

\$6.95 / November 2024

BOXOFFICE[®] PRO



RECLINERS ON A RISER™

Put the **R.O.A.R.™** and Profits in Your Theaters™



FEATURES:

- Seat Comfort/Height - Best In Class
- Patented
- Smart Power-2™ 36-Recliners with Heat on 20 amp 120 VAC
- 2-Motor Option
- Fast and Low-Cost Stadium Renovation
- Metal & Matrix™ Construction Throughout
- Smart Clean Sweep™
 - Fastest Room Cleaning: Open all used chairs with the push of a button
 - Bright Under Seat Cleaning Lights

FACTORY BUILT KNEE WALL SYSTEMS
Save Cost - Reduced Theater Down Time



Telescopic Seating Systems  **Innovations That Move You™**

Contact us at 855-713-0118 or info@telescopicseatingsystems.com • TelescopicSeatingSystems.com

Protected by Various Awarded US Awarded Patents and Pending Patent Applications | See telescopicseatingsystems.com/patents

Protected by Awarded Patents and Pending Applications in China, United Kingdom, Italy, France, Germany, Spain, etc.

November 2024

CONTENTS

16

Remembering George Rouman
Personal Recollections from Colleagues of the Late Industry Leader

26

A Family Tradition
B&B Theatres Celebrates its Centennial Anniversary

32

Veteran Leadership
Marcus Theatres President Mark Gramz Honored with Salah M. Hassanein Award

36

Giving Back
Paramount's Melanie Valera Is 2024's Al Shapiro Distinguished Service Award Winner

54

Premium Formats
Omdia's Charlotte Jones on the Expansion of PLF

60

Specialty Audiences
The 2024 Art House Convergence National Audience Survey Shows Audiences Still Flock to Independent Cinemas

66

Collectible Obsession
The Rising Popularity of Concessions Merchandise

INDUSTRY

- 10 Charity Spotlight**
Industry Charity Events and Calendar
- 12 Trade Talk**
News and Notes From the World of Theatrical Exhibition
- 16 Remembering George Rouman**
Personal Recollections From Colleagues of the Late Industry Leader
- 18 Indie Focus**
Silents Synced: Contemporary Soundtracks Reintroduce Silent Classics

SHOWEAST

- 26 A Family Tradition**
B&B Theatres Celebrates its Centennial Anniversary
- 32 Veteran Leadership**
Marcus Theatres President Mark Gramz Honored with Salah M. Hassanein Award
- 36 Giving Back**
Paramount's Melanie Valera Is 2024's Al Shapiro Distinguished Service Award Winner
- 40 LatAm Exhibitor of the Year**
Cinesystem Cinemas Honored at ShowEast
- 42 NAC Icon Award**
Malco Theatres' Larry Etter Receives NAC Icon Award
- 44 NAC Icon**
Award Malco Theatres' Larry Etter Receives NAC Icon Award
- 50 Coca-Cola Empowerment Award**
Christina Blumer Receives ShowEast Coca-Cola Empowerment Award

THEATER

- 54 Premium Formats**
Omdia's Charlotte Jones on the Expansion of PLF
- 60 Specialty Audiences**
The 2024 Art House Convergence National Audience Survey Shows Audiences Still Flock to Independent Cinemas
- 66 Collectible Obsession**
The Rising Popularity of Concessions Merchandise

ON SCREEN

- 74 Reconciliation Road**
Filmmaker Jesse Eisenberg on His Bittersweet Buddy Comedy, *A Real Pain*
- 80 Life's a (Night)Bitch**
Marielle Heller Directs the Date Movie of 2024
- 86 Event Cinema Calendar**
- 88 Booking Guide**



"Collectible movie merch offers a tangible connection to the moment a guest sees a favorite film, especially when a specific item achieves viral status."
Collectible Obsession, p. 66



MOVING IMAGE TECHNOLOGIES



Where Every Voice Finds Volume,
Amplifiers and Accessibility Unite!



MIT ACCESSIBILITY SOLUTIONS

Enhanced Engagement: Encouraging broader participation and enjoyment, fostering a sense of community within the cinema.

Closed Captioning: Real-time transmission of captions to a user friendly LED display, enhancing accessibility for the hearing impaired.

Infrared Technology: Seamless transmission of descriptive narrative and movie soundtrack for visually and hearing impaired patrons.



CINEMA DIGITAL SERIES

NEW Cinema Line! LEA CDS models accept AES67 directly from Dolby CP950 & IMS3000 delivering seamless 5.1, 7.1 & Atmos compatibility.

Peace of Mind Warranty: A six-year warranty ensures long-term reliability and customer satisfaction.

Advanced DSP Capabilities: Cutting-edge digital signal processing (DSP) technology, offers precise control enabling fine-tuning of cinema systems.



Visit MiT at ShowEast 2024

BOXOFFICE PRO

PRESIDENT

Stan Ruszkowski

SVP CONTENT STRATEGY & EDITORIAL DIRECTOR

Daniel Loria

VP ADVERTISING

Patricia Martin

DEPUTY EDITOR

Rebecca Pahle

CREATIVE DIRECTION

Olivier Robert

COPY EDITOR

Heidi Bollich

STAFF WRITER

Chad Kennerk

CONTRIBUTORS

Charlotte Jones

ADVERTISING

Patricia Martin
63 Copps Hill Road
Ridgefield, CT USA 06877
patricia.martin@boxoffice.com

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Boxoffice Pro
P.O. Box 215
Congers, NY 10920
833-435-8093 (Toll-Free)
845-450-5212 (Local)
boxoffice@cambeywest.com

CORPORATE

Box Office Media LLC
63 Copps Hill Road
Ridgefield, CT USA 06877
corporate@boxoffice.com

Boxoffice Pro has served as the official publication of the National Association of Theatre Owners (NATO) since 2007. As part of this partnership, Boxoffice Pro is proud to feature exclusive columns from NATO while retaining full editorial freedom throughout its pages. As such, the views expressed in Boxoffice Pro reflect neither a stance nor an endorsement from the National Association of Theatre Owners.

Due to Covid-19, Boxoffice Pro will be adjusting its publishing schedule. For any further questions or updates regarding your subscription, please do not hesitate to contact our customer service department at boxoffice@cambeywest.com.

ANGEL STUDIOS

Angel Studios is home to record-shattering cinema that amplifies light. A distribution studio with impactful, top-grossing films for all ages, Angel is the industry leader in crowdfunding films and makes waves with strategically utilized theatrical marketing budgets, made possible by our patent-pending Pay it Forward technology. Angel Guild audience members greenlight each production, building in box office success. Fans worldwide enjoy our award-winning, viewer-supported, meaningful storytelling designed to inspire, uplift, and unite.

ON THE COVER: See Neal McDonough as Ian Ross in *Homestead*, in theaters December 20, alongside Bailey Chase as Jeff Eriksson, Olivia Sanabia as Claire Ross, and Dawn Olivieri as Jenna Ross.

Statement of Ownership, Management and Circulation (All Periodicals Publications Except Requester Publications)

1. Title of Publication: BOXOFFICE PRO
2. Publication Number: 62260
3. Filing Date: 09/16/2024
4. Issue Frequency: Irregular
5. Number of Issues Published Annually: 8
6. Annual Subscription Price: \$75
7. Complete Mailing Address of Known Office of Publication (Not printer): 63 Copps Hill Road, Ridgefield CT 06877
8. Complete Mailing Address of Headquarters or General Business Office of Publisher (Not Printer): 63 Copps Hill Road, Ridgefield CT 06877
9. Full Names and Complete Mailing Addresses of Publisher, Editor and Managing Editor
Publisher: Julien Marcel, CEO, Box Office Media LLC, 63 Copps Road, Ridgefield, CT 06877; Editor: Daniel Loria, SVP Content Strategy, Box Office Media LLC, 63 Copps Road, Ridgefield, CT 06877; Managing Editor: Rebecca Pahle, Deputy Manager, Box Office Media LLC, 63 Copps Road, Ridgefield, CT 06877
10. Owner (If the publication is owned by a corporation, give the name and address of the corporation immediately followed by the names and addresses of all stockholders owning or holding 1 Percent or more of the total amount of stock. If not owned by a corporation, give the names and addresses of all the individual owners. If owned by a partnership or other unincorporated firm, give its name and address as well as those of each individual owner. If the publication is published by a nonprofit organization, give its name and address.):
Box Office Media LLC, 63 Copps Road, Ridgefield, CT 06877; Julien Marcel, Box Office Media LLC, 63 Copps Hill Road, Ridgefield CT 06877 11.
Known Bondholders, Mortgagees and Other Security Holders Owning or Holding 1 Percent or more of Total Amount of Bonds, Mortgages, or Other Securities: None
12. The purpose, function, and nonprofit status of this organization and the exempt status for federal income tax purposes: Has Not changed During Preceding 12 Months
13. Publication Title: BOXOFFICE PRO
14. Issue Date for Circulation Data Below: 11/1/2023
15. Extent and Nature of Circulation

Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months
No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to filing Date

a. Total Number of Copies (Net press run)		
b. Paid and/or Requested Circulation		
1. Mailed Outside-County Paid		
Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3541 (Include paid distribution above nominal rate, advertiser's proof copies, and exchange copies)	2,168	1,858
c. Total Paid Distribution	2,168	1,858
d. Free or Nominal Rate Distribution (By Mail and Outside the Mail)		
1. Free or Nominal Rate Outside-County. Copies Included on PS Form 3541	724	442
e. Total Free or Nominal Rate Distribution	724	442
f. Total Distribution (Sum of 15c. and 15e.)	2892	2300
g. Copies not Distributed		
h. Total (Sum of 15f. and g.)	2892	2300
i. Percent Paid (15c. Divided by 15f. Times 100)	74.97%	80.78%

16. Signature and Title of Editor, Publisher, Business Manager, or Owner

Julien Marcel, CEO 10/01/2024

EXECUTIVE LETTER

A STRONG FINISH

➔ We're expecting a strong finish to the year. After enduring some difficult months, exhibitors are looking ahead to a dynamic Q4. Momentum is on the upswing, and a slate of diverse and compelling titles awaits audiences in the coming months. As we navigate through a period of significant change and innovation within our industry, we are thrilled to bring you another collection of insightful stories that celebrate the past, present, and future of the movie theater business.

Leading our issue this month is a heartfelt tribute to George Rouman, a revered figure in our industry who tragically passed away earlier this year. This remembrance compiles personal messages and memories from some of the executives who had the privilege of working alongside him, painting a picture of a man whose legacy will continue to inspire and shape our industry. September in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, with George has been a constant throughout my career here at BOXOFFICE PRO, as we've served as the event's official media partner since he and John Scaletta relaunched the event. It is hard to believe that I won't be spending that time with him anymore. Reading the submissions we received for the story reminded me how his passing affected so many of us across the industry on a deeply personal level.

Despite not having our traditional section on the Geneva Convention, we still have ample event coverage of ShowEast

2024—taking place, once again, in Miami, Florida, in late October. We have some great interviews lined up with several of the honorees, including a conversation with Marcus Theatres' Mark Gramz on his storied career in the industry. The centerpiece of our interview section is a feature on the centennial anniversary of B&B Theatres. I can confidently say that the story, which I wrote over a span of a week in early September, is among my favorite pieces that I've authored for this magazine.

In our theater section this month you'll find two feature stories on some of the hottest industry trends of the year. Rebecca Pahle's report on concessions merchandising offers unique insights into how snack sales are being complemented with movie tie-in products at cinemas across the nation. On the tech side, Charlotte Jones brings us her latest update on the premium large format sector, with a global outlook on the latest innovations and developments in the space. The report sheds light on the increasing popularity and significance of PLF for attracting moviegoers who seek an unparalleled cinema experience.

As always, we hope you enjoy our magazine, and we look forward to seeing you in person at one of the industry events this fall and winter. ■

DANIEL LORIA
SVP Content Strategy and Editorial Director,
BOXOFFICE PRO

THE FEATURES YOU NEED THE OPTIONS YOU WANT THE COMPANY YOU TRUST

When it comes to concessions,
it comes from Cretors.

SINCE 1885



We invented the popcorn machine
THEN JUST KEPT GOING!

Contact Shelly Olesen at 847.616.6901 or visit www.cretors.com

GIANTS OF EXHIBITION 2024

In reviewing our annual ranking of the top 50 Giants of Exhibition, BOXOFFICE PRO realized that R/C Theatres was omitted from the list. The below ranking has been updated and revised to reflect this error.

- | | | | | | |
|---|--|--|---|--|---|
| 1.
AMC Theatres
Screens: 7,325
Locations: 558 | 11.
CMX Cinemas
Screens: 327
Locations: 29 | 19.
National Amusements (Showcase Cinemas)
Screens: 233
Locations: 18 | 27.
Landmark Theatres
Screens: 172
Locations: 31 | 35. (TIE)
Look Cinemas
Screens: 145
Locations: 11 | 44. (TIE)
Allen Theatres
Screens: 112
Locations: 16 |
| 2.
Regal
Screens: 5,774
Locations: 425 | 12.
Caribbean Cinemas
Screens: 302
Locations: 34 | 20.
Elevate Entertainment Group
Screens: 230
Locations: 24 | 28.
MJR Theatres
Screens: 164
Locations: 10 | 35. (TIE)
Cinemas Guzzo
Screens: 145
Locations: 10 | 44. (TIE)
Star Cinema Grill
Screens: 112
Locations: 13 |
| 3.
Cinemark USA
Screens: 4,303
Locations: 308 | 13. (TIE)
Landmark Cinemas of Canada
Screens: 299
Locations: 36 | 21.
Studio Movie Grill
Screens: 205
Locations: 19 | 29.
Regency Theatres
Screens: 159
Locations: 23 | 37.
Classic Cinemas
Screens: 141
Locations: 16 | 46.
Mitchell Theatres
Screens: 107
Locations: 15 |
| 4.
Cineplex
Screens: 1,618
Locations: 156 | 13. (TIE)
Alamo Drafthouse Cinema
Screens: 299
Locations: 35 | 22.
Reading Cinemas
Screens: 198
Locations: 20 | 30. (TIE)
GQT Movies
Screens: 154
Locations: 22 | 38.
Coming Attractions Theatres
Screens: 137
Locations: 16 | 47.
IPIC Theatres
Screens: 100
Locations: 13 |
| 5.
Marcus Theatres
Screens: 981
Locations: 78 | 15.
Neighborhood Cinemas Group (NCG)
Screens: 263
Locations: 27 | 23.
United Entertainment (UEC Theatres)
Screens: 191
Locations: 22 | 30. (TIE)
Cinema Entertainment Corp. (CEC Theatres)
Screens: 154
Locations: 19 | 39.
Apple Cinemas
Screens: 136
Locations: 12 | 48.
R.L. Fridley Theatres
Screens: 97
Locations: 17 |
| 6.
B&B Theatres
Screens: 550
Locations: 57 | 16.
Cinépolis USA
Screens: 262
Locations: 26 | 24.
Cinema West
Screens: 178
Locations: 18 | 32. (TIE)
Marquee Cinemas
Screens: 150
Locations: 14 | 40. (TIE)
Flagship Premium Cinemas
Screens: 131
Locations: 18 | 49.
Picture Show Entertainment
Screens: 89
Locations: 11 |
| 7.
Harkins Theatres
Screens: 475
Locations: 32 | 17.
Premiere Cinemas
Screens: 245
Locations: 22 | 25.
Galaxy Theatres
Screens: 176
Locations: 15 | 32. (TIE)
Celebration Cinema by Studio C
Screens: 150
Locations: 11 | 40. (TIE)
R/C Theatres
Screens: 131
Locations: 14 | 50. (TIE)
Flix Entertainment
Screens: 88
Locations: 10 |
| 8.
Santikos Entertainment
Screens: 377
Locations: 27 | 18.
Georgia Theatre Company
Screens: 238
Locations: 22 | 26.
Larry H. Miller Theatres (Megaplex Theatres)
Screens: 173
Locations: 15 | 34.
Epic Theatres
Screens: 146
Locations: 12 | 42.
Golden Ticket Cinemas
Screens: 121
Locations: 18 | 50. (TIE)
Maya Cinemas
Screens: 88
Locations: 6 |
| 9.
Malco Theatres
Screens: 345
Locations: 33 | 10.
Emagine Entertainment
Screens: 330
Locations: 27 | | | 43.
Phoenix Theatres
Screens: 118
Locations: 11 | |

ENTERTAINMENT
supply & technologies

THERE'S
NO PLACE LIKE
CINEMA.



Charity Spotlight 10 | Trade Talk 12 | Indie Focus 18

INDUSTRY



“There is nothing like seeing a movie the way it’s meant to be seen—on the big screen, and I look forward to continuing to make Showcase the theater of choice for our customers with new offerings, increased community engagement, fun programming, and so much more to come.”

Trade Talk, p. 12

CHARITY SPOTLIGHT



➔ On August 28, the New York City-based Motion Picture Club sponsored a dinner for guests of Ronald McDonald House NYC, which provides assistance—including accommodation, meals, special events and activities, wellness care, and transportation to and from the hospital—to patients and their caregivers. In addition to touring the facility, visiting MPC board members were invited to serve dinner for the residents, allowing them to see first-hand the impact of the MPC’s regular contributions to the charity. “The Motion Picture Club having the honor of donating and serving dinner for the House was an incredibly rewarding experience,” said board member Garry Darvin of Media Services Worldwide. “The gratitude and

warmth from the families made every moment special. It’s amazing to see how something as simple as a meal can bring comfort and a sense of normalcy during such difficult times. The sense of community among volunteers and the opportunity to contribute to such a meaningful cause left a lasting impact, reminding us of the power of kindness and connection.”



➔ This August, Variety Illinois partnered with the DuPage Sports Commission on their annual Family Fun Ride, where kids raced on the official Chicago Grit Racing Series track at the Lombard Cycling Classic. The event was attended by over 300 families, along with Variety’s mascot, Heartly.



➔ Variety of the Desert held its Ice Screen Social on August 16 at the Mary Pickford Theatre in Cathedral City, California. Guests enjoyed ice cream, arcade games, and a sensory-friendly movie. For several families, it was the very first time they’d gone to the movies with their child.

Variety’s Greater Kansas City chapter launched *Brooks’ Dream*, the fourth book in the *Variety Tales* series, on August 14. The special event was hosted at the B&B Theatres Liberty Cinema 12, a long-time supporter of Variety KC and the setting for *Variety Tales: Brooks’ Dream*. Brooks and his family shared their thanks and appreciation for the opportunity to share their son’s dream of offering a movie experience full of magic for everyone to enjoy. Guests enjoyed watching the book read aloud on the big screen, with Brooks and his family narrating. *Variety Tales: Brooks’ Dream* can be purchased online at Amazon.



UPCOMING EVENTS

OCTOBER 10

Proceeds from the men’s-only stag event held at the Sundown Mountain Resort on October 10 in Dubuque, Iowa, will support Variety’s mission to improve the lives of children who are underprivileged, at-risk, critically ill, or living with special needs. The evening includes beverage sampling, a steak dinner, a silent auction, a raffle, entertainment, and a gift for each guest. The event will be emceed by the iconic voice of the Iowa Hawkeyes, Gary Dolphin. varietyiowa.com

OCTOBER 19

Variety Women of Buffalo Tent No. 7 presents the Spooks, Spiders & Spaghetti Halloween Party, taking place at the Variety Club in Lancaster, New York. Stop by for a spooktacular time including a raffle, games, costume contests, and trunk or treating. varietybuffalo.org

OCTOBER 20

Think you’ve got what it takes to be crowned a chili champion? Join Variety’s Iowa chapter at its Fourth Annual Chili Cookoff, hosted with local networking group The Loop DSM at the Iowa Tap Room in Des Moines, Iowa. varietyiowa.com

OCTOBER 26

Join Variety the Children’s Charity of Wisconsin for their Big Halloween Gig, featuring live music by Eric Barbieri and The Rockin’ Krakens, a costume contest, tap beer, and a midnight pizza buffet. The event takes place at O’Brien’s Pub in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. A cash bar will also be available. varietywisconsin.org

OCTOBER 26–27

Together with Canadian Food Truck Festivals, Variety’s Ontario chapter hosts their Fourth Annual Halloween Food Truck Festival at Variety Village in Scarborough, Ontario. The two-day event will feature food, drinks, kid-friendly activities, costumes, treats, and live entertainment, with all

proceeds supporting Variety Village’s inclusive programs and facilities for children and adults of all abilities. varietyontario.ca

NOVEMBER 15

Join Variety’s Buffalo chapter for a holiday-themed meat raffle, taking place at the Variety Clubhouse in Lancaster, New York. varietybuffalo.org

NOVEMBER 18

The elves at Variety – the Children’s Charity’s Manitoba chapter are working hard on their annual Winter Wonderland celebration, a holiday-themed event that provides children with a hot, nutritious meal; entertainment; and a gift bag containing useful items, snacks, and a toy. This year’s extravaganza will take place on Tuesday, November 18, at the RBC Convention Centre in Winnipeg. varietymanitoba.com

DECEMBER 5–7

Variety – the Children’s Charity of Delaware Valley once again brings the joy of the season to their Worcester, Pennsylvania, campus with Holiday Lane, a three-day event featuring live entertainment, raffle baskets, kid’s activities, and more. varietyphila.org

DECEMBER 8

Variety’s Alberta chapter celebrates the magic of giving on Sunday, December 8, with a charity holiday event featuring family-friendly activities, a visit from Santa, festive treats, seasonal music, and more. The exclusive, invite-only event takes place at the BLOX Arts Centre in Calgary, Alberta. varietyalberta.ca

DECEMBER 8

Variety’s Ontario chapter kicks off the holiday season with its annual Christmas party, featuring music, treats, family-friendly activities, a visit from Santa, and holiday shopping opportunities. The event will take place at Variety Village in Scarborough. varietyontario.ca

Honoring the Life and Legacy of

Dan Kroeger

1951-2024

Friend, Mentor, Leader

From his humble beginnings to his extraordinary leadership, **Dan Kroeger** made a difference. He was more than just a colleague; he was a friend who inspired us, a mentor who guided us, and a leader who paved the way for success. His legacy of excellence and his unwavering commitment to our industry will forever be in our hearts.

With gratitude from the entire Gold Medal family.

TRADE TALK

SHOWCASE CINEMAS ANNOUNCES PROMOTION OF REBECCA STEIN TO SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT OF MARKETING AND PARTNERSHIPS

→ Cinema chain Showcase Cinemas has promoted longtime executive Rebecca Stein, formerly VP of studio relations and US marketing, to senior vice president of marketing and partnerships.

Throughout her career, Stein has had a laser focus on growing Showcase's US marketing presence while keeping the company at the forefront of the exhibition industry. During her time at Showcase, she managed the marketing launches for key cinema locations—including Patriot Place and Legacy Place, both in Massachusetts—as well as the recent relaunch of Showcase Cinemas de Lux in Warwick, Rhode Island, and the opening of the new Showcase Cinema de Lux in Hanover, Massachusetts.

Throughout her 25-year career with Showcase Cinemas, Stein has prioritized community engagement and involvement, developing and executing strategic programming initiatives; she also launched the chain's cause-marketing Showcase for GOOD program, which works with area nonprofits. Stein currently leads the company's Film Impact Series for high school students, which is designed to help raise awareness to combat antisemitism, racism, and hate. She continues to focus on community programs like Bookworm Wednesdays, a summer reading program that has been selling out auditoriums for more than 20 years.

Stein introduced the Popcorn Club children's loyalty program more than 20 years ago while driving her team towards reinvigorating Showcase's Starpass Loyalty program with new member offerings. More recently, Stein oversaw the implementation of the Showcase Subscribe membership program, after which she began



overseeing the company's newly restructured Group Sales offering, resulting in significant year-to-year growth. Stein also steered the company's revamped social media program, with dedicated content creation teams and a targeted microinfluencer program.

"I'm excited to continue to grow and evolve our marketing initiatives at Showcase Cinemas while working to

further 'eventize' the moviegoing experience for our guests as we draw people into the movies," said Stein. "There is nothing like seeing a movie the way it's meant to be seen—on the big screen, and I look forward to continuing to make Showcase the theater of choice for our customers with new offerings, increased community engagement, fun programming, and so much more to come." ♥

ICTA APPOINTS CARRIE DIETRICH AS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND ANNOUNCES 2024 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OFFICERS

→ The International Cinema Technology Association (ICTA) formally announced Carrie Dietrich as the newly appointed executive director at its annual convention held in July. Dietrich is a widely respected cinema technology professional who received the Ioan Allen Award at the closing night President's Banquet Event and Awards Ceremony.

Taking the reins from Bob Sunshine, who led the prestigious association as executive director for over four decades and focused on cinema technologies worldwide, Dietrich brings a wealth of experience to the organization. Her accomplishments at notable cinema technology providers such as The Boxoffice Company and, more recently, Influx Worldwide, provide a unique perspective and skill set that will benefit the organization's mission and objectives.

Directors: Frank Tees, ICTA's immediate past president, who achieved several milestones during his three-year term, will become an honorary director and

continue to be actively involved with the other ICTA officers, including the president, Mark Mayfield (Meyer Sound); the vice president, Beth Figge (Dolby); the treasurer, Doug Sabin (American Cinema Equipment); and the secretary, Theresa English (TK Architects).

"It's truly a privilege to be selected to lead ICTA, and I plan to honor Bob's legacy by continuing to grow our academic programs and networking events," says Dietrich. "The executive committee is an exceptionally talented group, and ICTA is a collective passion for all of us—it's safe to say it will be a very productive term." ♥



ICTA executive committee officers (left to right) Figge, Tees, Mayfield, Dietrich, English, and Sabin.

TRADE TALK

CINÉPOLIS OPENS FIRST MACROXE SCREENX THEATER AT ESCALA MORELIA COMPLEX

➔ Mexican cinema chain Cinépolis and premium film format and cinema technology producer CJ 4DPLEX announced the opening of the first MacroXE ScreenX theater at Cinépolis' Escala Morelia complex (Plaza Morelia), in the state of Morelia, Michoacán.

ScreenX theaters in Mexico can be found exclusively at Cinépolis theaters, with two other locations—a traditional ScreenX auditorium in Las Antenas, Mexico City, and the Ultra 4DX auditorium in Parque Torea, the only cinema in the Americas to combine 4DX motion and environmental effects with ScreenX technology—pre-dating the new Cinépolis Escala Morelia MacroXE ScreenX auditorium.



"With the opening of our first MacroXE ScreenX theater at Cinépolis Escala Morelia, we reaffirm our commitment to offering cutting-edge cinematic experiences that exceed the expectations of our customers," said Santiago González Carrasco, deputy director of box office at Cinépolis. "This innovative immersive format transforms how audiences experience cinema and underscores our dedication to keeping Cinépolis at the forefront of film exhibition in Mexico and the 18 countries where it has a presence. We are excited to offer our customers in Morelia a window into this new level of entertainment, where every movie is experienced beyond a front screen." ♥



DIRECTORS: ALAMO DRAFTHOUSE DOWNTOWN BROOKLYN COMPLETES MAJOR UPGRADE AND EXPANSION

➔ Alamo Drafthouse completed the upgrade and expansion of its Brooklyn location, providing guests with new recliner seats, five new auditoriums, upgraded projection, and additional restrooms.

"I'm thrilled to say that Downtown Brooklyn is now the state-of-the-art theater that our inspiring and passionate NYC community deserves," said Michael Kustermann, Alamo Drafthouse CEO. "This theater means a great deal to our company, and I know it means a lot to our guests. These upgrades allow us to do more of what we love: Play awesome movies for the coolest fans in the world." ♥

Director Spike Lee with Alamo Drafthouse co-founder Tim League at the theater dedication ceremony officially dubbing Alamo's Brooklyn location as the "Spike Lee Cinema."

Originally opened in Downtown Brooklyn's City Point complex in 2016 with just seven screens, Alamo Drafthouse Brooklyn's five new auditoriums add 256 new seats for a total of 978, all of which are leather recliners equipped with personal swivel tables. Each auditorium has been outfitted with laser projectors with RealD 3D, 70mm, and 35mm capabilities on select screens. ♥

IN MEMORIAM: DIRECTORS: DAN KROEGER, FORMER PRESIDENT, CEO, AND CHAIRMAN OF GOLD MEDAL PRODUCTS CO.

➔ Dan Kroeger, former president, CEO, and chairman of Gold Medal Products Co., passed away on Wednesday, July 31 at the age of 72.

Dan Kroeger got his start at Gold Medal by answering a newspaper ad in 1979 for a sales position there. When he met his wife, Janet, he told her that he was in the popcorn business. She was skeptical and asked how he could support a young family that way. Yet Kroeger built a successful 40-year career at Gold Medal, culminating in his position as president and chief executive officer. Under his leadership, overall company sales grew a striking seven times over, marking some of the largest periods of growth for Gold Medal. However, Kroeger's greatest impact went beyond sales. His gift was in his relationships with others. He was known throughout the concessions industry and served with such notable groups as the National Association of Concessionaires,



the Outdoor Amusement Business Association, the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions, and the Gibtown Showmen's Club. He was honored with numerous awards and recognitions throughout his career.

Those who knew Kroeger also knew he was a devoted family man. Married to his beloved wife, Janet, for nearly 50 years, the couple were parents to three adult children and thoroughly enjoyed being grandparents to six wonderful grandchildren.

Dan Kroeger retired from Gold Medal in 2019 to spend more time with his family and enjoy traveling. Dan spent more than half his life with Gold Medal, and his influence, innovation, integrity, and dedication will continue to inspire others.

Dave Evans, the third-generation owner and chairman of Gold Medal, said, "What made Dan successful was not just his passion for the concession industry itself but his heart for the people. He was a friend, mentor, and leader to all who knew him. Dan would talk to anyone and everyone. He never met a stranger. To his wife, Janet, I thank you for graciously sharing Dan with Gold Medal for four decades. You can trust that his legacy will live on in the lives of all who knew him."

The current president of Gold Medal, Adam Browning, reflected on Kroeger's legacy: "Dan was a fundamental part of Gold Medal's success. His remarkable leadership and vision guided the company through years of growth and prosperity, setting the foundation for continued success. I greatly respect both Dan's accomplishments and his character. He will be greatly missed by the Gold Medal family." ♥

FANDANGO AND REGAL EXPAND MULTIYEAR AGREEMENT AND ANNOUNCE NEW OFFERINGS

➔ Fandango and Regal have announced plans to build the success of their decades-long ticketing partnership. The new phase of the collaboration will include new service offerings aimed at enhancing the moviegoing experience for Regal customers and driving additional theater attendance.

The two companies will join forces to offer movie studios and advertisers an opportunity to reach the companies' combined audience of more than 50 million monthly entertainment consumers. Led by Fandango's sponsorship and ad sales team, advertisers can now access Regal's vast digital footprint and Fandango's extensive digital network, including Fandango's ticketing platform, Rotten Tomatoes, and Fandango at Home.

To sweeten its offering to Regal customers, Fandango will soon enable moviegoers to preorder concessions through Fandango's mobile app and website before arriving at the theater. Fandango and Regal will also offer exclusive movie tickets and collectible bundles, delivering special-edition memorabilia, to entertainment fans tied to their favorite movies, characters, and franchises.

"We are thrilled to expand our longstanding relationship with Regal by delivering exciting new ticketing offerings to Regal customers and industry-leading advertising solutions for studios and brands looking to reach our massive, combined audience of moviegoers," said Will McIntosh, president of Fandango. "With Regal, we share a passion for and commitment to the cinematic experience and driving industry growth, and together,



I believe we'll accomplish great things for moviegoers and industry partners alike."

"In this new, expanded relationship with Fandango, it was important for both of our companies to find new ways to enhance the moviegoing experience for our guests and drive theater attendance further for the industry," said John Curry, senior vice president of commercial for Regal. "We're already working on exciting new ticketing, e-commerce, and advertising initiatives and look forward to bringing them to the market soon." ♥

REMEMBERING GEORGE ROUMAN

INDUSTRY EXECUTIVES SHARE THEIR MEMORIES OF THE LATE GEORGE ROUMAN

➔ This edition of BOXOFFICE PRO would normally be focused on NATO of Wisconsin and Upper Michigan's Geneva Convention, the annual regional convention held at Lake Geneva, Wisconsin. In light of the passing of George Rouman, one of the event's co-founders, BOXOFFICE PRO has collected a series of recollections from industry leaders about the impact and influence of George Rouman on the industry.

George Rouman was the warmest, most genuine and welcoming person, and a sharp guy. One of my earliest interactions with George was doing a call with him and federal government officials—a tough meeting, but George was totally unfazed by their difficult questions. He had insights no one else had considered and spoke passionately and articulately. He was a natural leader and one of our most dependable regional NATO partners. George was a great audience; he always laughed, even when my jokes were bad. Missing you, George. My deepest condolences to his family and everyone who knew and loved him.

Esther Baruh
Director of Government Relations
(fmr.), NATO

George Rouman was the embodiment of sunshine. His smile had a way of making even the darkest day bright. His enthusiasm for life was infectious, and his love for the film industry was powerful. George's kindness and generosity were limitless. His dedication to industry charities was evident in everything he did. He will be deeply missed.

Christina Blumer
Executive Director, Will Rogers Motion
Picture Pioneers Foundation



Rouman (far right) with cinema executives (left to right) John Scaletta, Todd Vradenburg, and Rolando Rodriguez

As fate would have it, George and I didn't get much time together in this life. We didn't know each other in the way that close friends do. The fact that I felt George's loss so deeply and profoundly speaks directly to the type of person that George was. Of course, he was loved and cherished by those who knew him well and were his lifelong friends. Yet he was also loved and cherished by those who barely knew him. This was George's gift: He would meet a stranger and instantly make them feel like family. He had that warmth and approachable affability that drew people in. This life can sometimes feel lonely, and I believe each of us searches for people who make us feel seen, heard, and valued. George made everyone he encountered feel that way. He was incredibly generous and supported people throughout the industry with his time, wisdom, and resources. He never stopped giving. Perhaps the most frightening truth in this life is that none of us know how much time we will be given. So all we can do is live each day, making the most of that time, trying to do the most good while the sun still shines upon us. George lived such that his life, however brief, was a good life, a life worth celebrating, a life worth remembering. For the rest of my days, I will carry George's memory with me as an ever-present reminder that life is precious and the treasures are not the things you hold, but the things you give away.

Heather Morgan
Chief Content Officer, Alamo Drafthouse

I was only beginning to get to know George when he died tragically this past summer. I met him at the NATO Fall Summit last year and spoke with him a handful of times, mostly when I called to get his perspective on something I was thinking about or didn't understand. In each instance, he was generous with his time, and his love of theatrical exhibition was always evident. My experiences with George, though limited, were not unique to me. He made everyone feel special. George's legacy will be carried forward by all the people he touched and will always be a part of the exhibition story.

Michael O'Leary,
president and CEO, NATO

I'm going to miss George a lot. I have been a George Rouman fan since Paul Rogers introduced us. I was lucky to get to know George when I worked for the Will Rogers Foundation and through our involvement with the Geneva Convention. Over the years, George would pitch me an idea for the convention that Will Rogers could make happen, and I would work my butt off to try and make the idea happen. George had that effect on people—no one wanted to say no to George. After 25 years at Will Rogers, I left and went to work for NATO of California/Nevada, and George was one of the first calls I received. George congratulated me and asked, "Do you mind if we talk about the current environment for exhibition (it was 2022, coming out of Covid-19), and let's talk about NATO." Of course, I welcomed the conversation. George would be my NATO mentor for the next two years. Every time there was a NATO meeting, I was looking for George. After that initial call, George never needed to call me because I always called him for understanding and counsel. His voice is in my head today, and I hope it never goes away.

Todd Vradenburg
President and CEO, NATO
of California/Nevada

SPOTLIGHT CINEMA NETWORKS

PARTNER WITH SPOTLIGHT

The *only* cinema advertising company dedicated to
Luxury, Dine-in and Art House theatres.

ELEGANT PRESHOW
PROGRAM

EXTRAORDINARY
SERVICE

CINEMATIC
ADVERTISING

PROVIDE YOUR CUSTOMERS WITH A QUALITY PRESHOW EXPERIENCE

Contact Bernadette McCabe | EVP, Event Cinema & Exhibitor Relations

Bernadette@SpotlightCinemaNetworks.com



SILENTS SYNCED

Contemporary Soundtracks Reintroduce Silent Classics

BY REBECCA PAHLE

Brought To You By

SPOTLIGHT
CINEMA NETWORKS

Today's moviegoers require variety, both in what they see and in the cinemas they choose to patronize. In both cases, Spotlight Cinema Networks is a dedicated supporter of the cinema industry, partnering with art house, dine-in, and luxury cinemas through their in-cinema advertising network and providing exciting exclusive content via their CineLife Entertainment® event cinema division.

In partnership with Spotlight Cinema Networks, BOXOFFICE PRO is proud to present Indie Focus, in which we explore the wealth of experiences that cinemas—from the high-end luxury and dine-in theater to the beloved community art house—offer their audiences.





→ Spooky season approaches and with it comes a new concept called Silents Synced, pairing classic silent films with classic albums, allowing moviegoers to experience both in a new way. Josh Frank, founder and owner of Blue Starlite Mini Urban Drive-in in Austin, Texas, created the series. Appropriately, Silents Synced (silentsynced.com) kicks off on October 4 with the grandfather of all vampire films, *Nosferatu*—seen (or heard) as never before, with two of alt rock's most esteemed albums, Radiohead's *Amnesiac* and *Kid A*, as the soundtrack. In advance of the CineLife Entertainment release, BOXOFFICE PRO spoke with Frank about Silents Synced's journey—created by an independent exhibitor, for independent exhibitors—to the big screen nationwide.

How did you come up with the concept for Silents Synced?

It really started 20 years ago when I was playing around with *Metropolis* and discovered that Nine Inch Nails' double album *The Fragile* basically synced up with it perfectly. I was fascinated with the idea that beloved albums could somehow magically just work with silent movies. And then, when I opened my little drive-in movie theater in Austin, Texas, 15 years ago, I got my friends together for a private screening. I wanted to show them something to see if the concept of a drive-in in an alleyway could work, so I showed them my edit [of *Metropolis* and Nine Inch Nails]. They loved the drive-in, but they also loved that. It stayed in my head.

"We're thrilled to be a partner in distributing [Silents Synced] because we believe in the power of event cinema combined with alternative music's most enduring artists. This is a concept that should work equally well for independent, indoor, and drive-in cinemas, as it offers attainable event cinema that will appeal to multiple generations of current patrons, as well as music fans."

Bernadette McCabe
EVP, CineLife Entertainment

Then, a couple of years after that, I was invited by Black Francis of the Pixies to work with him on his rescoring of [1920's] *The Golem* for the San Francisco International Silent Film Festival. It screened in the big, beautiful Grand Theatre. I'm watching a hero of mine score this silent movie, and that had a profound effect on me.

All those things connected when the pandemic hit, and I saw how my peers were in need of more content. I was doing fine, because I had the drive-in and I was actually the only cinema open in [the area]. But even I was having issues, because what had once been my signature, classic movies, was now being screened by everyone. And I knew that, when the pandemic ended, my peers would not have a lot of content to put on their screens. All those things together got me thinking about alternative content and about how we as independent cinema owners can take care of ourselves and look out for one another. I challenged myself to create intriguing and alternative content that I could provide independently and then share with my peers.

It's about time someone made the concept of pairing classic films with classic albums work for cinemas. People have been syncing *The Wizard of Oz* with Pink Floyd's *Dark Side of the Moon* for decades.

One of the holdbacks is, obviously, rights. But I'm insane, so I took it upon myself to learn how those work and to reach out to all the labels myself and try and work with them to come up with a way to do it. I was going to the labels with something that nobody had really done before. It was a challenge for them, too. I stepped into solving this particular challenge of how to bring all these elements together to do it legitimately. It's been done illegitimately for decades, as you said, but how could we do it such that it would be useful to other independent cinemas? Unless it was legitimate, it wouldn't help other people.

Basically, I sat down with this challenge

The Boxoffice Podcast is your weekly podcast all about the cinema industry.

Every week we break down major industry news, dissect box office results and connect with studio and cinema executives to talk market trends and industry shifts in theatrical exhibition and entertainment at large.



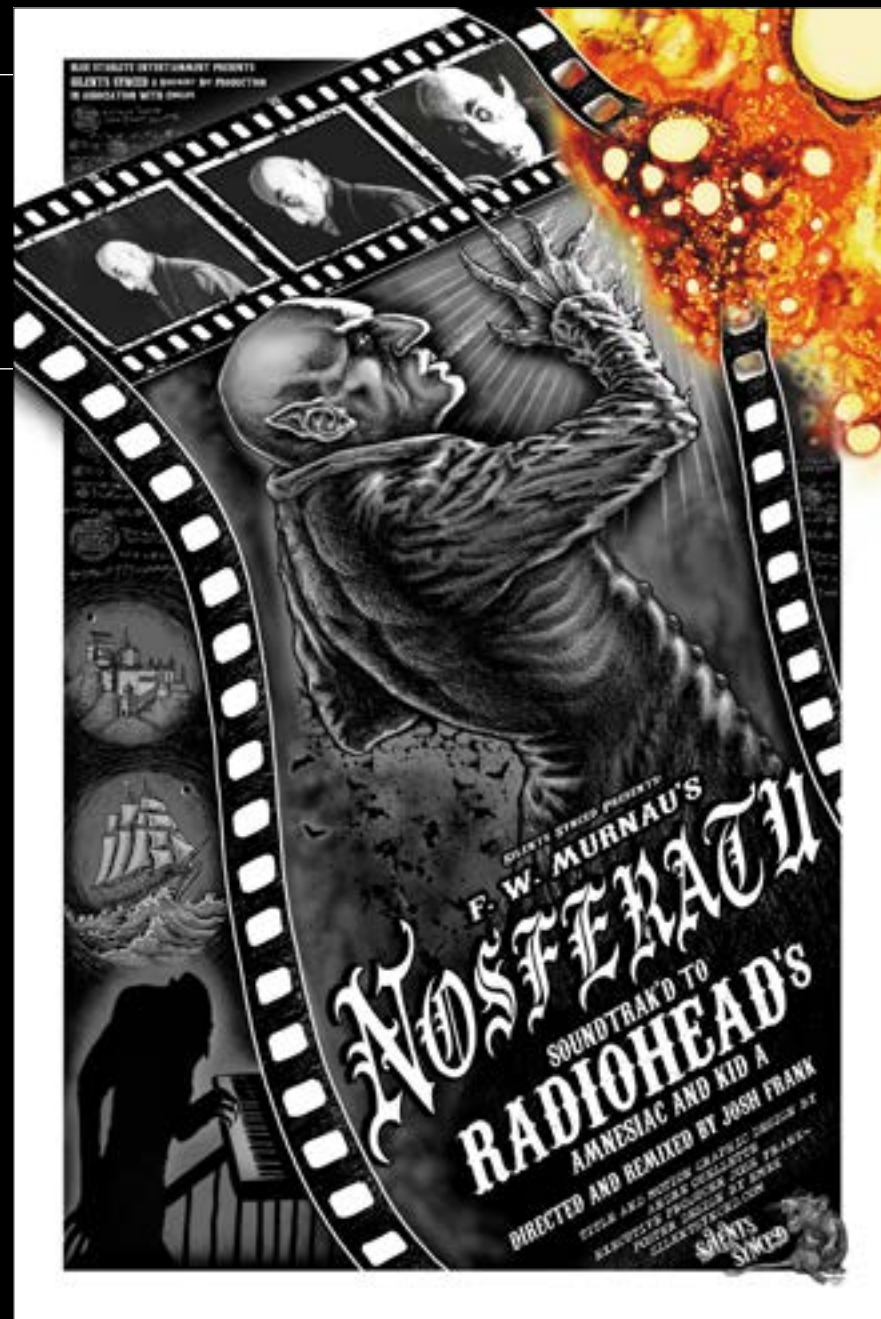
Search for *Boxoffice Podcast* on your favorite podcast app.

BOXOFFICE PRO

of, "Let's come up with something that can be reproduced." [It wasn't just about Silents Synced]: It was about the idea that an independent cinema could come up with a good concept that they could then offer to other cinemas and create a new tier of content. That was what excited me the most about it. I knew that I could make these, because it was something that I discovered early on I was good at. There are a lot of creative decisions that have to be made; it's not putting the album over the movie and saying, "Good night!" I brought in an effects guy, and I asked, "How do we make the visual and music experience even cooler? How can I take the places where the music and the movie come together so perfectly and make them even better?" There was a lot of work that went into doing this first one, and once I started experimenting with different albums and different movies, I realized there are a lot of them that I can make work really beautifully. And that's when I realized, "This is my content idea. It's my event cinema idea, the one that I'm going to offer." A friend of mine encouraged me to reach out to the bands and send them demos of what I was doing and see if they'd even respond. I sent out four demos within a month-long period, and every band's manager got back to me immediately and said, "This is frickin' cool. What do you need from us to do this?" It was really this beautiful, exquisite corpse of a concept.

And, like you say, it's a business concept in addition to being a creative concept. Cinemas like the Texas Theatre in Dallas have had great success with events pairing screening with live scores, but most cinemas don't have the resources to make that work.

The thing is, live scores on sound films are freaking awesome. People have been doing them for decades, and they're beautiful, but the problem is they're not scalable. And they also cost a lot to produce because you need a whole live



band. There are a lot of elements that have to come together. My idea was, "Can we harness that same magic in a way where you can put it on a DCP and give lots of theaters the opportunity to create a rock concert movie experience?" I didn't want to replace the live score experience, because it's completely different. I feel like this is complementary. It's another level of that kind of experience.

The timing for the first Silents Synced is great. I caught a rep screening of Nosferatu last October, and it still plays really well. And then there's the Robert Eggers version of Nosferatu coming out in December.

That was kind of happenstance.

Originally I was going to lead with a different film, but that one got stuck in production, so I moved on to the one that was ready, the Radiohead one. The best month to release, obviously, was October. And then, of course, Eggers' *Nosferatu* is coming out in December. That wasn't on purpose, but it's great for Silents Synced, because a lot of cinemas that aren't going to be playing Eggers' [*Nosferatu*] can do complementary programming for [the Radiohead version of] *Nosferatu*. And people who are huge fans of *Nosferatu* in general will get a chance to see both of them, which is awesome.

And younger people who are maybe familiar with Robert Eggers but haven't

seen the original Nosferatu can catch up before the new one comes out.

Exactly. And it also gives us a bump past the initial release [in October]. Some theaters are booking it specifically because Eggers' movie is coming out in December. They're booking [our *Nosferatu*] in early December.

How did you come to work with CineLife Entertainment on this release?

I've worked with them through Spotlight Cinema Networks for a number of years. They're just really good people, and they're the best of the business in so many ways. When I was shopping around for distributors, there were a number of them that were interested, but I didn't know them. This had become my baby. You know what I mean? So that's why I thought, "I should really talk to CineLife Entertainment. I know they know how to do it. Maybe I should see if they're interested." When I told them about it, they were super pumped. They were the only ones out of all the distributors I talked to that, at least on the surface, did not show they had any doubts. Like it was a no-brainer. To me, that's all I needed. The people who immediately say yes, those are the people you want to go into battle with.

And repertory cinema is doing so well right now. Younger audiences are really excited about going to independent cinemas and experiencing these older films. At this point, Amnesiac and Kid A are old albums too, I suppose.

It's funny. When I was a teenager, my parents took me to see *Grease*. They would point at the screen and say, "This was our life. This is what we were into." It's been about 20 years since the albums [used in Silents Synced came out]. This is [my generation's version of] taking your kids to the art house cinema that you used to go to and watching a classic movie where the soundtrack is by one of your favorite bands when you were your kids' age. It's that cyclical thing. That's what we can capture

as art house cinemas: We're not just a place for the people who have been coming to art houses their whole lives. We're a place to give younger generations their first-time experiences with something that could become a big part of their lives. Silents Synced was designed in that way, in the custom of midnight movies like *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* or David Lynch films—all the wonderful and weird and subversive stuff [that has become part of moviegoing culture]. It's born of the cool feeling that I had when I was a teenager going to the movies. That's the experience I'm hoping people are going to take away from Silents Synced.

What silent movie/album pairings do you have in the works?

The next one will be R.E.M. with Buster Keaton's *Sherlock Jr.* It uses two of their classic albums, and I know that the band is pumped about it. Radiohead, they're like The Beatles. They're not involved. They thought it was cool, and they said, "Go for it, kid!" But R.E.M.'s management and REM are like, "This is really cool." And they're going to help promote it and get the word out to their fans." It's really awesome.

The next one after that is either going to be *They Might Be Giants* or Pearl Jam. With Pearl Jam, the album is *Vs.* And with *They Might Be Giants*, it's songs from their entire catalog [paired with] another Buster Keaton film, *The Cameraman*. That one is so much fun, and it's very sweet. That's one of the really exciting things about making these: You really feel like you're making a whole new film. In the end, if it's done right, you're experiencing the movie in a way you've never experienced before. You're having emotions that you've never had from watching it. The same with the music: You're experiencing new feelings, new emotions, to the music that you're so used to. The context makes it all the more exciting. ▀

For information on booking Silents Synced, email drew@spotlightcinemanetworks.com

NEW AND USED
MARQUEE
 ~SIGN~
LETTERS

We Sell & Buy
Slotted & Snap Lok
Sign Letters


800-545-8956
mike@pilut.com
baycitycargo.com

THERE IS NO CLOUD
 It's just your theater relying on someone else's computers, oh, and also, hoping the Internet doesn't go out on either end!

 Don't rely on a slow, cloud-based POS for your theater!
 Over 30 Years of 100% Uptime.

www.sensiblecinema.com


Congratulations to ShowEast's 2024 Honorees.

Marcos Barros

The Enrique Ramirez LATAM Exhibitor of the Year Award

Luis Carcheri

LATAM Distributor of the Year

Bobbie, Brittanie, & Brock Bagby

Dan Fellman Show "E" Award

Melanie Valera

Al Shapiro Distinguished Service Award

Mark Gramz

Salah M. Hassanein Humanitarian Award

Dolby Laboratories

ShowEast Technology Award

Larry Etter

ShowEast & NAC ICON Award

SHOWEAST



“The reality of where we are now as a company has grown so much bigger than our dreams. To think that we could grow from 17 screens to becoming the fifth-largest in the nation is never something we expected.”

A Family Tradition, p. 26

A FAMILY TRADITION

B&B Theatres Celebrates its Centennial as the Country's Largest Family Owned and Operated Circuit

BY DANIEL LORIA

➔ B&B Theatres, the nation's largest family owned and operated exhibition circuit, is celebrating its centennial this year. B&B Theatres' history dates back to cinema's silent era, with the 1924 acquisition of the Lyric Theatre in Salisbury, Missouri, by Elmer Bill Sr., who named his company Bills Theatres. At the Lyric, Elmer met his future wife, Johnnie, who provided piano accompaniment to the silent films flickering on the screen.

In 1936, the couple welcomed a son,

Elmer Bills Jr., who would later become the second generation to lead the family business. The elder Elmer Bills hired 10-year-old Sterling Bagby as a concessions clerk, a role that would ignite Sterling's lifelong passion for the exhibition industry. Even during his time in the Navy during World War II, Sterling's dedication to the business never wavered.

"He fell in love with the business," says Bob Bagby, the son of Sterling and current CEO of the circuit known today as B&B

Theatres. "He worked in the Navy and ran the projectors on a ship during the war. He would tell me how he would exchange reels with other ships through a makeshift rope and pulley system so they could move films from one ship to the other and have a rotation of fresh new movies. I have a letter that he wrote back home during this period, where he writes, 'As soon as I get out, I want to start my own picture shows.'"

Upon his return from the war, Sterling married Pauline, one of the box office clerks in a cinema he had worked at in Higbee, Missouri. Together, they started the Bagby Traveling Show and set off on a tour of rural Missouri with a pack of films, a mobile projection system, seats, and a snack bar. The Bagby Traveling Picture Show screened movies in barns, schools, and parks before growing into a full-fledged circuit of drive-in and indoor theaters in Kansas.

On his end, Elmer Bills Jr. had also found love at the movies. The younger Elmer married Amy, whom he had met working at the concessions stand of one of his father's theaters when they were both 13. After graduating from the University of Missouri in 1959, Elmer entered the family business to continue the expansion of Bills Theatres.

The Bagby and Bills families kept close ties in the ensuing decades as their circuits grew independently. This close relationship and shared passion for the industry played a significant role in the growth and success of B&B Theatres. Elmer and Amy began a family, spending the weekends raising their children while working at their theaters. "My sister, brother, and I would sit in the back row of the theater while my mom did her best to keep an eye on us as she sold tickets," remembers their daughter, Bridget. "I have vivid memories of walking out to the lobby during *The Sound of Music*—I must have seen it at least seven times by then—and dancing to the songs while everyone was in the theater."

All the Bills children began working in the theaters as soon as they could. "I had a little stool behind the concessions stand that would make me tall enough to help out," says Bridget. "We all worked together most weekends, especially at the drive-in concessions during our all-night movie marathons. My mom and I usually flipped hamburgers, my brother made pizzas, and my sister was on popcorn. We would finish



Bridget and Bob Bagby

by about three or four in the morning and then drive home and sleep in as late as possible the next morning." Drive-ins were social hubs of small towns during the era, drawing people with the concessions stand alone in some cases—according to Bridget, the only place in town back then where customers could find fast food: "We were there before Pizza Hut."

Bob Bagby also spent his childhood around movie theaters. He spent the first five years of his life living in a one-bedroom apartment above the family's drive-in theater—sharing the space with his parents, siblings, and grandparents over the course of a couple of years. Bob remembers peering out of a picture window in the living room that would look out to the drive-in screen. "You could sit on the couch, open the drapes, turn on the speakers, and watch the movie. I remember having all my birthday parties growing up at that drive-in."

Bob started working the concessions stand as early as age 7, standing on a stool behind the counter to pass out boxes of popcorn. When it came to custodial work, his father would drop spare change on the floor and in between seats to keep the

"I thought I'd open an accounting office, and then somewhere along the line, I realized [exhibition] was in our blood."

younger Bagby motivated.

Given their shared upbringing in the industry, it's no surprise that Bob and Bridget became close friends. The Bagby and Bills families would share a big hotel suite at Show-A-Rama, the biggest industry convention of the time. Despite being close friends through high school, none of their relatives expected Bob and Bridget to wind up being a couple. "Somewhere along the line, we realized we couldn't marry anybody else with more shared history than we had," says Bob.

"I had two more years of college to finish, and Bob was going to move to Columbia, Missouri, where I was going to college when we decided to go ahead and get married," remembers Bridget. "Once he moved there, a theater became available in Fulton, Missouri, and he just jumped back [into the business]. I was studying during the day, driving over, and working at the theater in the evenings." Bob, who originally set out to have a music career before settling on an accounting degree, hadn't planned to return to the family business either. "I thought I'd open an accounting office, and then somewhere along the line, I realized [exhibition] was in

our blood,” he says. “We couldn’t leave it.”

The pair got married, and in 1980—within a year of the marriage—the Bagby and Bills families combined their respective circuits into a single company, B&B Theatres. At the time, the combined circuit represented a total of 17 screens. The newly merged circuit doubled in size in November 1982 with the acquisition of a small regional circuit in Kansas. This acquisition marked the beginning of B&B Theatres’ expansion strategy, which focused on acquiring and renovating existing theaters to modernize the moviegoing experience. Bob and Bridget moved to a one-bedroom apartment above one of the locations, starting their own journey as parents during that period. The B&B circuit grew throughout the 1980s, adding a new location around once a year, and introducing new technologies and amenities to enhance the movie experience for their patrons.

“We were building one or two theaters a year, gradually growing,” says Bob. “At that time, my dad was in charge of construction. He had a fifth-wheel trailer, and he and mom would move to a town to stay for a year and build a theater. I would do

“Bridget and I were always looking to do the latest and greatest. The first evolution we introduced was the transition from the big downtown theaters to multiplexes on the edge of town. That’s something Bridget and I were pushing for—it was very difficult for our parents to leave those downtown theaters—and we achieved it over a ten-year period.”

the accounting books for the construction. We’d find communities that wanted a movie theater. Sometimes, that would include local investors or incentives from the city. We were always looking at those opportunities.”

“Bridget and I were always looking to do the latest and greatest,” says Bob. “The first evolution we introduced was the transition from the big downtown theaters to multiplexes on the edge of town. That’s something Bridget and I were pushing for—it was very difficult for our parents to leave those downtown theaters—and we achieved it over a ten-year period.”

B&B Theatres kept innovating as it continued expanding. Renovations and new builds became a hallmark of the company throughout the ‘90s and 2000s, and the circuit was among the first in the nation to transition to digital projection. New concepts were introduced in 2010, including its initial foray into premium large format (Grand Screen) and in-theater dining (Marquee Suites). The biggest evolution in the company’s history came in October 2014 with the acquisition of Dickinson Theatres, which squarely positioned B&B Theatres as one of North America’s ten largest cinema chains. By then, Bob and Bridget’s children—Bobbie, Brittanie, and Brock (the family’s passion for exhibition apparently also extends to alliteration)—worked in the family business.

The fourth generation of the family had a similar upbringing to their parents. Road trips in the family motorhome to do theater runs, where the adults would check in on individual locations, would occur over the occasional weekend, sometimes with both sets of grandparents, or these runs could take up a ten-day trip over the summer.

The kids were constantly around their grandparents during their childhood. Elmer Bills would take out 35 mm prints and screen them for his grandchildren, instilling an appreciation for film history. Brock, the youngest of the three children, remembers his grandfather teaching him how to play poker during one of their theater runs. During one of the road trips, Brock remembers Sterling insisting on making a detour to a 99 cent store that was having a liquidation sale and returning to the motor home with every paintbrush, roller, and construction tool he could find.

“Our grandparents and parents never



(left to right) Brittanie Bagby Baker, Brock Bagby, Bobbie Bagby Ford

shied away from talking about the business in front of us. We knew very well how a theater was doing, how grosses were that day. We would eat with my grandparents three or four days a week, sometimes more. My dad and grandpa would come home from work together and continue their conversation from the day. We got the privilege of learning a lot along

the way,” says Bobbie Bagby Ford, president and chief creative officer of B&B Theatres.

The three kids didn’t take long to go from playing hide-and-seek between the rows of seats to working the concessions stand. Bobbie started working for the family business at the Lyric Theatre, the same cinema Elmer Bills Sr. acquired in

1924, becoming the fourth generation to work there.

While employment at the theaters was common in their teenage years, Bobbie and Brittanie had different professional plans when they set out for college. Like their father before them, the sisters set out for performing arts careers: Bobbie in musical theater, while Brittanie double-majored in music and business in college. They both found their way back to B&B Theatres on their own, realizing they had a deeper connection to exhibition than they first realized.

“At first, I didn’t think this would turn into a career,” admits Brittanie Bagby Baker, president and chief operations officer at B&B Theatres. “There was never an expectation for any of us to join the company. We all found our own path back to the company in different ways. Our parents encouraged us to pursue our goals, hopes, and dreams. As a result, I think we all found that passion on our own without ever feeling any pressure over it.”

Brittanie’s first formal job at the family company was at the concessions stand when she was 16 years old. Today, the general manager who mentored her in that first post works in the office next to hers at B&B’s corporate office, serving as the circuit’s chief financial officer.

While a return to the family business was a surprise to Bobbie and Brittanie, Brock, the youngest of the three children, had a more straightforward path. “Brock always knew this is what he wanted to do,” says his mother, Bridget. “He chose a college close to one of our theaters, where he could work as an assistant manager.”

“I started at 14 years old, at our Liberty location, and I was so young that I would share a register with Brittanie to make sure I didn’t screw it up,” says Brock Bagby, president and chief content, programming, and development officer. “I cleaned auditoriums, worked the concessions stand—it was a big deal when I got promoted to box office because you needed to get people through that line quickly.”

“Working at B&B Theatres was a good way for them to make some money in high school and college,” says Bob. “Brittanie helped out a lot at our office, got involved with inventory and the insurance side, and came to know the operations side very closely. Bobbie always had an interest in marketing. She was the one who suggested we change the name of our theaters to a



single brand, B&B Theatres; before, we used to have distinct names for each location. Bobbie revolutionized the way we approached our branding. Brock was always interested in the development and construction of our theaters—he spearheaded all the planning for one of our new builds, from blueprints to the opening, while he was still in college.”

“Bridget and I always sought to grow the company,” he continues. “Working with our parents, we found a dynamic where everyone complemented each other—and there was never any tension. Bridget’s dad always joked, ‘I can’t wait until we’re making enough money to fight over!’ Her dad was very conservative and wanted to hold the reins, which is like my daughter Brittanie. She’s very cautious and has a very good grasp of our operations. My dad was very aggressive, like my son Brock is, wanting to grow and innovate. Brock was a big reason why we converted so many of our locations to recliners as early as we did. I was always in the middle, excited to grow, but always in a sustainable way. That’s a lot like Bobbie, who has a temperament similar to mine in that way.”

“Movies will always be our bread and butter, the core of our business. But these entertainment centers that we’ve been doing and finding success with are a big part of the future of B&B Theatres.”

The Bagby’s vision for B&B Theatres has introduced a new wave of innovations since the Dickinson acquisition in 2014. The circuit has adopted new auditorium concepts like VIP experiences (The Lyric), third-party premium formats in addition to their in-house Grand Screen offerings (ScreenX, MX4D, and 4DX), and enhanced image and sound technologies like immersive audio from DTS:X and laser projection by Barco. More recently, B&B Theatres has set out to inaugurate state-of-the-art cinema entertainment centers, including new builds like their Red Oak, Texas, location or remodels like the recently opened Macedonia, Ohio, location. Both cinemas opened earlier this year, offering a glimpse of the circuit’s ambition as it enters its second century.

“Movies will always be our bread and butter, the core of our business,” says Brittanie. “But these entertainment centers that we’ve been doing and finding success with are a big part of the future of B&B Theatres. They are a place where you can put your phone down and have a communal experience with someone—whether it’s escaping into a story together or playing a board game in a restaurant while having some cocktails. From bowling to birthday parties, it’s about finding opportunities to encourage people to come together and have a shared experience. That is the focus we have for the future of our company: creating magical experiences for our guests with movies being at the center of it all.”

“I am more bullish on the future than I have ever been my entire life,” adds Bob. “We’re doing everything in our power to improve the moviegoing experience—and we’ll continue to explore what ancillary amenities we can bring to our theaters. These amenities wouldn’t work for every location, but there are opportunities out there to bring a nice mixture of people watching movies and staying at our sites to do other things—whether that’s a game of bowling or grabbing a drink at one of our bars. In today’s marketplace, you’ve got to have a nice theater with the right amenities. You either need to remodel or close. That’s what we’ve been working on. We’re down to very few theaters, less than a handful, that haven’t been remodeled with recliners.”

B&B Theatres plays a special role in today’s film industry as a link between exhibition’s past—a multigenerational

family owned and operated circuit—and its future—an innovative national chain expanding by leveraging new amenities and experiences. Its growth from the acquisition of the Lyric Theatre in Salisbury, Missouri, in 1924 to become the fifth-largest chain in the United States (by screen count) in 2024 reflects the passion and resiliency of the families who’ve engraved their initials across the chain’s fifty-plus locations nationwide.

“We don’t have a goal of becoming the second or third largest chain in North America. We don’t care about any of that. We want to run quality theaters that innovate. Theaters we are proud of. It’s not about quantity; it’s about quality. Our future is to have a chain of profitable theaters that deliver a great experience to our guests, whether that be 10 locations or 100,” says Brock.

The impact of B&B’s circuit expands well beyond the family that runs it and the moviegoers it welcomes. The company currently employs over 1,400 employees, a figure set to grow as the chain adds more locations. The theaters are an economic driver for their communities, providing an

“I am more bullish on the future than I have ever been my entire life. We’re doing everything in our power to improve the moviegoing experience—and we’ll continue to explore what ancillary amenities we can bring to our theaters.”

affordable entertainment destination and dependable jobs for workers of all ages. “I don’t want to be on my deathbed and say, ‘Hey, I sold a lot of popcorn in my life.’ We are continually focusing on ways to give back to our communities and employees,” says Bobbie. “I like to talk to our managers about the special opportunity they have when welcoming a 16-year-old in their very first job at one of our theaters. Not all of them will stay and have a career at our company, though we hope some of them do. We know that many of them will go on to different jobs. We want them to remember their time with us as a reference: This is how I’m supposed to be treated as an employee, and this is the experience I’m supposed to have.”

For Bob and Bridget, the chance to have been able to spend a career working alongside their parents, grandparents, and children is a privilege they do not take for granted. “The reality of where we are now as a company has grown so much bigger than our dreams,” says Bob. “To think that we could grow from 17 screens to becoming the fifth-largest in the nation is never something we expected.”

CONGRATULATIONS

to our partners and legendary friends

<p>Marcos Barros, Founder and Chairman, Cinesystem Cinemas The Enrique Ramirez LATAM Exhibitor of the Year Award</p>	<p>Melanie Valera Paramount Pictures AI Shapiro Distinguished Service Award</p>
<p>Bobbie, Brittanie, and Brock Bagby Co-Presidents, B&B Theatres Dan Fellman Show “E” Award</p>	<p>Larry Etter, Senior Vice President Malco Theatres ShowEast & NAC ICON Award</p>
<p>Mark Gramz, President Marcus Theatres Salah M. Hassanein Humanitarian Award</p>	<p>Robert Smerling, President US Cinema Operations Reading Int’l Inc. Bingham Ray Spirit Award</p>



Proud Supporter of Film Expos Group

MARK GRAMZ

MARCUS THEATRES PRESIDENT RECEIVES SALAH M. HASSANEIN HUMANITARIAN AWARD

BY CHAD KENNERK

Established in 1987, ShowEast's annual Salah M. Hassanein Humanitarian Award is presented to companies and individuals in the industry that make an impact in the philanthropic community. This year's recipient is Mark Gramz, president of Marcus Theatres. Gramz began his exhibition journey in 1971, joining the company while still in high school as a part-time concession attendant at a drive-in theater, and seasonal stints at indoor locations followed. He has been with the company ever since. Gramz took the traditional route to assistant manager and eventually general manager by the late '70s. He was GM at several locations before becoming district manager for the Milwaukee metro area in 1987. By 1991, he was promoted to vice president of operations for southern Wisconsin, and in 1997 he became senior vice president of operations. He was named executive vice president of Marcus Theatres in 2012, and a decade later, in 2022, Gramz stepped into the role of Marcus Theatres' president. In advance of ShowEast, Gramz spoke with BOXOFFICE PRO about his longtime career with the Milwaukee-based chain and the charitable efforts he's helped shepherd.

You made a decision in high school that shaped the course of your career. How did your first job in exhibition lead to a career in exhibition?

There was a drive-in theater within walking distance of my home, so it was easy to latch on to the crew that worked there. I didn't answer an ad or send in a résumé; I was friends with a lot of the associates who worked there, so I was an easy acquisition and hire. It was my first

gig. I started working part-time in refreshments at the drive-in cinema. The best thing I can say about it all is that despite finishing high school and going on to a four year university and getting two undergraduate degrees (one in economics and one in business finance), I never found a reason to leave Marcus Theatres. I started with Marcus Theatres when I was 16, and I've never had a reason to leave Marcus Theatres. I always felt that the culture was educational: It had a career ladder associated with it and growth [potential] attached. The culture had involvement, participation, and a sense of accomplishment on every step of the path here at Marcus.

You've worked at Marcus from the ground up to president, gaining a full understanding of exhibition at every level. What were those early days like?

I was in theater operations for a very long time. It's an interesting business. It's always been an interesting business. When I think about it and try to take a broader view of it, I always felt like we were part of culture. I worked at theaters that played exclusively or semiexclusively to our marketplace in the Milwaukee metro area. Movies like *Tommy*, *Grease*, *Animal House*, *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, *Star Wars*, and *The Empire Strikes Back*. When you play those pictures and you see the passion that people come to the theaters with, the anticipation to see those movies, and then you see them come back time and time again to see the movie again, you realize that you're part of culture and you're sort of feeding the world what's new—the latest and greatest.

It was exciting to be a small piece of

that; at the same time, it was exciting to have a business facility where you looked at it from a perspective of, "What do we do to maintain a habit of moviegoing? What do we do to get people to come back each week or every two weeks? What do we do here to improve our sight and sound? What do we do to improve refreshments? What do we do to improve seating? What do we do to make the environment even more attractive, to draw in even more people and to keep them coming back on a regular, consistent basis?"

What were those blockbuster eras like in the business? Was it any easier back then?

There were always periods of time like that, but there were always other periods of time where you felt like, "Wow, we're just not hitting it right. We just don't have the right titles." I remember an era where musicals were big, but then that whole genre kind of went underground and movies like 1973's *Lost Horizon*—which was sort of a forgettable musical—didn't do very well. *The Great Gatsby* with Robert Redford didn't do very well and wasn't well reviewed. Then suddenly, something culturally new came up like *Star Wars*. Suddenly the cinema was the place to go; it was really culturally relevant to go to the cinema. We've gone through periods like that, and we continue to go through periods like that.

I recall when CGI became so good that suddenly things became possible that were not filmable when I was young, like the Marvel Cinematic Universe. Those were popular comics in the '70s, but they really didn't become filmable to the point where they really looked like real-life comic



characters until *Spider-Man* came out in 2002. Reading a book or comics in the '70s, you looked at Spider-Man and Iron Man and those characters and said, "Wow, if only they could make a movie out of this." Then we get to the point where CGI is such that you can do it. That's been a great thing for cinema. I saw that this year with Denis Villeneuve and what he did with *Dune*. Again, those books were written in the '60s. They predated *Star Wars*. To make them filmable, like he did, that's spectacular stuff.

Did you have any mentors who helped you along the way?

I feel like I've had partners along the way my entire career. I've had GMs that I feel were partners with me when I was a GM. I've had colleagues as district

directors that were partners of mine. When I first became VP of operations, I shared the role with a person named Don Perkins, who unfortunately passed away a number of years ago, but he certainly was a mentor to me. Right now, I feel like I have something of that relationship with Greg Marcus. These last couple of years as president have been a very good thing. I think we have a strong relationship and are in strong agreement on some core principles that we have here.

As a leader in the industry, you've distinguished yourself in the philanthropic community as well. What role have industry charities played in your career?

Marcus Corporation and NATO, particularly NATO of Wisconsin & Upper Michigan, have always been both of those organizations have always been all about giving back to the community, employee volunteerism, and employee participation in charitable campaigns. Ever since the start of my career, I've been involved in and helped shepherd and guide and be part of charitable efforts. We have a couple of gift-giving campaigns here at Marcus—one for the United Way of Greater Milwaukee and [another for] the United Performing Arts Fund of Milwaukee (UPAF). We have had both those employee gift giving campaigns for as long as I can remember. We have a large kickoff event, and we have individual events at individual locations. We do quite a lot to try to encourage and support associate involvement in raising funds for those two charities in particular.

Also on the Marcus Theatres side, we are longtime supporter of Variety – the

Children's Charity of Wisconsin and also Variety the Children's Charity of Illinois. We've been very much involved with them and the Will Rogers Motion Picture Pioneers Foundation. One of the hallmarks of the Geneva Convention that NATO Wisconsin has put on for many years is that the money we raise there generally goes to either Variety or to Motion Picture Pioneers or both. Along the way, we've also donated money to a lot of different civic organizations and to individual municipal individual cities, libraries, and museums. In the case of NATO Wisconsin, there's an organization we've supported for many years called the Children's Outing Association (COA) here in Milwaukee, which serves underprivileged children. They have a campground which we have supported for many years.

This year Marcus Theatres' loyalty program, Magical Movie Rewards, celebrated 10 years and 6 million members. Marcus also added its first ScreenX auditorium last year and recently opened Marcus West End Cinema. What are some of the other Marcus milestones, and what's ahead for Marcus Theatres?

We are always trying to find ways to improve the moviegoing experience and to bring new experiences to people. We were an early adopter of recliner seating. We had one of the first 4DX screens in North America. We also had two Imax theaters back in the mid-'90s where we played *Everest*, *T. Rex: Back to the Cretaceous*, and more of the original Imax products. We're always looking for new ways to either attract a new audience or to enhance the experience for the existing audience. We were among the first theaters to put alcohol service and alcoholic beverage lounges into our lobbies. We've also moved to a better food and beverage menu, with more complete meals available at most of our locations. We've done a lot of different things over the years—as our audience has been looking for more and better amenities from cinemas—to serve that audience and improve our opportunities for sales.

You've been in this business a long time. What fresh joys and challenges have these past two years brought you?

We've been through a series of hurdles. It started with the pandemic back in 2020, and when the pandemic ended, we were

"People do want to get out of the house: People are still interested in going to the movies. Once we get them back in the theater, it's our job to find ways to get them back in on a continuous, regular basis and build that momentum."

faced with this environment where the studios were putting a lot of resources into streaming. We've shown ourselves to be resilient in that regard. If we put out great movies, customers were coming to the theaters and did want to get out of the house. So I think we kind of conquered that as an industry. Then we came up to the strikes, the Screen Actors Guild strike and the Writers Guild strike, and the lag period in production after that strike was finally settled.

We're just now coming back to somewhere close to the reality of production we had before the pandemic. Now we just need to demonstrate that the industry is resilient, that the industry will serve a broad audience, and that we can play movies that are primarily for seniors, families, young adults, and teens. We can create momentum through the calendar and build attendance from the point after the production lag due to the strikes to where we're back to full production, with a full slate of titles and a consistency of titles.

The fall slate and beyond is looking really good.

It looks really good. What I love to see is

how a number of movies [have] overperformed. The overperformance that we saw, for example with *It Ends with Us* and *Twisters*, that's significant stuff, because it indicates that maybe some of these surveys are old news. People do want to get out of the house: People are still interested in going to the movies. Once we get them back in the theater, it's our job to find ways to get them back in on a continuous, regular basis and build that momentum.

I felt that our performance, for example on *IF*, and our catering to families, helped propel *Inside Out 2*. The opening wasn't as strong as we wanted, but its length of run was really good. It helped give us a lead into *Inside Out 2*, and that overperformed and was a magnificent thing this summer. It's building those first titles and getting people in the door and getting them to see trailers, standees, and posters. Then once you get the big picture, the blockbusters like *Inside Out 2*, it's keeping that momentum going into *Despicable Me 4* and to other titles like *Harold and the Purple Crayon* as we move through the calendar.

It's all about the momentum and the consistency, isn't it? Getting people in and excited about the following week.

Yes, exactly, and giving them a great time. I mean, we're all about entertainment. I say to the staffers, "We've got to create a fun atmosphere. Please have fun with customers. Make them feel like they're a guest and make them feel like you're at a fun place." We have fun here at the theater.

Do you remember the first movie you saw in a theater?

It was downtown about a block and a half away from my office right now. It's currently a legit [performing arts] theater, but it was a downtown movie palace back in the '60s. My mother took me to see *Pinocchio*.

Was that your hometown theater growing up?

My hometown suburban theater was on the southwest side of Milwaukee, and it was originally over 1,000 seats with a single auditorium. We played *Earthquake*, *Tommy*, *Grease*, and a lot of big attractions there. We played them for a very long time. I remember opening *Grease*, I think in June, and I believe we were still playing it in December! ♥

CONGRATULATIONS

2024 SHOWEAST AWARD WINNERS

MARK GRAMZ

PRESIDENT, MARCUS THEATRES

Salah M. Hassanein Humanitarian Award

MELANIE VALERA

PARAMOUNT PICTURES

Al Shapiro Distinguished Service Award

We are excited to recognize these two individuals and all of the other winners. Thank you for your dedication and leadership in the exhibition industry!



GIVING BACK

Paramount's Melanie Valera Is 2024's AI Shapiro Distinguished Service Award Winner

BY REBECCA PAHLE



→ The AI Shapiro Distinguished Directors: Service Award is awarded annually to someone whose dedication to helping the cinema community exemplifies the industry's generous spirit. It's hard to think of a better candidate than this year's honoree, Melanie Valera, SVP general sales manager at Paramount Pictures. Starting with her early years as a sales clerk at then-new DreamWorks, Valera has been a tireless supporter of a number of institutions that give back to the industry, including the Will Rogers Motion Picture Pioneers Foundation (WRMPPF) and the New York-based Motion Picture Club, serving as a board member at both. In 2019, Valera became the founding president of Film Row, a division of WRMPPF that cultivates the next generation of cinema industry leaders through mentorship and educational and networking opportunities. Valera spoke with BOXOFFICE PRO about the importance of immersing oneself in the history and community of the cinema world.

You started working at DreamWorks as a sales agent, then moved to Miramax as sales coordinator before moving to Paramount, where you've been for twenty years. How did you come to work in the cinema industry in the first place?

I fell into this industry. If you talk to most people, they don't even know that this part of the business exists. I was one of those people. I was fresh out of college, and the only thing I could come up with was that I really liked movies. I thought, "Well, what can I do with that?" I was temping right out of college at an insurance company. My boss there knew someone in the industry and said, "I have no idea what this person does, but I'm happy to send your résumé over." And the person that they ended up sending my résumé over to was Lew O'Neil. Sadly, Lew recently passed away. He was beloved in this industry; just a wonderful guy. He was working at Fox at the time [as senior vice president of domestic theatrical distribution], and he was hiring for the position of gross clerk.

He said, "I want to offer you the job, but before I do that, I have a colleague who just started at a brand new company. The principals are Katzenberg, Spielberg,

"[Creating Film Row] was such a great opportunity to bridge the gap between the veterans in the business and the younger generation. That's something that was lacking."

and Geffen, and they're looking for some great people over there. If you're OK with it, I would like to send your resume over to a man named Jim Smith at this company called DreamWorks." I jumped at the chance. It was a fresh, exciting new company.

That's really how I got into the business. [I later transitioned to] Miramax and moved to New York early in my career. I spent 10 years in New York; it was a wonderful time in the industry. Then I came back in 2011 to Paramount. Everything happens for a reason. Ironically, Jim Smith was my very first boss in this business and a great mentor, and he was actually my *last* boss in this industry before he retired in December and I stepped into his role as general sales manager. So it came full circle.

It's so fascinating to talk to some of those veteran cinema executives. This is an industry that has a real respect for its history.

Absolutely. The thing that attracted me most to this business is the community within it. I certainly grew up in this business in L.A. during the first

three years of my career [working] with a lot of young up-and-comers over at DreamWorks. When I moved to New York, I only knew a handful of people—if that—and I was embraced by everyone. That's when I got very involved with the Motion Picture Club, because a lot of colleagues were part of it. It was something I knew I wanted to be a part of. It was a really exciting and fun time to be in New York and to be a part of that organization and everything that they do, giving back to the industry and fundraising for other charities, [plus] the social aspect of it.

I'm glad I got the exposure that I did.

A key part of that community today is Flim Row, a division of the Will Rogers Motion Picture Pioneers Foundation that cultivates a new generation of leadership in the industry. Can you talk a bit about how you came to be involved in its creation?

[Will Rogers' then-Director of Operations] Christina Blumer and [then-Executive Director] Todd Vradenburg came to me and a few others and said, "I know you were part of the Motion Picture Club"—and I'm still on the board, because it's something I'm so dedicated to—"How do we do something to spotlight education and give to the younger generation [as] a spinoff of Will Rogers?" Me and a couple of other colleagues, including Jeff Wilk over at Warner Bros., came together and said, "There's a lot that we can do here." Todd and Christina gave us free [rein] to put something together. We really wanted to be mindful of aligning our goals. There are so many great things that Will Rogers does. I currently serve on the Will Rogers Motion Picture Pioneers Foundation board, and I'm thrilled to be a part of that. But, going back to Film Row, it was such a great opportunity to bridge the gap between the veterans in the business and the younger generation. That's something that was lacking. [In March 2019,] I became the first president of Film Row. We worked really hard to stay engaged with with the film industry, and it's really blossomed into something amazing. Jeff Wilk was vice president when I was president. He became president, and Frank Martinez [of A24] was his vice president. Now Frank Martinez is the new president. I'm really

proud of everything that they've accomplished and everything that we've put into it.

We always try and have that educational component, which is really important. We also highlight the importance of networking and philanthropy. The social aspect is always there, because we all like to have a good time, but that's secondary to all the other items. With the mentorship program that we launched, we've had such great success. So many people have said, after the [mentorship officially ended], "I still keep in touch with my mentee"—or my mentor. It's really built relationships, and it's such a great networking opportunity. I'm a huge fan of that program. In addition to that, we've got the trivia night, which is a great fundraising event that's a lot of fun. It's one of our most well-attended events. And then the Lunch & Learns. We launched LEAD [Leadership, Education, Advancement, Diversity], which is the diversity and inclusion branch of Film Row, and they've done tremendous things with their speaker series. We've really engaged the veterans and the younger generation. It's really exciting.

What's your overall impression of the younger generation in this industry?

The younger generation is very hungry. There's a long history of how this business has evolved, and that's one thing that I've always tried to instill within our Film Row board members and within the groups that I'm involved with, because you can't really know where you're going until you know where you came from. There's a lot of interest in how things were done back then. That's part of these programs that we put together, like the Lunch & Learns or the speaker series: talking about the history [of this industry] and how it's evolved. There's a huge curiosity for that.

It's very different from when I started in this business nearly 30 years ago. First off, there weren't formal programs like these, where you had mentorship opportunities. The engagement [these groups] get from the younger generation who are eager to sign up, eager to come to these events, eager to connect with these top-level executives, says a lot about the younger generation. They're trying to further themselves and their careers. I'm

"There's a long history of how this business has evolved, and that's one thing that I've always tried to instill within our Film Row board members and within the groups that I'm involved with, because you can't really know where you're going until you know where you came from."

glad we can provide that opportunity to connect everybody, because when I grew up in this business, it was a very different landscape, and the opportunities were certainly more scarce than they are today.

What was your childhood cinema?

I went to a few different theaters. The UA Warner Center [in Woodland Hills, California] was a theater with a sloped floor that I used to go to all the time, and there was also the Mann Valley West in Tarzana. I distinctly remember when AMC opened the Promenade in Woodland Hills. I was a teenager by then. That was the most mind-blowing experience, because there was stadium seating and everything was beautiful and brand new. That became my go-to theater. I distinctly remember that was the place to be. It was the best place to watch a movie. Sadly, they closed down that theater not too long ago. They've since built the AMC Topanga over at the Topanga Mall. But the Promenade has a special place in my heart, because there was nothing like it that I had experienced up to that point. The

stadium seating was so cutting edge!

I still love going to the movies. I love being in the auditorium as a shared experience and talking about the movie with my friends and family afterwards. There's really nothing like it.

What's your day-to-day like as the general sales manager at Paramount?

In my current role as general sales manager, I'm overseeing the sales department. It's such a different landscape compared to what it used to be, because there are so many different formats. We release [films] in 3D, in Imax, in 4DX, in Dolby. It's having those discussions with all of the theater chains and getting aligned with them. A lot of it is managing the team, making sure we're setting up our movies for success. There's a lot of build-up to the release, but how do we take care of those movies and make sure that we're servicing them properly beyond opening week? You have to capitalize in a very crowded space. It's trying to maximize the box office in every way possible and making sure I'm communicating with the team and that we're communicating with each other.

A very relationship-heavy role in a very relationship-heavy industry.

Absolutely. The other thing that's great is the ability to work with other [Paramount] departments. We work closely with with marketing, and we're all connected to each other's operations, like the home entertainment portion of the company. The lifespan of a movie doesn't end when it comes out in movie theaters. There's a lot of interactive communication within departments, too. I work closely with [President of Domestic Distribution] Chris Aronson, who has such vast knowledge of both exhibition and distribution. He's such a great advocate for our team, and I'm thrilled he's at the helm.

Aside from the Motion Picture Club and Will Rogers, are there any other industry nonprofits that you've been involved with?

I don't currently serve on other boards, but I'm fully supportive of all of these other groups within the industry, [like Variety - the Children's Charity, Young Variety, and the Lollipop Theater Network]. I try to attend all the events.

Donating is always important, but by that same token, it's important to donate your time. That's the other thing that I try to be mindful of, as well.

The reason I'm so immersed in Will Rogers specifically is that they give back to the industry. There are a lot of people who are falling on hard times. It's important to support Will Rogers, because [they treat the industry like] a family, and they take care of their family. We're all related to each other. We have to work to get that message out there to the younger generation, because they might not be fully aware of what Will Rogers does and how they can serve each and everyone in this industry.

Going back to what you said earlier: Networking is such a huge part of this industry. If you do fall on hard times, it's critical to have a network, and groups like Will Rogers and the Motion Picture Club can help you cultivate that.

I lived in New York from 2001 to 2011, and I was asked to be a part of the Motion

"The reason I'm so immersed in Will Rogers specifically is that they give back to the industry. There are a lot of people who are falling on hard times. It's important to support Will Rogers, because [they treat the industry like] a family, and they take care of their family."

Picture Club right away. I did not hesitate for a second, because of the community and the people involved. Everyone cares. Everything kind of gets squeezed as time goes on; budgets are tight, and it's a little more difficult to get approvals. But it's a very important part of our business. I feel the need to continue to support the Motion Picture Club, whether I'm in New York or L.A., and to make people aware of what the Motion Picture Club is. Their fundraising efforts have been tremendous in helping the film community, and all the different [charitable initiatives] they support are amazing. They bring together everyone in the industry. I just recently went to their annual golf outing, and it's just so nice to be around the community. People make the effort to go out to New York, because these are iconic events that really bring the community together, whether you're in L.A. or Dallas or New York or even Canada. People are eager to be together and support one another and support the Motion Picture Club. I'm glad I can be a part of that. ♥

THE **BOXOFFICE** COMPANY WEBEDIA GROUP

Congratulations to ShowEast 2024 Honoree, Melanie Valera

Al Shapiro Distinguished Service Award





CINESYSTEM CINEMAS TO RECEIVE SHOWEAST'S ENRIQUE RAMIREZ LATAM EXHIBITOR OF THE YEAR AWARD

→ Cinesystem Cinemas will receive the Enrique Ramirez LATAM Exhibitor of the Year Award as part of the International Awards Luncheon at this year's edition of ShowEast. Marcos Barros, founder and chairman of Cinesystem, will accept the award.

"ShowEast is thrilled to honor Cinesystem Cinemas with this year's LATAM Exhibitor of the Year award," said Andrew Sunshine, president of Film Expo Group. "We commend them for their successes in the LATAM region and congratulate them on this richly deserved honor."

Cinesystem Cinemas is a Brazilian cinema chain that operates 27 multiplexes with 182 screens across 18 cities. Known for its strategic innovations, Cinesystem introduced Brazil's first 100 percent digital

cinema and Latin America's first cinema with laser projection.

Cinesystem was a pioneer in Brazil: Innovations include its self-service concept and the Cinepic auditorium, which features a Dolby Atmos sound system. The chain also offers screening concepts to Brazilian moviegoers, like Cine

Atelier, Cine Pets, and Cine Azul, plus the Clube da Pipoca loyalty program.

In 2024, Cinesystem expanded to Distrito Federal and Porto Alegre and increased its presence in São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro by acquiring five new multiplexes with over 40 screens. This expansion reflects Cinesystem's ongoing commitment to Brazilian culture.

Marcos Barros started his career in Maringá (Paraná State, Brazil), where he is still a partner in one of the biggest media groups in the state. Barros entered the movie exhibition market in 1999, when he acquired his first two movie theaters, also in Maringá. In 2003, he founded the Cinesystem brand, expanding the business to other Brazilian states and cities. He is now the CEO and chairman of the company's board. Additionally, Barros is president of the Brazilian Association of Cinema Exhibition Companies Operators of Multiplexes (ABRAPLEX) and a member of the Superior Cinema Council (CSC), a collegiate body belonging to the Brazilian Ministry of Tourism. ▶



warmly congratulates

**Bobbie, Brittanie, & Brock Bagby,
B&B Theatres**

Dan Fellman Show "E" Award

Larry Etter, Malco Theatres

NAC ICON Award

Melanie Valera, Paramount Pictures

Al Shapiro Distinguished Service Award

Robert Smerling, Reading International

Bingham Ray Spirit Award

Mark Gramz, Marcus Theatres

Salah M. Hassanein Humanitarian Award

And All Other 2024 ShowEast Honorees



screenvisionmedia.com

SHOWEAST 2024 LATAM DISTRIBUTOR OF THE YEAR AWARD LUIS CARCHERI

→ Luis Carcheri, proprietor of Distribuidora Romaly, S.A., will receive the LATAM Distributor of the Year Award as part of this year's ShowEast International Awards Luncheon.

"ShowEast is thrilled to honor Mr. Carcheri with this year's LATAM Distributor of the Year Award," said Andrew Sunshine, president of Film Expo Group. "He has valiantly promoted distribution in Costa Rica and the LATAM region. We congratulate him on this richly deserved honor."

Past recipients of this prestigious award include Diamond Films, Marcio Fraccaroli of Paris Filmes, Pedro Rodríguez of IDC, Martin Iraola of Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures, and Monique Esclavissat of Warner Bros. Pictures International.

Luis Federico Carcheri Schwartz was born in Panama and holds a degree in economics from the University of Panama.

He began his career in 1975, when he entered into a small family business with two very successful movie theaters, led by Viola Schwartz (Cinema Capitólio and Cinema Central). This led to the founding of a small film distribution company called Latin American Film Investment.

In 1980, Carcheri moved to Costa Rica to join Antonio Hassan and his company Romaly, S.A. There, he embarked on the task of promoting cinematic exhibition in Costa Rica. While in Costa Rica, Romaly, S.A. developed five new complexes, breathing new life into the country's movie business. In 1990, Carcheri successfully advocated for a major change in the rating system law before the Supreme Court of Costa Rica. Afterwards, the Board of Censors could no longer prohibit a film; they were allowed only to establish restrictions by age.

In 1995, as director of distribution at

Romaly, S.A., he was appointed the Costa Rican distributor of UIP (Paramount and Universal Pictures) releases. In 2020, with the support of his daughter Annabelle, he became UIP's distributor in El Salvador as well. In 2010, he successfully reopened the prestigious movie theater Cine Magaly. Still an icon in Costa Rica, the Cine Magaly has two screens with 569 seats, plus an additional 75-seat screening room named La Salita (The Living Room). Run by solar panels and equipped with the latest in projection, Cine Magaly has become an important stop for upscale films and film festivals in Costa Rica.

For the last 14 years, Carcheri has served as president of the Association of Distributors and Exhibitors of Costa Rica. Currently, he is working on a proposal to the government about modernizing the rating system in the region, specifically in Costa Rica and El Salvador. ■

LARRY ETTER

MALCO THEATRES' SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT RECEIVES THE NAC ICON AWARD

BY CHAD KENNERK

→ Larry Etter has led a distinguished career with the National Association of Concessionaires (NAC) and Memphis-based Malco Theatres. His exhibition journey at Malco began in 1997 and in addition to his role as Malco's senior vice president, Etter has served as NAC chairman of the board and as a longtime NAC director of education. His commitment to educating and inspiring the next generation has led to the development of food service curriculum for several universities and online platforms. Etter created an accredited recreational food service management class at Auburn University and is an adjunct professor in the University of Memphis' Kemmons Wilson School of Hospitality and Resort Management, where he has conducted extensive food service research projects. Etter helped build online programs for the NAC and worked with Experia and NSF to develop the recreational food service food safety exam, as well as NSF's nationally certified food safety manual. He has been a frequent speaker at a wide variety of industry focused conferences, such as CinemaCon, and has presented certification classes and seminars in over 50 cities and 14 countries. He currently teaches a one-day accreditation class for recreational food service managers, a three-day concession managers certification class for NAC, and the ACS certification for suppliers and sales professionals.

Etter's previous accolades include the NAC Bert Nathan Memorial Award at ShoWest 2003, the Outstanding Leadership Award from TSTIA Owners in 2001, and an honorary doctorate of food service from the North American Foodservice Equipment Association. He was inducted

into the 2003 TSITOA Hall of Fame and received the NAC Mickey Warner Award in 2012. In 2018, Etter became the first food and beverage operator to be inducted into the ShowEast Hall of Fame, and this year, Etter will receive the NAC Icon Award at ShowEast 2024. "Larry Etter's commitment for over 16 years as the director of education for the NAC along with his 30 years of involvement in leadership roles within NAC has set Larry apart in our industry," says Rob Novak, the president of NAC. "The executive board of the NAC is so proud to acknowledge all that Larry has done for our industry and bestow open him the 2024 NAC Icon Award."

Congratulations on receiving the NAC Icon Award. You have a long and rich history with the NAC. How did it all begin?

I've been a member of NAC for nearly 40 years. I attended my first NAC meeting in 1985, out in Los Angeles, in conjunction with what was then ShoWest. I was a newbie and I'll never forget how the elder statesman embraced me as a nobody, a newbie, and a freshman. They introduced me to the right kind of people and helped me learn. At the time, I was in the diversified part of the industry. I was doing stadiums, arenas, amusement parks, and we were also managing zoos. That's really where my career started and how I got connected with NAC. I found it to be a really good portal for me to network and gain experiences from the people that had already 'been there and done that'. That formed a foundation for me as I've progressed with NAC. In 1992, I was appointed to the board of directors as a regional vice president and I always wanted, from that point on, to give back to

the next generation as much as I possibly could, because individuals had taken the time to help me when they didn't have to. I went from being regional vice president to chairman of the marketing committee, and I was also chairman of the finance committee. I handled two conventions—one in St. Louis and one in Washington, D.C. NAC was almost bankrupt back in the early 2000s. We were able to change and modify some of the practices, and we resurrected ourselves. I was president of NAC and then chairman of the board. I realized that we had a director of education who was a great statesman, but he was 88 years old. I approached the board of directors and I said, "I'm going to recommend you find somebody as a substitute. As long as he's qualified and able, that would be fine." They said, "Okay, we nominate you." So I agreed to be a substitute, because I had a full-time job at Malco Theatres at the time. That's how I moved from the president's position to the chairman of the board. Once they had a substitute, he retired. I thought, "Well, it won't be long. They'll find somebody to become the director of education for NAC. I'll just kind of sit in this position until they find someone." Here we are, some 17-18 years later.

What were some of the initiatives that you helped spearhead or implement as director of education?

At the time, NAC only had two certification programs. They had the CCM program, which is the concession manager certification. They had just created a kind of graduate master's program called the executive concession managers program. The CCM program is really a four-day



certification class that discusses five particular modules: management and leadership, profitability and budget management, event planning, cost control, and menu engineering and development. There were only a limited number of individuals that could take that class. You were supposed to have a senior-level management position in order to be able to be certified. It was my initiative to say, “Wait a minute, there are a lot of people in junior management or even supervisory positions that need to understand the business acumen of what happens in recreational food service management.”

I never liked the term concessions. I thought we were more developed and sophisticated than just snacks. As a matter of fact, when I was with NAC, they changed the name of their convention to the NAC Convention and Expo. My stance was: Individuals that are managing stadiums and arenas on the food and beverage side are managing \$10 million annual budgets and people in the theater industry are graduating; they’re not selling just popcorn and sodas anymore. We had become much more sophisticated. The initiative was to take that educational portal to an entry level. I also wrote at least six regional seminar series on leadership or marketing and promotions. On a two-year cycle, we would present seminars all across the United States and then that went international. These different seminars included topics like Leadership Counts and Concession Management 101. One of our problems on the education side was timing; nobody wants to go to school for a full semester. A full semester at the University of Memphis right now, or any university, is at least 14 weeks. Nobody has 14 weeks; as a matter of fact, people don’t have 14 hours. The challenge was to professionally engage and train in segments of an hour or two, giving people enough information or motivation to go back and integrate some of these practices that would improve profitability and presentation on the recreational food and beverage side.

I also wanted NAC to gain more credibility in their presentations, so I approached the University of Memphis, where I live, to see if they would teach an accredited class for recreational food service, where you get three hours in a hospitality channel of business. FIU (Florida International University) had a class that did that. A professor by the name of Mickey Warner

I never liked the term concessions. I thought we were more developed and sophisticated than just snacks.

was the godfather that started this. He wrote the CCM program. I took that initiative from him, approached the University of Memphis, and they said, “Yes, but we’ll only do it if you’ll teach.” So I became an adjunct professor. From that standpoint, I felt like NAC had the support of academia. I really felt like it was instrumental, because I didn’t know it at the time, but if you’re a teaching professor in any university, you’re required to do research. What it enabled me to do was start doing research with the support of the University of Memphis’ dollars. We got four or five significant research projects where they paid \$15,000 to \$20,000 to get the research done. It allowed me to teach more, because I could take that information and present it at places like CinemaCon or around the world.

Education and teaching the next generation has been a big focus in your career. A number of years ago, you literally wrote the book on the subject, *The Concessions Class: With a Few Condiments*.

I was doing seminars and educational pieces, and one of the things that I realized

was that there were a number of vendors, suppliers, and salespeople that didn’t understand our industry. Companies such as C. Cretors and Company, Gold Medal Products, and Vistar employed me to do a seminar teaching them the mindset of a buyer in our industry. One of the guys in one of the classes said, “This is so cool. You should write a book.” I just laughed at him. He said, “No, no, I’m serious.” So I sat down, and I started writing a book from the standpoint of, “How do you encourage people to get into this industry? What’s it really like?” I got to about chapter five, and then I realized how small our channel of work is. How many people are actually going to buy this book? This is not going to be on the *New York Times* Bestseller list. This is channel driven, and our channel is really small when you compare it to other industries. So I stopped. I’d worked on it for almost nine months, something like that. A bit of time went by and I picked up the manuscript again and about six months later, I finished it. The concept of it was, if you want to get into the business of—at the time, concessions—what will it take? What do you have to think about? What are the criteria that you’ll have to expect? You’re going to have to work long hours. You’re going to have to work when everybody else is off—weekends specifically are when people entertain themselves. It also talks a little bit about service. I had fun writing that book.

You mentioned that you started in the diversified sector of the business initially. What drew you specifically into exhibition?

I had been working for a food management group that was owned by the Coca-Cola bottling company here in Memphis, and they decided that they were selling to Coca-Cola Atlanta, and they weren’t going to be a family owned business anymore, and the Coca-Cola company in Atlanta decided that they didn’t want to be in the food service business. We had various channels: business dining, college dining, vending machines, and sports and recreation. They were spinning those businesses off, and when they did, it was time for me to leave. I dropped a résumé off at Malco Theatres, and low and behold, they picked it up and said, “Oh my gosh, you’re on the board at NAC and you have all these contacts.” In 1997 they invited me to work with the



family. That’s how I landed here. I felt really good about it, because in the previous 10 years or more, I had really learned the industry. When I stepped into these shoes, I already had the connections. When it was time to start setting up ways and means of running the business, I stepped right in. If the shoe fits, wear it.

Auburn University stadium, for example, seats 85,000 people and had six or seven home games a season. They had around 60 concession stands, and they also had catering in the sky boxes and the press box. We were running multiple levels of food service at the time. At Malco, we had 35 locations with one concession stand running for multiple screenings a day. So on a Saturday, you had the equivalent of a football stadium—it was just in six different states and 35 different locations. So I felt comfortable right away. I’ve always been an individual that tries to be very organized and a good planner. I think it worked out pretty well.

You’ve been with Malco over 27 years now. What has that experience meant to you?

I literally could not have found a better home. The family-owned organization was

The more money the studios make, the more product they’re going to make. What happens when we have product? Well, look at this summer. The business grows.

founded in 1915, so they’re 109 years old and fourth-generation exhibitors. One of the great things about this job is they’ve given me so much freedom. They’ve always displayed an extreme amount of confidence in my capabilities and abilities. They have never stopped me from continuing my education and sharing. They’ve always thought that whatever we can do to improve the experience in any movie theater will grow the business. Anytime people like going to the movies—whether it’s Memphis, Tennessee, or Los Angeles or Chicago or Dallas—we’re going to sell more movie tickets and the higher the grosses are. The more money the studios make, the more product they’re going to make. What happens when we have product? Well, look at this summer. The business grows. As long as we have product, Malco is going to be in business.

I’ve always appreciated the fact that while it is somewhat competitive, the reality is we’re in an industry where we have to be really good every day. If the New York Yankees were the only baseball team that was good, people wouldn’t go to baseball games. You need a lot of really good baseball teams to prove that the

Yankees are the best, or the St. Louis Cardinals around here. I think that was the philosophy of the family that really encouraged me and prompted me to share experiences and network and challenge each other. It encouraged me to help any young guys like myself coming into the industry, by sharing best practices. We all want the same thing. We want the perfect cinema experience. Malco has really given me the tools and the capabilities to perform and then share my experience. I also can't tell you how many times I've gone to other chains, done seminars for their employees, and how much they've taught me in return. While I'm talking to them, we're sharing ideas, and they've got a lot of things they're doing that are very successful.

It's the "rising tide that raises all ships" mentality, isn't it? Collaboration helps the entire industry succeed.

I like the idea of being collaborative. Malco's very collaborative. The family has been really, really good to me. I can think about a number of different scenarios with different companies where you don't talk to other people and you don't leave the four walls of the organization. I think it's been a

good fit for both of us, because I certainly am very self-motivated. I want to be creative and state-of-the-art, because that's what our patrons are looking for. Somebody told me a long time ago, the way to make money is just find a need and fill it. Seems pretty simple, right? Think about the cinema industry and what we've done.

When I started with Malco, we were transforming and retooling all the theaters from slow floors to stadium-style seating. That was expensive, and it was a challenge, but we found a need and filled it. After that it was digital projectors. Again, we had to retool and reinvent ourselves, and it was very expensive, but we did. The next thing we had was recliner seats. We just barely got the digital projectors paid for and we were doing recliners. The whole time that's going on, we're revitalizing the food and beverage program, because it wasn't just about popcorn and soda anymore. We were doing pizzas and then we started doing burgers. Then we introduced alcohol. We started out soft with beer and wine, and we found out there's a bigger market available. It's a constant evolution, giving patrons what they're looking for; something outside the home that they can't get anywhere else.

Otherwise, they're not going to come. You have to give them an experience. As long as the studios continue to give outstanding product, we can provide what I call "the polish."

When I first came to Malco, one of my responsibilities was to function as a training director. Every time we opened a new theater, we had a series of training exercises. One of the things that I would always leave our employees with is, "I don't care how good the script is, how good the score is, how good the direction, or how good the actor is. We in the cinema put the final polish on every film. If they walk into a theater and it's hot and we're rude and the soda is flat and the popcorn is greasy and cold and they sit in an auditorium where the sound is sketchy, then that movie has a totally different reception. As opposed to when they walk into a building that's clean, where they're greeted with a smile, the soda is great, the popcorn is fresh, and they sit in an auditorium where the presentation is perfect. Then they walk out having shared that emotional experience." We, on the exhibition side, have that responsibility. We put the final polish on every film released. ■



CONGRATULATIONS

SHOWEAST & NAC ICON AWARD

LARRY ETTER

Senior Vice President, Malco Theatres

DAN FELLMAN SHOW "E" AWARD

BOBBIE, BRITTANIE, AND BROCK BAGBY

Co-Presidents, B&B Theatres

B&B THEATRES 2024 INDUCTEE

DAN VANORDEN

AS WELL AS ALL 2024 AWARD RECIPIENTS!



FROM YOUR FRIENDS AT



TM, ® & © 2024 PIM Brands, Inc. The Welch's name and banner are registered trademarks of Welch Foods Inc. A cooperative. All Rights Reserved. © Trademark of & © Sun-Maid Growers of California, 2024. www.PIMBrands.com. 1 PIM Plaza, Park Ridge, NJ 07656. TEL: 1-800-369-7391



CHRISTINA BLUMER RECEIVES SHOWEAST COCA-COLA EMPOWERMENT AWARD

→ Christina Blumer, executive director of the Will Rogers Motion Picture Pioneers Foundation, will receive the ShowEast Coca-Cola Empowerment Award. The award will be presented on Wednesday, October 23, as part of the ShowEast Breakfast Program at the Loews Miami Beach Hotel. Past recipients of this

award include Elizabeth Frank, Joe Masher, and Rebecca Stein.

“The motion picture community thrives thanks to the advocacy and visionary leadership of people like Christina, who have made a profound impact on so many lives,” said Andrew Sunshine, president of the Film Expo

Group. “In partnership with Coca-Cola, ShowEast is truly excited to present this award to someone so deserving and whose dedication and influence continue to drive positive change. Christina represents the past, the present, and the future as the executive director of the motion picture industry’s largest philanthropic organization.”

“We are thrilled to celebrate Christina with this year’s Coca-Cola Empowerment Award,” added Josh Nations, global vice president of strategic partnerships at Coca-Cola. “This recognition is a testament to Christina’s commitment to and passion for supporting theatrical exhibition, and we are grateful for the profound impact she makes on the industry through the Will Rogers Motion Picture Pioneers Foundation.”

Blumer has been executive director of the Will Rogers Motion Picture Pioneers Foundation since June of 2022. She is the first woman appointed to the executive director position since 1975, when Lois Lewis ran the motion picture industry charity. Named after one of the greatest humanitarians, philanthropists, and entertainers of all time, the Will Rogers Motion Picture Pioneers Foundation was created in 1936 to continue Rogers’ legacy through three programs: Brave Beginnings, the Will Rogers Institute, and the Pioneers Assistance Fund. The foundation is committed to providing financial assistance, resources, and social services to working and retired members of the motion picture community in times of need.

Blumer oversees the organization’s day-to-day activities, provides leadership to staff, advises the board of directors, and maintains relationships with the motion picture industry at large. She previously worked as the foundation’s director of development, overseeing fundraising and donor relations, and as director of operations, where she expanded industry relations and supervised programs and services. She was instrumental in the development of the Film Row program, which provides leadership development opportunities for the next generation of industry leaders.

Blumer also serves on the board of directors of the Motion Picture Club, a New York City-based organization that fosters camaraderie in the film community while raising funds for industry-related charities. ▶



Once upon a time in Hollywood...

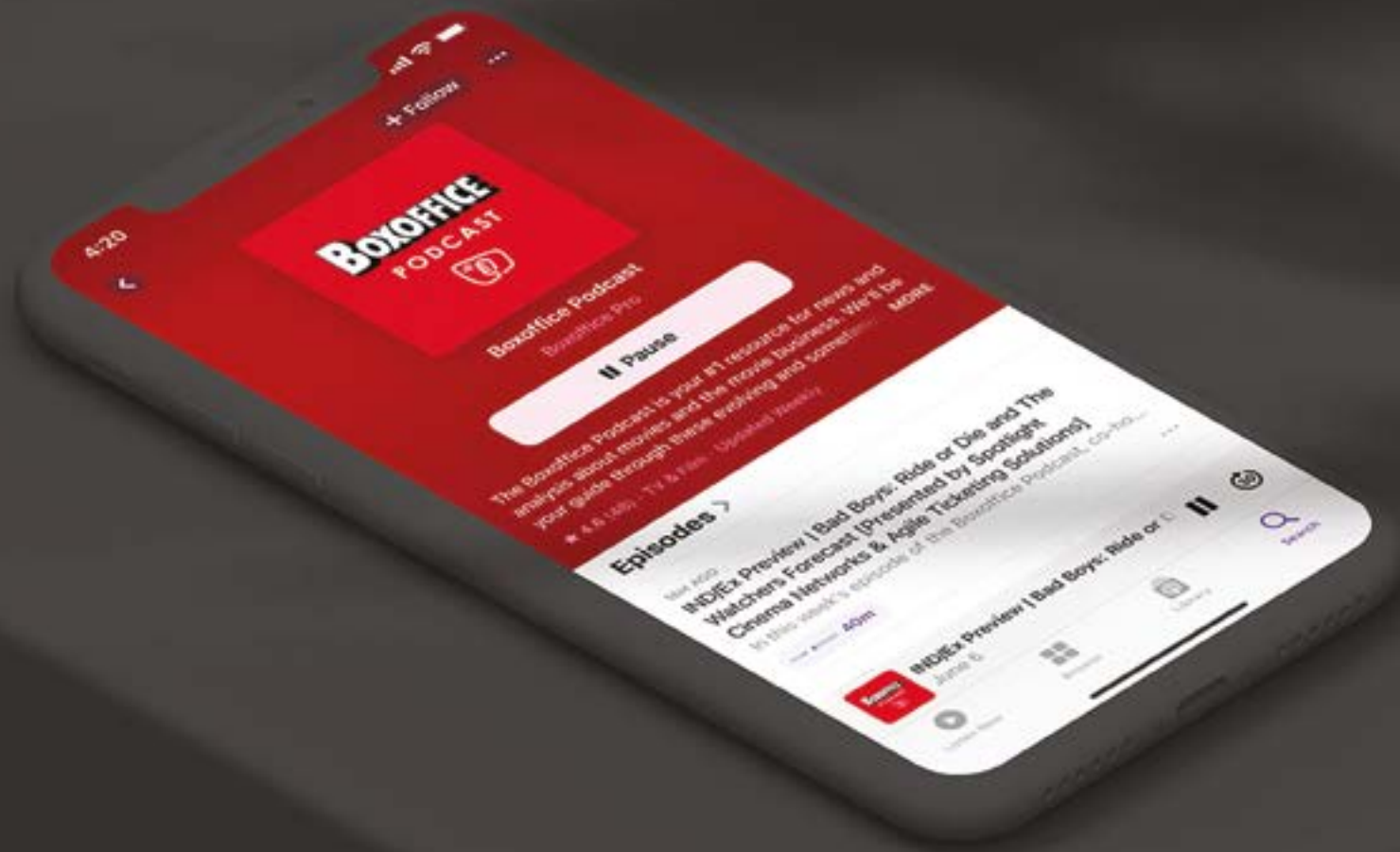
Quentin Tarantino and his team reached out to Proctor Companies to design and build his dream theatre. The result? The Vista Theatre, Hollywood, California. Renovated with an eye for retro styling, this 100 year old cinema absolutely oozes eclectic coolness, just like its owner. Groovy!



PROCTOR COMPANIES

The Boxoffice Podcast is your weekly podcast all about the cinema industry.

Every week we break down major industry news, dissect box office results and connect with studio and cinema executives to talk market trends and industry shifts in theatrical exhibition and entertainment at large.



Search for *Boxoffice Podcast* on your favorite podcast app.



Premium Formats **54** | Specialty Audiences **60** | Concessions Merchandising **66**

THEATER



“For the third consecutive year, growth was elevated by exhibitor-branded PLF screens, which recorded a slightly larger 3.6 percent increase. This growth provides an opportunity to expand the range of premium concepts to cater to specific audiences.”

Premium Formats Go from Strength to Strength, p. 54



PREMIUM FORMATS GO FROM STRENGTH TO STRENGTH

Omdia Updates the Expansion of Premium Formats Worldwide

DIRECTORS: BY CHARLOTTE JONES, SENIOR PRINCIPAL ANALYST, MEDIA AND ENTERTAINMENT, OMDIA



➔ Premium format auditoriums are the industry’s flagship screens. They play a key role in driving prestige and buzz around new movie releases: The ability to buy into this “prestige” is now essential to moviegoing. The essentials of the premium large format (PLF) concept—superior technological attributes and a larger screen—are widening to encompass a broader section of the overall screen base. In doing so, the classification has expanded to include lower-tier screens, opening up another segment of the market and increasing opportunities for audiences to choose their preferred experience.

Premium screens help drive the all-important opening weekend box office and are the first to be booked, often weeks in advance. With major releases such as Universal’s *Oppenheimer* acting as catalysts in 2023, the total number of premium screens—including PLF, 4D seating, and immersive motion seating (IMS)—rose by just over four percent in 2023, to 7,850 from 7,550 in the previous year. Premium formats are a fast-growing segment of the industry (in fact, the fastest growing), in contrast to stagnation in total screen counts, which edged up by just 0.2

Exhibitors need to continue investing in new formats and developing innovative and immersive spaces, especially with the raft of strong titles on the horizon, including the next film in the *Avatar* franchise in December 2025.

percent (to 214,000 worldwide) in 2023, and a market readjustment of total screen counts in other territories such as North America and the United Kingdom.

Exhibitors need to continue investing in new formats and developing innovative and immersive spaces, especially with the raft of strong titles on the horizon, including the next film in the *Avatar* franchise in December 2025. The extent of this progress, however, is dependent on exhibitors’ finances, which were stretched thin after four years of hardship due to the pandemic and then suffered a further blow from the Hollywood strikes, which weakened 2024’s film slate.

GROWTH IN A CHALLENGING PHASE

The number of PLF screens reached approximately 5,650 worldwide in 2023, equivalent to a modest 2.6 percent annual growth rate. This should be viewed positively considering the more challenging 2024 box office trajectory, which comes amid wider casualties in terms of exhibitor bankruptcies and site closures, including, in some cases, the loss of PLF screens. The total also includes market

adjustments in China, a substantial factor given the number of inactive screens, financial challenges, and strategy changes in local formats across the territory. In fact, without China, the overall growth rate stands at 6.1 percent.

Several factors were behind this continued growth, including expansion to new territories such as Kosovo and Mongolia, the launch of new exhibitor PLF brands among smaller and midsized operators, and the establishment of new tiers of premium screens.

For the third consecutive year, growth was elevated by exhibitor-branded PLF screens, which recorded a slightly larger 3.6 percent increase. This growth provides an opportunity to expand the range of premium concepts to cater to specific audiences. Nonetheless, the key global formats, such as Imax and Dolby Cinema, remain the gold standard in terms of experience and quality: They are the leading formats, with screens across 88 international territories in 2023. Imax continues to overindex on “Filmed for Imax” releases and will release 14 titles in 2025 (including a regional Chinese film), its highest total to date.

Cinity and ICE Theaters were among the fastest-growing PLF brands, albeit at a lower level. Cinity was established in China and then launched into international territories in 2022, including Switzerland, Germany, and Spain. ICE is also present in multiple global markets, including India, Estonia, Saudi Arabia, the United States, France, and Spain.

FOCUS ON PREMIUM FORMAT GROWS

According to Omdia, North America was again the largest territory for exhibitor PLF screens, with over 900 in 2023, followed by China (which has the largest exhibitor PLF footprint overall). In 2023, Japan became the fourth territory to record more than 200 PLF screens after China, the United States, and Germany. Germany’s largest premium format is still from 4D/IMS, particularly D-Box seating.

Outside of the top five, Australia and France leapfrogged South Korea, which dropped lower down the top 10. Spain was also a new entrant in the top 20 as exhibitors branched out into a wider range of global formats. In total, there were 13 territories with over 100 PLF screens at the end of 2023. On the exhibitor-branded side, Australia climbed into third place overall, overtaking Brazil for the first time in 2023. Leading exhibitor brands include Hoyt’s Xtremescreen and Event Cinema’s Vmax. In Europe, the United Kingdom, Germany, and Ireland were the largest territories by exhibitor PLF screen count, just ahead of France and Spain.

Motion seating (including 4D) continues to expand, driven by audience curiosity about experiential effects and exhibitors’ efforts to attract and retain a younger demographic in today’s competitive leisure landscape. Total screens with motion seating (including 4D) rose by over 7 percent in 2023. D-Box placed haptic seats in a total of 939 screens worldwide as

of April 2024. CJ 4DPlex also grew across each of its three formats—4DX, ScreenX, and the combination format Ultra4DX—in 2023, for a total of over 1,170 screens. ScreenX is the third-largest PLF brand after Imax and CGS (Cinionic Giant Screen).

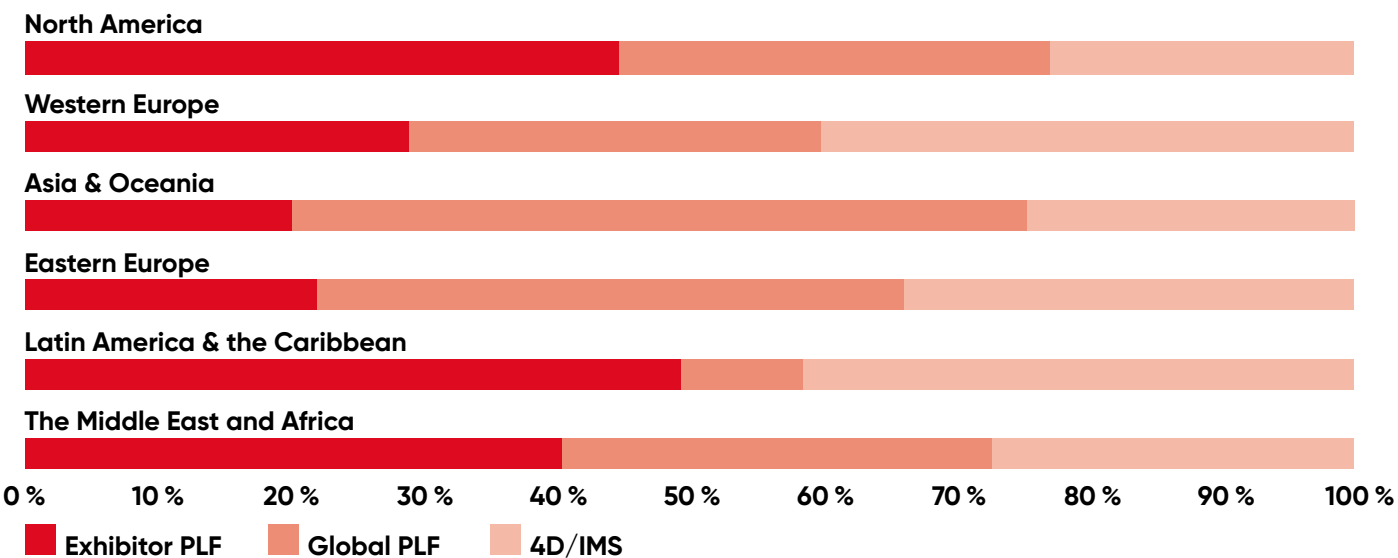
NEW DIRECTIONS IN PLF

As technology evolves and standards improve, opportunities to integrate the latest technologies such as HDR and HFR into existing formats or to launch new ones have expanded. In 2024, Barco launched its new technology format, HDR by Barco, based on its unique light-steering technology.

Omdia counted 19 individual global-branded formats in its 2023 data (PLF, 4D, and IMS) although this does not include the launch of the HeyLED PLF screen. A push towards LED could add another aspect to premium formats, depending on the best technology fit for the screen. In China, the government set targets for how many screens should use this technology.

PLF-integrated design is also an untapped market. In 2024, the first Ōma Cinema opened at Cinewest in Mougins, France, including one Ōma screen with 160 seats. Ōma also signed a deal with PVR and will continue to expand its footprint further. Ōma is the first of a new wave of PLF screens based around the design of the auditorium itself—representing a novel opportunity for the premium end of the market.

Regional Breakdown of PLF Screens, 2023





WHY PREMIUM WILL GROW IN IMPORTANCE

The market share of premium will edge up as new screens come online and as consumers continue to buy into the value-added experience—in other words, for as long as there's audience appetite for the format. Of 2023's titles, Omdia estimates just over one-third of box office came from premium formats in North America on opening weekend because audiences prefer PLF for experiencing the biggest movies.

However, premium formats can only feasibly support one major release at a time, representing a challenge for studios and underscoring opportunities to expand in underserved locations and territories such as Eastern Europe. Premium boutique circuits in the United Kingdom, such as Everyman and The Light Cinemas, already cater to the desire for premium experiences such as an elevated level of quality, luxury, and service. This model of cinema experience opens up further pockets of opportunity, despite more challenging operating conditions. In other areas, premium will have a more limited appeal due to price sensitivity or types of content.

However, premium formats can only feasibly support one major release at a time, representing a challenge for studios and underscoring opportunities to expand in underserved locations and territories such as Eastern Europe.

Audiences are now more discerning, so there is an inherent need to raise the bar for all types of screens and experiences: Most cinemagoing audiences in Omdia's Consumer Survey opt for premium experiences. Premium screens will, however, need to continue to evolve in order to stand out and justify the higher price and need for audience engagement.

Of course, producing more movies with these best-in-class experiences in mind will reinforce the growth and validity of these types of theatrical releases. Imax and other formats are extending their repertoire into non-movie content, including live sports, to appeal to a wider demographic, keeping in mind that a more diverse slate is required for sector health.

As the industry comes out of a lackluster period at the box office in 2024, and with key high-profile releases coming out in 2025 and 2026, premium formats will build cinemagoers' interest as well as drive the industry's journey towards a new level of recovery, reinvention, and innovation. With a number of premium releases slated for 2025 onwards, the industry will need more premium screens to fully realize the new potential of this medium. ▶

THE BIG SCREEN

PREMIUM CONTENT. CULTURAL MOMENTS.
PASSIONATE AUDIENCES. SHARED EXPERIENCES.

LASTING IMPACT!



Contact us today to learn more:
David Ostrander • 212.497.0490
dostrander@screenvisionmedia.com



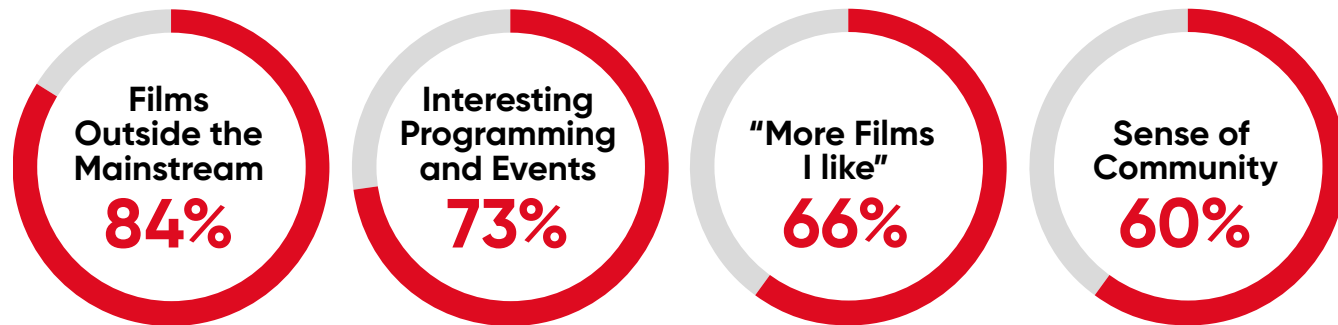
SPECIALTY AUDIENCES

The 2024 Art House Convergence National Audience Survey Shows Audiences Still Flock to Independent Cinemas

→ Industry group Art House Convergence released its largest member survey to date, reflecting the perspectives of 32,000 moviegoers across the country. The participants range in age from 15–98 years old and hail from all 50 states and the District of Columbia and represent 46 cinemas across the country. The National Audience Survey shows how crucial independent exhibitors are to the cultural lives of moviegoing audiences, a finding in sharp contrast to the prevailing narrative that the theatrical sector is in peril. Data from the respondents made it clear that art house audiences are alive and well, as existing and new patrons continue to return to their independent

community-driven cinemas. “While we’re constantly met with click-bait analysis about the perilous state of theatrical exhibition from Hollywood’s perspective, it was remarkable to hear from the audiences of independent cinemas across the United States for the results of our 2024 National Audience Survey,” said Kate Markham, Art House Convergence’s managing director. “What we learned, of course, is what we already knew to be true—art house audiences are still attending their local cinemas, and new and younger patrons are discovering these independent exhibitors; the creativity and variety of programming is what keeps them coming back.”

Top Reasons for Art House Cinema Visits



"These are the defining characteristics of an art house cinema, and this is why, as a sector of the exhibition industry, we're excited to share that our audiences and member cinemas are deeply committed to the theatrical experience," said Markham.

Audiences also reported an increase in the films they watch in their art house

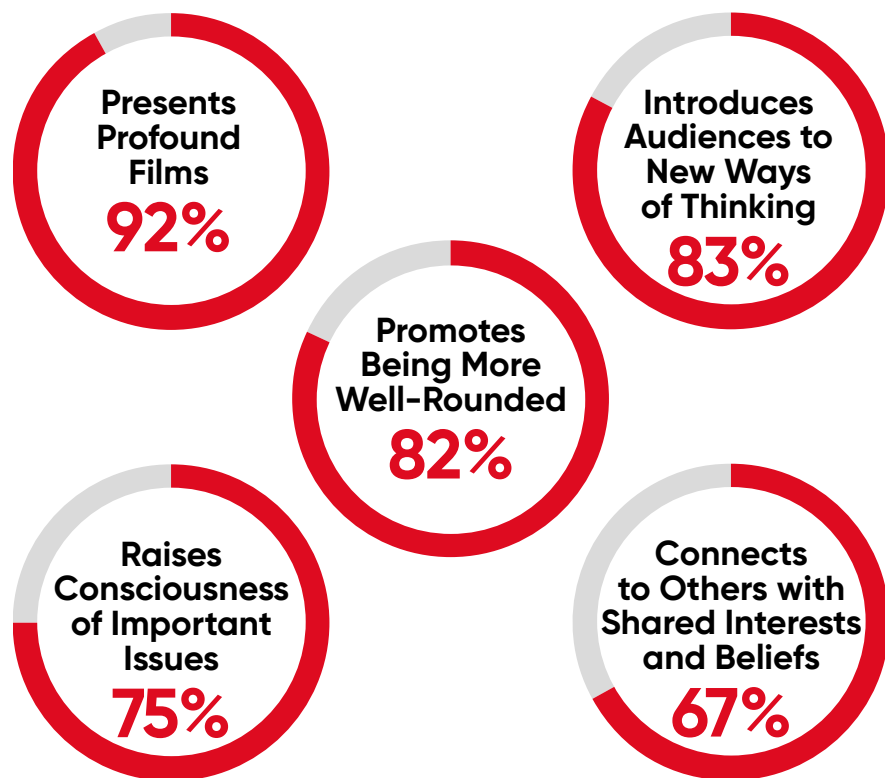
cinema (20% compared to 16% in 2019) versus the films they're watching in other theaters (19% in other theaters, compared to 15% in 2019) and at home (62%, compared to 69% in 2019). Moviegoers continue to value the role their local cinema plays in their community, with 74 percent of patrons reporting that their art

house theater is "extremely" or "very" valuable to their overall quality of life, up from 66 percent in 2019. Nearly half (43 percent) of respondents reported being members of their local art house organization, while a quarter of them are new attendees at their local cinema within the last three years.

Art houses serve as the backbone of the artistic, civic, and economic vitality of communities. 93 percent say their art house sparks arts and culture, and 90 percent agree that their art house is one of the best things about the community. 89 percent say that their cinema helps tell important stories that would otherwise not be told. 87 percent say their cinema is an anchor in their community. 77 percent say that their cinema enhances their community's economic vitality.

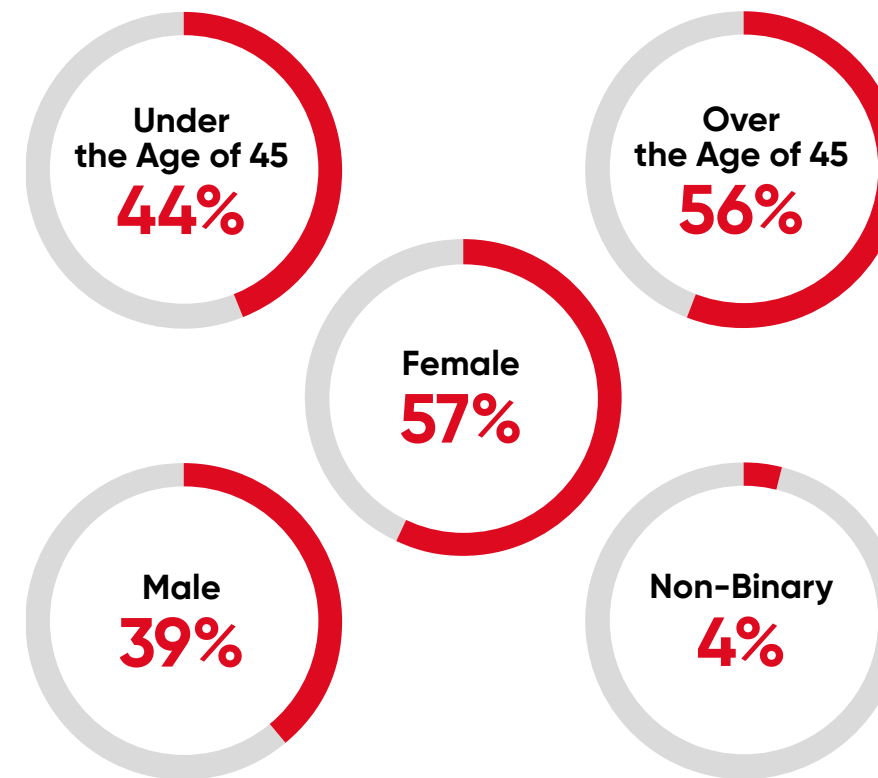
Although the traditional art house patron tends to be older, younger audiences are flocking to their local specialty theater more frequently since the pandemic. The average age of the overall audience at art house theaters is 50 (compared to 55 in 2019), while the average age of new attendees is 38.

Cultural Benefits of Art House Cinemas



Some of the 700+ attendees at 2024's Independent Film Exhibition Conference, or IND/EX, organized by Art House Convergence and the Film Festival Alliance.

Art House Audiences: Demographic Breakdown



Forty six cinemas across the country participated, and we had more than 32,000 respondents, which is exciting. The overall consensus is that people love their art house cinemas. 97 percent say that it adds to their quality of life, and what more could you ask for? People are going to their art house cinemas for curation, specifically, and for that community feeling. That's a message that doesn't get across that often. We hear a lot about the chains and maybe even the specialty cinemas, but we do not hear about individual organizations. They're usually the water coolers in their communities. I think that's another reason why coming together at IND/EX was so important: It shows the power of what everybody's doing in one place. [No matter how] overlooked small cinemas in small towns might be, what they're providing for their communities is essential.

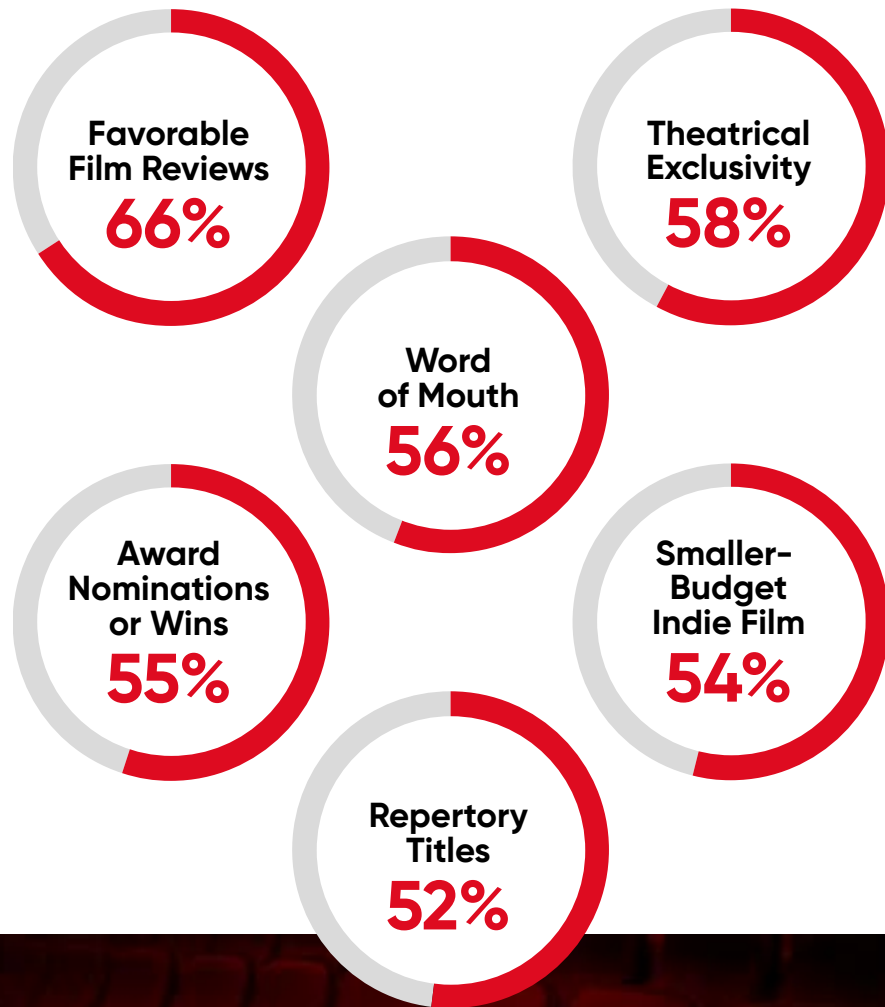
The other thing that was cool to see from the survey is that new attendees are coming to cinemas, and younger attendees are coming to cinemas. We often get caught thinking, "Art house cinema patrons are of a certain generation, and they may not be around much longer." It's so cool that we have young people flocking to the curation. Much of that has to do with the programming of rep titles, the interesting programs, and the festivals. [That curation] is the key to cultivating newer cinema audiences.

BOXOFFICE PRO spoke with Lela Meadow-Conner, president of the board of directors of Art House Convergence, to get a better sense of where art houses—and their audiences—are situated as we enter the fall and winter awards season.

What were some of Art House Convergence's goals for this survey?

The main goal of our survey was to find out what our cinemas' audiences are thinking, first and foremost. The icing on the cake is all the good news that we found.

Top Reasons to Visit an Art House Cinema



Top Genres at the Art House (60%+ of Respondents)

- Drama
- Foreign
- Comedy
- Documentary

The most recent Art House Theater Day, a program designed to drive attendance to participating independent cinemas, took place on July 25. How did that go?

It was exciting because we hadn't done an Art House Theater Day since 2019. We had over 90 cinemas from across the country participating. We offered a slate of films, but of course, anyone could play whatever film they wanted in celebration. We were excited to show *The Terminator's* 40th anniversary 4K restoration, with a special Q&A with James Cameron and [producer] Gale Anne Hurd. People might not think of *The Terminator* as an independent film, although Gale Anne will tell you it was an independent film back in the day. It is about creativity and being able to provide a Q&A, bring people together, and tell stories about movies. Several theaters we've heard back from said that *The Terminator* was their best Art House Theater Day screening ever. It all goes back to that curation. Repertory cinema has been doing really well for art house cinemas, partly because younger audiences want to see some of these "newer" classics on the big screen.

There are a lot of people who haven't even seen some of these movies! When we think about "classic cinema," we're not thinking about the '80s and '90s per se. But these younger audiences haven't seen these movies, and they haven't seen them on the big screen. They're nostalgic for Gen X, too. I think it's a real win-win.

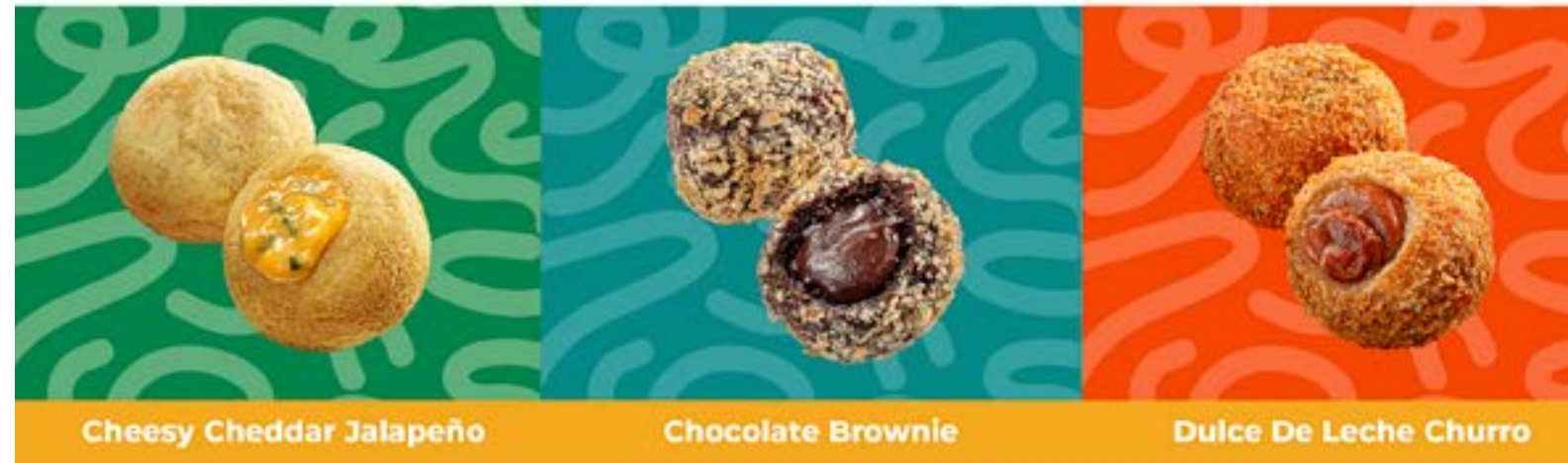
Between IND/EX, Art House Theater Day, and the national audience survey, Art House Convergence has a lot of momentum right now. Can you tell us what you're working on currently?

We just launched our first paid membership, which is really exciting, and the response has been incredible. We weren't sure how the community was going to respond, but I think everyone understands that we need the support to be able to provide the professional development that we're going to offer to the community and the other services that we're hoping to offer. ▶

Keep your sales rolling with

Rebelliously Craveable treats

These delicious flavors from Curveballs™ will keep your shoppers asking for more all day long.



Cheesy Cheddar Jalapeño

Chocolate Brownie

Dulce De Leche Churro

Flavors that roll with you

A variety of delicious options, from savory to sweet, rolled up into every mouthwatering bite.



Chili Cheese Hot Dog

Caramel Churro

Bean and Cheese



For more information, please contact:

Michael Stremmlau | National C-Store Sales Director
mstremmlau@bar-s.com



SigmaFoodserviceUS.com



THE COLLECTIBLE OBSESSION

The Rising Popularity of Concessions Merchandise

BY REBECCA PAHLE

➔ When it comes to going to the movies, the most important thing is, well, the movie. Since the earliest days of cinema, exhibitors have been responsible for the showmanship angle, using whatever means necessary to entice moviegoers with a little something extra, be it experiential, like the still-rising popularity of premium formats, or material.

In the latter category, a bit of merch—either free with purchase or available at additional cost—can both draw moviegoers to the cinema and evoke memories of the moviegoing experience after-the-fact. BOXOFFICE PRO's 100-plus years of reporting on the cinema industry is filled with examples, ranging from dinnerware ("dish night" was a popular promotion during the cash-strapped days of the Great Depression) to movie memorabilia to, in one notable case, live chickens. (From our August 1, 1960, issue: Guests at the Circus Drive-In in Hammonton, New Jersey, had a chance to win one of ten live chickens that were "toss[ed] off the roof of the concessions building during intermission, with each bird to become the property of the person who catches it.")

Though live animal giveaways are (as far as we know) a thing of the past, the spirit of showmanship is alive and well in the many cinema-exclusive popcorn buckets, cup toppers, and other tie-in items that are popping up in cinema

concessions areas coast-to-coast . . . and later, on eBay or other resale sites, where a *Dune: Part 2* or *Deadpool & Wolverine* popcorn bucket can bring in over \$100.

Custom concessions merchandise, also called collectible concession vehicles (CCVs), aren't a new thing for cinemas. One of the leaders in the movie collectibles industry, Golden Link, has been providing cinemas with such merch since its founding in 1997. Exclusive branded items have been a major part of dine-in chain Alamo Drafthouse's brand identity ever since they launched their own merchandise brand, Mondo, in 2004, with custom pint glasses taking pride of place in many a movie geek's kitchen. AMC traces its big CCV "Aha!" moment to 2019, when their popcorn/drink holder shaped like



(above) Star Wars: The Force Awakens
(below) Five Nights at Freddy's





Alien: Romulus

“Collectible movie merch offers a tangible connection to the moment a guest sees a favorite film, especially when a specific item achieves viral status.”

R2-D2 sold out on the opening night of *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*; Nels Storm, AMC Theatres’ vice president of food and beverage product strategy, called it “an inflection point where we saw the real potential for these vessels and began to strategize how they could be a core part of our overall marketing plans.”

Still, it’s hard to deny that popcorn buckets and other concessions merchandise are having a moment. A big turning point came last summer when Warner Bros. and Hasbro pulled out all the stops in the run-up to *Barbie*, partnering with what sometimes seemed like every brand under the sun. That included major cinema brands, which rolled out exclusive popcorn vessels shaped like the Barbie box and Barbie’s famous pink convertible. “When *Barbie* was released, in-theater merchandise became must-have movie accessories, which was hard not to notice,” says Matt Willard, head of business development at Regal. “Collectible movie merch offers a tangible connection to the moment a guest sees a favorite film, especially when a specific item achieves viral status.”

And in instances where the merch in question is exclusive to a particular chain, as it often is, it can be a useful differentiating factor in an often crowded cinema marketplace. In 2023, after Cinemark’s *Scream VI* popcorn tub shaped like the iconic Ghostface flew off the shelves, moviegoers got the chance to buy it online;

Despicable Me 4



months later, the Texas-based chain’s introduction of an online merch shop was a major component of a company-wide rebrand. Concessions merchandise “helps, obviously, with the promotion of a film,” says David Haywood, Cinemark’s senior vice president of food and beverage, but, combined with other amenities like special menu items and premium technology, it also serves as the icing on the cake that helps sell the overall experience.

In February of this year, months after *Barbie* changed the merch game, another Warner Bros. release sparked concessions traffic when *Saturday Night Live* aired a musical skit about AMC’s *Dune: Part 2* popcorn bucket, after images of it leaked online days before. When the movie



Alien: Romulus

opened, the popcorn bucket was an instant hit: Sales were boosted by FOMO social media posts from moviegoers lucky enough to buy one before they sold out.

“I think it’s pretty clear that we live in an age of social media and instant gratification,” says Rod Mason, vice

president of business development at Zinc Group, the marketing agency behind the *Dune: Part 2* popcorn bucket. “If you can [say], ‘I’ve got the *Dune* popcorn bucket,’ it kind of elevates your coolness.”

“It’s an impulse buy for some and not for others,” adds Zinc’s Marcus Gonzalez, global creative director of entertainment marketing. “Every time you see it at home, it reminds you of watching the movie and the movie experience. You tell your friends, ‘Look at this thing that I got!’ Those are some of the same basic factors that feed into a lot of the whole social media experience, as well. It’s a matter of which [concept is] going to catch on.”

A lot has been catching on lately. The three movie merchandise programs AMC

Dune: Part 2



Design your own popcorn vending machine!

It pops, takes payment, and serves up fresh popcorn!

ReadyPop® Cashless includes a 16-oz kettle, cashless payment system, and a push-button dispenser. Custom graphics packages also available.

See the complete Ready Series line at: gmpopcorn.com/ReadySeries

GOLD MEDAL
Since 1931



(left) Scream VI
(right) Barbie



"I think people would be surprised at the lead time it requires to get these CCVs into the hands of our guests—from identifying titles, securing licensing, innovative concepting, creating prototypes, and then eventually moving onto production and shipping. We often work up to a year in advance to get these vessels into our guests' hands."

The long lead times typically required to produce movie-themed concessions merch are at odds with the nature of the cinema industry, where marketing often gets pushed to the last minute as cinemas wait for studios to provide official assets. It's that lack of lead time that poses the biggest challenge to cinemas looking to offer new release-themed concessions merchandise, either to sell or as free promotional items, says Geonni Sigl,

founder of marketing agency Onni Creative. But that doesn't mean it's impossible. More elaborate concessions items, like the *Barbie* car or *Dune: Part 2* popcorn bucket, require special molds that drive up the time needed to produce them. Using simpler designs makes the process exponentially easier, as does staying away from overseas manufacturers, which, though often cheaper, add layers of complexity by way of shipping and customs. "I really like the merch that can fold into already existing things that the theaters have," says Sigl, like their custom *Five Nights at Freddy's* pizza box, which "was overwhelmingly popular. [People] would come in and not want the pizza. They'd just want to purchase the



Beetlejuice Beetlejuice

box. It was an exciting way to get people into the theaters, particularly younger audiences. They want that physical item to take home so they can have that memory."

"While merchandise tie-ins have long been part of marketing strategies outside of the industry, in the past few years movie studios have seen just how impactful movie tie-ins can be with theatrical partners in bringing excitement and awareness to their films," says AMC's Storm. The genie is out of the bottle (or the popcorn tub), and concessions merch sales are expected to stay strong throughout 2025, boosted by a slate of titles like *The Smurfs Musical*, *Captain America: Brave New World*, *Snow White*, and *Minecraft* that cry out for collectibles. ■

earned the most revenue from—*Taylor Swift: The Eras Tour*, *Deadpool & Wolverine*, and *Despicable Me 4*—all debuted in the last 12 months. So far this year, custom concessions vessels tied to *Dune: Part 2*, *Deadpool & Wolverine*, *Inside Out 2*, and *Despicable Me 4* all sold out the weekend they were released, as did a light-up Bat-Signal popcorn bucket released to coincide with Batman's 85th anniversary.

Alamo is also expanding its merch game; *Deadpool & Wolverine* gave the chain both its best-selling pint glass and its first movie-themed popcorn bucket, which sold out "almost instantly," per Chaya Rosenthal, chief marketing officer of Alamo. New licensing agreements have expanded the lifetime of certain items by allowing people to buy them in Alamo's online shop, whereas before they were only available when purchasing a ticket.

The point when a pint glass or popcorn tub goes home with a customer is closer to the end of the merch story than the beginning, of course. "I think people would be surprised at the lead time it requires to get these CCVs into the hands of our guests—from identifying titles, securing licensing, innovative concepting, creating prototypes, and then eventually moving onto production and shipping. We often work up to a year in advance to get these vessels into our guests' hands," says AMC's Storm. Zinc Group generally starts work on a project 12–4 months before a film is released. At Alamo, "we start planning our merch targets a year in advance, but that is not always realistic with the release schedule," says Rosenthal. "In reality, it comes down to a minimum of five months in advance of a release."



Deadpool & Wolverine



Your One Stop Shop For All of Your Concession Packaging Needs



9832 Evergreen Industrial Drive St. Louis, MO 63123 • 314-329-9700
www.packagingconceptsinc.com • bcb@packagingconceptsinc.com

A Home for Stories that Amplify Light



ANGEL
STUDIOS

theaterbookings@angel.com



A Real Pain **74** | Nightbitch **80** | Booking Guide **88**

ON SCREEN



JURASSIC WORLD REBIRTH
Wed, 7/2/25 WIDE

RECONCILIATION ROAD

Filmmaker Jesse Eisenberg on His Bittersweet Buddy Comedy, *A Real Pain*

BY CHAD KENNERK

➔ Filmmaker Jesse Eisenberg had a revelation during his first trip to Poland in 2007. Had his family not been displaced by World War II, he would have grown up there. Pondering what his life might have been like ultimately inspired his play *The Revisionist*, which debuted off-Broadway in 2013. Eisenberg starred as David, a young American novelist visiting Maria, his Polish cousin, played by Vanessa Redgrave. After much soul-searching and wrestling with complex questions about his family's past—along with an online advertisement boasting “Holocaust tours (with lunch)” — Eisenberg developed the framework for his latest film.

A Real Pain follows odd-couple cousins David (Eisenberg) and Benji (Kieran Culkin) on a heritage tour of Poland, where they plan to honor their late grandmother. The duo's discord reaches a turning point as they attempt to reconcile their own struggles against the backdrop of family history and historical trauma. Comedic and deeply thought-provoking, Eisenberg based aspects of the film on his family's own personal history, even filming a scene at the apartment his family fled in 1938. Many of the places Eisenberg visited during that initial trip ultimately became filming locations more than fifteen years later.

The Oscar-nominated actor made his directorial debut in 2022 with *When You Finish Saving the World* (based on his Audible original of the same name), which premiered at the Sundance Film Festival. *A Real Pain* brought him back to the festival this year, where his sophomore feature earned him the Waldo Salt Screenwriting Award. It's not the first time a film starring Eisenberg received this honor: Noah Baumbach won the prize in 2005 for *The Squid and the Whale*, one of Eisenberg's early breakthrough roles.

As *A Real Pain* arrives in theaters this fall from Searchlight Pictures, BOXOFFICEMOJO sat down with Eisenberg to discuss the inspiration behind the story, the cameo appearance of his adopted town (Bloomington, Indiana), and how wearing multiple hats—as writer, director, actor, and producer—has given him a helpful way to approach his work.

The inspiration for the film and its themes have been on your mind for a

long time. What was your experience like revisiting places specific to your own family history as filming locations?

I had this very anticlimactic, noncathartic experience. We were filming, literally, at the house that my grandparents, my great aunt, and cousins lived in, in this small town of Krasnystaw, Poland. I visited before on my own and was always kind of struck by these great, big thoughts. “Had things been slightly different, I would have lived here.” Kind of existential thoughts. When we were filming there, I had the exact opposite experience, which was just, “We have to make sure that we get the shot before it rains.” It was supposed to rain that day, and then before it rained, it was too sunny. Kieran couldn't see because where he was standing, he was looking into the sun. So when I was actually filming there, instead of having this kind of great, coming home, cathartic moment, it was really just about, “How can we finish this day?” It taught me this strange lesson: a movie set is always going to feel like a movie set, regardless of the content.

This is the first time you've had the challenge of wearing both director and actor hats at the same time for a film. That seems like a hard gear shift back and forth between the two. How was that experience for you?

In a way, it was very helpful to not have any downtime. I'm somebody who gets caught up in my thoughts in ways that are not helpful. So for me to be able to move quickly from acting in the shot to setting up the next shot, or from acting in the shot to talking to the other actors about what they'll be doing, was very helpful for me. I'm currently working on a movie called *Now You See Me 3* and, as you can imagine, with a movie like this, a big Hollywood movie, I have a lot of downtime between scenes, because they're setting up these massive sets and huge equipment. And I just start going into my own head about not doing a good job as an actor. So when I was directing the movie, I felt, at all times, busy in a more healthy way.

Things are being asked of you at all times in that situation.

Yeah, there's really no time to even panic.

Speaking of wearing hats and panicking, there's a moment in the film where your hat blows off. For those aware of your long-standing association with Indiana University and Bloomington, it makes for a great cameo moment.

Yeah, the truth of that scene is that we didn't have access to the train or the train schedule. We were just standing there as a crew, praying for something to come, and when we heard something was coming, we just ran out and my hat flew off. We kept the take. It was just kismet.

It's the Indiana Jones moment of this adventure, I think.

Yes, yes, the Indiana University Jones moment, basically. It's the most action there is in this.

In setting the tone for your sets, what have you brought with you from directors you've worked with and from your own experiences, knowing what you personally like and need as an actor on set?

I've worked with some amazing directors. I find that I've been taking quite a bit from the personal realm, rather than technical. For example, I worked with this amazing director named Greg Mottola, he did *Adventureland*, which I was in, and he also did *Superbad*. He has the most calming nature on set. One time I was having a little panic on set and he took me aside. I said, “I'm so sorry. I think I screwed up that scene.” And he said, “It's amazing to me that actors are not panicking all the time. You're so exposed and asked to perform on cue and emote. To me, it seems like you would be panicking all the time.” It just changed my entire perspective on my job, which told me that, “Oh yeah, it's okay to have these kinds of feelings.” As an actor, you're kind of manipulating your own emotions, and it's normal to kind of feel really unsettled.

I feel now, I can pass along that spirit to other actors by saying, “It's okay. Don't worry.” Especially when we were doing scenes in this movie: We were doing scenes in very fraught places, and I felt comfortable being the stable person there who could give the right kind of encouragement and try to set a nice tone. The first day that we shot Kieran, he felt a little hemmed in by standing on the marks that we had set for him on the



ground, and so it became immediately clear that we had to change the nature of the shooting to accommodate Kieran's natural, incredible, spontaneous abilities. I was very comfortable doing that, because I've been on sets where I felt the director was perhaps too robotic in the design, and you feel hemmed in as an actor. Because I understood what Kieran was feeling, having been on the other side, it allowed me to know how to change the scene to accommodate both what I needed as a director and how Kieran would excel as an actor.

That's really the work of a good director, isn't it? Being able to understand where other artists excel, and then providing them the space and opportunity to do that.

Yes, exactly. But also having the bigger picture in your mind at all times, because I've also been on sets where the actors, in some way, took over the set and were changing shots. That's the worst place you can get to, even though the actors—and I've been one of them—walk away with this great feeling of accomplishment during the day; that the scene was in

"In some ways, I think directors can occasionally be in opposition to what actors want, because what actors want is the reality of their characters constantly expressed, and a director understands that that's not always the best way to tell a story—even a character-driven story. There should be bigger things happening."

some ways designed for you and your role. Those movies tend not to work as well, because there's not the guiding hand of somebody telling a bigger story.

You need the moment to moment instinct and then you need the greater vision.

Yeah, exactly. That's my assessment. In some ways, I think directors can occasionally be in opposition to what actors want, because what actors want is the reality of their characters constantly expressed, and a director understands that that's not always the best way to tell a story—even a character-driven story. There should be bigger things happening. I think maybe having been an actor for most of my life allows me to take all that stuff into account, even when I'm writing the scripts. “What does an actor want to do here?”

When it comes to subject matter, there's a real invitation here, because *A Real Pain* is reverent without being self-important. We don't always see that in a film dealing with the Holocaust.



That was the precise goal: to make something that can be reverential to horrific historical events, while not being self-important, while not trying to make the movie seem like it's doing the audience a favor by telling them this important story. I tend to recoil at movies that are about some political issue and when you can see that the movie is so proud of itself for teaching the audience its important message. As an actor, I hate that stuff too, because you feel like you're a pawn for somebody's self congratulatory project. So that was the exact goal with this.

It was designed quite specifically; if it's going to be a movie about these cousins who go on a Holocaust tour, it also has to be about characters that are crass, characters that are ambivalent about every aspect of history, characters that are kind of ignorant of some of the history, characters that think about the history in ways that are quite self-centered, in a way that doesn't seem noble, in a way that doesn't seem constantly deferential, because that's my reaction personally. I've been obsessed with World War II. As a suburban Jewish kid, you're kind of obsessed with World War II, because it's

"I tend to recoil at movies that are about some political issue and when you can see that the movie is so proud of itself for teaching the audience its important message. As an actor, I hate that stuff too, because you feel like you're a pawn for somebody's self congratulatory project. So that was the exact goal with this."

just the most shocking thing—once you realize what happened to your family, it's that much more shocking. You go down every rabbit hole. Sometimes I find my curiosity about the war and the history to be coming from a place of more complicated feelings than just one of deep, somber, deference. So that was the goal of the movie.

Did the process of making this film provide any insights into the question of "pain"? It's a multifaceted title.

In terms of the title, I am very interested in this idea (and have written a lot about this in the theater): How do I, in my incredibly lucky life, walk around with a feeling of emptiness and misery and self-pity, and yet, I come from people who survived the worst atrocities to happen to our species. How is it possible to reconcile that? How come I'm not walking around constantly with a huge smile on my face that I'm living this wonderful life and have access to antibiotics, and can have some self-actualization through my art and my job. It seems so dumbly lucky, but how come I'm not elated all day? So, in a way, that's what the movie is touching on. We

come from these people, yet we're kind of miserable in different ways. My character is obsessive-compulsive, and my cousin's character is going through something much more severe emotionally and yet we come from something that was far worse. People who came out of that far worse situation were living a life that they felt had more meaning. It's about these complicated thoughts. And then, of course, the title also refers to the way I view my cousin, because he's kind of a pain in the ass to me.

This is the kind of film that plays well in any cinema space, but one that art houses are going to be so happy to have. Art house cinemas, in particular, have the ability to really champion films that audiences might otherwise miss among all the blockbuster content that's out there.

You're right, which is why I kind of pinch myself. I'm feeling so lucky to be working with Searchlight. I mean, Searchlight is a company that cares more than anything about kind of indie, unusual movies, and yet they have the backbone and support of a big company.

I feel very lucky to be at the very fortunate nexus of Searchlight, who I could not be more honored to be working with. Stuff like that is really helpful. When I started to get to know Searchlight, I was kind of frankly shocked that they even exist; because they make these very unusual movies and take real chances with real, artful films, yet they have the muscle to compete in the major film industry.

What does it mean as a director to have your work in a theater, on a big screen, and for audiences to see it that way?

My background as a writer is in theater, but what excited me more than anything as a writer and performer was to write a play, put it on live, and have that kind of communal experience. It just felt like the best place. I have written mostly transgressive comedy dramas, and it seemed like it was really a cool thing to have this story, which might have some warts, in a space that we're all stuck in together where we have to grapple with those warts. That feels so exciting to me. So with a movie, the closest you can get to that feeling is playing a movie in a theater (as opposed to TV)

where there's kind of a communal feeling of being both attracted to and put off by various characters, story points, etc., and yet, you're stuck together grappling with it. I feel so thrilled that this movie will have a theatrical release, especially at a time where that's not a guarantee for movies, even like this one, which has an accessible story, known actors, and a tone that's fairly transcendent, because it's comedic and everything. So, yeah, I feel really thrilled.

Do you have a particularly memorable moviegoing experience?

I saw this movie *Dirty Pretty Things* when I was younger. I remember it was like, maybe one of the first times I went to an independent art house cinema: Sunshine Cinema in New York City on Houston Street and Second Avenue. It was tackling a very difficult subject, but in a really artful way. I remember just thinking like, "Oh, I didn't realize they could do this. I didn't know you're allowed to do this kind of thing. This is fantastic." I've since met actor Chiwetel Ejiofor several times, and each time I say the same thing to him and each time he reminds me that I told him that the previous time. ♥

Are you READY for a fast and comprehensive cinema management solution?

- ✓ Boxoffice, Concession, Kiosk, App, Online Ticketing and F&B Selling Interfaces
- ✓ Custom Digital Signage & Reserved Seating
- ✓ Membership & Loyalty Programs
- ✓ 24/7/365 US Based Tech Support
- ✓ *Keep all your convenience fees!*






(865) 212-9703

sales@rts-solutions.com

www.rts-solutions.com





Marielle Heller Directs the Date Movie of 2024

BY REBECCA PAHLE

LIFE'S A

(NIGHT)BITCH



➔ It's not often that a movie has a hook as compelling as "horror/comedy where Amy Adams thinks she's turning into a dog. Oh, and it's called *Nightbitch*." The film adaptation of Rachel Yoder's then-unpublished novel was announced in mid-2020, with Adams producing and starring. Curious cinephiles have been waiting ever since to see what, exactly, a movie called *Nightbitch* will be like. Now they'll finally find out.

Initially slated for release on Hulu, *Nightbitch* was filmed at the end of 2022, with Marielle Heller (*A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood*, *Can You Ever Forgive Me?*) directing and adapting for the screen. The yearlong delay of its

theatrical release (due to 2023's Hollywood labor strikes) did nothing to impact the timeliness of the film: an artist (known in the script only as Mother) pauses her career to be a stay-at-home mom for her young son—something that proves way more difficult than she thought it would be, as evidenced by a growing conviction that she's, well, turning into a dog.

Co-starring Scoot McNairy as Mother's well-intended but sometimes oblivious husband, *Nightbitch* hits theaters on December 6, courtesy of Spotlight Pictures. In advance of its release, Heller spoke to BOXOFFICE PRO about her hilariously honest (if sometimes disgusting) meditation on motherhood.

"My joke has been that the movie is a comedy for women and a horror movie for men."

What was it like screening *Nightbitch* for audiences for the first time?

When you first get to screen a movie for a big audience, it changes everything. My favorite thing is making movies where, hopefully, people get to come together and watch the movie in the dark and have that collective experience. There are a number of hopefully surprising-slash-gross moments within this movie that are really fun to watch in a group.

It's an interesting movie to watch in the context of the last few years and the social changes brought about by the pandemic. Couples were working from home, and they weren't really seeing people outside the family unit and that

caused a lot of people to think differently about the division of labor among couples and the expectation that the wife will "manage" everything.

It's exactly that. It's about isolation and what it feels like to be alone in the world. It sort of took on a whole different meaning because of the pandemic. The book was written before the pandemic, but it felt so related to [cultural conversations about] the division of labor and what marriages are made up of, and how there's this labor that largely goes unrecognized. Those invisible things were being made visible by the pandemic. And then it also brought to light what really happens when we're stuck in our own minds, isolated, as well.

It's definitely the sort of movie that makes you think about your relationship. As you adapted the script and bounced ideas off of people in your life, did you find that men and women responded differently?

My joke has been that the movie is a comedy for women and a horror movie for men. I'm friends with a lot of men and women who are in relationships. With my women friends, in particular those who are mothers, we tend to vent to each other a lot and talk about our lives and compare notes and help each other solve problems when it comes to parenting and relationships and things like that. For men who would read the script or watch a cut of the movie, the response was often quite different. The

women would think it was so funny, and the men would be like, “*Whoa*. I don’t like us talking about this stuff. This feels a little too close to home.” But, of course, most of the men that I’m friends with are good men who want to grow and change. So bringing up these tough subjects is good for their marriages—hopefully, ultimately—because it’s bringing the unspoken, unseen labor [of parenthood] to light in ways that I think are really important. But it’s painful, too.

Depending on what your personal context is, you’ll have a very different experience with the movie, and you’ll be bringing your own story into your watching of it, which I think is very evident when I show the movie. I’ll often screen the movie for a couple of friends at my house. Hearing when a couple may laugh or when they get awkwardly silent is telling [when] it comes to their marriage.

In addition to the relationship element of the film, there are also elements that are almost body horror-esque. How was crafting that element of the movie, the quote-unquote “gross” bits? Because that’s not something that’s really been a part of your work before.

There’s a little bit of it in *The Diary of a Teenage Girl*, with [main character Minnie, played by Bel Powley] checking out her body and touching her period blood. [With *Nightbitch*], my brother [said], “Wow, you finally made a movie that’s really *you*. It’s so gross.” I think he thinks of me as somebody who is obsessed with gross body stuff. We just grew up in a household where we weren’t shy about talking about disgusting things.

I feel like a big part of perimenopause for women is being more honest in talking about the gross, weird things that happen with our bodies. Similarly, when you get pregnant, there are not a lot of people who will tell you the real truth of what’s going to happen with your body.

My closest, dearest friends were the ones who would tell me things. I remember my best friend saying, “Hey, so you know that after you have a baby, you’re going to bleed for, like, eight weeks?” And I was like, “Wait, *what?*” “Oh yeah, all those periods you haven’t had, they’re all going to happen at once, and it’s going to be the heaviest period you’ve ever had in your life. You’re just going to bleed and bleed and bleed.” How had no one ever told me

“One of my favorite screenings was at Sundance Labs. I showed the movie to a bunch of Sundance fellows and advisers, and [I was told that] a bunch of the married men in the audience all met in the bathroom afterwards and looked at each other and were like, ‘We’ve got to go apologize to our wives!’”

this? How had I gone 35 years on this Earth, thinking I know a lot about women’s reproductive systems, and I had no idea that I was going to bleed for like eight weeks after having a baby? [And my friends said], “Yeah, people don’t tell you about this kind of stuff.” There’s something about that honesty we can have with each other as women, and that we should have more of, that was part of the impetus for me with this movie, too. “It’s going to be kind of gross, but I’m going to go there. We’re going to talk about gross body stuff and try and destigmatize it a little bit.”

To completely switch gears—did you go to the cinema a lot as a kid? What was your go-to movie theater?

Yes, I did. We had both a drive-in and a regular movie theater in my little hometown of Alameda, [California]. At some point, both of them shut down. There was a period of time when our town had no movie theater, but now it has [the Alameda Theatre and Cineplex, which is] a beautiful, old, restored, historic movie theater. We very much grew up going to the mall to go to the movies. It was a big part of childhood and early dating.

Are there any memories in particular that stand out?

I remember being a teenager and deciding I wanted to sit away from my parents in the movie theater. That was a big rite of passage. It was like, “Okay, [my friends and I] will sit three rows behind you.” Or, “Okay, we can all go to the movies. You guys go see the movie you

want to see, and we’ll go to a different movie.” It felt like a first taste of freedom. And then [there were the] first dates, where my parents would drop me off and I’d meet a boy, and we’d go to the movies.

***Nightbitch* does seem like it would be an interesting date night movie. It must really work in a crowd.**

There’s a catharsis that you get when you’re seeing something collectively, and you’re all recognizing it as true. To laugh at something because it feels so relatable and true is so cathartic. I think that experience happens with this movie a lot.

I can imagine a lot of those sorts of reactions happening with the interactions between Mother and her husband.

I was careful not to paint him as a one-dimensional [bad husband]. He’s trying to do what he thinks is right. He’s just slightly oblivious and has no idea what it feels like to be [his wife] and hasn’t really spent a lot of time thinking about it until she lays it out for him. Even the best men that I know have a hard time putting themselves in their partner’s shoes. It’s just not something that boys and men are taught as much within our society. Women are conditioned by media and society to always empathize with other people, including men. Even just the fact that protagonists in movies are almost always men makes it so we can empathize with them in a way that they can’t really emphasize with us.

One of my favorite screenings was at Sundance Labs. I showed the movie to a bunch of Sundance fellows and advisers, and [I was told that] a bunch of the married men in the audience all met in the bathroom afterwards and looked at each other and were like, “We’ve got to go apologize to our wives!”

A lot of the good men that I know who see this movie may recognize something in themselves that they don’t want to recognize, or haven’t wanted to recognize, because they think of themselves as good partners and good fathers, and it sort of makes them go, “Oh, maybe I’m not quite as good as I want to be.” Or, “Maybe there are certain things I didn’t know.” There’s something so connective about seeing how hard this journey of being parents is and how hard it is to do together and recognizing that, yeah, this isn’t easy for either side. It’s not easy for any of us. ♥

BOXOFFICE

More than
Websites

Search Engine Optimization

Paid Advertising

Social Media



Scan the QR code to find out more.

EVENT CINEMA CALENDAR

Updated through September 25, 2024.
Contact distributors for latest listings.

CINELIFE ENTERTAINMENT
cinelifeventertainment.com

NOSFERATU WITH RADIOHEAD: A SILENTS SYNCED FILM
Starting Oct. 4
Genre: Classics

FATHOM EVENTS
fathomevents.com
855-473-4612

AVERAGE JOE
Oct. 10 - Oct. 17
Genre: Drama

BACK TO THE FUTURE PART 2 - 35TH ANNIVERSARY
Oct. 19, Oct. 21
Genre: Classics

THE MET LIVE IN HD: GROUNDED
Oct. 19, Oct. 23
Genre: Performing Arts

SAW UNRATED
Oct. 20, Oct. 23
Genre: Classics

KIKI'S DELIVERY SERVICE - STUDIO GHIBLI FEST 2024
Oct. 26 - Oct. 30
Genre: Anime

BRANDON LAKE & PHIL WICKHAM PRESENT: FOR THE ONE
Oct. 27 - Oct. 29
Genre: Documentary/Concert

JOHN WICK 10TH ANNIVERSARY
Nov. 3, Nov. 6
Genre: Classics

ANDREA BOCELLI 30: THE CELEBRATION
Nov. 8 - Nov. 14
Genre: Concert Premiere

RADIATING JOY: THE MICHELLE DUPPONG STORY
Nov. 12
Genre: Faith/Inspirational



BACK TO THE FUTURE PART 2
35TH ANNIVERSARY
Oct. 19, Oct. 21

THE FIFTH ELEMENT - FATHOM'S BIG SCREEN CLASSICS 2024
Nov. 17, Nov. 20
Genre: Classics

THE MET LIVE IN HD: TOSCA
Nov. 23, Dec. 4
Genre: Performing Arts

POM POKO 30TH ANNIVERSARY - STUDIO GHIBLI FEST 2024
Nov. 24, Nov. 26
Genre: Anime

THE TALE OF THE PRINCESS KAGUYA - STUDIO GHIBLI FEST 2024
Nov. 25, Nov. 27
Genre: Anime

THE MET: THE MAGIC FLUTE HOLIDAY ENCORE 2024
Dec. 7
Genre: Performing Arts

MY NEIGHBOR TOTORO - STUDIO GHIBLI FEST 2024
Dec. 7 - Dec. 11
Genre: Anime

WHITE CHRISTMAS 70TH ANNIVERSARY - FATHOM'S BIG SCREEN CLASSICS 2024
Dec. 15, Dec. 16
Genre: Classics

THE MET LIVE IN HD: AIDA
Jan. 25, Jan. 29, Feb. 1
Genre: Performing Arts

THE MET LIVE IN HD: FIDELIO
Mar. 15, Mar. 19
Genre: Performing Arts

THE MET LIVE IN HD: LA NOZZE DI FIGARO
Apr. 26, Apr. 30
Genre: Performing Arts

THE MET LIVE IN HD: SALOME
May 17, May 21
Genre: Performing Arts

THE MET LIVE IN HD: IL BARBIERE DI SIVIGLIA
May 31, Jun. 4
Genre: Performing Arts

ICONIC RELEASING
iconicreleasing.com

AXCN GUNDAM FEST: MOBILE SUIT GUNDAM II: SOLDIERS OF SORROW
Oct. 16
Genre: Anime

AXCN GUNDAM FEST: MOBILE SUIT GUNDAM III: ENCOUNTERS IN SPACE
Oct. 23
Genre: Anime

SABATON - THE TOUR TO END ALL TOURS
Oct. 30
Genre: Concert

UFC 309
Nov. 16
Genre: Live Sports

AXCN: OSAMU TEZUKA'S METROPOLIS
Nov. 3
Genre: Anime

BOONDOCK SAINTS 25TH ANNIVERSARY
Nov. 7
Genre: Classics

PATTERNS OF EVIDENCE: THE ISRAEL DILEMMA: ANCIENT PROPHECIES
Nov. 13
Genre: Documentary

UFC 310
Dec. 7
Genre: Live Sports

AXCN: BABYMETAL LEGEND-43 THE MOVIE
Dec. 11
Genre: Concert

AXCN: PAPRIKA 4K - 15TH ANNIVERSARY
Jan. 8
Genre: Anime

SCREAMBOAT
Jan. 24
Genre: Horror

AXCN: COWBOY BEBOP: THE MOVIE
Feb. 5
Genre: Anime

AXCN GUNDAM FEST 2025: MOBILE SUIT GUNDAM: CHAR'S COUNTERATTACK
Mar. 12
Genre: Anime

BoxOFFICE

CINEMA TECHNOLOGY & MARKETING

Your audience is evolving. Make sure your e-commerce tools are too.



Scan the QR code to find out more.

BOOKING GUIDE

Release calendar for theatrical distribution in North America

Release dates are updated through September 25, 2024. Please contact distributors to confirm latest listings.

A24

646-568-6015

HERETIC

Fri, 11/15/24 WIDE
Stars: Hugh Grant, Sophie Thatcher
Directors: Scott Beck and Bryan Woods
Rating: NR
Genre: Hor

Y2K

Fri, 12/6/24 WIDE
Stars: Jaeden Martell, Rachel Zegler
Director: Kyle Mooney
Rating: NR
Genre: Com

AMAZON MGM

310-724-5678 Ask for Distribution

RED ONE

Fri, 11/15/24 WIDE
Stars: Dwayne Johnson, Chris Evans
Director: Jake Kasdan
Rating: NR
Genre: Act/Adv/Com/Fam
Specs: Imax / Dolby Atmos / Dolby Vision

UNSTOPPABLE

Fri, 12/6/24 LTD
Stars: Jharrel Jerome, Bobby Cannavale
Director: William Goldenberg
Rating: PG-13
Genre: Dra

THE FIRE INSIDE

Fri, 12/25/24 WIDE
Stars: Ryan Destiny, Brian Tyree Henry
Director: Rachel Morrison
Rating: PG-13
Genre: Dra

THREE BAGS FULL: A SHEEP DETECTIVE MOVIE

Fri, 2/20/26 WIDE
Stars: Hugh Jackman, Emma Thompson
Director: Kyle Balda
Rating: NR
Genre: Act/Com/Mys



HERETIC
 Fri, 11/15/24

PROJECT HAIL MARY

Fri, 3/20/26
Star: Ryan Gosling
Directors: Phil Lord and Christopher Miller
Genre: Act/Adv/SF
Rating: NR

MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE

Fri, 6/5/26 WIDE
Director: Travis Knight
Rating: NR
Genre: Act/Adv/Fan

BRIARCLIFF / OPEN ROAD FILMS

MY DEAD FRIEND ZOE

Fri, 11/1/24 WIDE
Stars: Sonequa Martin-Green, Natalie Morales
Director: Kyle Hausmann-Stokes
Rating: NR
Genre: Com/Dra/War

WEREWOLVES

Fri, 12/6/24 WIDE
Star: Frank Grillo
Director: Steven C. Miller
Rating: NR
Genre: Hor/Thr

BLUE FOX ENTERTAINMENT

William Gruenberg william@bluefoxentertainment.com

LOST ON A MOUNTAIN IN MAINE

Fri, 11/1/24 LTD
Stars: Luke David Blumm, Paul Sparks
Director: Andrew Boodhoo Kightlinger
Rating: PG
Genre: Adv/Fam/Dra

BRAINSTORM MEDIA

I'LL BE RIGHT THERE

Fri, 9/6/24 LTD
Stars: Edie Falco, Jeannie Berlin
Director: Brendan Walsh
Rating: NR
Genre: Com

BLEECKER STREET

THE RETURN

Fri, 12/6/24 LTD
Stars: Ralph Fiennes, Juliette Binoche
Directors: Uberto Pasolini
Rating: NR
Genre: Dra

DISNEY

818-560-1000 Ask for Distribution

MOANA 2

Wed, 11/27/24 WIDE
Stars: Auli'i Cravalho, Dwayne Johnson
Director: Dave Derrick Jr.
Rating: NR
Genre: Ani
Specs: Dolby Atmos / Dolby Vision

MUFASA: THE LION KING

Fri, 12/20/24 WIDE
Stars: Aaron Pierre, Kelvin Harrison Jr.
Director: Barry Jenkins
Rating: NR
Genre: Ani
Specs: Dolby Atmos / Dolby Vision

CAPTAIN AMERICA: BRAVE NEW WORLD

Fri, 2/14/25 WIDE
Stars: Anthony Mackie, Harrison Ford
Director: Julius Onah
Rating: NR
Genre: Act/Adv/SF
Specs: Dolby Atmos / Dolby Vision

SNOW WHITE

Fri, 3/21/25 WIDE
Stars: Rachel Zegler, Gal Gadot
Director: Marc Webb
Rating: NR
Genre: Fan

THUNDERBOLTS*

Fri, 5/2/25 WIDE
Stars: David Harbour, Hannah John-Kamen
Director: Jake Schreier
Rating: NR
Genre: Act/Adv/SF

UNTITLED DISNEY 2025 1

Fri, 5/23/25 WIDE
Rating: NR

ELIO

Fri, 6/13/25 WIDE
Stars: America Ferrera, Jameela Jamil
Director: Adrian Molina
Rating: NR
Genre: Ani

THE FANTASTIC FOUR: FIRST STEPS

Fri, 7/25/25 WIDE
Stars: Pedro Pascal, Vanessa Kirby
Director: Matt Shakman
Rating: NR
Genre: Act/Adv/SF

UNTITLED DISNEY 2025 2

Fri, 8/8/25 WIDE
Rating: NR

UNTITLED DISNEY 2025 3

Fri, 9/12/25 WIDE
Rating: NR

TRON: ARES

Fri, 10/10/25 WIDE
Rating: NR

BLADE

Fri, 11/7/25 WIDE
Director: Mahershala Ali
Rating: NR
Genre: Act/Adv/SF

ZOOTOPIA 2

Wed, 11/26/25 WIDE
Rating: NR
Genre: Ani

UNTITLED DISNEY 2026 1

Fri, 1/16/26 WIDE
Rating: NR

UNTITLED MARVEL 2026 1

Fri, 2/13/26 WIDE
Rating: NR
Genre: Act/Adv/SF

HOPPERS

Fri, 3/6/26 WIDE
Rating: NR
Genre: Ani

UNTITLED DISNEY 2026 2

Fri, 3/27/26 WIDE
Rating: NR

UNTITLED DISNEY 2026 3

Fri, 4/17/26 WIDE
Rating: NR

AVENGERS: DOOMSDAY

Fri, 5/1/26 WIDE
Stars: Robert Downey, Jr.
Directors: Anthony Russo & Joe Russo
Rating: NR
Genre: Act/Adv/SF

THE MANDALORIAN & GROGU

Fri, 5/22/26 WIDE
Star: Pedro Pascal
Director: Jon Favreau
Rating: NR
Genre: Act/Adv/SF

TOY STORY 5

Fri, 6/19/26 WIDE
Rating: NR
Genre: Ani

MOANA

Fri, 7/10/26 WIDE
Stars: Dwayne Johnson, Catherine Laga'aia
Director: Thomas Kail
Rating: NR
Genre: Adv/Mus

UNTITLED DISNEY 2026 4

Fri, 8/7/26 WIDE
Rating: NR

UNTITLED DISNEY 2026 5

Fri, 9/11/26 WIDE
Rating: NR

UNTITLED MARVEL 2026 3

Fri, 11/6/26 WIDE
Rating: NR
Genre: Act/Adv/SF

UNTITLED DISNEY ANIMATION 2026

Fri, 11/25/26 WIDE
Rating: NR
Genre: Ani

UNTITLED STAR WARS 2026 2

Fri, 12/18/26 WIDE
Rating: NR
Genre: Act/Adv/SF

UNTITLED DISNEY 2027 1

Fri, 2/12/27 WIDE
Rating: NR

UNTITLED DISNEY 2027 2

Fri, 3/5/27 WIDE
Rating: NR

UNTITLED DISNEY 2027 3

Fri, 4/2/27 WIDE
Rating: NR

AVENGERS: SECRET WARS

Fri, 5/7/27 WIDE
Directors: Anthony Russo & Joe Russo
Rating: NR
Genre: Act/Adv/SF

UNTITLED DISNEY 2027 4

Fri, 5/28/27 WIDE
Rating: NR

UNTITLED PIXAR 2027

Fri, 6/18/27 WIDE
Rating: NR
Genre: Ani

UNTITLED MARVEL 2027 1

Fri, 7/23/27 WIDE
Rating: NR
Genre: Act/Adv/SF

UNTITLED DISNEY 2027 5

Fri, 8/6/27 WIDE
Rating: NR

UNTITLED DISNEY 2027 6

Fri, 9/17/27 WIDE
Rating: NR

UNTITLED DISNEY 2027 7

Fri, 10/8/27 WIDE
Rating: NR

UNTITLED MARVEL 2027 2

Fri, 11/5/27 WIDE
Rating: NR
Genre: Act/Adv/SF

FROZEN 3

Fri, 11/24/27 WIDE
Rating: NR
Genre: Ani

UNTITLED STAR WARS 2027

Fri, 12/17/27 WIDE
Rating: NR
Genre: SF/Fan

20TH CENTURY STUDIOS

310-369-1000 212-556-2400

THE AMATEUR

Fri, 4/11/25 WIDE
Stars: Rachel Brosnahan, Caitriona Balfe
Director: James Hawes
Rating: NR
Genre: Act/Thr

AVATAR: FIRE AND ASH

Fri, 12/19/25 WIDE
Stars: Sam Worthington, Zoe Saldana
Director: James Cameron
Rating: NR
Genre: Act/Fan/SF



TOY STORY 5
 Fri, 6/19/26

AVATAR 4

Fri, 12/21/29 WIDE
Rating: NR
Genre: Act/Adv/SF

AVATAR 5

Fri, 12/19/31 WIDE
Rating: NR
Genre: Act/Fan/SF

SEARCHLIGHT PICTURES

212-556-2400

A REAL PAIN

Fri, 11/1/24 WIDE
Stars: Jesse Eisenberg, Kieran Culkin
Director: Jesse Eisenberg
Rating: NR
Genre: Com/Dra

NIGHTBITCH

Fri, 12/6/24 WIDE
Stars: Amy Adams, Scoot McNairy
Director: Marielle Heller
Rating: NR
Genre: Com/Hor

CONCLAVE

Fri, 11/1/24 WIDE
Stars: Ralph Fiennes, Stanley Tucci
Director: Edward Berger
Rating: NR
Genre: Dra

NOSFERATU

Fri, 12/25/24 WIDE
Stars: Bill Skarsgård, Nicholas Hoult
Director: Robert Eggers
Rating: NR
Genre: Hor/Com
Specs: Dolby Atmos / Dolby Vision

LAST BREATH

Fri, 2/28/25 WIDE
Stars: Woody Harrelson, Simu Liu
Director: Alex Parkinson
Rating: NR
Genre: Thr

BLACK BAG

Fri, 3/14/25 WIDE
Stars: Cate Blanchett, Michael Fassbender
Director: Steven Soderbergh
Rating: NR
Genre: Thr/Dra

DOWNTON ABBEY 3

Fri, 9/12/25 WIDE
Stars: Hugh Bonneville, Elizabeth McGovern
Director: Simon Curtis
Rating: NR
Genre: Dra

BUGONIA

Fri, 11/7/25 WIDE
Stars: Emma Stone, Jesse Plemons
Director: Yorgos Lanthimos
Rating: NR
Genre: SF/Com

IFC FILMS

BOOKINGS@IFCFILMS.COM

UNTITLED IFC CHRISTMAS FILM

Fri, 11/15/24 WIDE
Rating: NR

GET AWAY

Fri, 12/6/24 WIDE
Stars: Nick Frost, Aisling Bea
Directors: Steffen Haars, Flip van der Kuil
Rating: NR
Genre: Hor

INHERITANCE

Fri, 1/24/25 WIDE
Stars: Phoebe Dynevor, Rhys Ifans
Director: Neil Burger
Rating: NR
Genre: Thr

LIONSGATE

310-309-8400

THE BEST CHRISTMAS PAGEANT EVER

Fri, 11/8/24 WIDE
Director: Dallas Jenkins
Rating: NR
Genre: Fam/Dra

DEN OF THIEVES 2: PANTERA

Fri, 1/10/25 WIDE
Stars: Gerard Butler, O'Shea Jackson Jr
Director: Christian Gudegast
Rating: NR
Genre: Act/Thr

UNTITLED GUY RITCHIE MOVIE

Fri, 1/17/25 WIDE
Stars: Henry Cavill, Jake Gyllenhaal
Director: Guy Ritchie
Rating: NR
Genre: Act

FLIGHT RISK

Fri, 1/24/25 WIDE
Stars: Mark Wahlberg, Michelle Dockery
Director: Mel Gibson
Rating: NR
Genre: Thr

THE UNBREAKABLE BOY

Fri, 2/21/25 WIDE
Stars: Zachary Levi, Meghann Fahy
Director: Jon Gunn
Rating: NR
Genre: Dra/Fam

MICHAEL

Fri, 4/18/25 WIDE
Stars: Jaafar Jackson
Director: Antoine Fuqua
Rating: NR
Genre: Dra

BALLERINA

Fri, 6/6/25 WIDE
Stars: Ana de Armas, Anjelica Huston
Director: Len Wiseman
Rating: NR
Genre: Act

UNTITLED SAW XI

Fri, 9/25/25 WIDE
Rating: NR
Genre: Hor

UNTITLED NOW YOU SEE ME FRANCHISE FILM

Fri, 11/14/25 WIDE
Rating: NR

THE HUNGER GAMES: SUNRISE ON THE REAPING

Fri, 11/20/26 WIDE
Rating: NR
Genre: Act/Adv

NEON

hal@neonrated.com

THE SEED OF THE SACRED FIG

Fri, 11/27/24 LTD
Stars: Misagh Zare, Sohelia Golestani
Director: Mohammad Rasoulof
Rating: NR
Genre: Thr

THE END

Fri, 12/6/24 LTD
Stars: Tilda Swinton, George MacKay
Director: Joshua Oppenheimer
Rating: NR
Genre: Mus

PRESENCE

Fri, 1/17/25 LTD
Stars: Lucy Liu, Chris Sullivan
Director: Steven Soderbergh
Rating: NR
Genre: Hor/Thr

THE MONKEY

Fri, 2/21/25 LTD
Stars: Theo James, Tatiana Maslany
Director: Osgood Perkins
Rating: NR
Genre: Hor

PARAMOUNT

323-956-5000

GLADIATOR II

Fri, 11/22/24 WIDE
Stars: Paul Mescal, Pedro Pascal
Director: Ridley Scott
Rating: NR
Genre: Act/Dra
Specs: Imax / Dolby Atmos / Dolby Vision

INTERSTELLAR (RE-RELEASE)

Fri, 12/6/24 WIDE
Stars: Matthew McConaughey, Anne Hathaway
Director: Christopher Nolan
Genre: SF
Specs: Imax

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG 3

Fri, 12/20/24 WIDE
Stars: Ben Schwartz, Colleen O'Shaughnessey
Director: Jeff Fowler
Rating: NR
Genre: Act/Adv/Com

BETTER MAN

Fri, 12/25/24 LTD
Director: Michael Gracey
Rating: NR
Genre: Mus
Specs: Dolby Atmos / Dolby Vision

THE SMURFS MOVIE

Fri, 2/14/24 WIDE
Star: Rihanna
Director: Chris Miller
Rating: NR
Genre: Ani/Mus

NOVOCAINE

Fri, 3/14/25 WIDE
Directors: Robert Olsen, Dan Berk
Rating: NR
Genre: Thr/Act

MISSION: IMPOSSIBLE 8

Fri, 5/23/25 WIDE
Star: Tom Cruise
Director: Christopher McQuarrie
Rating: NR
Genre: Act
Specs: Imax

UNTITLED TREY PARKER/MATT STONE/KENDRICK LAMAR/DAVE FREE

Fri, 7/4/25 WIDE
Rating: NR
Genre: Com

UNTITLED NAKED GUN

Fri, 7/18/25 WIDE
Stars: Liam Neeson, Pamela Anderson
Director: Akiva Schaffer
Rating: NR
Genre: Com

VICIOUS

Fri, 8/8/25 WIDE
Star: Dakota Fanning
Director: Bryan Bertino
Rating: NR
Genre: Hor

THE SPONGEBOB MOVIE: SEARCH FOR SQUAREPANTS

Fri, 10/19/25 WIDE
Rating: NR
Genre: Ani

UNTITLED AANG AVATAR FILM

Fri, 1/30/26 WIDE
Rating: NR



PADDINGTON IN PERU
 Fri, 1/17/25

PAW PATROL 3

Fri, 7/31/26 WIDE
Rating: NR
Genre: Ani

TMNT 2

Fri, 10/9/26 WIDE
Director: Jeff Rowe
Rating: NR
Genre: Ani

PURDIE DISTRIBUTION

THE CARPENTER

Fri, 11/1/24 LTD
Stars: Kameron Krebs, Daz Crawford
Director: Garrett Batty
Rating: PG-13
Genre: Act

SIDESHOW / JANUS FILMS

ALL WE IMAGINE AS LIGHT

Fri, 11/15/24 LTD
Stars: Kani Kusruti, Divya Prabha
Director: Payal Kapadia
Rating: NR
Genre: Dra

FLOW

Fri, 11/22/24 MOD
Director: Gints Zilbalodis
Rating: NR
Genre: Adv/Ani

SONY

212-833-8500

HERE

Fri, 11/1/24 WIDE
Stars: Tom Hanks, Robin Wright
Director: Robert Zemeckis
Rating: NR
Genre: Com/Dra/Rom

KRAVEN THE HUNTER

Fri, 12/13/24 WIDE
Stars: Aaron Taylor-Johnson, Russell Crowe
Director: J.C. Chandor
Rating: NR
Genre: Act/Adv/SF
Specs: Imax, Dolby Vis/Atmos

PADDINGTON IN PERU

Fri, 1/17/25 WIDE
Stars: Olivia Colman, Antonio Banderas
Director: Dougal Wilson
Rating: NR
Genre: Fam

A BIG BOLD BEAUTIFUL JOURNEY

Fri, 5/9/25 WIDE
Stars: Margot Robbie, Colin Farrell
Director: Kogonada
Rating: NR
Genre: Dra

KARATE KID

Fri, 5/30/25 WIDE
Stars: Jackie Chan, Ralph Macchio
Director: Jonathan Entwistle
Rating: NR
Genre: Act
Specs: Dolby Atmos / Dolby Vision

28 YEARS LATER

Fri, 6/20/25 WIDE
Rating: NR
Genre: Hor

UNTITLED SONY/MARVEL LIVE ACTION 2025

Fri, 6/27/25 WIDE
Rating: NR
Genre: Act/SF
Specs: Imax

I KNOW WHAT YOU DID LAST SUMMER

Fri, 7/18/25 WIDE
Director: Jennifer Kaytin Robinson
Rating: NR
Genre: Thr/Hor

BENEATH THE STORM

Fri, 8/1/25 WIDE
Stars: Phoebe Dynevor, Whitney Peak
Director: Tommy Wirkola
Rating: NR
TH

ANIMAL FRIENDS

Fri, 8/15/25 WIDE
Stars: Ryan Reynolds, Jason Momoa
Director: Peter Atencio
Rating: R
Genre: Ani

SONY/BLUMHOUSE

UNTITLED SONY/BLUMHOUSE INSIDIOUS
 Fri, 8/29/25 WIDE
Rating: NR
Genre: Hor

GOAT

Fri, 2/13/26 WIDE
Director: Tyree Dillihay
Rating: NR
Genre: Ani

STREET FIGHTER

Fri, 3/20/26 WIDE
Rating: NR
Genre: Act

SONY PICTURES CLASSICS

Tom Prassis 212-833-4981

THE ROOM NEXT DOOR

Fri, 12/20/24 LTD
Stars: Julianne Moore, Tilda Swinton
Director: Pedro Almodóvar
Rating: NR
Genre: Dra



THE BEST CHRISTMAS PAGEANT EVER
 Fri, 11/8/24

CRUNCHYROLL

OVERLORD: THE SACRED KINGDOM

Fri, 11/8/24 LTD
Director: Naoyuki Ito
Rating: NR
Genre: Ani
Specs: Imax

UNTITLED SONY/CRUNCHYROLL/ANIPLEX EVENT FILM

Fri, 9/12/25 LTD
Rating: NR
Genre: Ani
Specs: Imax

UNIVERSAL

818-777-1000

WICKED

Fri, 11/22/24 WIDE
Stars: Ariana Grande, Cynthia Erivo
 Jon M. Chu
Rating: NR
Genre: Mus
Specs: Dolby Atmos / Dolby Vision

THE WOMAN IN THE YARD

Fri, 1/10/25 WIDE
Stars: Danielle Deadwyler, Russell Horsby
Director: Jaume Collet-Serra
Rating: NR
Genre: Hor

WOLF MAN

Fri, 1/17/25 WIDE
Director: Christopher Abbott
 Leigh Whannell
Rating: NR
Genre: Hor

DOG MAN

Fri, 1/31/25 WIDE
Director: Peter Hastings
Rating: NR
Genre: Ani



WICKED
 Fri, 11/22/24

WITH LOVE

Fri, 2/7/25 WIDE
Star: Ke Huy Quan
Director: Jonathan Eusebio
Rating: NR
Genre: Act

UNTITLED UNIVERSAL EVENT FILM 2025 1

Fri, 2/14/25 WIDE
Rating: NR

DROP

Fri, 4/11/25 WIDE
Stars: Meghann Fahy, Brandon Sklenar
Directors: Christopher Landon
Rating: NR
Genre: Hor

ATLANTIS

Fri, 5/9/25 WIDE
Stars: Kelvin Harrison Jr., Halle Bailey
Director: Michel Gondry
Rating: NR
Genre: Mus

HOW TO TRAIN YOUR DRAGON

Fri, 6/13/25 WIDE
Director: Dean DeBlois
Rating: NR
Genre: Act

M3GAN 2.0

Fri, 6/27/25 WIDE
Rating: NR
Genre: Thr/Hor

JURASSIC WORLD REBIRTH

Wed, 7/2/25 WIDE
Rating: NR
Genre: Act/Adv

THE BAD GUYS 2

Fri, 8/1/25 WIDE
Stars: Sam Rockwell, Craig Robinson
Director: Pierre Perifel
Rating: NR
Genre: Ani

NOBODY 2

Fri, 8/15/25 WIDE
Star: Bob Odenkirk
Director: Timo Tjahjanto
Rating: NR
Genre: Act

HIM

Fri, 9/19/25 WIDE
Stars: Marlon Wayans, Tyriq Withers
Director: Justin Tipping
Rating: NR
Genre: Hor

GABBY'S DOLLHOUSE: THE MOVIE

Fri, 9/26/25 WIDE
Directors: Laila Lockhart Kraner, Ryan Crego
Rating: NR
Genre: Ani

THE BLACK PHONE 2

Fri, 10/17/25 WIDE
Stars: Ethan Hawke, Mason Thames
Director: Scott Derrickson
Rating: NR
Genre: Hor

WICKED PART 2

Wed, 11/21/25 WIDE
Stars: Ariana Grande, Cynthia Erivo
 Jon M. Chu
Rating: NR
Genre: Mus

FIVE NIGHTS AT FREDDY'S 2

Fri, 12/5/25 WIDE
Director: Emma Tammi
Rating: NR
Genre: Hor



JURASSIC WORLD REBIRTH
 Wed, 7/2/25

SOULM8TE

Fri, 1/2/26 WIDE
Director: Kate Dolan
Rating: NR
Genre: Hor

UNTITLED UNIVERSAL EVENT FILM 2026 1

Fri, 1/16/26 WIDE
Rating: NR

UNTITLED UNIVERSAL EVENT FILM 2026 2

Fri, 2/13/26 WIDE
Rating: NR

UNTITLED EXORCIST FILM DIRECTED BY MIKE FLANAGAN

Fri, 3/13/26 WIDE
Director: Mike Flanagan
Rating: NR

UNTITLED NEW ANIMATED FILM BASED ON THE WORLD OF SUPER MARIO BROS.

Fri, 4/3/26 WIDE
Directors: Aaron Horvath, Michael Jelenic
Rating: NR
Genre: Ani

UNTITLED EVENT FILM DIRECTED BY STEVEN SPIELBERG

Fri, 5/15/26 WIDE
Director: Steven Spielberg
Rating: NR

UNTITLED EVENT FILM DIRECTED BY DANIELS

Fri, 6/12/26 WIDE
Directors: Daniel Kwan and Daniel Scheinert
Rating: NR

SHREK 5

Wed, 7/1/26 WIDE
Stars: Mike Myers, Eddie Murphy
Director: Walt Dohrn
Rating: NR
Genre: Ani

UNTITLED UNIVERSAL ANIMATED EVENT FILM 2026

Fri, 9/25/26 WIDE
Rating: NR

UNTITLED BLUMHOUSE EVENT FILM 2026

Fri, 10/16/26 WIDE
Rating: NR

UNTITLED FOURTH FILM DIRECTED BY JORDAN PEELE

Fri, 10/23/26 WIDE
Director: Jordan Peele
Rating: NR

UNTITLED UNIVERSAL EVENT FILM 2026 3

Fri, 11/13/26 WIDE
Rating: NR

UNTITLED UNIVERSAL EVENT FILM 2026 4

Wed, 12/23/26 WIDE
Rating: NR

MINIONS 3

Wed, 6/30/27 WIDE
Director: Pierre Coffin
Rating: NR
Genre: Ani

VERTICAL ENTERTAINMENT

THE ORDER

Fri, 12/6/24 WIDE
Stars: Jude Law, Nicholas Hoult
Director: Justin Kurzel
Rating: NR
Genre: Act/Dra

VIVA PICTURES

SCARYGIRL

Fri, 10/4/24 WIDE
Stars: Anna Torv, Sam Neill
Directors: Ricard Cussó & Tania Vincent
Rating: NR
Genre: Ani

HITPIG

Fri, 10/4/24 WIDE
Stars: Jason Sudeikis, Rainn Wilson
Directors: Cinzia Angelini & David Feiss
Rating: NR
Genre: Ani/com

WARNER BROS.

818-977-1850

JUROR #2

Fri, 11/1/24 LTD
Stars: Nicholas Hoult, Toni Collette
Director: Clint Eastwood
Rating: PG-13
Genre: Dra

THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE WAR OF THE ROHIRRIM

Fri, 12/13/24 WIDE
Director: Kenji Kamiyama
Rating: NR
Genre: Ani/Fan
Specs: Imax / Dolby Atmos / Dolby Vision

COMPANION

Fri, 1/10/25 WIDE
Stars: Sophie Thatcher, Jack Quaid
Director: Drew Hancock
Rating: NR

MICKEY 17

Fri, 1/31/25 WIDE
Stars: Robert Pattinson, Naomi Ackie
Director: Bong Joon Ho
Rating: NR
Genre: Act/Dra/SF
Specs: Imax

AN UNTITLED RYAN COOGLER EVENT SINNERS

Fri, 3/7/25 WIDE
Star: Michael B. Jordan
Director: Ryan Coogler
Rating: NR
Genre: Dra

ALTO KNIGHTS

Fri, 3/21/25 WIDE
Stars: Robert De Niro, Debra Messing
Director: Barry Levinson
Rating: NR
Genre: Dra

MINECRAFT

Fri, 4/4/25 WIDE
Stars: Jason Momoa, Jack Black
Director: Jared Hess
Rating: NR
Genre: Ani

UNTITLED WB EVENT FILM 2025 1

Fri, 4/18/25 WIDE
Rating: NR

FLOWERVALE STREET

Fri, 5/16/25 WIDE
Stars: Anne Hathaway, Ewan McGregor
Director: David Robert Mitchell
Rating: NR
Genre: Thr
Specs: Imax

UNTITLED NEW LINE EVENT FILM 2025 1

Fri, 5/30/25 WIDE
Rating: NR

UNTITLED NEW LINE EVENT FILM 2025 2

Fri, 6/20/25 WIDE
Rating: NR

F1

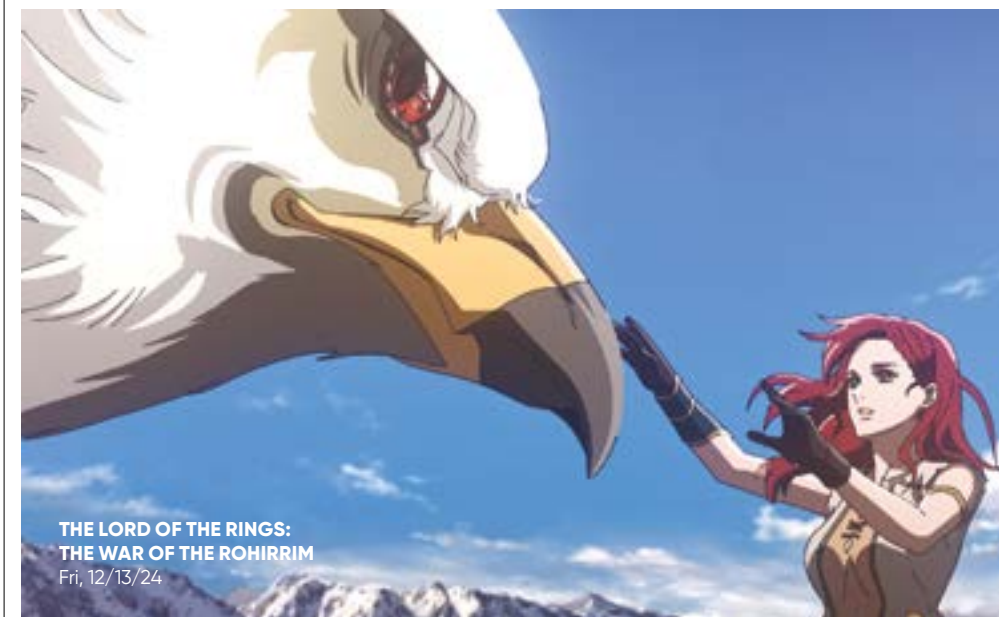
Fri, 6/25/25 WIDE
Stars: Brad Pitt, Damson Idris
Director: Joseph Kosinski
Rating: NR
Genre: Act/Adv
Specs: Imax

SUPERMAN

Fri, 7/25/25 WIDE
Stars: David Corenswet, Rachel Brosnahan
Director: James Gunn
Rating: NR
Genre: Act/Adv

UNTITLED PAUL THOMAS ANDERSON EVENT FILM

Fri, 8/8/25 WIDE
Stars: Leonardo DiCaprio, Sean Penn
Director: Paul Thomas Anderson
Rating: NR
Genre: Dra
Specs: Imax



THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE WAR OF THE ROHIRRIM
 Fri, 12/13/24

UNTITLED CONJURING FINALE

Fri, 9/5/25 WIDE
Rating: NR
Genre: Hor
Specs: Imax

THE BRIDE!

Fri, 9/26/25 WIDE
Stars: Christian Bale, Jessie Buckley
Director: Maggie Gyllenhaal
Rating: NR
Specs: Imax

MORTAL KOMBAT 2

Fri, 10/24/25 WIDE
Stars: Karl Urban, Adeline Rudolph
Director: Simon McQuoid
Rating: NR
Genre: Act

UNTITLED NEW LINE EVENT FILM 2025 3

Fri, 11/21/25 WIDE
Rating: NR

UNTITLED WB EVENT FILM 2025

Fri, 12/19/25 WIDE
Rating: NR

WEAPONS

Fri, 1/16/26 WIDE
Stars: Josh Brolin, Julia Garner
Director: Zach Cregger
Rating: NR

THE CAT IN THE HAT

Fri, 3/6/26 WIDE
Stars: Bill Hader, Quinta Brunson
Directors: Alessandro Carloni, Erica Rivinoja
Rating: NR
Genre: Ani
Specs: Imax

UNTITLED NEW LINE HORROR FILM 2026 1

Fri, 3/27/26 WIDE
Rating: NR

UNTITLED NL/ATOMIC MONSTER/BLUMHOUSE EVENT FILM

Fri, 4/17/26 WIDE
Rating: NR
Genre: Hor

UNTITLED DC EVENT FILM 2026

Fri, 5/29/26 WIDE
Rating: NR

UNTITLED NEW LINE EVENT FILM 2026 1

Fri, 6/19/26 WIDE
Rating: NR

SUPERGIRL: WOMAN OF TOMORROW

Fri, 6/26/26 WIDE
Star: Milly Alcock
Director: Craig Gillespie
Rating: NR
Genre: Act/Adv
Specs: Imax

UNTITLED NEW LINE EVENT FILM 2026 2

Fri, 7/3/26 WIDE
Rating: NR

UNTITLED NEW LINE EVENT FILM 2026 3

Fri, 8/7/26 WIDE
Rating: NR

UNTITLED NEW LINE HORROR FILM 2026 2

Fri, 9/11/26 WIDE
Rating: NR
Genre: Hor

THE BATMAN PART II

Fri, 10/2/26 WIDE
Star: Robert Pattinson
Director: Matt Reeves
Rating: NR
Genre: Act/Thr
Specs: Imax

UNTITLED WB EVENT FILM 2026

Fri, 11/20/26 WIDE
Rating: NR

UNTITLED NEW LINE EVENT FILM 2026 4

Fri, 11/20/26 WIDE
Rating: NR

UNTITLED WB/LEGENDARY/DENIS VILLENEUVE EVENT FILM

Fri, 12/18/26 WIDE
Director: Denis Villeneuve
Rating: NR
Specs: Imax

UNTITLED NEW LINE EVENT FILM 2026 5

Fri, 12/25/26 WIDE
Rating: NR

UNTITLED WB EVENT FILM 2027 1

Fri, 2/12/27 WIDE
Rating: NR

UNTITLED DC EVENT FILM 2027 1

Fri, 3/5/27 WIDE
Rating: NR

UNTITLED WB / LEGENDARY / MONSTERVERSE FILM

Fri, 3/26/27 WIDE
Rating: NR
IMAX

UNTITLED WB EVENT FILM 2027 2

Fri, 5/21/27 WIDE
Rating: NR

UNTITLED NEW LINE EVENT FILM 2027 1

Fri, 7/16/27 WIDE
Rating: NR

BAD FAIRIES

Fri, 7/23/27 WIDE
Rating: NR
Genre: Ani

UNTITLED WB EVENT FILM 2027 3

Fri, 8/6/27 WIDE
Rating: NR

UNTITLED NEW LINE HORROR FILM 2027 1

Fri, 9/10/27 WIDE
Rating: NR

UNTITLED DC EVENT FILM 2027 2

Fri, 10/1/27 WIDE
Rating: NR

MARGIE CLAUS

Fri, 11/5/27 WIDE
Star: Melissa McCarthy
Directors: Ben Falcone & Damon Jones
Rating: NR

UNTITLED WB FAMILY SEQUEL

Fri, 12/17/27 WIDE
Rating: NR
Genre: Fam

UNTITLED NEW LINE EVENT FILM 2027 2

Wed, 12/22/27 WIDE
Rating: NR

Our Sponsors

Advertiser	Page
Angel Studios	FC, 72
Bay City Cargo	23
Barco	BC
Boxoffice Podcast	52
C. Cretors & Co.	6
Entertainment Supply & Technologies	8
GDC	31
Gold Medal	11, 69
Marcus Theatres	35
Malco Theatres	48
Moving iImage Technologies	3
Packaging Concepts	71
Proctor Companies	51
PIM Brands	49
Ready Theatre Systems	79
Screenvision	41, 59
Sensible Cinema	23
Sigma USA	65
Spotlight Cinema Networks	17
St. Jude	95
Telescopic Seating Systems	IBC, IFC
Vista	96
The Boxoffice Company	8, 24, 39, 85, 87

Image Credits & Acknowledgments

Cover: Courtesy Angel Studios
Page 1: Photo by James Mangold, Courtesy of Searchlight Pictures. © 2024 Searchlight Pictures All Rights Reserved.
Page 2: Photo by Alison Narro, courtesy Alamo Drafthouse
Page 9: Courtesy National Amusements
Page 10: Photo courtesy Variety of the Desert , Photo courtesy Motion Picture Club, Photo courtesy Variety the Children's Charity - Illinois, Photo by Shawn Haley
Page 12: Courtesy National Amusements
Page 13: Photo courtesy ICTA
Page 14: Photo courtesy CJ 4DPLEX, Photo Credit: Chance Yeh/Getty Images for Alamo Drafthouse
Page 15: Photo courtesy Gold Medal,
Page 15: Photo courtesy of Regal
Page 16: Photo courtesy National Association of Theatre Owners
Page 18-19: Photo by Zach Caddy
Page 20, 22: Courtesy of Josh Frank / CineLife Entertainment
Page 25 - 26: Photos courtesy B&B Theatres
Page 27: Photo courtesy GDC
Page 28 - 30: Photos courtesy B&B Theatres
Page 30: Photo courtesy B&B Theatres
Page 33: Courtesy Film Expo Group
Page 36: Photo courtesy Film Expo Group
Page 40: Photo courtesy Cinesystem Cinemas
Page 42: Photo courtesy Film Expo Group Carcheri
Page 45, 47: Photos courtesy Film Expo Group; National Association of Concessionaires/Chris Dammann
Page 50: Photo courtesy Film Expo Group
Page 52: Photo courtesy Cinemark
Page 54-55: Photo courtesy Apollo Kino
Page 56: Photo courtesy Cinemark
Page 58: Photo courtesy D-Box
Page 60-61: Photo Adobe Stock

Page 63: Photo by Zach Caddy
Page 64: Photo Adobe Stock
Page 66: Photo by Alison Narro, courtesy Alamo Drafthouse
Page 67: Photos courtesy AMC (R2-D2), Onni Creative (Five Nights at Freddy's)
Page 68: Photos courtesy Cinemark (Alien), AMC (Despicable Me 4)
Page 69: Photos courtesy AMC
Page 70: Images courtesy Cinemark (Scream), AMC (Deadpool, Barbie)
Page 71: Photo courtesy AMC
Page 73: Jurassic Park Rebirth, Courtesy of Universal Pictures and Amblin Entertainment. Photo by Jasin Boland for Universal. © 2024 Universal Studios. All Rights Reserved.
Page 74-79: Photos Courtesy of Searchlight Pictures. © 2024 Searchlight Pictures All Rights Reserved.
Page 80-81: Photo by Anne Marie Fox, courtesy Searchlight Pictures
Page 82-83: Photo courtesy Searchlight Pictures
Page 86: Courtesy Fathom Events
Page 87: Heretic, Courtesy of A24. © 2024 A24. All Rights Reserved.
Page 88: Toy Story 5, Courtesy of Disney. © 2024 Disney/Pixar. All Rights Reserved.
Page 90: The Best Christmas Pageant Ever, Courtesy of Lionsgate. Photo by Allen Fraser for Lionsgate. © 2024 Lionsgate. All Rights Reserved.
Page 91: Paddington in Peru, Courtesy of Sony Pictures. Photo by Peter Mountain. © 2024 CTMG, Inc. All Rights Reserved.
Page 92: © Universal Studios. All Rights Reserved. Photo by Giles Keyte/ Universal Pictures, Jurassic Park Rebirth, Courtesy of Universal Pictures and Amblin Entertainment. Photo by Jasin Boland for Universal. © 2024 Universal Studios. All Rights Reserved.
Page 93: © 2024 Warner Bros. Entertainment Inc. All Rights Reserved.



St. Jude patient Rinoa

Big Screen. Bigger Cause.

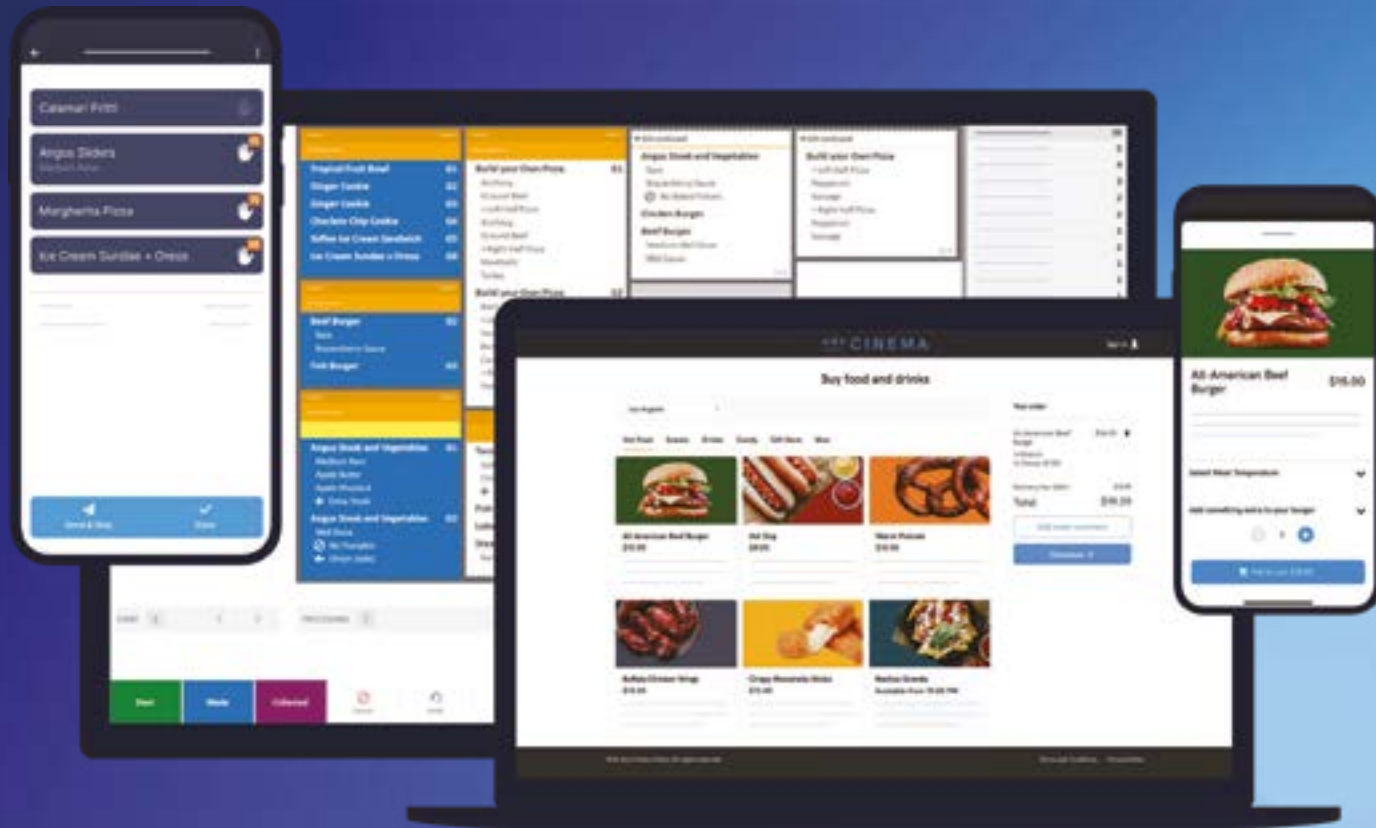
When St. Jude opened in 1962, childhood cancer was largely considered incurable. Since then, St. Jude has helped push the overall survival rate from 20% to more than 80%, and we won't stop until no child dies from cancer. But we can't do it without your powerful partnership. By pairing movie exhibitors with some of Hollywood's brightest stars, St. Jude is harnessing the power of the silver screen to accomplish a truly marvelous mission: **Finding cures. Saving children.®**

For more information, please visit stjude.org/theaters or email chance.weaver@alsac.stjude.org.



vista

Innovative **F&B solutions**
designed for the cinema industry



Kitchen
Operations
Digital signage
Stock
Front of house
Self-service



vista.co/food-and-beverage

TSS™ Couches

SO COMFORTABLE!



COUCH FEATURES:

- Extremely Comfortable
- Budget Friendly
- Fast Installation - No Electrical Needed
- Perfect for your lobby or theater

OPTIONS INCLUDE:

- Ottomans
- Snack Trays
- Tables



Telescopic SEATING SYSTEMS  **Innovations That Move You™**

Contact us at 855-713-0118 or info@telescopicseatingsystems.com • TelescopicSeatingSystems.com

Protected by Various Awarded US Awarded Patents and Pending Patent Applications | See telescopicseatingsystems.com/patents

Protected by Awarded Patents and Pending Applications in China, United Kingdom, Italy, France, Germany, Spain, etc.

HDR BY BARCO

Feel the difference of intensity

Elevate your cinema experience with HDR by Barco, where every moment is a masterpiece waiting to be unveiled. See the difference with unparalleled contrast, darker darks and brilliant highlights that elevate every scene to new heights. Experience vivid colors that pop off the screen and exquisite details that bring the story to life like never before.

Discover more at barco.com/cinema

