

MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE TO PRESENT SEVENTH EDITION OF 'FIRST LOOK,' FESTIVAL OF FORMALLY INVENTIVE NEW CINEMA

First Look to open with U.S. premiere of Blake Williams's 3-D film *PROTOTYPE*, and will include new boundary-breaking work by James Benning, Ken Jacobs, and an exciting array of emerging artists from around the world

January 5–15, 2018

Astoria, Queens, New York, December 4, 2017— Museum of the Moving Image will present the seventh edition of [*First Look*](#), its acclaimed festival of innovative new international cinema, from January 5 through 15, 2018. The Festival will include more than two dozen programs, featuring formally inventive new works that seek to redefine the art form while engaging in a wide range of subjects and styles. The festival, which was organized by Chief Curator David Schwartz and Associate Film Curator Eric Hynes, will open on Friday, January 5 with Toronto-based experimental filmmaker **Blake Williams's *PROTOTYPE***, a unique 3-D sci-fi–influenced film that immerses us in the aftermath of the devastating 1900 Galveston, Texas hurricane to fashion a haunting essay on technology, cinema, and the medium's future. Like *PROTOTYPE*, many other films in *First Look* invent their own hybrid forms, exploding and combining genres. The full lineup features films from Brazil, Canada, Croatia, France, Georgia, Germany, Indonesia, Lebanon, Norway, Palestine, Poland, Portugal, Syria, Thailand, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

“This is an exceptionally strong edition of *First Look*,” said Schwartz. “The films are at once remarkably assured yet boldly experimental. There is a sense of discovery to all of the works, whether they are by established masters or bold new talents.”

In addition to feature-length and short films, there are works in *First Look* that go beyond the traditional screen presentations, such as Daniel Cockburn's quasi-film lecture *All the Mistakes I've Made (Part 2)*; a new program of Radio Atlas short works comprised solely of audio recordings and projected subtitles; and even a work being produced during the Festival, an update of Wim Wenders's documentary *Room 666*—in which filmmakers talk about the state of the art form.

For the fourth year in a row, the Festival will continue its programming partnership with

FIDMarseille, the pioneering French cinema festival, with screenings during the second weekend of *First Look* featuring five films that premiered at FID, and with Festival Director Jean-Pierre Rehm appearing in person. This edition will also see the beginning of new partnerships. In conjunction with the University of Missouri's Jonathan B. Murray Center for Documentary Journalism, the Museum will present the New York premieres of four award-winning student shorts. And in an initiative that promises to take the festival even deeper into the realm of discovery, the Museum will host a work-in-progress screening of a film supported by and co-presented with Sundance Institute's Documentary Film Program.

For their assistance with First Look, the Museum wishes to thank the Consulate General of Brazil in New York, French Cultural Services of the French Embassy, New York; UnionDocs (New York); and the Polish Cultural Institute New York.

First Look 2018 Films:

All the Mistakes I've Made (Part 2) and The Argument (with annotations) (Dir. Daniel Cockburn. Canada/U.K. 2015–2017, approx. 90 mins.) Daniel Cockburn's exuberantly cerebral, filmically deconstructionist work defies easy categorization, and this program of new work is no exception, from a short that interrogates "things that mean other things before becoming a thing that means other things in itself," and a performance piece that juxtaposes two postmodern 1994 horror films, *John Carpenter's In the Mouth of Madness* and *Wes Craven's New Nightmare* to explore both the redemptive and destructive powers of storytelling. **U.S. premieres.**

Colo (Dir. Teresa Villaverde. Portugal. 2017, 136 mins) On the outskirts of Lisbon, in a well-outfitted apartment, a family is falling apart from the economic strain. An unemployed father spends his days on the roof gazing at the horizon which no longer offers him a future; the mother returns home exhausted from working double shifts; their adolescent daughter keeps her secrets to herself and wonders if there is enough money to pay her bus fare to school. And yet what at first seems like stasis is actually a trio going through seismic, relationship and identity-altering changes. **U.S. premiere.**

Communion (Dir. Anna Zamecka. Poland, 2016, 72 mins.) Living amid domestic instability and teenaged volatility, a sister and brother play out their lives on camera, by turns affectionate and in conflict, the camera's gaze both sober and tragicomic. Anna Zamecka's Cinema Eye Award-nominated debut is a quiet marvel, and a major new contribution to the storied history of Polish hybrid filmmaking. **New York premiere.**

The Exiled (Dir. Marcelo Novais Teles. Brazil/France/Ireland/Portugal, 2017, 95 mins.) Marcelo Novais Teles, a young Brazilian, moves to Paris to find work as an actor. Amidst the personal tumult and revelations, he makes home movies of the people and

events of his life—dinner parties, rehearsals, encounters with friends (including Mathieu Amalric, who serves as the film’s producer), late-night conversations, and journeys around the continent. *The Exiled* is a self-portrait that becomes a portrait of a generation.

First Sight: Award-winning shorts from the Jonathan B. Murray Center for Documentary Journalism at the Missouri School of Journalism

Jury award-winning student films from the Murray Center’s inaugural Stronger Than Fiction Film Festival. *Last of the Last Days* (Dir. Jordan Inman. 2017, 20 mins), *Send* (Dir. Alex Watkins. 2017, 31 mins), *Lost Paradise* (Dir. Marc Nemcik. 2017, 25 mins), *A Conversation Between Parents* (Dir. Adam Dietrich. 2017, 18 mins). **New York premieres.**

Ghost Hunting (Dir. Raed Andoni. France/Palestine/Qatar/Switzerland, 2017, 94 mins.) In Raed Andoni’s formally bold and psychologically rigorous gloss on the theater of the oppressed, former inmates of Jerusalem’s Al-Moskobiya interrogation center come together to construct a set and perform scripted scenes dramatizing their experiences of torture, dehumanizing and isolation, collaborating to wrest control of their individual traumas and efforts at recovery. **New York City premiere.**

Three Works by James Benning: *L. Cohen* (US, 2012, 48 mins.), *measuring change* (US, 2016, 60 mins.), *Readers* (US, 2017, 108 mins.)

James Benning has been making contemplative, structurally rigorous, drily humorous, and beautiful films for more than 40 years. Three of his latest works will have their New York premieres. *Readers* is composed of just four shots, in which the subjects read quietly to themselves; the film becomes a mirror for its viewers, who perform a parallel stillness. *Measuring change* hypnotically contemplates Robert Smithson’s colossal Utah land-sculpture *Spiral Jetty*, and the people who walk on and around its gargantuan coils. *L. Cohen* is a view of an Oregon farm field, observing the passing moon and a sunset, and incorporating a Leonard Cohen song. **New York premieres.**

Last Days in Shibati (Dir. Hendrick Dusollier. France, 2017, 60 mins.) Every few months for over a year, French documentary filmmaker Hendrick Dusollier visits the rapidly industrializing Chinese city of Chongqing to witness the gradual dismantling of its last standing pre-modern hutong. Rather than hide his own status as an interloping foreigner, Dusollier places it front and center to illuminate both the limits of his understanding and the personalities of the people he comes to know—people faced with the dissolution of their homes and an entire way of life. **U.S. premiere.**

Let the Summer Never Come Again (Dir. Alexandre Koberidze. Germany, 2017, 202 mins.) This simple love story and road movie is an astonishing work, filled with an endless sense of visual surprise that emerges through its daring ultra-low-resolution style. “This first film is quite striking in its propensity to create uninterrupted wonders

and charms, never ceasing to let elementary fiction be nourished with documentary realities gleaned while shooting,” wrote Jean-Pierre Rehm, director of the festival FIDMarseille, which awarded the film its grand prize. **North American premiere.**

The Lives of Therese (Dir. Sebastien Lifshitz. France, 2016, 55 mins.) Diagnosed with a terminal disease, iconic French feminist Thérèse Clerc asks director and friend Sebastien Lifshitz to document her final days. The result is a brave, ceaselessly curious document that alternates between Clerc and her family candidly reckoning with her vanishing present and joyously revisiting her journey from obscure housewife to one of the most influential activists of her time. **U.S. premiere.**

Marlina the Murderer in Four Acts (Dir. Mouly Surya. Indonesia/France/Malaysia/Thailand, 2017, 95 mins.) Mouly Surya’s visually stunning, tonally singular Indonesian western follows the recently widowed Marlina as she is visited by a violin-playing stranger and his posse of evil marauders, goes on the run with a very pregnant woman, carries around a sack containing a severed head, and plots her revenge. A KimStim/Icarus release. **New York premiere.**

Missing Episode and other episodes (Dir. Charlie Lyne. United Kingdom. Approx. 75 mins.) Filmmaker Charlie Lyne presents an evening of recent essay films that use popular television as a springboard for personal exploration and philosophical inquiry, headlined by Lyne’s latest, *Missing Episode* (2017, 30 mins. **North American premiere**), a one-take audio-visual poem in which artist Ross Sutherland revisits a twenty-year-old episode of the popular English soap opera *EastEnders* as a form of self-reckoning.

Playing Men (Dir. Matjaža Ivanišin. Croatia, 2017, 60 mins.) This seriously playful and unpredictable essay film takes us into a strictly male world, observing the games that men play. What starts as an inventory of manly activities and their ancient roots within remote corners of the Mediterranean soon becomes something brazenly unconventional, shamelessly comedic, and genuinely provocative. **New York premiere.**

PROTOTYPE (Dir. Blake Williams. Canada, 2017, 63 mins.) As a major storm strikes Texas in 1900, a mysterious televisual device is built and tested. Blake Williams’s experimental 3-D sci-fi film immerses us in the aftermath of the Galveston disaster to fashion a haunting treatise on technology, cinema, and the medium’s future. A Grasshopper Film release. **U.S. premiere. Opening Night Film.**

Radio Atlas: Intimacy and Distance (United Kingdom, 2017, approximately 60 mins.) Vanguard radio producer Eleanor McDowall returns with a new batch of subtitled audio documentaries, presented theatrically to subtly redefine both auditory and cinematic spaces. The program is comprised of pieces that speak to the power of

sound and voice to both bring us closer and articulate distance. **New York premiere.**

Railway Sleepers (Dir. Sompot Chidgasornpongse. Thailand, 2016, 102 mins.) Shot over eight years on every active line of the Thai railway system, Sompot Chidgasornpongse's transfixing debut seamlessly collapses footage to simulate a two-day, two-night journey through the landscape, and among a diversity of characters, sensations, and classes. A Grasshopper Film release. **New York premiere.**

ROOM H.264: Astoria, NY, January 2018 (Dirs. Jeff Reichert, Damon Smith, Eric Hynes. U.S.A., 2018, installation and 45-minute short) This film, to be shot, edited, finished, and screened all within the dates of the First Look festival, is an open-ended homage to Wim Wenders's documentary *Room 666*. As in Wenders's original, visiting filmmakers, alone with a camera in a hotel room, will answer the question "Is cinema a dead language, an art which is already in the process of decline?" The production process will be accompanied by a gallery installation featuring the raw footage to be used for the final film. **World premiere.**

Shelley Duvall Is Olive Oyl (Dir. Ken Jacobs. U.S.A., 2017, 23 mins.) This series of brief GIF-like animated sequences is a flickering and colorful 3-D study of New York City street life by the city's avant-garde master filmmaker Ken Jacobs. **World premiere.**

Taste of Cement (Dir. Ziad Kalthoum. Syria/Lebanon, 2017, 85 mins.) Ziad Kalthoum's award-winning, cinematically audacious documentary explores the days and nights of Syrian refugees employed as construction workers in post-Civil War Beirut. Laboring to erect a towering skyscraper by day, they spend their nights in curfew, relegated to the cavernous basement of the site, haunted by memories of a homeland left in ruins, hoping for a chance to rebuild. **New York premiere.**

Tinselwood (Dir. Marie Voignier. France, 2017, 82 mins.) Employing everything from re-enactments and interviews to sensuous photography, Marie Voignier immerses us into a tropical forest in Cameroon once coveted by both German and French colonial powers, where sorcerers perform votive rituals, lumberjacks work with chainsaws and trucks, and a mysterious enshrouded graveyard awaits. **International premiere.**

Tongue Cutters (Dir. Solveig Melkeraaen. Norway, 2017, 85 mins.) This exuberant and wildly entertaining coming-of-age film documents the journey of Ylva, a nine-year-old girl from Oslo, to her grandparents' northern Norwegian fishing village to learn the ancient art of codfish tongue cutting—the gateway task for children being trained as fisherpeople. Over the course of her trip, Ylva pals around with her friend Tobias, snips a whole lot of tongues, and by conquering some real fears, becomes the brave heroine of her own developing story. **U.S premiere.**

Va, Toto! (Dir. Pierre Creton. France, 2017, 94 mins.) Filmmaker and agricultural laborer Pierre Creton devises a work unlike any other, combining unadorned observational documentary with florid allegory, collaborative performance, first-person storytelling, and group portraiture. At the center is Toto, an adolescent wild boar found on a doorstep by Madeleine, an older woman who has adopted the beast as her last, and most beloved child. **New York premiere.**

Vazante (Dir. Daniela Thomas. Brazil/Portugal, 2017, 116 mins.) Forced to marry a slave trader and live on his decaying farmhouse in the Brazilian mountains, young Beatriz faces physical and emotional unrest beyond her years in this lyrical and nuanced historical mood piece from director Daniela Thomas. A Music Box Films release. **New York premiere.**

You Have No Idea How Much I Love You (Dir. Pawel Lozinski. Poland, 2016, 80 mins.) Polish filmmaker Pawel Lozinski's unwaveringly intimate work documents psychotherapeutic encounters between Hania and her mother Ewa. Focused on one face at a time, mining every expression for what lurks behind their words, Lozinski and his therapist conduit unearthen both trauma and enduring love, while underscoring the camera's power to both document and instigate. **U.S. premiere.**

Sundance Institute Work-In-Progress screening

An inaugural event co-presented with Sundance Institute's Documentary Film Program, featuring a special advance look at a feature-length artistic work currently in development.

Tickets and screening schedule

The full schedule will be posted online at movingimage.us/firstlook2018 by December 8. Tickets are \$15 (with discounts for seniors and students and free for Museum members at the Film Lover and MoMI Kids Premium levels and above). A Full Festival pass, good for admission to all First Look films, is available for \$45.

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Press contact: Tomoko Kawamoto, tkawamoto@movingimage.us / 718-777-6830
Preview coverage welcome. Press screeners are available for a selection of titles; additional press screenings to be announced.

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 stunning facility—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: Tuesday-Thursday, 10:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Friday, 10:30 to 8:00 p.m. Saturday-Sunday, 10:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Holiday Hours: Closed December 25. Open Tuesday, December 26, and Monday, January 1 (New Year's Day), 10:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m. Modified hours: Sunday, December 24 (Christmas Eve), 10:30 a.m.–3:00 p.m.; Sunday, December 31 (New Year's Eve), 10:30 a.m.–4:00 p.m.

Museum Admission: \$15 adults (18+); \$11 senior citizens (65+) and students (18+) with ID; \$7 youth (ages 3–17). Children under 3 and Museum members are admitted free. Admission to the galleries is free on Fridays, 4:00 to 8:00 p.m.

Film Screenings: Friday evenings, Saturdays and Sundays, and as scheduled. Unless otherwise noted, ticket are \$15 adults / \$11 Standard members, seniors and students / \$7 youth 3–17 / Free for members at the Film Lover and Kids Premium levels and above. (Tickets for New Releases are discounted for Museum members.) Advance purchase is available online. Ticket purchase may be applied toward same-day admission to the Museum's galleries.

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 Broadway.

Program Information: Telephone: 718 777 6888; Website: movingimage.us

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

Museum of the Moving Image is housed in a building owned by the City of New York and has received significant support from the following public agencies: New York City Department of Cultural Affairs; New York City Council; New York City Economic Development Corporation; New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo and the New York State Legislature; Institute of Museum and Library Services; National Endowment for the Humanities; National Endowment for the Arts; and Natural Heritage Trust (administered by the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation). For more information, please visit movingimage.us.