

# MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## ALAN ALDA TO BE FIRST GUEST IN A NEW SERIES OF DISCUSSIONS, 'ICONIC CHARACTERS OF COMEDY,' PRESENTED WITH THE COMEDY HALL OF FAME

**Series focuses on how comedy and television changed the American consciousness**

**Tuesday, October 15, 2013**

Astoria, New York, October 2, 2013—As Captain Hawkeye Pierce on *M\*A\*S\*H* (1972–1983), Alan Alda created one of the most important and influential characters in television history. On Tuesday, October 15, at 7:00 p.m., Museum of the Moving Image and The Comedy Hall of Fame will present an evening with Alda to celebrate and examine the story and the legacy of his iconic creation and how it transformed the audience's experience of the Vietnam War. The discussion, "**The Rationalist: Alan Alda as Hawkeye Pierce in *M\*A\*S\*H***," presented with clips, will be moderated by Jeff Greenfield, television journalist and historian. This program is the inaugural event in a new series of high-profile personal appearances, *Iconic Characters of Comedy*, focused on the impact of comedy delivered through the medium of television on the consciousness of the American public.

In eleven years, Alan Alda starred in all 251 episodes of *M\*A\*S\*H*, 32 of which he directed, 19 of which he wrote. He won five Emmys and was nominated for 21. The character of Hawkeye, an army surgeon, was incorruptibly moral with a keen sense of the absurd and he had a talent for irony. His delivery was characterized by sharp wit and surgical timing. As a nation, the American public could not help but side with him as he smashed old stereotypes and perspectives that glorified war by forcing a generation to personalize the loss of life. The final episode, seen by more than 125 million Americans, was the most widely viewed TV episode in the nation's history.

"Hawkeye was the first anti-establishment character on television, and *M\*A\*S\*H* the first anti-war program," said Jeffrey Pancer, Director of The Comedy Hall of Fame. "Alan accomplished this through his fearless ability to redress and redefine the political, social, and moral issues of war, often through humor. As Hawkeye, he helped change the national conversation, and the American experience in the process. We are thrilled to partner with Museum of the Moving Image on the *Iconic Characters of Comedy* series and honored to be presenting Alan as the first guest."

"We are very pleased to be working with The Comedy Hall of Fame, which has a deep understanding of the cultural and historic significance of great comedy," said David Schwartz, Chief Curator of Museum of the Moving Image. "The best comedy brings audiences together in laughter, in order to reveal truths about the way we live, as individuals and as a society. The *Iconic Characters* series will look at this first-hand, bringing together an amazing group of comedians and commentators."

**Tickets for "The Rationalist: Alan Alda as Hawkeye Pierce in *M\*A\*S\*H*" are \$25 public / \$15 Museum members / Free for Silver Screen members and above.**

Tickets are available online at [movingimage.us](http://movingimage.us) or by phone at 718 777 6800.

Special thanks to Gary Podell for his support of *Iconic Characters of Comedy*.

### **About the series *Iconic Characters of Comedy***

Presented by Museum of the Moving Image and The Comedy Hall of Fame, this series of high-profile discussions will celebrate key comic performers and a specific character they played on television. The conversations will trace the comedic experience of the artist, the development of the character, and the social ramifications and influence these icons have had on changing American social mores. The series will pair artists with esteemed moderators, to create unforgettable and illuminating evenings.

**The Comedy Hall of Fame** (CHF) is comedy's first and only institution established exclusively to promote, preserve and celebrate comedy. CHF created and maintains the most comprehensive archive of oral histories featuring interviews with comedy's most defining artists, thought leaders and professionals in the field. The Comedy Hall of Fame Foundation curates educational programs for museum events, and created Laugh It Out Improv, an educational program that uses the power of comedy to teach communication skills in NYC Public schools. For more information, visit <http://comedyhalloffame.com/>.

**Museum of the Moving Image** ([movingimage.us](http://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.

### **Press contacts:**

Tomoko Kawamoto, Moving Image: [tkawamoto@movingimage.us](mailto:tkawamoto@movingimage.us) / 718 777 6830

Patrick Kowalczyk, PKPR: [Patrick@PKPR.com](mailto:Patrick@PKPR.com) / 212 627 8098

## **MUSEUM INFORMATION**

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.

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](http://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](http://movingimage.us).

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