

# MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **'FUN CITY: NEW YORK IN THE MOVIES 1967–75,' CURATED BY J. HOBERMAN, HIGHLIGHTS GRITTY NEW YORK FILMS MADE DURING THE JOHN LINDSAY YEARS**

**Screening series, accompanied by a new monograph by Hoberman, includes *The French Connection*, *Dog Day Afternoon*, *The Taking of Pelham One Two Three*, *Midnight Cowboy*, *Across 110th Street*, *Superfly*, *Serpico*, and more**

**August 10–September 1, 2013**

Astoria, NY, July 24, 2013—Movies filmed in New York City that tapped into the turmoil, chaos, and social and cultural energies of the late 1960s and early 1970s are the subject of the screening series ***Fun City: New York in the Movies 1967–75***, curated by film critic and historian J. Hoberman. The series, which will be accompanied by a new monograph written by Hoberman, includes nineteen films, and will be presented by Museum of the Moving Image from August 10 through September 1. The films include established classics such as *Rosemary's Baby*, *The French Connection*, *Midnight Cowboy*, and *Dog Day Afternoon*, as well as lesser known films such as *The Angel Levine*, *Bye Bye Braverman*, and *Cotton Comes to Harlem*.

A special screening of *Superfly*, which just celebrated its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary, will be accompanied by a discussion with co-star Sheila Frazier and followed by a costume and singing contest on Friday, August 16.

In November 1965, New York City mayor John V. Lindsay signed an executive order that cut through existing red tape, encouraging the filming of motion pictures on the city's streets. Hollywood took notice with a cycle of tough cop films (*The French Connection*), bleak social comedies (*The Landlord*), and gritty urban fables (*The Panic in Needle Park*). Whatever the mayor's intentions, the movies produced on his watch rarely glamorized New York. Rather, they provide a still-compelling, exuberantly downbeat spectacle of social upheaval and urban decay, ethnic tension, and street smart chutzpah, drawing on local talent to celebrate America's greatest city in all its glory and despair.

The ironic coinage "Fun City" first appeared in a Dick Schaap column that ran in

response to a remark made by the new mayor at his first press conference: “This is a fun and exciting city even when it’s a struck city.” That was one way to put it. Born with a transit strike, ending amid the gas lines that followed the oil embargo of 1973, Fun City was a town in continuous crisis.

“Jim Hoberman is a brilliant cultural historian who has always written thoughtfully about the ways that films are artifacts of the times and places in which they are made, and series *Fun City* is a great example of this,” said David Schwartz, the Museum’s Chief Curator. “We are especially pleased that we will publish a monograph by Jim, which will be available for free online, including an overview of the series and fascinating notes about each of the films.”

Unless otherwise noted, tickets for screenings are included with Museum admission and free for Museum members. To find out about membership and to join, visit <http://movingimage.us/support/membership> or call 718 777 6877.

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### **SCHEDULE FOR ‘FUN CITY: NEW YORK IN THE MOVIES 1967–75,’ AUGUST 10–SEPTEMBER 1, 2013**

All screenings take place at Museum of the Moving Image, 36-01 35 Avenue in Astoria, in either the Sumner M. Redstone Theater or the Celeste and Armand Bartos Screening Room. Tickets are included with Museum admission and free for Museum members unless otherwise noted. Tickets for Friday evening screenings (when the Museum offers free gallery admission) are \$12 adults / \$9 students and senior citizens.

#### ***You’re a Big Boy Now***

SATURDAY, AUGUST 10, 2:00 P.M.

Dir. Francis Ford Coppola. 1966, 96 mins. Digital projection. With Peter Kastner, Geraldine Page, Rip Torn. The first feature production to avail itself of Mayor Lindsay’s new deregulations was a manic youth comedy filmed entirely in New York by 26-year-old former Queens resident Francis Ford Coppola. Manhattan locations included Central Park, Times Square, Greenwich Village, and, in a sequence that required the mayor’s personal intervention, the 42nd Street Library. The screening will be introduced by guest curator J. Hoberman.

#### ***Cotton Comes to Harlem***

SATURDAY, AUGUST 10, 5:00 P.M.

Dir. Ossie Davis. 1970, 97 mins. 35mm. With Godfrey Cambridge, Raymond St. Jacques, Calvin Lockhart, Redd Foxx. Broadway star Ossie Davis’s rollicking first film, adapted from Chester Himes’s 1965 novel, was shot in Harlem during the spring of 1969, with extensive neighborhood participation and an almost entirely black cast headed by Raymond St. Jacques and Godfrey Cambridge (both playing cops) with Calvin Lockhart stealing the movie as their nemesis, a bogus preacher.

### ***Norman Mailer vs. Fun City***

SUNDAY, AUGUST 11, 2:00 P.M.

Dir. Dick Fontaine. 1970, 50 mins. Norman Mailer orchestrated his own political happening in the spring of 1969, running for New York mayor in the Democratic primary with journalist Jimmy Breslin as his sidekick, seeking the nomination for city council president. Documented by British filmmaker Dick Fontaine, their free-wheeling and highly rhetorical campaign provides a flavorsome analog to contemporary Fun City caper films.

### ***Bye Bye Braverman***

SUNDAY, AUGUST 11, 3:30 P.M.

Dir. Sidney Lumet. 1968, 94 mins. Digibeta. With George Segal, Jack Warden, Jessica Walter, Godfrey Cambridge, Phyllis Newman. The quintessential Fun City director, Sidney Lumet drew on his Yiddish theater roots for this dark, extremely ethnic comedy adapted from Brooklyn novelist Wallace Markfield's wise-guy satire of pop-culture obsessed *Partisan Review* intellectuals, *To An Early Grave*. Careening through Brooklyn in search of a funeral, the cast includes sometime stand-up comedians Alan King and Godfrey Cambridge.

### ***Serpico***

SUNDAY, AUGUST 11, 5:30 P.M.

Dir. Sidney Lumet. 1973, 130 mins. 35mm. With Al Pacino. New York Film Critics Circle named Bronx-born Al Pacino the year's best actor for his performance as the whistle-blowing "hippie" detective Frank Serpico, real-life hero of the Knapp Commission Hearings into police corruption, which convulsed the city in late 1970 and precipitated the biggest shake-up in the history of the NYPD.

### ***Superfly***

**Screening and discussion, followed by costume and singing contest**

**With actress Sheila Frazier in person, and joined by Bow Legged Lou, Paul Anthony, and George Logan (*House Party*) as guest judges**

FRIDAY, AUGUST 16, 7:00 P.M.

Dir. Gordon Parks, Jr. 1972, 96 mins. 35mm. With Sheila Frazier, Ron O'Neal. *Superfly* is a landmark urban crime drama starring Ron O'Neal, Carl Lee, and Sheila Frazier. O'Neal plays Priest, a Harlem drug dealer looking to make one last score in order to quit the business. Financing for the film came from two African American dentists and Gordon Parks, the famous father of the film's director, Gordon Parks, Jr. The film's now classic soundtrack—written, produced, and performed by the legendary Curtis Mayfield—is one of the few soundtracks to have out-grossed its film. Museum trustee and curator Warrington Hudlin will moderate the discussion as well as the competition, where Sheila Frazier will be joined by guest judges Bow Legged Lou, Paul Anthony, and George Logan, cast members from Hudlin's film *House Party*. Tickets: \$12 public / \$9 Museum members / free for Silver Screen members and above. Order online or call 718 777 6800 to reserve tickets.

### ***Rosemary's Baby***

SATURDAY, AUGUST 17, 2:30 P.M.

Dir. Roman Polanski. 1968, 136 mins. DCP. With Mia Farrow, John Cassavetes, Ruth Gordon. Roman Polanski milked maximum atmosphere out of a two-week location shoot, turning the stately Dakota into Manhattan's most infamous apartment house. New York street guy John

Cassavetes plays an extremely sketchy Broadway actor with naïve Mia Farrow as his pregnant bride, and Oscar-winning Ruth Gordon as the hilariously sinister character next door.

### ***Little Murders***

SATURDAY, AUGUST 17, 5:30 P.M.

Dir. Alan Arkin. 1971, 110 mins. 35mm. With Elliot Gould, Marcia Rodd, Vincent Gardenia. Another sort of urban horror movie, no less apocalyptic but more overtly funny, Alan Arkin's adaptation of *Village Voice* cartoonist Jules Feiffer's caustic play (a flop on Broadway, a hit in London and a smash off-Broadway revival) was co-produced by its star, erstwhile Brooklyn chorus boy Elliott Gould. That *Little Murders* was originally to be directed by Jean-Luc Godard gives some idea of its world view.

### ***The Landlord***

SUNDAY, AUGUST 18, 2:00 P.M.

Dir. Hal Ashby. 1970, 112 mins. 35mm. With Beau Bridges, Lee Grant, Diana Sands, Pearl Bailey, Louis Gossett, Jr. An indolent American princeling (Beau Bridges) purchases a row house in then-black brownstone Brooklyn. Hal Ashby's first feature, directed from Bill Gunn's script, is among the funniest social comedies of the period. The hero goes native as did the cast, which largely moved into then ungentrified Park Slope during the shoot as Pearl Bailey commuted daily from Broadway where she was starring in the all-black production of *Hello, Dolly!*.

### ***The Angel Levine***

SUNDAY, AUGUST 18, 4:30 P.M.

Dir. Jan Kadar. 1970, 104 mins. 35mm. With Zero Mostel, Harry Belafonte, Ida Kaminska, Milo O'Shea, Gloria Foster, Eli Wallach, Anne Jackson. Bill Gunn also contributed to the script of this kindred fable of racial tension in a New York City tenement directed by Czech émigré Jan Kadar and based on a story by Bernard Malamud. Harry Belafonte not only produced the movie but plays its deus ex machina as the divine hustler who installs himself in the lives of a downtrodden, elderly Jewish couple (Mostel and Kaminska, the star of Kadar's Oscar-winning *The Shop on Main Street*).

### ***The French Connection***

SATURDAY, AUGUST 24, 2:00 P.M.

Dir. William Friedkin. 1971, 104 mins. 35mm. With Gene Hackman, Roy Scheider, Fernando Rey, Tony Lo Bianco. "I felt this was a kind of crude poem to the city," said director William Friedkin with regard to this most successful of Fun City movies, which won Best Picture and four other Oscars, including Gene Hackman's for Best Actor. The justly celebrated car and elevated subway chase through Bensonhurst required an actual Transit Authority motorman on set and five weeks to complete.

### ***Across 110<sup>th</sup> Street***

SATURDAY, AUGUST 24, 4:30 P.M.

Dir. Barry Shear. 1972, 102 mins. Digital projection. With Anthony Quinn, Yaphet Kotto, Anthony Franciosa. Fueled by Bobby Womack's haunting theme, directed by Barry Shear (*Wild in the Streets*) from a novel by a Channel 5 news cameraman, this farrago of corrupt cops, ghetto hustlers, and downtown mobsters is the least glamorous and most violent of Blaxploitation films—producer-star Anthony Quinn held its world premiere in Harlem, at the Loews Victoria,

on 125th Street.

***Coogan's Bluff***

SUNDAY, AUGUST 25, 2:00 P.M.

Dir. Don Siegel. 1968, 93 mins. 35mm. With Clint Eastwood, Lee J. Cobb. An Arizona deputy known only as Coogan (Clint Eastwood) comes to town to extradite a suspect and finds himself cheated by cabbies, insulted by hookers, dissed by the cops, and even attacked by his prey's strident, vaguely Jewish mother. The title puns on the location of the Polo Grounds, a tenement stoop of a ballpark once home to the New York Giants; the big action scene is set around the Cloisters.

***Midnight Cowboy***

SUNDAY, AUGUST 25, 5:00 P.M.

Dir. John Schlesinger. 1969, 113 mins. 35mm. With Dustin Hoffman, Jon Voight, Sylvia Miles, Brenda Vaccaro. Another westerner comes east. John Voigt's wannabe gigolo leaves Texas and winds up hustling on 42nd Street, bonded with the blighted block's genius loci, Dustin Hoffman's tubercular petty thief. Probably the most romantic New York movie of its era, *Midnight Cowboy* won Best Picture and two other Oscars despite being the first major studio production released with an X.

***The Taking of Pelham One Two Three***

FRIDAY, AUGUST 30, 7:00 P.M.

Dir. Joseph Sargent. 1974, 104 mins. 35mm. With Walter Matthau, Robert Shaw, Martin Balsam, Hector Elizondo. Just before leaving office, Mayor Lindsay gave permission for this hijacking thriller, a disaster flick set in the New York subways, to be filmed on location—mainly in the tunnel of the abandoned Court Street station in Brooklyn and outside the subway entrance on 28th Street and Park Avenue South. The mayor is a character but the movie is stolen by Lower East Side born Walter Matthau's jaundiced police inspector.

***Taking Off***

SATURDAY, AUGUST 31, 2:00 P.M.

Dir. Milos Forman. 1971, 93 mins. 35mm. With Lynn Carlin, Buck Henry, Georgia Engel. A solemn high-school student (Linnea Haecock) vanishes into the East Village, leaving her clueless parents (Buck Henry and Lynn Carlin) to leave Queens and essay the counterculture on their own. The sweetest of generation gap movies, Czech exile Milos Forman's first American production was shot in and around New York during the summer of 1970; the director discovered his 16-year-old star in Central Park hanging with the hippies around Bethesda Fountain.

***Born to Win***

SATURDAY, AUGUST 31, 5:00 P.M.

Dir. Ivan Passer. 1971, 88 mins. 35mm. With George Segal, Paula Prentiss, Karen Black, Robert DeNiro. Forman's colleague and sometime collaborator Ivan Passer addressed another social issue in his first U.S. movie, a comic tragedy that was given its world premiere at the 1971 New York Film Festival. George Segal plays a hipster hairdresser, addicted to smack, impressing critic Pauline Kael as "an absurd man seen not in the abstract setting of an absurdist play but in the lower depths of New York City."

***The Panic in Needle Park***

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 2:00 P.M.

Dir. Jerry Schatzberg. 1971, 110 mins. DCP. With Al Pacino, Kitty Winn. Al Pacino made his film debut as a fast-talking junkie in a movie filled with choice Fun City locations, including an authentic cold water loft and the then hustler-ridden Whalen's drugstore at the corner of 8th Street and Sixth Avenue. The triangle where Broadway crosses 72nd Street stands in for the eponymous hangout, a block away, but the ambience is real. The extras were "people who'd come off the streets," according to casting director Juliet Taylor. "We used some real heroin addicts."

***Dog Day Afternoon***

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 5:00 P.M.

Dir. Sidney Lumet. 1975, 125 mins. 35mm. With Al Pacino, John Cazale. Pacino gives his career performance in what Vincent Canby called Sidney Lumet's "most accurate, most flamboyant New York movie." Based on a bizarre 1972 bank robbery staged blocks from the movie's Brooklyn location, *Dog Day Afternoon* might be seen as the first Fun City period film; it was shot after John Lindsay had left office and released a month before the legendary *Daily News* headline: "Ford to City: Drop Dead."

**MUSEUM INFORMATION**

**Museum of the Moving Image** ([movingimage.us](http://movingimage.us)) advances the understanding, enjoyment, and appreciation of the art, history, technique, and technology of film, television, and digital media. In January 2011, the Museum reopened after a major expansion and renovation that nearly doubled its size. Accessible, innovative, and forward-looking, the Museum presents exhibitions, education programs, significant moving-image works, and interpretive programs, and maintains a collection of moving-image related artifacts.

Hours: Wednesday-Thursday, 10:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Friday, 10:30 to 8:00 p.m. Saturday-Sunday, 11:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Film Screenings: Friday evenings, Saturdays and Sundays, and as scheduled. Tickets for regular film screenings are included with paid Museum admission and free for members.

Museum Admission: \$12.00 for adults; \$9.00 for persons over 65 and for students with ID; \$6.00 for children ages 3-12. Children under 3 and Museum members are admitted free.

Admission to the galleries is free on Fridays, 4:00 to 8:00 p.m. Tickets for special screenings and events may be purchased in advance by phone at 718 777 6800 or online.

Location: 36-01 35 Avenue (at 37 Street) in Astoria.

Subway: M (weekdays only) or R to Steinway Street. Q (weekdays only) or N to 36 Avenue.

Program Information: Telephone: 718 777 6888; Website: [movingimage.us](http://movingimage.us)

The Museum is housed in a building owned by the City of New York and located on the campus of Kaufman Astoria Studios. Its operations are made possible in part by public funds provided through the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, the New York City Economic Development Corporation, the New York State Council on the Arts, the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Institute of Museum and Library Services, and the Natural Heritage Trust (administered by the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation). The Museum also receives generous support from numerous corporations, foundations, and individuals. For more information, please visit [movingimage.us](http://movingimage.us).

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