

American Museum Of The Moving Image (AMMI)

Astoria, New York



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Housed in a landmark three-story loft building adjacent to the Astoria motion pictures studio complex, the American Museum of the Moving Image is both an archive-repository and a learning center for movie and video history where exhibits are designed to encourage hands-on exploration.

Program flexibility requirements and a limited budget determined the primary aesthetic and construction phasing. The permanent ground-floor intervention includes a flexible exhibition gallery, a state-of-the-art 200-seat movie theater, a bookstore/museum shop, a lobby and a café. The second floor houses administrative offices, a multi-use exhibition loft, and the Tut's Fever Movie Palace. Designed by artist Red Grooms as an interpretation of Egyptian-style movie theaters of the twenties and thirties, Tut's theater adds an engaging dynamic to the exhibition loft. The roof will accommodate a prefabricated metal pavilion, providing exhibition and entertainment space.

The architects placed a new monumental stair and elevator tower on-axis with the main entrance to the building, so that it extends from the original courtyard facade as a counterpoint to its gridded solid-void frame.

The stair acts as the iconic object of the design and the orientation element for the entire complex. The landings provide visitors with an alternative exhibition experience, giving them the opportunity to reorient themselves before reentering through the facade of the original building, creating a sense of anticipation and reengagement. In the final phase, the courtyard will be developed as an outdoor movie theater and exhibition space to hold larger-scale installations.

1 Detail of main entry

2 Stair tower from courtyard

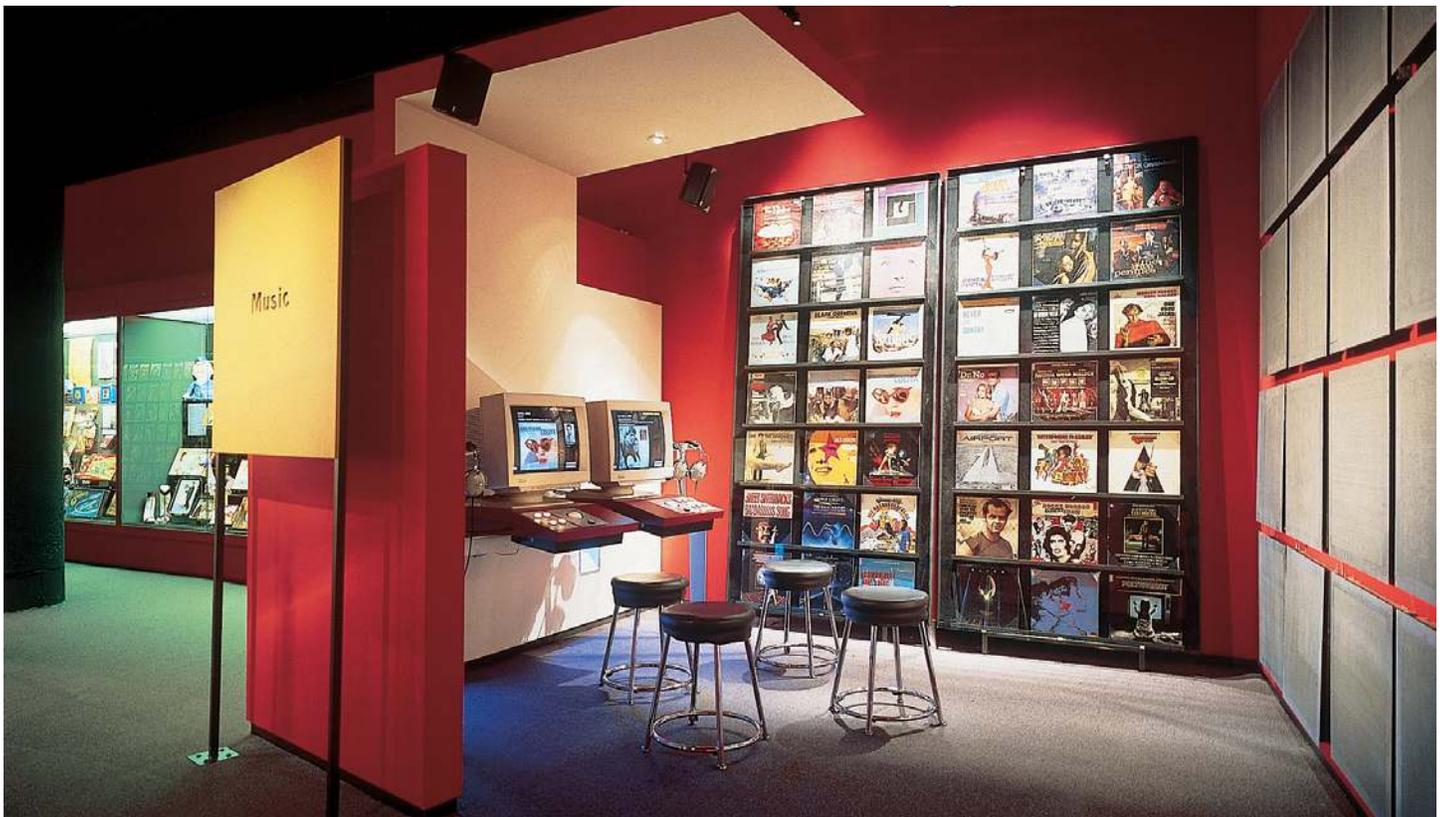
3 Museum shop from lobby

4 Typical Exhibition Gallery on Second Level

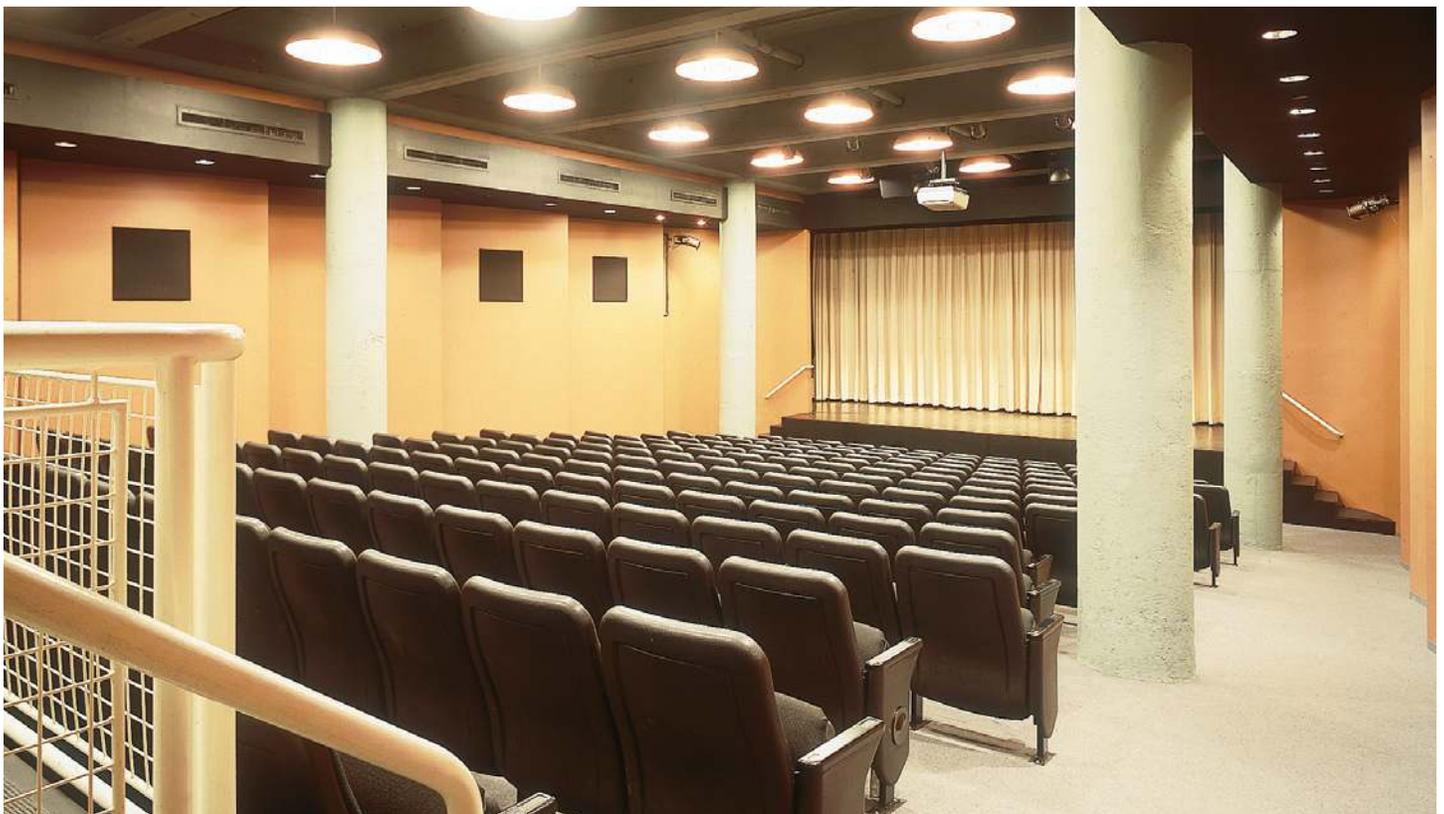


Stair tower from courtyard

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Permanent exhibition gallery "Soundtrack Jukebox"



200 Seat Movie Theater

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Key Project Information

flexible and multi-programmable interior
lobby and reception area
penthouse exhibition space
library
museum store
café
flexible exhibition space
200-seat movie theater
sound stage
orientation theater
administrative and curatorial offices
courtyard theater

| | |
|-----------|--------|
| completed | 1988 |
| gsf | 55,000 |

“The architects responded to the programmatic needs with great intelligence. They were particularly sensitive to the limited budget within which the Museum had to work. With respect to their capacity to bring the job in on time and within budget I have nothing but admiration. [...] The final outcome is a Museum which has received worldwide recognition for its aesthetic distinction and is, at the same time, a place where I and my colleagues are able to function professionally in an environment which is not only pleasing but appropriate to the activities which we must perform.”

Rochelle Slovin, Director



Typical exhibition gallery on second level



Koolhaas Haass Partners' "Tuts Fever Movie Theater Palace"