

MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE ANNOUNCES LINEUP FOR ITS ANNUAL CURATORS' CHOICE SERIES, FEATURING SOME OF THE BEST FILMS RELEASED IN 2022

December 9, 2022–January 21, 2023

Astoria, New York, November 22, 2022 — Museum of the Moving Image today announced more than two dozen titles in its annual Curators' Choice series, which features some of the best films released in 2022, with a strong focus on favorites and under-recognized works, selected by Curator of Film Eric Hynes and Associate Curator of Film Edo Choi. Offering New York audiences an opportunity to view these on the big screen, **Curators' Choice 2022** opens December 9 and continues through January 2023. Additional titles will be added as they are confirmed.

Hynes noted, "While journalists, industry insiders, market analysts, and armchair speculators endlessly debated the fate of fickle moviegoing and streaming subscriptions, these selections suggest an alternative narrative for the moving image in 2022, one defined by evolving processes and forms, the instability and anxieties over how we encounter the work perhaps freeing artists to let the work become whatever it may. It's also a year in which numerous filmmakers told their own stories, and in so doing made some of their best work."

The survey comprises festival standouts (*Dos Estaciones*, *Murina*), awards season staples (*Nope*, *All That Breathes*, *The Territory*, *Aftersun*, *Decision to Leave*), overlooked gems (*Benediction*, *Apollo 10 ½: A Space Age Childhood*), vanguard innovations in form and genre (*We Met in Virtual Reality*, *Marcel the Shell with Shoes On*, *Expedition Content*, *We're All Going to the World's Fair*), and one of the most audacious documentaries in recent memory (*Jackass Forever*). This year's series also includes two films by Claire Denis (*Both Sides of the Blade* and *Stars at Noon*) and three films by Hong Sangsoo (*Introduction*, *In Front of Your Face*, and *The Novelist's Film*).

The schedule is noted below and posted online at movingimage.us/series/curators-choice-2022. Tickets are \$15 with discounts for students, seniors, youth, and MoMI members. Tickets for MoMI members for this series and all regular screenings are \$7, with options for using free passes. Join today at movingimage.us/join-and-support/become-a-member.

SCHEDULE FOR 'CURATORS' CHOICE,' DECEMBER 9, 2022–JANUARY 21, 2023

Screenings take place in the Sumner M. Redstone Theater or the Celeste and Armand Bartos Screening Room at Museum of the Moving Image, 36-01 35 Ave, Astoria, NY. Advance tickets are available online at movingimage.us.

Expedition Content

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 9, 7:00 P.M.

Dirs. Ernst Karel, Veronika Kusumaryati. 2020, 78 mins. DCP. Constructed from audio recorded during the making of Robert Gardner's landmark ethnographic documentary *Dead Birds* (1964), this work by renowned sound artists Karel (*Leviathan*, *The Hottest August*) and Kusumaryati is simultaneously an immersive sonic document and a deft critique of the ethnographic endeavor. The recordings were made by recent college graduate and Standard Oil heir Michael Rockefeller, who joined the Harvard-Peabody Expedition to Netherlands New Guinea that set up tents among the indigenous Hubula (also known as Dani) people. Karel and Kusumaryati reframe the archive to explore the power dynamics between anthropologist and subject, and between sound and image, ultimately including very few images to reorient us and our sense of what's been documented, and by and for whom, creating a singular cinematic experience.

Preceded by ***Dead Birds*** (Dir. Robert Gardner, 1963, 84 mins.).

My Imaginary Country

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2:00 P.M.

Dir. Patricio Guzmán. 2022, 83 mins. DCP. In Spanish with English subtitles. One of the greatest documentary filmmakers the medium has ever known, the 80-year-old Guzmán has been creating works about the political past and hopeful future of his home country Chile for more than fifty years. Recalling the potency of such films of Guzmán's as *The Battle of Chile* and *Nostalgia for the Light*, his latest, *My Imaginary Country* captures the revolution that exploded onto the streets of Santiago in 2019, in which activists, politicians, and citizens (overall, a million and a half people) demanded reform and regime change from a government stuck in a politically traumatized past. Guzmán connects the battles of the seventies to the struggles of today with vivid, clear-eyed urgency.

We Met in Virtual Reality

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 10, 4:00 P.M.

Dir. Joe Hunting. 2022, 91 mins. DCP. Filmed entirely inside the world of virtual reality, Hunting's expansive and sensitive documentary embeds itself within several unique communities in VR Chat, a burgeoning virtual reality platform. The filmmaker employs software within the platform that allows him to shoot, frame, and record his subjects uncannily like a live-action documentary, and it's this adherence to convention—in this most unconventional milieu—that transforms images and avatars that might be considered strange into familiar expressions of humanity. The film follows Jenny, an American Sign Language (ASL) teacher, dedicated to building a welcoming community for deaf and hard of hearing VR Chat users, and two long distance couples who met in VR and prepare to meet physically: DustBunny, a fitness dance instructor building a career in social VR dance classes, and her partner, Toaster; and DragonHeart and

IsYourBoi, a couple who met while performing in an exotic VR dance community. *We Met in Virtual Reality* tenderly documents the stories of people experiencing love, loss, and unexpected connection within an online world that may shape the future.

Descendant

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 11, 1:30 P.M.

Dir. Margaret Brown. 2022, 109 mins. DCP. Brown's moving documentary about this country's legacy of slavery and its lingering traumas excavates a violent past that for a community in Mobile, Alabama, remains a painful reality. In an incident that occurred in 1860, before the passing of the 13th Amendment but after the United States had banned the kidnapping and importing of people, a slave ship carrying more than one hundred Africans docked. Though the ship was ordered sunk to destroy evidence of its illegal passage, its survivors established a separate community called Africatown, which today contains a vibrant community but is beleaguered by governmental neglect and inequity. Looking at both the dramatic re-emergence of the long-buried ship and the daily lives of the town's inhabitants, *Descendant* is a loving rendering of a place that refuses to let its complicated past stay buried.

Riotville, USA

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 11, 4:00 P.M.

Dir. Sierra Pettengill. 2022, 91 mins. DCP. For her unsettling and brilliantly executed documentary composed of archival footage, Pettengill has uncovered a trove of remarkable and disturbing footage from the late '60s of a U.S. military experiment. Within the surreal confines of small, artificially constructed towns on army bases called Riotsvilles, police and National Guardsmen simulated violent attacks on Black American citizens deemed as subversives—training for what would become widespread, racist government crackdowns. Rather than employ talking heads or conventional documentary storytelling, Pettengill uses the footage itself, as well as news reports and interviews from the period, and employs penetrating, philosophical voice-over from critic Tobi Haslett, constructing a hypnotic account of a violent, authoritarian past that, as the film implies, is sadly ever present.

Nope

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 30, 6:30 P.M.

Dir. Jordan Peele. 2022, 130 mins. DCP. With Daniel Kaluuya, Keke Palmer, Steven Yeun, Michael Wincott, Brandon Perea, Keith David. Using the format of large-canvas sci-fi horror, Oscar winner Jordan Peele has made perhaps his most provocative film yet, a wildly expansive, primally frightening movie that quickly became one of the year's most puzzled-over, debated, and admired studio productions. *Nope* is set way out West, on the Haywood ranch, where grown siblings OJ and Emerald (Kaluuya and Palmer) continue their father's legacy, training and handling horses for Hollywood productions, a family business that extends back to the very beginnings of motion pictures. After they discover a dangerous (and bloodthirsty) UFO near the ranch, brother and sister set out to identify the flying object by capturing it on film, which proves to be more difficult than it would appear. Crucial—and truly unforgettable—is

the story of neighbor Jupe (Yeun), a huckster entertainer harboring a shocking childhood trauma. As usual, Peele has created a plausible yet utterly surreal world that goes down multiple avenues of inquiry—marginalized histories, racial representation, industry exploitation—while remaining a satisfying and scary entertainment.

Dos Estaciones

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 30, 7:00 P.M.

Dir. Juan Pablo González. 2022, 99 mins. DCP. In Spanish with English subtitles. With Teresa Sánchez, Rafaela Fuentes, Manuel Garía-Rulfo, José Galindo. In an unforgettable performance, Sánchez plays María García, the stoic owner of a tequila factory in the highlands of Jalisco that has fallen into disrepair and is having trouble paying its bills. Maria, no longer one of the wealthiest and most powerful people in town, begins to reassess her business after she hires a new assistant. But after a series of catastrophes, both natural and manmade, her world begins to seem irrevocably altered. González has created a drama of striking observational realism that's as much about environmental change as the fascinating community of people at its center.

The Eternal Daughter

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 31, 3:00 P.M.

Dir. Joanna Hogg. 2022, 96 mins. DCP. With Tilda Swinton, Joseph Mydell, Carly-Sophia Davies, Alfie Sankey-Green. Hogg is one of the most consistently surprising, visually and emotionally precise filmmakers working anywhere in the world today, and her latest is at once an unexpected left turn and completely in keeping with her cinematic project. Taking the apparent form of a classical ghost story, *The Eternal Daughter* stars a marvelous Tilda Swinton in two roles, as an elderly mother and her middle-aged filmmaker daughter, staying together at a sinister, fog-enshrouded hotel in the English countryside. It's the older woman's birthday, and the younger woman is working on the script for a new movie. Strange things go bump in the night, and there's an eerie sense of imminent danger in the nearly empty establishment, but Hogg twists the haunted house genre and finds something poignant, melancholy, and entirely new. Following her transformative one-two punch of *The Souvenir* films, Hogg has made another deeply moving and atmospheric film about the unknowability of those closest to us.

Introduction

SUNDAY, JANUARY 1, 1:00 P.M.

Dir. Hong Sangsoo. 2021, 66 mins. DCP. In Korean with English subtitles. With Shin Seokho, Park Miso, Kim Youngho, Ki Joobong, Seo Younghwa, Kim Minhee, Cho Yunhee, Ye Jiwon, Ha Seongguk. Hong's deceptively complicated comic drama focuses on the sometimes seemingly irreconcilable generation gaps that keep uncomfortable distances between parents and children. Delicately playing with time as only he can, the prolific South Korean writer-director here tells a story of thwarted meetings and agonized communication, focusing on a young man, Youngho (Shin), who has been summoned to see his intimidating doctor father, leaving his girlfriend, Juwon (Park) outside to wait. The film then transitions to Berlin, where Juwon lives

with her mother, who introduces her to an artist friend (Kim Minhee) who could be helpful to her. In the space between—and following—these meetings, Hong creates a rich world of mundanity and possibility, in which relationships and professional aspirations are often connected, and no future is certain.

In Front of Your Face

SUNDAY, JANUARY 1, 3:00 P.M.

Dir. Hong Sangsoo. 2021, 85 mins. DCP. In Korean with English subtitles. With Lee Hyeyoung, Cho Yunhee, Kwon Haehyo, Shin Seokho, Kim Saebyeok, Ha Seungguk, Seo Younghwa, Lee Eunmi, Kang Yiseo, Kim Siha. One of Hong's most ruminative and slyly caustic films, *In Front of Your Face* follows a middle-aged woman who has come back to South Korea after living abroad for many years and following a successful but now largely defunct career as an actor. Hong observes as she reconnects to people with whom she has complicated, in some cases mysterious, relationships, including her younger sister and a shopkeeper, and meets others who might provide a key to future successes, such as a movie director who floats the idea of working with him on a comeback project. Through these encounters, which all take place over the course of 24 hours in Seoul, we get a better understanding of her regrets, desires, and deficiencies, as well as the big, looming secret that promises to change her forever.

The Novelist's Film

SUNDAY, JANUARY 1, 5:00 P.M.

Dir. Hong Sangsoo. 2022, 92 mins. DCP. In Korean with English subtitles. With Kim Minhee, Lee Hyeyoung, Seo Younghwa, Park Miso, Kwon Haehyo, Cho Yunhee. After her mesmerizing work in Hong's *In Front of Your Face*, Lee Hyeyoung gives another standout, ruminative performance as a cantankerous middle-aged novelist who hasn't written in years and is in desperate need of a new creative outlet. As the film begins, she is reuniting with an old friend, a bookshop owner, and the two have a conversation that triggers her insecurity, setting her out on a series of perambulations that lead her to a fortuitous meeting with a famous actress (Kim Minhee), whose career has fallen by the wayside and who also has been desiring artistic fulfillment. All the Hong hallmarks are there—soju-soaked conversations, poison-barbed friendly quips, a seemingly loose structure that conceals a rigorous form—though this latest film harbors many surprises, leading to an almost transcendent conclusion that shifts the aesthetic format in a delightful, hopeful manner.

Jackass Forever

SUNDAY, JANUARY 1, 5:30 P.M.

Dir. Jeff Tremaine. 2022, 96 mins. DCP. With Johnny Knoxville, Steve-O, Chris Pontius, Dave England, Wee Man, Danger Ehren, Preston Lacy. Twenty years after the surprising box office success of *Jackass: The Movie*, and twelve years since the previous offering in the series, Tremaine, Knoxville, and his cackling stuntmen of stupidity reunite for more mayhem. Now pushing 50 and sporting a fully white mane, Knoxville is a mortal impresario, giving these death- and dignity-defying feats an added element—poignancy—which is only enhanced by the introduction of a younger, and

more notably diverse, crew of co-conspirators, some of whom were raised on Knoxville and Co.'s antics. The formula hasn't changed—florid Hollywood homages open and close the film, and in between are wall-to-wall stunts and pranks entirely untethered from a narrative thread—but the tone has warmed, such that the very endurance of these elaborate Three Stooges and Wile E. Coyote-style stunts reveals a story arc furnished by time and the documented image.

Benediction

FRIDAY, JANUARY 6, 6:30 P.M.

Dir. Terence Davies. 2021, 137 mins. DCP. With Jack Lowden, Peter Capaldi, Simon Russell Beale, Jeremy Irvine, Kate Phillips, Gemma Jones, Ben Daniels, Calam Lynch, Anton Lesser, Tom Blyth, Matthew Tennyson, Geraldine James. In this aching, unorthodox historical drama, the great British director Davies tells the story of the pacifist poet and veteran Siegfried Sassoon, whose experiences fighting in the first world war forever transformed him. Played exquisitely by Lowden and Capaldi in his younger and older incarnations, Sassoon functions as a veiled surrogate for Davies himself, a figure of rage, torment, and immense wit whose life and art come to represent so much about the social realities of twentieth-century British gay life. *Benediction* is an emotionally overwhelming requiem that unites Davies's singular talents for both Noel Coward-esque drawing-room repartee and a deeper, poetic depiction of trauma, shame, and the unending hope for salvation.

The Territory

FRIDAY, JANUARY 6, 7:00 P.M.

Dir. Alex Pritz. 2022, 83 mins. DCP. In Portuguese and Tupi with English subtitles. With invaders and speculating farmers seeing to take their land, and the Brazilian government looking the other way, the Indigenous Uru-eu-wau-wau people are forced to defend their own protected land in the Amazonian rainforest, and in so doing try to stave off global environmental devastation. Coproduced by the Uru-eu-wau-wau community, Alex Pritz's debut feature draws on intimate access to both the Indigenous perspective and the farmers who want their land, chronicling a conflict that has profound implications for the survival of a people and the planet. Partially shot by the Uru-eu-wau-wau people and filmed over the course of several years, *The Territory* is a marvel of collaborative filmmaking, offering not just multiple perspectives among subjects but among creators as well. Featuring extraordinary cinematography by Pritz and Alex and Tangãi Uru-eu-wau-wau, and a complex, propulsive score by Katya Mihailova. Winner of the Audience and Special Jury Awards for Documentary Craft at the 2022 Sundance Film Festival. A Nat Geo release.

Apollo 10 ½: A Space Age Childhood

SATURDAY, JANUARY 7, 1:00 P.M.

Dir. Richard Linklater. 2022, 98 mins. DCP. With Milo Coy, Jack Black, Glen Powell, Zachary Levi, Josh Wiggins, Lee Eddy, Bill Wise. One of the most underappreciated films of 2022 finds American cinema's deftest memory maker once again plumbing the depths of his own personal experience, in this case his recollections of growing up

in Houston at the height of America's space craze. Taking place in the feverish build up to the Apollo 11 moon landing in July 1969, *Apollo 10 ½* is a feature-length exercise in Proustian digression, deferring the central conceit of a young boy who imagines himself an astronaut on a secret mission in favor of a finely observed comic evocation of a white middle-class family's insulated suburban existence, where all the tumult and excitement of the late sixties counterculture is held at a safe remove within the irresistible square of the television screen. Perhaps the culmination of Linklater's experiments with rotoscoped animation, the film arguably surpasses both the surreal *Waking Life* and the nightmarish *A Scanner Darkly* in its level of detail and fluency of motion.

EO

SATURDAY, JANUARY 7, 1:30 P.M.

Dir. Jerzy Skolimowski. 2022, 88 mins. DCP. In Polish with English subtitles. Few filmmakers today are as youthful, exuberant, surprising, and experimental as Polish director Skolimowski—who just happens to be 84. The legendary filmmaker, whose films include such daring, singular works as *The Deep End*, *The Shout*, and *Moonlighting*, has created an arresting, funny, and tragic portrait of humanity in all its foibles, told from the perspective of a donkey. The animal's episodic journey begins at a circus, where EO is a mistreated performer, before extending across the Polish and Italian countryside as the creature encounters a constellation of troubled human beings. Fearlessly evoking one of the greatest movies ever made, Robert Bresson's *Au hasard Balthazar*, Skolimowski nevertheless has fashioned something wholly his own, a work of both cynicism and profound empathy captured in a dazzling array of styles.

Saint Omer

SATURDAY, JANUARY 7, 4:00 P.M.

Dir. Alice Diop. 2022, 122 mins. DCP. In French with English subtitles. With Kayije Kagame, Guslagie Malanga, Valérie Dréville, Aurélia Petit, Xavier Maly. The fiction feature debut by documentary filmmaker Diop (*We*) is an emotionally rich, thought-provoking courtroom drama that adapts the shocking true story of a young Senegalese immigrant named Laurence (Malanga) in northern France on trial for murdering her baby daughter. Having admitted to the killing, she nevertheless refuses to admit motivation and denies that she's to blame, saying she was affected by a curse. Attending the trial is Rama (Kagame), a journalist also of Senegalese descent who plans to write a book about Laurence, comparing her to Medea, and who is dealing with her own anxieties around becoming a mother. Multilayered and brilliantly acted, *Saint Omer* is both intensely psychological and observationally distant, a film about the impossibility of fully knowing another person and the estrangement of living in an adopted world.

Aftersun

SATURDAY, JANUARY 7, 6:30 P.M.

Dir. Charlotte Wells. 2022, 101 mins. DCP. With Paul Mescal, Frankie Corio, Celia Rowson-Hall. The acclaimed debut from Scottish filmmaker Wells stars Mescal and

Corio as a divorced dad and his daughter on holiday at a beach resort in Turkey. Though they enjoy each other's company and their relaxing down time together, there's an underlying current of melancholy to the proceedings that only gradually reveals itself as the days wear on. Wells takes an entirely new approach to the family memento movie, creating a kind of talisman into the past; it is based upon the filmmaker's own relationship with her father, and indeed the film feels like it coasts on the ebbs and flows of memory. Impressively acted by its two charismatic leads, *Aftersun* doesn't feel like any other movie—a tactile experience at once naturalistic and dreamlike, building to an overwhelming final passage.

Murina

SUNDAY, JANUARY 8, 1:00 P.M.

Dir. Antoneta Alamat Kusijanović. 2021, 92 mins. DCP. In Croatian with English subtitles. With Gracija Filipović, Leon Lučev, Danica Curcic, Cliff Curtis. Winner of the Camera d'Or (Best First Feature) at the 2021 Cannes Film Festival, *Murina* is a serrated-edge, sexually charged coming-of-age tale set in scenic coastal Croatia. Amidst clashes with her oppressive father and impassive mother, restless Julija seeks liberation from their isolated existence when a visit from an old family friend creates overlapping waves of greed, jealousy, desire, and rage. Executive produced by Martin Scorsese, the film features gorgeous camerawork by Hélène Louvart (*The Lost Daughter*, *Happy as Lazzaro*).

Petite Maman

SUNDAY, JANUARY 8, 1:00 P.M.

Dir. Celine Sciamma. 2021, 72 mins. DCP. In French with English subtitles. In her exquisitely crafted jewel of a film, *Portrait of a Lady on Fire* director Sciamma has fashioned an uncommonly perceptive, lightly metaphysical drama about memory, grief, coming-of-age, and the gifts passed between generations. After the passing of her beloved grandmother, eight-year-old Nelly (Joséphine Sanz) accompanies her mother back to her childhood home to sort through mementoes and pack things up. While there, the young girl meets a neighbor who's the same age and is strikingly familiar, an encounter that opens up a portal to a surprising world of emotional connection. Wondrous yet spare and economical, *Petite Maman* offers an unusual attention to details of sound and texture in its pursuit of a dreamlike domestic intimacy that transcends time itself.

All That Breathes

SUNDAY, JANUARY 8, 3:30 P.M.

Dir. Shaunak Sen. 2022, 94 mins. DCP. In Hindi with English subtitles. In New Delhi, one of the world's most populated cities, where cows, rats, monkeys, frogs, and hogs roam alongside people, brothers Nadeem and Saud care for injured kites—black birds of prey that drop daily from the city's smog-choked skies. As environmental toxicity and civil unrest escalate, the relationship between this family and the neglected, eco-essential kites forms a poetic chronicle of the city's collapsing ecology and deepening social fault lines. An unprecedented winner of both Sundance's Best World Feature

Documentary and the Cannes Golden Eye award, *All That Breathes* is the rare work of nonfiction that astounds for both its visual virtuosity and its observational ease around Nadeem and Saud, who've created a haven for themselves as well as their beloved birds.

Decision to Leave

SUNDAY, JANUARY 8, 6:00 P.M.

Dir. Park Chan-wook. 2022, 138 mins. DCP. In Korean with English subtitles. With Tang Wei, Park Hae-il. In his triumphant return to feature filmmaking, virtuoso Korean filmmaker Park (*Old Boy*, *The Handmaiden*) delivers a breathlessly involving thriller that doubles as a delightful romantic comedy. Meticulous homicide detective Hae-joon (Park) finds himself increasingly drawn to Seo-rae (Tang), the alluringly inscrutable Chinese wife of an average Korean salary man who has fallen to his death in a seemingly freak climbing accident. As the dogged policeman peels back one layer after another of an increasingly baroque mystery, *Decision to Leave* detours dizzyingly from *Basic Instinct* through *In the Mood for Love* on its way to *Vertigo*. Winner of the Best Director award at this year's Cannes Film Festival, Park's film is a sensually activating plunge into a well-wallpapered abyss of desire.

We're All Going to the World's Fair

SATURDAY, JANUARY 13, 7:25 P.M.

Dir. Jane Schoenbrun. 2021, 86 mins. DCP. With Anna Cobb, Michael J. Rogers. Schoenbrun's feature debut uses the textures and trappings of the horror genre to descend into a striking depiction of a particularly 21st-century loneliness. Anna Cobb holds the screen with tremulous force as Casey, a solitary teenager in a nondescript, wintry upstate suburb who seems to live most of her life on the internet. As she plays an elaborate online horror role-playing game, we watch her plunge into a surreal psychological landscape through webcams, amateur videos, and Skype chats; the line between fantasy and reality grows increasingly blurred when she begins to be contacted by a strange, equally isolated figure who's either longing for contact or toying with her. With its patient, unsettling long takes and almost otherworldly depiction of the complexities of human empathy, Schoenbrun's film brilliantly dramatizes the emotional drive toward dissociation and the hope for physical transcendence.

Marcel the Shell with Shoes On

SATURDAY, JANUARY 14, 1:00 P.M.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 15, 12:30 P.M.

Dir. Dean Fleischer Camp. 2022, 90 mins. With Jenny Slate, Rosa Salazar, Thomas Mann, Isabella Rossellini. Marcel is an adorable one-inch-tall shell who ekes out a colorful existence with his grandmother Connie and their pet lint, Alan. Once part of a sprawling community of shells, they now live alone as the sole survivors of a mysterious tragedy. But when a documentary filmmaker discovers them amongst the clutter of his Airbnb, the short film he posts online brings Marcel millions of passionate fans, as well as unprecedented dangers and a new hope at finding his long-lost family.

The feature film debut of a character created by Dean Fleischer Camp and Jenny Slate and previously featured in three award-winning stop-motion animated short films, *Marcel the Shell with Shoes On* plays so successfully as a documentary that you might catch yourself believing it's true, especially when notable figures turn up in the apartment. It also plays so well as giddy comedy that its stealth exploration of loss and heartbreak might just sneak up on you.

Both Sides of the Blade

SATURDAY, JANUARY 14, 3:00 P.M.

Dir. Claire Denis. 2022, 116 mins. DCP. In French with English subtitles. With Juliette Binoche, Vincent Lindon, Grégoire Colin, Bulle Ogier. In Denis's crepuscular Parisian melodrama, Binoche plays Sara, a radio host, living in tentative domestic bliss with her husband Jean (Lindon), a former rugby player shadowed by his past. Enter François (Colin), Jean's former business partner and Sara's former lover, whose sudden return to both their lives feels as deathly inevitable as that of a vampire. Denis has never made a film so sharply straight and to the point as this, her wintriest and weariest work, which finds its network of white Parisians collapsing upon itself in a cyclical dance of animal impulse and egoistic retribution. Ferociously filmed by the great French cinematographer Éric Gautier (*Irma Vep*, *Pola X*) in choppy, convulsive handheld sequences that suggest an unrepentant return to Denis's nineties roots, *Both Sides of the Blade* is a rugged, back-to-basics blues performance from a filmmaker who has nothing left to prove but an abundance yet to share.

Stars at Noon

SATURDAY, JANUARY 14, 6:00 P.M.

Dir. Claire Denis. 2022, 137 mins. DCP. With Margaret Qualley, Joe Alwyn, Benny Safdie, Danny Ramirez, John C. Reilly. Denis's distinctively Denisian take on the erotic political thriller stars Qualley as a marooned American journalist and Alwyn as the shifty English dealmaker with whom she becomes entangled in ethically unstable Nicaragua. Based on Denis Johnson's 1986 novel, *Stars at Noon* retains a seedy, sweaty '80s aesthetic yet is set in the present day—there's even a crucial sequence set in a roadside COVID testing tent—and the disorientation extends to a pervadingly fluid sense of history, politics, and identity throughout. Qualley dives headlong into a character whose brashness and sexual confidence disguise a deepening powerlessness, and Safdie turns up as if commuting directly from an episode of *Miami Vice*, a motormouth menace of doom.

No Bears

SUNDAY, JANUARY 15, 5:00 P.M.

Dir. Jafar Panahi. 2022, 107 mins. DCP. In Persian, Azerbaijani, and Turkish with English subtitles. In this thrillingly mercurial work, a city filmmaker—played by the director himself—has moved to a rural village to work remotely. His latest film concerns two lovers desperate to escape Iran and trying to secure fake passports. While overseeing the production, a pair of lovers in the small town find themselves under the intolerant, watchful eye of neighbors, and he becomes embroiled in a

controversy with strange parallels to his own fictional plot. A film that keeps reinventing itself, *No Bears* is the latest superb shapeshifter from the genius director Jafar Panahi, whose work has never been diminished despite being constantly persecuted by the Iranian authorities over the past decade. Earlier in 2022, Panahi was arrested yet again, this time for speaking out against a fellow artist's government censorship, but not before he finished this gripping and brilliant film, a testament to the humanity and endless curiosity of a great artist.

Armageddon Time

SATURDAY, JANUARY 21, 3:30 P.M.

Dir. James Gray. 2022, 115 mins. DCP. With Banks Repeta, Anne Hathaway, Jeremy Strong, Jaylin Webb, Anthony Hopkins. American cinema classicist Gray proves yet again his crucial place in the contemporary cinematic landscape with this profoundly felt, autobiographically inspired coming-of-age drama set in Queens circa 1980. The son of second-generation American Jews, eleven-year-old Paul Graff entertains fantasies of becoming an artist when he grows up, even if his parents don't find his dreams of the future practical. When he befriends Johnny, a Black fellow student at school picked upon by their racist teacher, his family's casual racism puts an even wider wedge between them, leading to a moment of blind moral failure. Shot by the great cinematographer Darius Khondji with the burnished glow of authentic memory, *Armageddon Time* deals honestly with privilege, cultural identity, American hypocrisy, antisemitism, and racism, while never once feeling like a social "issue" movie, speaking directly to the melancholy of our contemporary moment, while also recalling the legacies of the past.

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MUSEUM INFORMATION

Hours: Thurs, 2:00–6:00 p.m. Fri, 2:00–8:00 p.m. Sat–Sun, 12:00–6:00 p.m.

Museum Admission: \$20 adults, \$12 senior citizens (ages 65+) and students (ages 18+) with ID, \$10 youth (ages 3–17). Children under 3 and Museum members are admitted free. General admission is free every Thursday, 2:00–6:00 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.

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: movingimage.us/join-and-support/become-a-member or 718 777 6877

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