sit-down strike, and the capacity to transform class conflict into new political and social institutions were all decisive elements.

Almost a century has passed, and the crisis of neoliberal capitalism is affecting the world. “Organizing the unorganized” – both now and in the United States the 1930s – is not just an ideological slogan. Rather, it is the perfect slogan for our times, one fit for all those who believe that change is a process made of great leaps, but also of daily steps to protect the new poor, the workers without rights, and the unemployed.

The United States during the Great Depression will be the subject of this debate, and of genealogical research looking at both the struggle and organizational practices adopted and the artistic forms and the social imaginary produced during that decade of class struggle.

This discussion is organized within the framework of *Strike*, Fred Lonidier's first institutional solo exhibition in Europe as part of the series *Openings Out to Reality*, a project cycle initiated in 2012 by Istituto Svizzero in Rome, and whose aim is to research the interaction among the arts, its institutions and society at large.

Sergio Bologna was born in 1937. He taught at universities in Italy and Germany, researching the history of the working class and of industrial society.

Bruno Cartosio was born in 1943. He teaches history of North America at the University of Bergamo. He spent years researching and wrote many books on the social and cultural history of the United States.

Fred Lonidier was born in 1942. He is an artist, an activist and a union member. He taught photography at the University of California, San Diego.

Class Struggle, Trade Unions and the Imaginary in the U.S.
Sergio Bologna, Bruno Cartosio, Fred Lonidier

Organized in collaboration with
CLAP - Camere del lavoro autonomo e precario

Thursday, May 28, 18.30
Free admission

Officine Zero
Via Umberto Partini 20
Casal Bertone, Roma

Istituto Svizzero di Roma
Via Ludovisi 48
I-00187 Roma
+39 06 420421
arte@istitutosvizzero.it
www.istitutosvizzero.it

Fred Lonidier. STRIKE
Complete Program

ROME

Thursday, May 28, 18.30

Class Struggle, Trade Unions and the Imaginary in the U.S.

A panel discussion with Sergio Bologna, Bruno Cartosio, Fred Lonidier
Officine Zero, via Umberto Partini, 20

May 28 – July 6

I Like Everything Nothing but Union (1983)

CLAP meeting room

Officine Zero, via Umberto Partini 20

June 6 – September 19

Exhibition Opening, Friday, June 5, 18.30

Istituto Svizzero di Roma, via Liguria 20

GENEVA

June 12 – August 30

Exhibition Opening, Thursday, June 11, 18.00

Centre de la photographie Genève, rue des Bains 28

ZURICH

September 2015 – June 2016

Fred Lonidier's MFA thesis work from 1972

Toni-Areal Campus, Zürich University of the Arts

Pfingstweidstrasse 96