

MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MOVING IMAGE AND PERFORMA PRESENT THE WORLD PREMIERE OF MING WONG'S *PERSONA PERFORMA*, A SITE-SPECIFIC WORK INSPIRED BY BERGMAN FILM

November 10 & 11, 2011 at the Museum as part of Performa 11

In his ambitious new Performa Commission titled *Persona Performa*, the internationally acclaimed multimedia artist **Ming Wong** has created a site-specific work for Museum of the Moving Image in response to the building's dynamic, fluid, and starkly white new architecture. Inspired by Ingmar Bergman's 1966 masterpiece *Persona*, in which an actress and her nurse exchange identities on the remote Fårö Island, Wong's piece is a powerful meditation on cinema and theater.

Presented as part of Performa 11, the fourth edition of visual art performance biennial in New York City (November 1–21, 2011), *Persona Performa* will be performed twice at the Museum on Thursday, November 10, and Friday, November 11, 2011, at 8:00 p.m. Tickets for *Persona Performa* are \$30 (\$25 for Museum members) and are available in advance online at movingimage.us or by calling 718 777 6800. Tickets are also available through the Performa 11 box office (performa-arts.org).

Twenty-four performers, each representing a frame of a "living filmstrip," will wind their way through the Museum space; the Museum itself becomes a camera, pointing at a 'Bergman landscape' through the glass walls of the café. After a series of live action performances in the public spaces of the Museum, the show moves into the main theater, which becomes a film studio, the setting for a series of sound and video experiments.

In creating *Persona Performa*, Wong was also influenced by the multicultural neighborhood of Astoria, Queens, and its history as home to a major film production studio. *Persona Performa* features actors and dancers—of different ages, genders, ethnicities, and nationalities—from Queens, as well as the other boroughs.

"The work has been developed in response to the site, architecture, and collection of the Museum of the Moving Image during my 'residency' here for the past three weeks, using the film *Persona* by Bergman as a framework with which to explore the notions of performance, identity, and cinema," said Ming Wong. "But instead of two personas as in Bergman's film, we are dealing with 24 different personas and identities, from a cast

of actors and dancers from across the city. It has been a uniquely intense and productive experience, only possible in a city like New York."

"Ming Wong's enthusiasm for the history of world cinema and cinematic characters is contagious," said Defne Ayas, Curator at Large at Performa, who is also the lead curator of *Persona Performa*. "With this performance, Ming pushes himself and his audiences to an adventurous engagement—not only with Bergman's cerebral and complex material, but also with the variables of the live medium. Expect a daring leap into fragmented staging."

"Ming's performance promises to be a revelatory evening," said the Museum's chief Curator David Schwartz, "a reflection on nothing less than the history and the nature of the moving image, and the nature of performance itself, on screen and in life."

Persona Performa was developed during a residency by Ming Wong at Museum of the Moving Image and is supported by Performa Producers Circle members Mimi Brown & Alp Ercil. Co-produced by Vitamin Creative Space.

[[Ming Wong, Defne Ayas, and David Schwartz are available for interviews.](#) Send inquiries to Tomoko Kawamoto at tkawamoto@movingimage.us or by calling 718 777 6830.]

About Ming Wong

Berlin-based artist Ming Wong (born 1971, Singapore) rose to international attention when he won a rare Special Mention for his installation for the Singapore Pavilion at the 2009 Venice Biennale. Wong creates installations, video pieces, and visual artworks that examine the nature of identity from cross-cultural perspectives, often through the lens of popular and art cinema. "Wong's work references both Malay cinema and the films of Hollywood and the Western avant-garde; he directs himself in engaging homemade versions of classic scenes from the films of Douglas Sirk, Rainer Werner Fassbinder, Pier Paolo Pasolini, and Luchino Visconti, bringing to light surprising cross-cultural currents and obliquely referencing Singapore's complex history and diverse population" (The Museum of Modern Art). Major exhibitions include Hara Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo (2011); 2011 Singapore Biennial, Singapore (2011); Villa Romana, Florence (2011); Frye Art Museum, Seattle (2011); Metropolitan Museum of Photography, Tokyo (2010); Biennale of Sydney, Sydney (2010); GWANGJU Biennale (2010) Korea, (curated by Massimiliano Gioni); Singapore Pavilion, Venice Biennial, Venice (2009); and Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin (2008). More information at www.mingwong.org

About Museum of the Moving Image

Museum of the Moving Image is on the site of the historic Astoria Studio, originally built in 1920 as the East Coast production facility for Paramount Pictures. The critically

acclaimed expansion and renovation of the Museum, designed by Leeser Architecture, added new galleries, new theaters, an education center, and a completely transformed lobby. Moving Image is the only institution in the United States that explores the art, industry, and innovation of screen culture in all its forms. It offers a distinctive, highly interactive core exhibition; contemporary and retrospective programs of films from around the world; public discussions with leading figures in film and television; a unique collection; inspiring education programs; stimulating changing exhibitions; and groundbreaking online projects. More information at movingimage.us

About Performa 11 ◆ **PERFORMA 11**

Performa 11 (November 1–21, 2011) is the fourth edition of the internationally acclaimed biennial of new visual art performance presented by Performa, the leading organization dedicated to exploring the critical role of live performance in the history of twentieth-century art and to encouraging new directions in performance for the twenty-first century. www.performa-arts.org

Press Contacts:

For Moving Image: Tomoko Kawamoto / tkawamoto@movingimage.us / 718 777 6830
For Performa: Ashley Tickle / Ashley@performa-arts.org / 212 366 5700

MUSEUM INFORMATION

Hours: Tuesday-Thursday, 10:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Friday, 10:30 to 8:00 p.m. Saturday-Sunday, 10:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. **Holiday hours:** The Museum will be open on Mondays from 10:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. December 26 and January 2. On Christmas Eve (Dec. 24) and New Year's Eve (Dec. 31), the galleries will close at 5:00 p.m. The Museum is closed on Thanksgiving (Nov. 24) and Christmas Day (Dec. 25).

Film Screenings: Friday evenings, Saturdays and Sundays, and as scheduled.

Museum Admission: \$12.00 for adults; \$9.00 for persons over 65 and for students with ID; \$6.00 for children ages 3-18. 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

The Museum is housed in a building owned by the City of New York and 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.

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