In this three-week series, Ann Hornaday, Washington Post film critic, and Deborah Sorensen, assistant curator at the National Building Museum, introduce films featuring the parking garage as a location in 1970s action films and thrillers, as well as a space of unsettling encounters in contemporary short films and dance.

February 3, 6:30 – 9:00 pm
THE DRIVER
Directed by Walter J. Hill (1978, R, 91 minutes)
Getaway driver Ryan O’Neal stars opposite Bruce Dern as a cop determined to catch his “cowboy.”

CAR
 Choreographer Kate Watson-Wallace (2008, 30 minutes)
Complete dance performed at the 2008 Philadelphia Live Arts Festival. Courtesy Kate Watson-Wallace.

February 10, 6:30 – 9:00 pm
SCORPIO
Directed by Michael Winner (1973, PG, 114 minutes)
This cat-and-mouse thriller pits CIA agent Burt Lancaster against Scorpio, a young assassin played by Alain Delon.

SOMETHING TO LOVE
Jesper Just (2008, 6 minutes)
Witness a mysterious encounter between a chauffeur and his charge. Courtesy of the Perry Rubenstein Gallery, New York.

February 17, 6:30 pm – 9:00 pm
ALL THE PRESIDENT’S MEN
Directed by Alan J. Pakula (1976, PG, 138 minutes)
Robert Redford meets with “Deep Throat” in one of the most well-known garage scenes of all time.

ODYSSEUS IN ITHACA
Peter Rose (2006, 5 minutes)
Video art originally commissioned by the Philadelphia Museum of Art. Courtesy of Peter Rose.
Guys, Guns & Garages in 1970s Film

February 2010
National Building Museum

As shown in House of Cars: Innovation and the Parking Garage, the parking garage emerged in the 20th century as a unique building type, built for maximum efficiency and only temporary human occupancy. As the number of drivers grew, so did the need to house their vehicles. And as more garages were built, their form was refined according to public tastes and municipal needs. The resulting shift from long-term, attendant-parked, automobile storage to hourly self-parking transformed the public garage both physically and socially—and led to a mid-century landscape of open-deck garages within which an anonymous caravan parked each day.

While garages may signal urban development success to city planners, their visually compelling (but geographically generic) qualities have inspired filmmakers to relocate scenes that might otherwise have taken place in back alleys, shadowy nightclubs, or among the faceless crowds of train stations and hotel lobbies. As a complement to House of Cars, the Museum investigates the parking garage as a location in action films and thrillers of the 1970s, as well as a space of unsettling encounters in contemporary short films and performances.

Features
- The Driver (Walter J. Hill, 1978, R, 91 min.)
- Scorpio (Michael Winner, 1973, PG, 114 min.)
- All the President’s Men (Alan J. Pakula, 1976, PG, 138 min.)

Shorts
- CAR (Short - Choreographer Kate Watson-Wallace, 2008, NR, 30 min.)
- Something to Love (Short – Jesper Just, 2005, NR, 8 min.)
- Odysseus in Ithaca (Short – Peter Rose, 2006, NR, 5 min.)

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