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Effect of Cinema

The way we view movies and cinema has changed drastically throughout history. Cinema started out as a way to escape everyday troubles, although it still is used for that same purpose, now it is more of a business module. When movies were first introduced they shocked audiences. The famous first moving picture was the Lumiere Brothers Arrival of a Train. Audiences shrieked in horror as the train approached the screen, fearing it would hit them. The concept of the moving image in front of them was something they have never experienced. We have come along way in terms of how we make movies and how they are viewed. However, along the way cinema and movie theaters altered the way we experience movies, even changing the landscape of a town in the process.

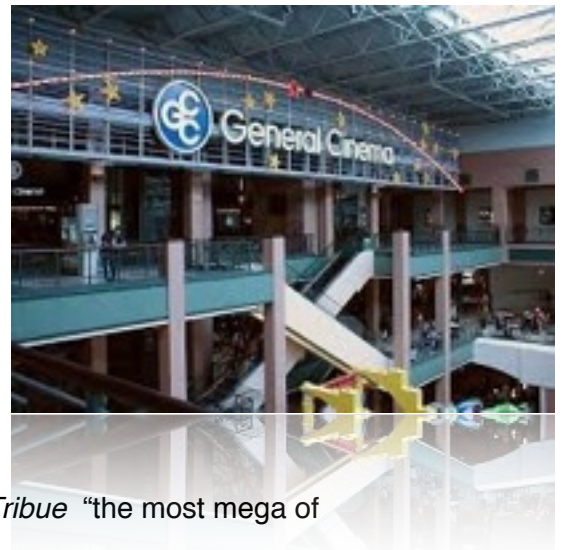
In a city such as Minneapolis, the landscape is changing drastically. The city is almost in a constant state of urban renovation. Throughout the years, particular movie theaters have altered the way that landscape is changed. Particularly in Uptown the Lagoon Cinema (opened 1995) was the “first Twin Cities theater built specifically for showings on independent, foreign-language, and art films”. Films like these were usually pushed off to an old single screen cinema like the Parkway but the Lagoons appealing five auditoriums and amenities it soon became a major attraction. Many stores opened up in uptown around this





theater due to the amount of people drawn to it. The Lagoon Cinema was not the first to use glamorous amenities to attract movie goers. The Willow Creek Cinema opened in 1989 definitely “inject[ed] glamour into the multiplex”. It introduced its concepts for the movies for the first time in the Twin Cities. From the floors to the seats to the eight wide screens it housed

the Willow Creek Cinema “encouraged patrons to demand more from their moviegoing experience”. Prior to establishments such as this people were used to the boring dull theaters of the 1970s and early 80s. It is places like Willow Creek Cinema that raised the bar for theaters all over the Twin Cities area, not just the metropolitan area. Moving just a few years ahead, Mall of America was on a rise in the 1990s. Being named one of the largest malls in the country the General Cinema (opened in 1992) within the mall was “once ranked as the largest in Minnesota”. With its fourteen screen multiplex, the Mall of America attract yet an even larger crowd with this addition. What made this theater revolutionary for its time was that it was “among the first cinemas in Minnesota to make special accommodations for patrons in wheelchairs”. This aspect is what made this theater very popular for a period of time. This theater eventually morphed into what you see at the mall today as Theatres Mall of America.



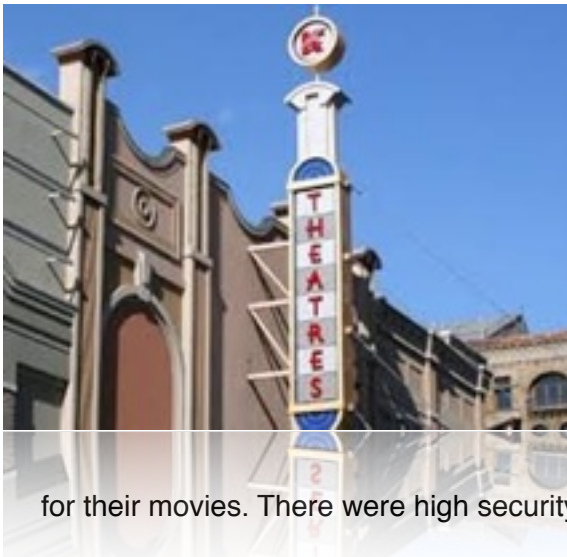
Later in 1998, in the words of the *Minneapolis Star Tribune* “the most mega of megaplexes in Minnesota to date” opened its doors. Lakeville 21 Theatre opened “in January of



1998 with ten screens...later adding eight more”. This theater located on the southern edge of the metropolitan area was one

of many theaters to open its doors at the turn of the millennium. This theater however was far beyond others of its time. With rocking chairs and upholders among other high-tech features, this multiplex attracted people from the whole area. It challenged nearby theaters to raise their standards and begged them to try and compete.

What was perhaps the biggest gamble in cinema here in the Twin Cities and surrounding area was the Block E 15 theater on Hennepin Avenue. Due to the “small downtown population



base, high crime rates, and a dearth of free parking”

and the closing of the Skyway Theater in 1999,

many feared that the challenges Block E 15 was

confronted with would be too much for it to handle.

To accommodate these challenges this Crown

Cinema was stuffed with a plethora of amenities

people were lured from all over to come downtown

for their movies. There were high security measures taken to ensure safety and “discourage rowdy behavior”. This was in an effort to “attract

suburban commuters”. The cinema even offered

vouchers for limited time free parking along with its

many amenities located just behind its doors. This

theater helped shape the Hennepin avenue area to be

more appealing to consumers from all over the Twin

Cities. No matter the challenges it face it was able to

overcome it and become a strong business shortly after opening its doors.



These particular theaters in the Twin Cities area raised the bar for what we expect when we go to the movies. With the way they changed the landscape around them and with what they offered they advanced the movie going experience rapidly up until the turn of the millennium

and even after. With a changing city such as Minneapolis it is comforting to know that establishments like these who hold such historical and significant value remain upright even as the city changes and morphs around them. Cinema is an ever growing and changing industry and it continues to affect the lives of millions of people daily. Who would have ever thought that a moving picture could hold such significance to some people and even change the world we live in and how we see it in the process.