

MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

“MASSA’ GAZE”: DEPICTIONS OF SLAVERY IN FILM AND TELEVISION TO BE SUBJECT OF MUSEUM SYMPOSIUM

Rare screenings of Gordon Parks’s *Solomon Northup’s Odyssey* and Gillo Pontecorvo’s *Burn!* and discussions with critics, scholars, and filmmakers Sheril Antonio, Neema Barnette, Jelani Cobb, Stanley Crouch, Warrington Hudlin, Malcolm Lee, Shola Lynch, and Khalil Muhammad in person

Saturday, February 1, 1:00 to 8:30 p.m.

Astoria, New York, January 23, 2014—In response to the interest and discussion surrounding the recent releases of *12 Years a Slave* (2013) and *Django Unchained* (2012), Museum of the Moving Image will present **Massa’ Gaze: Screenings and Critical Discussions of the Depictions of Slavery in Film and Television**. The event, on Saturday, February 1, from 1:00 to 8:30 p.m., opens with a rare screening of *Solomon Northup’s Odyssey*, Gordon Parks’s 1984 film adaptation of Northup’s memoir (the same source material as *12 Years a Slave*), and closes with *Burn!*, Gillo Pontecorvo’s 1969 film about a Caribbean slave rebellion starring Marlon Brando.

In between the screenings will be two panel discussions: The first features scholars and critics Sheril Antonio (NYU Tisch School of the Arts), Jelani Cobb (University of Connecticut), Stanley Crouch (*New York Daily News*), and Khalil Muhammad (The Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, New York Public Library); the second features filmmakers Neema Barnette (*Woman Thou Art Loosed on the Seventh Day*), Malcolm Lee (*Best Man Holiday*), and Shola Lynch (*Free Angela Davis*).

Massa’ Gaze is conceived and curated by Warrington Hudlin, President of the Black Filmmaker Foundation (BFF) and Trustee of Museum of the Moving Image. Promotional partners include: American Black Film Festival (ABFF), Black Documentary Collective (BDC), Black Filmmaker Foundation (BFF), BK Nation.org, Medgar Evers College Film & Culture Series, NYU Tisch School of the Arts, The Eagle Academy for Young Men, Reelblack.com, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, Shadow and Act Blog, WBL5-FM Open Line talk radio show.

This program is presented as part of *Changing the Picture*, sponsored by Time Warner, Inc., an ongoing series exploring the work of film and television artists of color who

bring diverse voices to the screen.

Hudlin stated, “Until the releases of *12 Years a Slave* and *Django Unchained*, the subject of slavery has been largely absent from recent American film and television narratives. To mark the beginning of Black History Month, the Massa’ Gaze program will take a close look at the artistic treatment of slavery by the filmmakers who get to tell this story and the meanings of the stories they select to tell.”

Full schedule and descriptions for the Massa’ Gaze symposium are included below. Tickets for the full symposium are \$15 public / \$12 students with valid ID / \$9 Museum members. Advance tickets may be purchased online at movingimage.us or by phone at 718 777 6800.

SCHEDULE FOR “MASSA’ GAZE: SCREENINGS AND CRITICAL DISCUSSIONS OF THE DEPICTIONS OF SLAVERY IN FILM AND TELEVISION”

Saturday, February 1, 1:00 to 8:30 p.m.

1:00 p.m.

Screening: *Solomon Northup’s Odyssey*

Dir. Gordon Parks. 1984, 115 mins. Digital projection. With Avery Brooks, Rhetta Greene, Mason Adams. Almost 30 years before *12 Years a Slave*, the legendary photographer and filmmaker Gordon Parks directed this adaptation of Solomon Northup’s memoir about his life as a black man who is kidnapped and sold into slavery. At the time of its airing, Gene Siskel wrote, “I don’t believe *Roots* was any more powerful or better acted than *Solomon Northup’s Odyssey*.”

3:15 p.m.

Panel Discussion: “Which Story, What Story, and Whose Story Is Being Told?”

A distinguished panel of critics and historians will discuss the recent depiction of slavery in such high-profile works as *12 Years a Slave*, *Django Unchained*, and other films. Panelists include **Sheril Antonio**, Associate Dean, New York University Tisch School of the Arts; **Jelani Cobb**, Associate Professor of History, University of Connecticut; **Stanley Crouch**, columnist for the *New York Daily News*; and **Khalil Muhammad**, Director of The Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, New York Public Library. The panel will be moderated by **Warrington Hudlin**, President of the Black Filmmaker Foundation (BFF) and Trustee of Museum of the Moving Image.

5:00 p.m.

Panel Discussion: “Who Gets to Tell the Story? Why and Why Not?”

Prominent African-American filmmakers discuss the unique challenges they face in telling historically significant stories. Speakers include **Neema Barnette** (*Woman Thou Art Loosed on the Seventh Day*), **Malcolm Lee** (*Best Man Holiday*), and **Shola Lynch** (*Free Angela Davis*). The panel will be moderated by **Warrington Hudlin**,

President of the Black Filmmaker Foundation (BFF) and Trustee of Museum of the Moving Image.

6:30 p.m.

Screening: *Burn!*

Dir. Gillo Pontecorvo. 1969, 112 mins. Digital projection. With Marlon Brando, Evaristo Márquez, Norman Hill, Renato Salvatori. The professional mercenary Sir William Walker (Marlon Brando) instigates a slave revolt on the Caribbean island of Queimada in order to help improve the British sugar trade. Years later he is sent again to deal with the same rebels that he built up because they have seized too much power, threatening British sugar interests. This rarely screened film by the director of *The Battle of Algiers* features one of Marlon Brando's strongest performances.

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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 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, 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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