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Title: Explore the Magic of Cinema at Chelsea District Library!

Venture backstage into the golden age of Hollywood at Chelsea District Library's nationally touring exhibition, *Backstage Hollywood:The Photographs of Bob Willoughby*. Each fall CDL hosts an art exhibition to fulfill its mission to engage and inspire the community. *Backstage Hollywood* dramatically shares the history and stories of film and photography. Director Lori Coryell reflects, "the films included in the exhibition unlock memories of an era when we eagerly awaited new movie releases and dinner conversations centered around the marvels found on the silver screen." Widely recognized as a pioneer of photography in the twentieth century, Willoughby was the first outside photographer invited by studios to take photos on film sets.

Willoughby's career took off in 1954 when *Life* magazine published a feature with over a dozen of his candid photographs of Judy Garland working on set. Since then, his photographs have become instantly recognizable, featuring naturalistic images of actors and directors in intimate moments of vulnerability.

Backstage Hollywood opens September 8 and runs through October 20. The exhibition features photographs from the sets of 17 iconic Hollywood films, including Audrey Hepburn in *My Fair Lady*, Alfred Hitchcock on the set of *Marnie*, Mia Farrow in *Rosemary's Baby*, and Marilyn Monroe in *Let's Make Love*. Willoughby developed friendships with some of his subjects, including Audrey Hepburn. When speaking of meeting Hepburn, he recalls "She took my hand like . . . well a princess, and dazzled me with that smile that God designed to melt mortal men's hearts."

Awarded the Lucie Award for Outstanding Achievement in Still Photography in New York in 2004, Willoughby's photographs are in the permanent collections across the US and Europe. The magazine *Popular Photography* has called him "the man who virtually invented the photojournalistic motion picture still." Responding to the many logistical challenges of working on film sets, he was a technological innovator, creating the silent blimp for 35mm still cameras so that he could photograph silently on set, capturing intimate moments of the stars.

In many ways, Willoughby's spontaneous approach set the standard of celebrity

portraits as we think of them today, casting the candid eye of his camera across the most famous faces to fill them with renewed vitality. *Backstage Hollywood* will captivate visitors as they learn about the impact this photographer had in developing the genre of celebrity portraiture.

About Us: Chelsea District Library (CDL) is a not-for-profit organization whose mission is to engage, inspire, and equip through evolving services and resources. CDL currently serves 16,126 residents in the Chelsea library district—City of Chelsea, Lyndon and Sylvan Townships, and the portions of Lima and Dexter Townships within the Chelsea School District. For more information visit chelseadistrictlibrary.org.

About ExhibitsUSA
This exhibition is toured by ExhibitsUSA, the national touring exhibition program of Mid-America Arts Alliance. ExhibitsUSA sends more than 25 exhibitions on tour to over 100 small- and mid-sized communities every year. These exhibitions create access to an array of arts and humanities experiences, nurture the understanding of diverse cultures and art forms, and expand the depth and breadth of cultural life in local communities, rural and urban. For more about ExhibitsUSA, email MoreArt@maaa.org or visit www.eusa.org.

About Mid-America Arts Alliance
Mid-America Arts Alliance (M-AAA) strengthens and supports artists, cultural organizations, and communities throughout Arkansas, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Texas, and beyond. To learn more about M-AAA grants, programs, exhibitions, and fellowships, visit www.maaa.org.#