MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE

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MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE TO SHOWCASE EXHIBITION OF 25 TOP INDEPENDENT VIDEO GAMES

Co-presented with IndieCade: International Festival of Independent Games

***Indie Essentials: 25 Must-Play Video Games* opens December 14, 2013**

PRESS PREVIEW: TUESDAY, DECEMBER 10, 11:00 A.M. TO 1:00 P.M.

Astoria, New York, (updated December 4, 2013)—Museum of the Moving Image and IndieCade the International Festival of Independent Games will present **Indie Essentials: 25 Must-Play Video Games**, an exhibition of more than two dozen games that represent the diversity and innovation of the "indie" video game scene. All games were created by individuals or small teams working independently of large studios and publishers. Visitors will be able to play all titles featured.

Games will include the **2013 IndieCade Festival award winners** presented alongside a selection of independent games that have had great impact on game design and culture in the last decade. Among the games are popular and groundbreaking titles such as *Minecraft* (2011) and *Braid* (2008), as well as underappreciated ones such as the web-based game *QWOP* (2008), and new discoveries *Gone Home* (2013) and *Quadrilateral Cowboy* (planned 2014).

Indie Essentials opens December 14, 2013 and will be on view through March 2, 2014, in the Museum's third-floor changing exhibitions gallery. The exhibition is organized by Jason Eppink, Museum of the Moving Image, Associate Curator of Digital Media; Aaron Isaksen, IndieCade East Chair; Matt Parker, IndieCade East Chair; Sam Roberts, IndieCade Festival Director; and Stephanie Barish, IndieCade CEO.

Games featured in *Indie Essentials* (* indicates 2013 IndieCade award winner)

Alien Hominid, 2002, PS2. Developer: The Behemoth (San Diego, CA, USA). A 2-D side-scrolling shooter, *Alien Hominid* is notable for its comic book visual aesthetic, arcade-style gameplay, difficult levels, and quirky sense of humor. The game's online success encouraged its creators to develop versions for game consoles.

Braid. 2008, PC. Developer: Jonathan Blow (San Francisco, USA). A critically acclaimed puzzle platformer, *Braid* features a painterly style and unique time-control

mechanics that address narrative themes of causality, desire, and regret.

Canabalt. 2009, iOS. Developer: Adam Saltsman and Daniel Baranowsky (Austin, TX, USA). *Canabalt* pioneered the endless runner genre, which uses procedural level generation to dynamically create a different level every play.

Dear Esther. 2007/2012, PC. Developer: The Chinese Room (Brighton, United Kingdom). *Dear Esther* applies the interactive conventions of a first person shooter to craft a non-linear narrative. The game's atmospheric visuals and haunting score composed by Jessica Curry immerse players in a lonely and isolated world.

Diner Dash. 2004, PC. Developer: Game Lab, published by PlayFirst (New York City, NY, USA). Credited with popularizing the time management genre in video games, *Diner Dash* places players in a fast-paced system where they must prioritize tasks to make as much money for the restaurant as possible.

Everyday Shooter. 2007, PS3. Developer: Jonathan Mak (Queasy Games) (Toronto, Canada). A traditional shooter placed in the context of a musical album, each level plays a new song that works in congress with the level's unique visual design, sound design, and puzzle mechanic. The result is an aesthetically cohesive experience, rooted in a conventional genre.

Flower. 2009, PS3. Developer: thatgamecompany (Santa Monica, CA, USA). The player controls the wind, guiding petals to bring life, color, and light to a dark and devastated landscape, in this meditative game. *Flower*'s vivid graphics, simple gameplay, and accessible controls made it popular among gamers and nongamers alike.

Gone Home*. 2013, PC. Developer: The Fullbright Company (Portland, OR, USA). In this interactive story, the player explores a domestic environment to slowly uncover the history of the family who lived there.

Kentucky Route Zero (**Act I and II**) *. 2013– , PC. Developer: Cardboard Computer (Chicago, IL, USA). *Kentucky Route Zero* is a magical realist adventure game about a secret highway in the caves beneath Kentucky. The game's evocative visual design, distinct setting, and original music appropriate the common point-and-click mechanic to expose characters' inner emotions.

Killer Queen Arcade*. 2012, arcade. Developer: Joshua DeBonis and Nikita Mikros (New York City, NY, USA). A ten-player real time strategy arcade game, fully realized with a large back-to-back custom arcade cabinet for up to five players on each team, *Killer Queen Arcade* creates a complex interplay between teamwork, offense, and defense.

Machinarium. 2009, PC. Developer: Amanita Design (Brno, Czech Republic). This point-and-click adventure game is notable for its dream logic and distinctive hand-drawn aesthetic. The player solves puzzles hidden in the game's visual design to advance the story.

Minecraft. 2011, PC. Developer: Mojang (Stockholm, Sweden). In the popular open world game *Minecraft*, players can explore and craft structures in a 3-D environment made of simple building blocks.

N. 2004, PC. Developer: Metanet Software (Toronto, Canada). A minimalist single-screen puzzle platformer, *N* has 500 notoriously difficult levels, where death is frequent and dramatic.

Passage. 2007, PC. Developer: Jason Rohrer (Potsdam, NY, USA). A five-minute game in which the player navigates a lifetime of obstacles and choices, *Passage* uses low-resolution graphics and audio to enhance its visual and mechanical metaphors, creating a deeply affecting and emotional experience.

The Path. 2009, PC. Developer: Tale of Tales (Ghent, Belgium). This atmospheric gothic horror story, based on Little Red Riding Hood, uses careful level design to misdirect and manipulate the player into violating the game's one instruction.

Porpentine's Twine Compilation*. 2012–2013, PC. Developer: Porpentine (Oakland, CA, USA). In this collection of experiments, statements, tricks, stories, and games, players explore the edges of poetry and interactivity.

Quadrilateral Cowboy*. (Releasing in 2014), PC. Developer: Blendo Games (Los Angeles, CA, USA). By manually typing code, players hack through security systems in a 1980s-era cyberpunk world.

QWOP. 2008, PC. Developer: Bennett Foddy (Oxford, United Kingdom). In this Flash game—notorious for its frustrating yet addictive gameplay—the leg muscles of a virtual athlete are mapped to individual keys that the player must carefully coordinate to move the character forward.

Slash Dash*. 2013, PC. Developer: Nevernaut Games (New York City, NY, USA). A strategic capture-the-flag game, in which two opposing pairs of players dual as ninjas, *Slash Dash* is part of the recent popular rebirth of local multiplayer games.

Spaceteam*. 2012, iOS. Developer: Henry Smith (Montreal, Canada). Focusing on shared physical space rather than virtual space, players work together as a team of

spaceship personnel, shouting nonsensical instructions to each other as they race to keep their ship from falling apart.

Spelunky. 2009/2013, PC. Developer: Mossmouth (San Francisco, CA, USA). A 2-D puzzle platformer set deep underground, *Spelunky* is notable for its randomly generated levels that make no two playthroughs the same.

Spin the Bottle: Bumpie's Party*. 2013, WiiU. Developer: KnapNok Games & Redgrim (Copenhagen, Denmark). A party game for two to eight players, *Spin the Bottle*'s creative use of the Wii platform and its controllers show how independent developers are creating innovative play experiences for gaming consoles.

Today I Die. 2009, PC. Developer: Daniel Benmergui (Buenos Aires, Argentina). *Today I Die* is an interactive poem in which the player must manipulate words, objects, and characters to save a drowning girl.

TowerFall*. 2013, PC. Developer: Matt Thorson (Vancouver, Canada). An archery combat platformer, *TowerFall* features easy-to-learn rules and high-energy action, where up-to-four players battle with bows and arrows.

World of Goo. 2008/2011, iOS. Developer: 2D Boy (San Francisco, CA, USA). *World of Goo*, an engaging physics-driven puzzle game where players manipulate squirming globs of goo, achieved widespread success on mobile devices because of its natural user interface.

In addition, the exhibition includes a tabletop game which won the 2013 IndieCade Impact Award:

Dog Eat Dog*. 2013. Developer: Liwanag Press (Oakland, CA, USA). In this roleplaying game about colonialism and its consequences, players explore systems of power and complicity as they dive into themes of occupation, resistance, and assimilation.

"The designers and developers of the games presented in *Indie Essentials* take daring creative risks to explore new forms and methods of play," said Jason Eppink, Museum of the Moving Image curator. "Independent games are a fountain of innovation and experimentation, advancing games as one of today's most dynamic and important cultural forms."

"The past decade of independent game development has enriched, grown, and deeply changed video games as culture and media," said Sam Roberts, IndieCade Festival Director. "In putting together this exhibition, we worked hard to identify games that influenced other developers—that lead to new developments in genre, mechanics, audience, and perception, and were integral to changing the landscape of play."

Access to *Indie Essentials: 25 Must-Play Video Games* is included with Museum admission (and free for Museum members). All games in the exhibition are free play.

Indie Essentials: 25 Must-Play Video Games is made possible in part by Tekserve.

Toward the end of the exhibition's run, the second annual **IndieCade East** will take place at the Museum on Feb. 14–16, 2014. This non-competitive East Coast event offers a lively weekend of games, talks, panels, and workshops celebrating independent games and the people who make and play them. The popular evening of freewheeling interactive game play for hundreds will also return. Ticket information and advance purchase options will be announced soon.

About IndieCade
Applauded as the "Sundance of the videogame industry", IndieCade supports independent game development globally through a series of international events highlighting the rich, diverse, artistic and culturally significant contributions of indie game developers. IndieCade's programs are designed to bring visibility to and facilitate the production of new works within the emerging independent game community. Annual events include IndieCade East, IndieCade's Game Showcase @ E3 and IndieCade Festival, the largest dedicated gathering of independent game creators in the nation. IndieCade was formed by Creative Media Collaborative, an alliance of industry producers and leaders founded in 2005. For more information, visit indiecade.com

Digital media at Museum of the Moving Image
As the first museum to include video games as part of the scope of the "moving image" and the first to appoint a full-time Curator of Digital Media in 1992, the Museum is considered a leading institution in the exhibition of digital media. Changing exhibitions focusing on this subject area have included *Hot Circuits: A Video Arcade* (1989), the first-ever exhibition at any museum devoted to video games ; *Interactions/Art and Technology* (2004), presented in conjunction with Ars Electronica (Linz, Austria); and *Real Virtuality* (2011), six experiments in art and technology. The Museum has regularly exhibited video games in its core exhibition, *Behind the Screen*, and most recently presented *Spacewar! Video Games Blast Off*, an exhibition exploring the first 50 years of video games.

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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 closed December 24 and December 25; and open 10:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Monday, December 23; Monday, December 30; Tuesday, December 31; and Wednesday, January 1 (New Year's Day).
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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