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The CCA Wattis Institute examines labor and life in a new research series with exhibitions and public programs

The yearlong project, *Labor: 8 hours of work, 8 hours of rest, and 8 hours of what you will*, is the Wattis's 11th research season

San Francisco, CA—October 15, 2025—CCA Wattis Institute for Contemporary Arts will launch a yearlong research series with exhibitions and public programs that explore the theme of labor. Presented under the collective title *Labor: 8 hours of work, 8 hours of rest, and 8 hours of what you will*, the project considers how we divide our time between work, rest, and freedom—and how these boundaries are increasingly blurred in contemporary society. The first exhibition—*8 hours of work*—is on view from October 29 to December 20, 2025.

This season reimagines the Institute's approach to its research program, shifting the focus from a singular artist to a single idea in dialogue with artists, thinkers, scholars, and the public. Over the course of the fall and spring seasons, the Wattis galleries will serve as a discursive space for exhibitions, readings, talks, and film screenings that expand the ways we think about labor, collectivity, and creativity. The second exhibition in the series, *8 hours of rest*, featuring a site-responsive installation by SoiL Thornton, will be on view from January 20 to March 7, 2026, and the final show, *8 hours of what you will*, will run from March 19 to April 26, 2026. The Wattis Institute is free and open to all.

"Thinking about labor is like thinking about the air we breathe, it's foundational to how we live our lives," said Daisy Nam, director of the Wattis Institute and co-curator of the series. "These three exhibitions, and related series of events and discussions, are opportunities to dive into this dense subject, alongside artists, writers, and thinkers. There is no better place to have this discussion than in San Francisco and the Bay Area, where there is such a rich history of labor movements parallel to rapid developments of technology that mold the future of work and reshape the workforce, in this region and globally."

8 hours of work

The first exhibition, *8 hours of work*, brings together archival materials from the San Francisco Labor Archives, including ephemera from the California Labor School and photographs by Otto Hegel and Hansel Mieth, alongside works by artists Tania Candiani, Stephanie Comilang, Aria Dean, Harun Farocki, Adelita Husni-Bey, Josh Kline, Liz Magic Laser, Luigi Nono, Chantal Peñalosa Fong, Pedro Reyes, Kenneth Tam, Rodrigo Valenzuela, and Lindsey White.

Reflecting the Bay Area's central role in shaping labor movements—from the 1934 General Strike to today's redefinitions of work in the age of automation—the exhibition asks what “work” means in the present moment. Highlights include archival material from San Francisco State University Labor Archives; an outdoor sound installation of Luigi Nono's work *La fabbrica illuminata* (*The Illuminated Factory*), 1964; and a new weaving commission at the front entrance of CCA conceptualized by Tania Candiani and realized by students. The work is inspired by a Dorothea Lange photograph of Japanese American women weaving at the Manzanar concentration camp.

An opening reception will be held Saturday, November 8, 2025, from 5 to 8 pm during CCA's Annual Arts and Craft Fair.

Alongside *Labor: 8 hours of work, 8 hours of rest, and 8 hours of what you will*, the Wattis will present a series of public programs offering opportunities to gather, read, and reflect on labor together:

- October 15, 2025: Lecture by Makeda Best on “labor's picture”
- November 1, 2025: Chris Carlsson leads a bicycle tour of labor history around the city of San Francisco
- November 18, 2025: Rimma Boshernitsan will moderate a conversation on AI
- December 9, 2025: Screening of films by Chantal Peñalosa Fong at the historic Roxie Theater
- January 29, 2026: Conversation between Josh Kline and Daisy Nam
- March 2026: Reading by Carol Becker from her new book, *A Time of Radical Imagining: California 1968–1978*

Further exhibition and program details on *Labor: 8 hours of work, 8 hours of rest, and 8 hours of what you will* will be announced later in the season.

Labor: 8 hours of work, 8 hours of rest, and 8 hours of what you will is organized by Director and Chief Curator Daisy Nam, Associate Curator Diego Villalobos, and former Deputy Director Jeanne Gerrity, with assistance from Curatorial Student Fellow Zipporah Hinds.

The Wattis Institute is generously supported by Mary and Harold Zlot, The Teiger Foundation, The Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation, and San Francisco Grants for the Arts; the Wattis Leadership Circle: Jonathan Gans, Abigail Turin, and Katie and Matt Paige; and the Curators' Forum members. Phyllis C. Wattis was the generous founding patron.

About CCA Wattis Institute for Contemporary Arts

Founded in 1907, California College of the Arts (CCA) educates students to shape culture and society through art, architecture, design, and writing in the vibrant San Francisco Bay Area.

CCA Wattis Institute for Contemporary Arts, founded in 1998 as part of the college, is a nonprofit exhibition venue and research institute focused on contemporary art and ideas. The

Wattis commissions and showcases new work by emerging and established artists from around the world. Additionally, an entire year is dedicated to explore the work of a single artist or idea, informing public programs and publications.

The new Wattis galleries and gardens space are part of CCA's expanded campus designed by world-renowned architecture firm Studio Gang and completed this fall 2024. The newly expanded campus adds 82,300 square feet of space to teach, make, and present art in a continuous indoor-outdoor environment.

CALENDAR EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE:

Labor: 8 hours of work, 8 hours of rest, and 8 hours of what you will

October 15, 2025 — April 18, 2026

Location: 145 Hooper Street, San Francisco

Gallery hours: Wednesday–Saturday, noon–6 pm; closed Sunday to Tuesday

Admission: Free and open to the public

Information: wattis.org or 415-355-9670

Social: [Instagram](#) // [Twitter](#) // [Facebook](#) @WattisArts