

MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FILM PROJECTIONISTS AND THEIR WORK SPACES FEATURED IN 'THE BOOTH,' EXHIBITION OF PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOSEPH O. HOLMES

Opening event on October 4 to feature exhibition preview, screening of *Sherlock, Jr.*, and tribute to the Museum's late chief projectionist Richard Aidala

Exhibition on view October 5, 2013–February 2, 2014

Astoria, New York, September 9, 2013— Photographer Joseph O. Holmes, a chronicler of people and their work spaces, turned his attention in late 2011 to the film projection booth, capturing projectionists in their domains at movie theaters in and around New York City. More than 30 of his photographs from this series will be presented by Museum of the Moving Image in the exhibition ***The Booth: The Last Days of Film Projection***, from October 5, 2013, through February 2, 2014, in the Museum lobby. These photos shine a light on what is quickly becoming a lost art form; they reveal the intricate beauty of the projectors and related ephemera such as canisters, reels, and the medium—celluloid itself—scattered across the often cramped booths. Usually anonymous and unseen, the skilled technicians who operate these increasingly rare machines are present in many of the images; their personalities evident in the handwritten notes, personal photographs, and posters that cover any available wall space.

“At a time when the projection of celluloid film and the craft of the film projectionist are quickly vanishing, Joseph Holmes’s intimate portraits preserve a visual record of the people who devote their lives to the craft. The photographs also preserve the unique working environment of the booth, with all its gadgets and machinery,” said Chief Curator David Schwartz.

The exhibition will be celebrated at an opening event on Friday, October 4, at 6:30 p.m. with a special screening of the 1924 Buster Keaton film ***Sherlock, Jr.***, in which the silent comic plays a projectionist who conjures himself into a movie, presented with live piano accompaniment. Holmes will also debut "Projection: Eighty-five Years of the Projection Booth in Movies," a twelve-minute supercut of clips from 45 movies that take place in projection booths, from *Sherlock, Jr.* to *Inglourious Basterds*. This event in the Museum's Redstone Theater will also serve as a tribute to the Museum's late chief projectionist, Richard C. Aidala, who died on August 20, 2013. Attendees will also

have an opportunity to preview the exhibition.

“Richie Aidala was at the Museum since its opening in 1988, and was widely regarded as a master of his craft,” said Schwartz. “He had many other skills; he could repair a Thomas Edison Kinetoscope, and then fix a 1980s video arcade game. In the galleries and especially in the theater, he always put on a great show, and he will be missed by the Museum staff, by our members and visitors, and by many filmmakers and artists who relied on him to present their work properly.”

Tickets for the October 4 program are \$12 public / \$9 seniors and students / \$6 children 3–12 and free for Museum members and invited guests. Museum members may reserve tickets in advance; tickets for the public will be available on the day of the event on a first-come, first-served basis. To find out about membership and to join, visit <http://movingimage.us/support/membership> or call 718 777 6877.

The photographs featured in *The Booth* were taken in 2012 and 2013. In addition to the projection booth and projectionists at Museum of the Moving Image, the exhibition includes photos taken by Holmes at nearly 20 movie theaters in New York City, Long Island, Upstate New York, and surrounding states. Among them are the booths at Anthology Film Archives and Film Forum; as well as nearby specialized theaters such as the Cinema Arts Centre (Huntington, NY), The Avon Theater (Stamford, Connecticut), and The Bombay Cinema (Flushing, Queens); commercial theaters including the Cobble Hill Cinema (Brooklyn) and the Chelsea Clearview; and also drive-in theaters in New York and Pennsylvania.

A catalog for *The Booth: The Last Days of Film Projection* will be available for purchase in the Museum Store.

According to the Motion Picture Association of America, at the end of 2012, 84% of commercial theater screens in the United States were set for digital projection. The number of analog screens (or those using celluloid film projection) dropped by more than 50% from a year ago to 6,387 screens. Most major movie studios will be distributing new releases only in digital format beginning this winter. Only archival prints of studio films will soon be available in 35mm.

About Joseph O. Holmes

Joseph O. Holmes’s photographs have hung in solo and group shows around the world. His “Booth” series of photos will also be presented as a projected installation at the Lichtroufen Festival (Lüdenscheid, Germany) from September 27 through October 6, 2013. Among other awards, Holmes has been honored with a Curator’s Commendation at the Houston Center for Photography, first prize in MPLS Photo Center’s 2010 Portraits Exhibition, and Honorable Mention in the Silver Eye Gallery’s Fellowship Competition. In his work, Holmes has also documented New York City Christmas tree

salesmen, machine shop operators, professional cooks on break, and museum visitors. He lives in Brooklyn, New York with his wife and two children. Holmes is represented by Jen Bekman Gallery, in New York City. For more information, visit <http://josephholmes.io>

Press Contact: Tomoko Kawamoto / tkawamoto@movingimage.us / 718 777 6830
Joseph O. Holmes and Chief Curator David Schwartz are available for interviews.

DESCRIPTION FOR OPENING PROGRAM

Screening of *Sherlock, Jr.* and tribute to Richard C. Aidala

Friday, October 4, 6:30–8:00 p.m.

***Sherlock, Jr.* with live music by Makia Matsumara**

Dir. Buster Keaton. 1924, 44 mins. 35mm. With Buster Keaton, Kathryn McGuire, Joe Keaton. *Sherlock, Jr.* is a comic masterpiece about a movie projectionist who wants to be a detective, and dreams himself into a movie. The film will be preceded by a tribute to Richard Aidala (1949–2013), the Museum's late chief projectionist, who died this August. This event is presented in conjunction with the opening of *The Booth*, a photography exhibition by Joseph O. Holmes. Tickets: \$12 public / \$9 seniors and students / \$6 children 3–12 and free for Museum members and invited guests. Museum members may reserve tickets in advance; tickets for the public will be available on the day of the event on a first-come, first-served basis.

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 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

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

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.

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