

MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

EXHIBITION ‘CINEMA PLAY HOUSE’ FEATURES NANDITA RAMAN’S PHOTOGRAPHS OF VANISHING MOVIE THEATERS IN INDIA

September 15, 2018–January 27, 2019

Astoria, New York, August 17, 2018— Beginning Saturday, September 15, 2018, Museum of the Moving Image will present [*Cinema Play House*](#), an exhibition of elegiac black-and-white photographs by Nandita Raman documenting vanishing single-screen movie theaters in India. This series of photographs were taken between 2006 and 2009 in cities around India by Raman, whose family owned the first talkies cinema in their hometown of Varanasi. The exhibition, featuring nearly twenty of Raman’s photographs, will be on view in the Museum’s amphitheater gallery through January 27, 2019.

The single-screen theaters that appear in Raman’s photographs were built in the first half of the twentieth century, an era during which film in India blossomed from a minor attraction to a national obsession. Many of these halls were designed by their owners rather than corporate architects, resulting in curious architectural details and unexpected idiosyncrasies that bestowed a unique character to each space. In the heyday of such cinema halls, their large auditoriums would fill with boisterous crowds who would participate in film screenings by cheering on their favorite film stars, partaking in candid discussions, and singing along with a film’s musical numbers. With the rise of home video in the late 1980s and the emergence of multiplexes, these communal spaces have diminished in recent years. Today, some struggle to remain in business, and many have closed their doors and fallen into disrepair.

Raman’s photographs guide viewers both behind the scenes and into the public areas of these timeworn spaces, revealing traces of the audience and the cinema hall workers, and evoking a fading era in Indian cinema. All works are inkjet prints by Nandita Raman, lent by sepiaEYE.

Cinema Play House will be accompanied by a screening series at the Museum featuring films selected by Priyadarhini Shanker, PhD in collaboration with Raman.

About the artist: Nandita Raman (b. 1980, Varanasi, India) is a visual artist who works with a range of mediums including photography, video, drawing, and language. Her

work has most notably been exhibited at the George Eastman Museum, Center for Documentary Studies, Duke University, and Columbia University. She is a recipient of Alkazi Foundation's Documentary Photography Grant and was 2017 Workspace Resident at Baxter St Camera Club of New York. Raman teaches at SUNY Purchase College.

Raman's work will also be on view in a solo exhibition, *Do Not Forget Me*, at sepiaEYE from September 28 through November 10, 2018. More information at www.sepiaeye.com.

Special thanks to India Center Foundation for their support of Cinema Play House at Museum of the Moving Image.

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MUSEUM INFORMATION

Museum of the Moving Image (movingimage.us) advances the understanding, enjoyment, and appreciation of the art, history, technique, and technology of film, television, and digital media. In its stunning facility—acclaimed for both its accessibility and bold design—the Museum presents exhibitions; screenings of significant works; discussion programs featuring actors, directors, craftspeople, and business leaders; and education programs which serve more than 50,000 students each year. The Museum also houses a significant collection of moving-image artifacts.

Hours: Wed–Thurs, 10:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m. Fri, 10:30 a.m.–8:00 p.m. Sat–Sun, 10:30 a.m.–6:00 p.m.

Museum Admission: \$15 adults; \$11 senior citizens (ages 65+) and students (ages 18+) with ID; \$9 youth (ages 3–17). Children under 3 and Museum members are admitted free. Admission to the galleries is free on Fridays, 4:00 to 8:00 p.m.

Film Screenings: Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays, and as scheduled. Unless otherwise noted, tickets: \$15 adults, \$11 students and seniors, \$9 youth (ages 3–17), free or discounted for Museum members (depending on level of membership). Advance purchase is available online. Ticket purchase may be applied toward same-day admission to the Museum's galleries.

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

Subway: M or R to Steinway Street. N or W to 36 Ave or Broadway.

Program Information: Telephone: 718 777 6888; Website: movingimage.us

Membership: <http://movingimage.us/support/membership> or 718 777 6877

Museum of the Moving Image is housed in a building owned by the City of New York and has received significant support from the following public agencies: New York City Department of Cultural Affairs; New York City Council; New York City Economic Development Corporation; New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo and the New York State Legislature; Institute of Museum and Library Services; National Endowment for the Humanities; National Endowment for the Arts; and Natural Heritage Trust (administered by the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation). For more information, please visit movingimage.us.