

MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE

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MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE ANNOUNCES CURATORS' CHOICE 2024 SCREENING SERIES, FEATURING FAVORITE FILMS OF THE PAST YEAR

Curators' Choice 2024: The First Batch runs December 1–31, with The Second Batch to follow in January 2025



Pictured: *No Other Land* (courtesy Cinetic) | [Press Gallery](#)

Astoria, New York, November 8, 2024 — Museum of the Moving Image today announced the lineup for its Curators' Choice series, an annual survey of favorite films of the year featuring a diversity of great cinema—and television—by MoMI curators. From December 1–31, the Museum will present Part I of the program, The First Batch, with Part II taking place in January 2025.

Curators' Choice 2024 kicks off on Dec. 1 with a quartet of acclaimed documentaries: Oksana Karpovych's *Intercepted*, *No Other Land* (Adra/Ballal/Abraham/Szor), *Black Box Diaries* (with Shiori Ito in person), and *Union* (with Brett Story and Stephen Maing in person), followed later in the month by formally inventive nonfiction works by Deborah Stratman (*Last Things*), Ben Russell (*Direct Action*), and Johan Grimonprez (*Soundtrack to a Coup d'Etat*) and two TV/streaming works by Lance Oppenheim, *Ren Faire* and *FX's Spermworld* (Dec. 8, with director in person). The series continues with art-house favorites and pop cultural hits such as Alice Rohrwacher's *La Chimera*, *Between the Temples* (Nathan Silver and Chris Wells in person Dec. 15), *I Saw the TV Glow* (Jane Schoenbrun in person Dec. 14), and Denis Villeneuve's *Dune Part Two*, to

be presented in 70mm (Dec. 26–29, and accompanied by *Dune*), as well as independent film releases and discoveries, including Lisandro Alonso’s *Eureka*, Bas Devos’s *Here*, Phạm Thiên Ân’s *Inside the Yellow Cocoon Shell, Good One* (India Donaldson in person Dec. 6), *Christmas Eve in Miller’s Point* (Tyler Taormina), and Kazik Radwanski’s *Matt and Mara*. Additional titles for The First Batch may be added.

Curators’ Choice 2024: The First Batch was programmed by Senior Curator of Film Eric Hynes and Associate Curator of Film Edo Choi, with contributions from Curator of Science and Technology Sonia Epstein, Associate Director of Special Programs Sarah Luciano, and Editorial Director Michael Koresky.

Find schedule below and online at movingimage.org/series/curators-choice-2024-the-first-batch/

SCHEDULE FOR CURATORS’ CHOICE 2024: THE FIRST BATCH, DEC. 1–31, 2024

All screenings take place in the Sumner M. Redstone Theater or Celeste and Armand Bartos Screen Room at Museum of the Moving Image, 36-01 35 Ave, Astoria, NY, 11106. Please confirm schedule online and purchase tickets in advance at movingimage.org.

Unless noted, screening format is DCP.

Intercepted

Sunday, December 1, 12:30 p.m.

Dir. Oksana Karpovych. 2024, 93 mins. Canada, France, Ukraine. In Russian and Ukrainian with English subtitles. Over the last two years of Russia’s war against Ukraine, Ukrainian intelligence services have intercepted thousands of personal phone calls Russian soldiers made from the battlefield to their families back home. Filmmaker Oksana Karpovych juxtaposes a sampling of these audio recordings with footage of her country in the aftermath of destruction—shot with cinematographer Christopher Nunn in 2023—offering a tension between the voices of marauding invaders and the shattered communities left in their wake. Also part of the series New Adventures in Nonfiction.

No Other Land

Sunday, December 1, 2:00 p.m.

Dirs. Basel Adra, Hamdan Ballal, Yuval Abraham, Rachel Szor. 2024, 95 mins. Palestine, Norway. In Arabic, English, and Hebrew with English subtitles. The year’s most urgent and devastating documentary is this major work of vérité, the result of a collaboration between a group of Palestinian and Israeli filmmakers and activists. They capture the Israeli military’s destruction of Masafer Yatta, an act that displaces lifelong Palestinian inhabitants for a military training ground. The film also portrays the friendship between activists Adra and Abraham. Winner of the Panorama Audience Award for Best Documentary Film at the 2024 Berlinale. Also part of the series Infinite Beauty: Muslim and MENASA Identity Onscreen.

Black Box Diaries

With director Shiori Itō in person

Sunday, December 1, 4:00 p.m.

Dir. Shiori Ito. 2024, 99 mins. Japan. In Japanese and English with English subtitles. In 2017, journalist Shiori Itō publicly accused a prominent media executive (and associate of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe) of rape, then weathered an often cruel and intolerant backlash. The book she published to detail her experience, *Black Box*, has been credited with sparking Japan's #MeToo movement. Using raw video diaries (shot on iPhone) and surreptitious audio recordings of police detectives and other officials, *Black Box Diaries* is a brave and generous act of both journalistic commitment and sacrificial self-exposure.

Union

With Stephen Maing and Brett Story in person

Sunday, December 1, 6:00 p.m.

Dirs. Stephen Maing, Brett Story. 2024, 104 mins. U.S. The documentary that Amazon likely wouldn't want you to see, this dynamic behind-the-scenes look at the efforts of Amazon warehouse workers in Staten Island is a master class in nonfiction narrative filmmaking from Brett Story (*The Hottest August*) and Stephen Maing (*Crime + Punishment*).

Good One

With India Donaldson in person

Friday, December 6, 7:15 p.m.

Dir. India Donaldson. 2024, 89 mins. U.S. With Lily Collias, James Le Gros, Danny McCarthy. In one of the year's most remarkable breakout performances, Lily Collias plays wise teenager Sam, who has been invited along with her divorced dad and his best friend on a weekend camping trip in upstate New York. Tensions rise among the three in unexpected ways, causing unhealed wounds to surface and subtle new fractures to erupt. Moving, unsettling, and ultimately empowering, Donaldson's film was a breakout of the 2024 Sundance Film Festival.

Soundtrack to a Coup d'Etat

Saturday, December 7, 2:00 p.m.

Dir. Johan Grimonprez. 2024, 150 mins. Belgium, France, Netherlands. French, English, Dutch, and Russian with English subtitles. This uniquely kinetic and percussive essay film reanimates a moment when African politics and American jazz collided. It begins in 1960 at the United Nations where the Global South ignites a political earthquake, jazz musicians Abbey Lincoln and Max Roach crash the Security Council, and Nikita Khrushchev bangs his shoe. The U.S. State Department swings into action, sending jazz ambassador Louis Armstrong to Congo to deflect attention from a CIA-backed coup and 1961 assassination of Congo's leader Patrice Lumumba. *Soundtrack to a Coup*

d'Etat is a timely interrogation of colonial history as well as a riveting, dynamically constructed evocation of the inseparability of music and historical movements.

Ren Faire

With Lance Oppenheim in person

Sunday, December 8, 2:00 p.m.

Dir. Lance Oppenheim. 2024, 172 mins. (3 episodes). U.S. For half a century, George Coulam, known to his employees as King George, has reigned with an iron fist over the Texas Renaissance Festival, the largest “faire” in the world. As he turns 86, he realizes it’s time to find a successor for his empire from his pool of longtime employees. Subject to the gaze of director Lance Oppenheim (*Some Kind of Heaven*), Coulam’s succession machinations are both baroquely theatrical and earthily candid. Since everyone in the troupe is a performer, there’s a collaborative synergy between their real lives and the documentary’s ripe stylizations, culminating in a Shakespearean—or Roy-esque—denouement that does not disappoint. Free with Museum admission. Also part of the series *New Adventures in Nonfiction*.

FX’s Spermworld

With Lance Oppenheim in person

Sunday, December 8, 5:30 p.m.

Dir. Lance Oppenheim. 2024. U.S. Lance Oppenheim introduces us to the new wild west of American fertility—unregulated encounters between freelance sperm donors and hopeful parents. From longtime serial donors to retired men looking to make themselves useful, and from parents who can’t afford or don’t trust fertility treatments to women who fail to qualify for such assistance, Oppenheim follows a spectrum of everyday people operating on a margin of society that’s entirely predicated on hope and production. *FX’s Spermworld* offers a moving, and ultimately universal exploration of our needs for connection, self-worth, and purpose. Also part of the series *New Adventures in Nonfiction*.

La Chimera

Friday, December 13, 6:45 p.m.

Dir. Alice Rohrwacher. 2023, 133 mins. Italy. In Italian with English subtitles. With Josh O’Connor, Carol Duarte, Vincenzo Nemolato, Alba Rohrwacher, Isabella Rossellini. Fueled by Rohrwacher’s singular energy and earthy detail, *La Chimera* is a contemporary fairy tale that unites past and present. A sexily rumped Josh O’Connor plays Arthur, a thief fresh out of prison who rejoins with his roving band of *tombaroli*, graverobbers who loot burial sites for their ancient jewels and precious objects.

Direct Action

Saturday, December 14, 4:00 p.m.

Dirs. Ben Russell, Guillaume Cailleau. 2024, 212 mins. France, Germany. In French, English, and Arabic with English subtitles. American experimental filmmaker Ben Russell and French artist Guillaume Cailleau collaborated on this epic experimental work, which

intricately details the processes of a French political eco-activist group. Set in the Notre-Dame-des-Landes commune in western France, where the collective plans and carries out its mission to disrupt and discourage corporations and state entities from building on and destroying land, *Direct Action* follows the minutiae and daily efforts leading to the protest of a reservoir development.

I Saw the TV Glow

With Jane Schoenbrun in person

Saturday, December 14, 6:00 p.m.

Dir. Jane Schoenbrun. 2024, 100 mins. U.S. With Justice Smith, Brigette Lundy-Paine, Ian Foreman, Helena Howard, Fred Durst, Danielle Deadwyler. In a mercurial, enormously moving performance, Justice Smith plays outsider teen Owen, who is forever transformed after a new friend at school (Brigette Lundy-Paine) introduces him to the late-night pleasures and pains of a mysterious TV series. Schoenbrun's follow-up to the visionary *We're All Going to the World's Fair* creates an eerily beautiful metaphorical evocation of the trans experience that speaks to the isolation and confusion of growing up and the ways in which popular culture and media both comfort and betray us as we try and figure out who we are.

Inside the Yellow Cocoon Shell

Sunday, December 15, 1:00 p.m.

Dir. Phạm Thiên Ân. 2023, 179 mins. Vietnam. In Vietnamese with English subtitles. With Lê Phong Vũ, Nguyễn Thị Trúc Quỳnh, Nguyễn Thịnh, Vũ Ngọc Mạnh. Winner of the Camera d'Or at the 2023 Cannes Film Festival, this remarkably accomplished debut from Vietnamese filmmaker Phạm Thiên Ân follows a young man who finds a five-year-old in his care. Returning to his rural hometown, he confronts his past, his longings, and his religious faith, all realized by the director in a series of inventive images and compositions that blur the lines between dream and reality—a remarkable cinematic experience.

Matt and Mara

Sunday, December 15, 4:30 p.m.

Dir. Kazik Radwanski. 2024, 80 mins. Canada. With Deragh Campbell, Matt Johnson, Mounir Al Shami. Reunited by chance, old flames Matt (Johnson), a well-known author, and Mara (Campbell), an ambivalently married poetry professor, rekindle their romance over a series of anxious, halting, tentative rendezvous. Radwanski imbues his latest study of early middle age diffidence with a fleeting sense of the aleatory and the unpredictable in human affairs that's buoyed by Johnson and Campbell's finely grained performances.

Between the Temples

With director Nathan Silver and screenwriter Chris Wells in person

Sunday, December 15, 6:00 p.m.

Dir. Nathan Silver. 2024, 111 mins. U.S. With Jason Schwartzman, Carol Kane, Dolly de Leon, Caroline Aaron, Robert Smigel, Madeline Weinstein, Matthew Shear. With a 1970s aesthetic and screwball comedy tone, *Between the Temples* is a sharply witty and heartwarming comic drama. Ben, a cantor (Jason Schwartzman) in a crisis of faith, finds his world turned upside down when his grade-school music teacher Carla (Carol Kane) re-enters his life as his new adult bat mitzvah student.

Last Things + Incident

With *Incident* director Bill Morrison in attendance

Friday, December 20, 7:00 p.m.

Last Things. Dir. Deborah Stratman. 2023, 50 mins. U.S. 35mm. One of American cinema's singular artists, Deborah Stratman creates multi-textured images of complex simplicity and historical narratives from untold, unexpected perspectives. *Last Things* is an uncannily beautiful work of scientific endeavor, imagining evolution and extinction from the point of view of the rocks and minerals that will remain on this earth way beyond us. Preceded by ***Incident*** (Dir. Bill Morrison, 2023, 30 mins). Through a composite montage of images from surveillance and security footage as well as police bodycams, *Incident* provides witness to the killing of Chicago barber Harith "Snoop" Augustus by local police, as well as to its immediate aftermath and consequences.

Christmas Eve in Miller's Point

December 21, 2:00 p.m. & 4:30 p.m.

December 22, 2:00 p.m. & 4:30 p.m.

Dir. Tyler Taormina. 2024, 106 mins. U.S. DCP. With Matilda Fleming, Maria Dizzia, Ben Shenkman, Francesca Scorsese, Elsie Fisher, Michael Cera. An iridescent Christmas bauble, at once comforting and melancholic. For his third feature, Tyler Taormina films a Christmas Eve get-together for the members of an eccentric Italian American family. As the night wears on and generational tensions arise, one of the teenagers sneaks out with her friend to claim the wintry suburb for her own.

***Dune: Part Two* (in 70mm)**

December 26–29

Dir. Denis Villeneuve. 2024, 166 mins. U.S. 70mm. With Timothée Chalamet, Zendaya, Rebecca Ferguson, Josh Brolin, Austin Butler, Florence Pugh, Dave Bautista, Christopher Walken. Continuing the hero's journey of Paul Atreides (Chalamet), as he and his mother, Lady Jessica (Ferguson), plot to secure their alliance with Arrakis's indigenous Fremen against the corrupt emperor and the rapacious Harkonnens, the spectacular and sleekly streamlined second part of Villeneuve's *Dune* surpasses its exposition-laden introductory chapter both visually and dramatically. Villeneuve renders Frank Herbert's epic sci-fi narrative with a sense of pictorial flow, scale, and expressionism reminiscent of the 1920s silent epics directed by Rex Ingram and Fritz Lang. Please note: *Dune* will screen on December 27 and 29 (in DCP), with a combo ticket for both films available.

Here

Friday, December 27, 7:00 p.m.

Dir. Bas Devos. 2023, 85 mins. Belgium. In Dutch, French, Romanian, and Mandarin with English subtitles. With Stefan Gota, Liyo Gong, Nanna Voss. Bas Devos's hushed, graceful portrait of an immigrant construction worker wandering gently through his final days in Brussels before returning to visit his mother in Romania is one of the most good-natured and moving films in recent years. His mundane yet touching preparations to leave town are interrupted when he makes the acquaintance of a woman named Shuxiu, a Belgian Chinese bryologist studying local moss. From such a simple set-up, Devos has constructed a profound film about human connection amidst the realities of our increasingly globalized world.

Eureka

Sunday, December 29, 5:00 p.m.

Dir. Lisandro Alonso. 2023, 147 mins. Argentina, France, Portugal. In English, Portuguese, and Lakota with English subtitles. With Viggo Mortensen, Chiara Mastroianni, Alaina Clifford, Sadie Lapointe, Viilbjørk Malling Agger, José María Yazpik. The great Argentinean filmmaker Lisandro Alonso (*Los muertos*, *Jauja*) has created a feverishly original triptych of stories that mix genre, defy space and time, and embrace existential exploration. The tales shift from a surreal western starring Viggo Mortensen, to a documentary-like depiction of an indigenous police-woman's patrol throughout her community in the Pine Ridge Reservation, to a mystical visit to the jungles of 1970s Brazil, where native workers are hired to pan for gold that will benefit their overseers.

About Museum of the Moving Image (movingimage.org)

Founded in 1985, MoMI celebrates the history, art, technology, and future of the moving image in all of its forms. Located in Astoria, New York, the Museum presents exhibitions; screenings; discussion programs featuring actors, directors, and creative leaders; and education programs. It houses the nation's most comprehensive collection of moving image artifacts and screens over 500 films annually. Its exhibitions—including the core exhibition *Behind the Screen* and *The Jim Henson Exhibition*—are noted for their integration of material objects, interactive experiences, and audiovisual presentations.

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[Press images](#)

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with the support of Governor Kathy Hochul 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.org.