

# MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE TO HONOR THOMAS R. O'DONNELL, PRESIDENT OF TEAMSTERS LOCAL 817, ON MARCH 3, 2012**

Astoria, NY, February 29, 2012 — Herbert S. Schlosser, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Museum of the Moving Image, announced today that Thomas R. O'Donnell, who has served more than 50 years as the President of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters Local 817, will be honored at a special Museum benefit on Saturday, March 3, 2012, at the Sheraton New York Hotel & Towers.

The evening will be emceed by actor, comedian, and author Colin Quinn, with tributes and roasts by friends, colleagues, and surprise guests.

“As a founding member of the Museum’s Board of Trustees, Tom O’Donnell was instrumental in leading Local 817’s important contributions to the revitalization of the Astoria Studio and the formation of the Museum,” said Mr. Schlosser. “Tom saw the need for a museum that would look at the process as well as the art of film and television. We are very pleased to be able to honor Tom and to celebrate his lasting legacy. He has been a driving force in New York City’s entertainment industry and has also served as a national leader for the IBT.”

Thomas O’Donnell first won the Presidency of Teamsters Local 817 in the fall of 1961 by a scant six votes. Since then, Mr. O’Donnell has won the confidence of his members in the last sixteen local union elections. During these 50 years of leadership, the Local’s membership has quadrupled. He has raised the members’ health and pension benefits to the highest standards, in not just the Teamsters, but also the larger entertainment community. It was with great foresight and vision that in 1965, he created a collectively bargained scholarship fund that would be a hallmark of his leadership. Starting with a 1% employer contribution, Local 817 has been able to provide to the children of its members free tuition and free room and board to any accredited university or college in the United States.

From 1989 through 1994, Mr. O’Donnell served as Director of the Motion Picture and Theatrical Trade Division for the International Brotherhood of Teamsters. In this capacity, he helped to elevate national wage standards, especially benefitting motion picture drivers in the South and Midwest. In 1998, Tom was elected first Vice President-at-Large for the IBT and was re-elected in 2002 to a five-year term. He was a founding member of the Council of Motion Picture and Television Unions and has also served on the Mayor’s

Advisory Board for Film, Television and Theatre. Amongst his many accolades, Mr. O'Donnell received the Crystal Apple Award from Mayor Rudy Guiliani in recognition of his contributions to the film industry. In 1998, he was named Entertainment Man of the Year by the Theatrical Mutual Association, and in 1999 he was honored by the Director's Guild of America for his outstanding efforts to uphold labor's rights while encouraging film production in New York.

"The Museum's core exhibition *Behind the Screen* explores the many behind-the-scenes jobs that make motion pictures and television shows possible," said Carl Goodman, the Museum's Executive Director. "How fitting then, that the Museum should honor Tom O'Donnell and by extension the guilds and unions that are so integral to the industry."

Founded in 1981, Museum of the Moving Image is the only institution in the United States that deals comprehensively with the art, history, technology, and social impact of film, television, and digital media. The heart of the Museum is its core exhibition *Behind the Screen*, which celebrates and explores the world of work and collaborative spirit that are at the center of the filmmaking process. One year ago, the Museum opened its completely transformed and expanded building, tripling its annual attendance to over 200,000 visitors, including over 50,000 students and teachers participating in the Museum's education programs. Tens of thousands more came for one of the over 400 films the Museum presented in its stunning new theaters. Funds raised at this evening will help support the Museum's mission and programming.

For ticket information, please contact Event Associates at 212 245 6570.

Press inquiries about the Museum should be directed to Tomoko Kawamoto, Museum of the Moving Image, at 718 777 6830 or [tkawamoto@movingimage.us](mailto:tkawamoto@movingimage.us).

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