

MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

‘SEE IT BIG!’ SERIES CELEBRATES MOVIE MUSICALS

Fourteen spectacular singing/dancing extravaganzas including *All That Jazz*, *The Sound of Music*, *Pennies from Heaven*, *The Wiz*, and more

January 24–February 28, 2014

Astoria, New York, January 2, 2014—The Museum of the Moving Image’s popular series ***See It Big!*** will turn its focus to the movie musical with a fourteen-film celebration of the genre, from January 24 through February 28, 2014. Musicals are, by their very nature, filled with spectacle. They are heightened forms of storytelling, in which the narrative is amplified by song and dance, where characters express their innermost feelings in the most extravagant ways imaginable. It is a genre that celebrates excess and stylization, and the best examples of the form can only be truly enjoyed... big!

Among the titles are two of the first films produced at the rejuvenated Astoria studio—across the street from the Museum—in the 1970s: Series opener ***All That Jazz*** (1979) is choreographer and director Bob Fosse’s largely autobiographical tour de force featuring a lithe and passionate Roy Scheider as Fosse’s alter ego (January 24); ***The Wiz*** (1978), directed by Sidney Lumet, reimagines *The Wizard of Oz* in a gritty urban fantasy land and stars Diana Ross, Michael Jackson, and Nipsey Russell (February 7). Production materials from *The Wiz* are currently on view at the Museum in *Lights, Camera, Astoria!*, an exhibition exploring the history of the Astoria studio (on view through February 9), and also in the core exhibition *Behind the Screen*.

Two other 1970s musicals also feature in the series. ***Cabaret*** (1972), another acclaimed Bob Fosse picture, starring Liza Minnelli and Joel Grey, won all three of them Academy Awards, and features John Kander and Fred Ebb’s rousing show tunes for a tale set in Berlin on the eve of Hitler’s rise to power (February 21). ***New York, New York*** (1977), also starring Liza Minnelli with Robert De Niro, is Martin Scorsese’s dramatically powerful ode to classic MGM musicals and 1940s jazz; the title song, written for Minnelli by Kander and Ebb, was the film’s grand finale and, became arguably the most beloved song about New York City (February 28).

Another highlight of the series is Herbert Ross’s ***Pennies from Heaven***, the 1981 film

starring Steve Martin as a sheet-music salesman and Bernadette Peters as his lover in Depression-era Chicago, presented in a restored 35mm print from the Academy Archive. This movie musical adaptation of Dennis Potter's serial television drama, beautifully photographed by the great Gordon Willis, contrasts the somberness of the era with tantalizing fantasy sequences; Christopher Walken as Tom the Pimp shines in a tap-dancing, striptease number.

A trio of 1930s musicals in the series are ***Love Me Tonight*** (1932), starring Maurice Chevalier (who will be featured on the same day in *Gigi*), directed by the innovative Rouben Mamoulian (January 26); ***Gold Diggers of 1933*** (1933), featuring the dazzling choreography of Busby Berkeley (February 2); and ***Show Boat*** (1936), James Whale's adaptation of the Jerome Kern-Oscar Hammerstein musical, starring Irene Dunne, Paul Robeson, Hattie McDaniel, Helen Morgan, and Allan Jones in this American saga set on a Mississippi River Boat—a rare 1930s film that depicted racism head-on (February 23).

Among the classic movie musicals in the series are Vincente Minnelli's ***Meet Me in St. Louis*** (1944) (February 2) and George Cukor's ***A Star Is Born*** (1954) (January 31), both starring Judy Garland at her heartbreaking best; ***The Sound of Music*** (1965), Robert Wise's adaptation of the Rodgers and Hammerstein Broadway show, starring Julie Andrews and Christopher Plummer (January 25). The series also includes two more Vincente Minnelli musicals, both set in Paris and starring Leslie Caron—and major Oscar winners: ***Gigi*** (1958), about a young girl's coming-of-age (January 26), and ***An American in Paris*** (1951), with Gene Kelly as a down-and-out American artist, set to an all-Gershwin score (February 22). Another rarity in the program is ***The Pajama Game*** (1957), a Doris Day musical, directed by Stanley Donen, and featuring dazzling and instantly recognizable choreography by a young Bob Fosse (February 22).

Tickets for screenings are included with paid Museum admission (\$12 adults / \$9 seniors and students / \$6 children 3–12) and free for Museum members. Museum members may reserve tickets in advance. For information about Membership and to join, visit <http://movingimage.us/support/membership>.

See It Big! is an ongoing series programmed by *Reverse Shot* editors Michael Koresky and Jeff Reichert, Chief Curator David Schwartz, and Assistant Film Curator Aliza Ma.

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SCHEDULE FOR 'SEE IT BIG!: MUSICALS,' JANUARY 24–FEBRUARY 28, 2014

All screenings take place in the Sumner M. Redstone Theater or the Bartos Screening Room at Museum of the Moving Image, 36-01 35 Avenue in Astoria. Screenings are included with Museum admission and free for Museum members unless otherwise noted.

All That Jazz

FRIDAY, JANUARY 24, 7:00 P.M.

Dir. Bob Fosse. 1979, 123 mins. **New DCP restoration.** With Roy Scheider, Ann Reinking, Ben Vereen. Fosse's dazzling, partly autobiographical, partly fantastical musical, largely filmed at the Astoria studio, is an interiorized epic, starring a never-better Scheider as Fosse's alter ego, Joe Gideon, a boozy, pill-addled choreographer negotiating a love life and a career. The footwork is as astonishing as the self-critique. It is an enveloping sensory experience, brilliantly shot and edited.

The Sound of Music

SATURDAY, JANUARY 25, 2:00 P.M.

Dir. Robert Wise. 1965, 174 mins. DCP. With Julie Andrews, Christopher Plummer, Eleanor Parker. At the time of its release the most financially successful film ever made after *Gone with the Wind*, Wise's spectacular adaptation of the Rodgers and Hammerstein Broadway show is one of cinema's greatest musical extravaganzas. Julie Andrews gives an iconic performance as a novice nun whose life changes when sent to care for the bratty children of a handsome military captain (Plummer) on the heels of World War II. *The Sound of Music* bursts with unforgettable songs and glorious CinemaScope images shot on location in Salzburg, Austria.

Love Me Tonight

SUNDAY, JANUARY 26, 3:30 P.M.

Dir. Rouben Mamoulian. 1932, 104 mins. 35mm. With Maurice Chevalier, Jeanette MacDonald, Charles Ruggles. From its opening sequence, with the camera floating over the rooftops and through the streets of Paris (Paris, Hollywood, that is), *Love Me Tonight*, with Maurice Chevalier as a jovial tailor who tries to collect on a bill from a Count—and falls in love with a princess—was the first truly modern movie musical. The Rodgers and Hart songs (including “Mimi” and “Isn't It Romantic”) are perfectly integrated into the narrative, and Mamoulian showed how to turn a theatrical form into a cinematic experience.

Gigi

SUNDAY, JANUARY 26, 6:00 P.M.

Dir. Vincente Minnelli. 1958, 115 mins. 35mm. With Leslie Caron, Louis Jourdan, Maurice Chevalier. The CinemaScope frame is crammed with exquisite detail in this thrillingly visualized musical about a young girl's coming-of-age in wealthy turn-of-the-century Paris. The winner of nine Oscars (a record at the time), including Best Picture, Director, Cinematography, Art Direction, Costume Design, Song, and Score, *Gigi* is a triumph on every level, like a Toulouse-Lautrec painting sprung to giddy life.

A Star Is Born

FRIDAY, JANUARY 31, 7:00 P.M.

Dir. George Cukor. 1954, 176 mins. 35mm. With Judy Garland, James Mason, Charles Bickford. The ultimate Judy Garland vehicle, this is the quintessential Hollywood tale of lost love and found fame. As a movie star on the rise, Garland is magnificent, both triumphant and tremulous, and Mason is her poignant equal as her husband and mentor Norman Maine, an alcoholic actor on his way down the ladder of success. Garland's rendition of “The Man That

Got Away” is one of the highlights of 1950s musicals.

Meet Me in St. Louis

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 2:00 P.M.

Dir. Vincente Minnelli. 1944, 113 mins. Restored 35mm print. With Judy Garland, Margaret O’Brien. In this bittersweet turn-of-the-century musical, a family contends with life, love, and an impending move from St. Louis to New York City. In his first color film, Vincente Minnelli deftly organizes the Technicolor palette around Judy Garland, moving seamlessly between story and song—and what songs they are, including “The Trolley Song,” “Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas,” and “The Boy Next Door.”

Gold Diggers of 1933

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 4:30 P.M.

Dir. Mervyn LeRoy. 1933, 96 mins. 35mm. With Joan Blondell, Warren William, Ruby Keeler, Ginger Rogers, Dick Powell. The ideal Busby Berkeley film: the super-choreographer created some of the most eye-popping, elaborate musical showstoppers ever filmed for this fluffy entertainment about four aspiring actresses trying to make it during the Great Depression. Numbers such as “Remember My Forgotten Man” and “Pettin’ in the Park” are high points of early Hollywood, examples of cinematic ingenuity that have not been bettered to this day. And Ginger Rogers sets the escapist tone in the opening number, “We’re in the Money.”

Pennies from Heaven

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 7:00 P.M.

Dir. Herbert Ross. 1981, 108 mins. **Restored 35mm print from the Academy Film Archive.** With Steve Martin, Bernadette Peters, Christopher Walken. Herbert Ross’s delicate and brilliantly conceived adaptation of Dennis Potter’s television serial drama stars a moving Martin as a sheet-music salesman during the Great Depression. For him and the schoolteacher he loves, played by Peters, music provides an escape from a dreary reality, however briefly. Endlessly moving, with spectacular dancing (including a number by the great hooper Christopher Walken) and lip-synched period songs, all captured in exquisite Edward Hopper-esque images by master cinematographer Gordon Willis.

The Wiz

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 7:00 P.M.

Dir. Sidney Lumet. 1978, 134 mins. 35mm. With Diana Ross, Michael Jackson, Nipsey Russell, Lena Horne, Richard Pryor. A Harlem school teacher is transported to the land of Oz in this lavish screen adaptation of the hit Broadway musical. At the time the most expensive production filmed in New York City, *The Wiz* helped revive the Astoria studio. A Motown co-production, the musical features songs by Luther Vandross and Ashford & Simpson, and a superstar cast headed by Diana Ross and Michael Jackson.

Cabaret

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 7:00 P.M.

Dir. Bob Fosse. 1972, 124 mins. New DCP restoration. With Liza Minnelli, Joel Grey. Fosse rightly won the Oscar for Best Director for his shattering musical set in Berlin on the eve of Hitler’s rise to power. Minnelli and Grey also scored Oscars for their unforgettable

performances as, respectively, Sally Bowles, a vivacious but damaged American singer selling her soul in a seedy nightclub, and the devilish emcee who presides over it. A devastating, delirious movie experience, featuring John Kander and Fred Ebb's rousing show tunes and Geoffrey Unsworth's gloriously ragged photography.

An American in Paris

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 4:00 P.M.

Dir. Vincente Minnelli. 1951, 113 mins. 35mm. With Gene Kelly, Leslie Caron, Oscar Levant. Minnelli's breathtaking Best Picture winner stars the ever-captivating Kelly as a painter struggling to make ends meet in the city of light. With a thrilling all-Gershwin score and a spectacularly designed, climactic dream ballet sequence shot by the brilliant cinematographer John Alton, *An American in Paris* is pure cinematic bliss and a musical movie landmark filled with such Gershwin gems as "I Got Rhythm," "'S Wonderful," "Our Love Is Here to Stay" and "I'll Build a Stairway to Paradise."

The Pajama Game

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 7:00 P.M.

Dir. Stanley Donen, George Abbott. 1957, 101 mins. 16mm. With Doris Day, John Raitt, Carol Haney. Can management (John Raitt) and labor (Doris Day) co-exist at the Sleep-Tite Pajama Factory in Cedar Rapids, Iowa? Perhaps the most scintillating entertainment about unionization ever made, this high-powered musical features typically energetic direction by Stanley Donen, dazzling and instantly recognizable choreography by a young Bob Fosse, songs like "Hernando's Hideaway" and "Steam Heat," and Doris Day at her best.

Show Boat

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 6:00 P.M.

Dir. James Whale. 1936, 113 mins. 35mm. With Irene Dunne, Paul Robeson, Allan Jones, Helen Morgan, Hattie McDaniel. A great American saga, *Show Boat* follows the lives of the performers and workers on *The Cotton Blossom*, a Mississippi River showboat, over 40 years. Expressively adapted for the screen by James Whale, this Jerome Kern-Oscar Hammerstein musical was considered radical at the time for its serious treatment of race. Paul Robeson's "Ol' Man River" is the most famous of its many great musical numbers.

New York, New York

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 7:00 P.M.

Dir. Martin Scorsese. 1977, 164 mins. 35mm. With Robert De Niro, Liza Minnelli. Scorsese's ode to classic MGM musicals and 1940s jazz marked a departure of sorts for him, combining his gritty hard-boiled realism (he had just made *Taxi Driver*) with a celebration of the surreal artificiality of Hollywood. Minnelli belts out the now-classic title song in a show-stopping finale.

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 expanded and renovated facilities—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: 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. **Holiday hours:** The Museum will be open Monday, January 20 (Martin Luther King, Jr. Day); Monday, February 17 (Presidents Day), and Tuesday, February 18, from 10:30 a.m. to 5:00 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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