arts & entertainment

Global Sideshow full meal deal

In recognition of World Food Day, (Sunday, October 16) the Lester Pearson Institute and the Metro World Food Day Committee held several events on Thursday and Friday, October 13 and 14, including "The Global Sideshow" by the Irondale Ensemble Project, a local theatre troupe which produces and performs an upbeat style of political theatre. They have performed at the Rally for Clayoquot Sound, the Atlantic Fringe Festival, and other

The Global Sideshow explores the global food system as it is today, controlled by multinational corpo-

rations which separate producers of food from consumers. Using very funny, fast-paced skits, the Sideshow demonstrates how this system hurts farmers, degrades the environment, and disconnects consumers from any real understanding of where their food is coming from. Sounds like pretty serious stuff, but the audience was laughing most of the time from the hilarious way this message was played out.

The way in which local food producers and consumers are held hostage by this system in all countries, including Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Ghana, and Canada, was graphically demonstrated. In all countries, farmers receive less for their produce than is due, considering the importance of brokers, processors, and distributors. food. In some cases, like bananas and coffee, workers grow the crop in poor working conditions, with exposure to toxic pesticides, and do not even

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get paid enough for basic living needs. This short-changing of producers does not often result in lower prices for consumers, because most of the price paid in the grocery store goes to

Far from being negative, the last portion of the show was dedicated to demonstrating what people can do to change the world food system. The actions suggested were all ways in which consumers can establish a closer connection with the source of

One way is to buy more of your food at a local farmers' market, from local farmers. In Halifax, there is the Brewery Market down on Lower Water Street. This has many advantages over supermarkets, including the social atmosphere, the direct contact with the person who grew the food, and the decrease in packaging garbage.

Another way is to buy through Alternative Trading Organizations (ATO), such as Bridgehead Coffee, which pay producers a fair price for their products. Yet another option is to buy through a Food Co-op, where people get together and order the food they want in bulk. There is an organic food Co-op at the NSPIRG. If you are interested, contact the NSPIRG at 494-6662 or email nspirg@ac.dal.ca and ask about the Food Co-op.

The Global Sideshow is a full plate of humour, sprinkled with satire, and with a large side-order of meaningful information. If you ever have the chance to see it, it's well worth it, particularly since it's usually free.





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