

= Oregon Theatre =

The Oregon Theatre , or Oregon Theater , is an adult movie theater in the Richmond neighborhood of southeast Portland , Oregon . The theater was completed in 1925 and originally housed a Wurlitzer pipe organ and vaudeville stage . It would later screen Hollywood , art @-@ house , and Spanish @-@ language films . The building was acquired by the Maizels family in 1967 and became an adult cinema in the 1970s . It continues to operate as the city 's longest running pornographic cinema and remains owned by a member of the Maizels family .

The cinema has been described as " less creepy than most of its kind " and " out of place " along the newly developed Southeast Division Street . It has also been called " the last holdout of an era " , referring to both the prominence of adult film screenings in the city during the 1970s and its status as the last property owned by the Maizels family . In 2004 , the building was identified as an " Investment and Identity Site " and commended for having attributes valued by the community , such as quality architecture , local ownership , and orientation to the street .

= = Description and history = =

The two @-@ story , roughly 8 @,@ 700 square foot (810 m2) Oregon Theatre was designed by Hubert A. Williams . It exhibits Italianate and " Streetcar Era Commercial " architecture , with plans drafted by Universal Plan Service . The brick exterior includes a glass @-@ filled retail base , beltcourses , double @-@ hung windows on the second story , ornamental brickwork on its parapet , and a flat roof . Upon its completion , the interior featured a \$ 16 @,@ 000 Wurlitzer pipe organ , ornate lighting fixtures attached to a high @-@ domed ceiling , 750 high @-@ backed chairs , a vaudeville stage , and a screen which measured 16 by 20 feet (4 @.@ 9 m × 6 @.@ 1 m) . The theater cost \$ 35 @,@ 000 to construct and began operating on September 4 , 1925 , possibly for a showing of Steele of the Royal Mounted .

J. W. McFadden Inc. was the building 's original owner . Subsequent owners have included C. C. and Leedy Maude , J. S. Middleton , Oregon Theatre Co . , Mary Watt , and Ernest Bass . The theater 's front doors and ticket office were altered by J. W. McFadden Inc. in 1930 , along with the construction of a new ticket booth . In 1949 , when the Waverly Heights Congregational United Church of Christ was reconstructing a new church building on its property at Southeast 33rd and Woodward , church services were held at the Oregon Theatre . According to the Puget Sound Theatre Organ Society , the organ was repossessed by the William Wood Organ Co. and re @-@ installed at radio station KXL 's studios in Portland . The theater 's front entrance , including its doors and 1930s ticket booth , were remodeled by Ferguson Cassady Co. in 1954 .

In 1967 , an immigrant family acquired ownership of the theater . The Maizels family also owned other cinemas , including Aladdin Theater , the defunct and demolished Walnut Park , and the Encore , now known as Clinton Street Theater . In addition to Hollywood films , the cinemas screened art @-@ house and Spanish @-@ language movies . Multi @-@ light Broadway Sign Co. installed corrugated aluminum on the bottom of the marquee in 1975 .

= = Adult cinema = =

The venue became an adult cinema in the 1970s . The success of Deep Throat in 1972 was a turning point , leading to an increase in the number of adult film screenings at more than a dozen cinemas in Portland . However , the rise of video cassettes and cable television led to a decline in cinema attendance , and by the 2000s , the Maizels family had sold all of their properties except for the Oregon Theatre . Gayne Maizels still owns the theater , which continues to operate as the city 's longest running pornographic cinema .

Since becoming an adult cinema , the theater has featured a single movie screen and sofas . In 2005 , The Portland Mercury said the theater showed heterosexual pornographic films daily except for Wednesdays and Saturdays , when it featured bisexual content . In 2013 , Portland Monthly described the venue 's green entryway , leading to a ramp lined with adult DVDs and an " indifferent

doorman who demands \$ 8 . Inside , a few dozen men , mostly seniors , occupy a hodgepodge of old couches in near @-@ total darkness . "

= = Reception = =

According to local film archivist and author Gary Lacher , the Oregon Theatre 's record as the longest continuously operating adult cinema in Portland is " not often acknowledged publicly " and represents " the last holdout of an era " , referring to the prominence of adult film screenings in Portland . In an interview , Lacher expressed his wish that the theater would return to a more traditional cinema , but was thankful that the venue has been spared from closure and demolition to date .

In 2004 , GNT Planning included the theater as an " Investment and Identity Site " in their report , which was commissioned by the Division Vision Coalition (DVC) , a coalition of community members from the nearby business and neighborhood associations . DVC is invested in the " economy of locally @-@ owned businesses , an attractive streetscape that invites neighbors to linger , and sustainable features that are ecologically sensitive " . The building was identified as having attributes valued by the community , including quality architecture , local ownership , and orientation to the street .

In its 2005 review of the theater , The Portland Mercury said the " glut of cozy sofas make an outing comfortable " , but criticized the venue for having only one screen and for showing predominantly heterosexual films . The publication said that the venue was " [m] ore like an actual cinema than a circle jerk (though chicken @-@ choking is not unheard of) The [theater] is much less creepy than most of its kind ? there 's even bicycle parking indoors . " In its 2012 Portlandia @-@ related list of " Portland 's Most Ill @-@ Advised Valentine 's Date Spots " , IFC quipped , " Of course , considering the dwindling number of adult theaters across the country , you could make an argument that it 's a piece of Portland history , and that visiting wouldn 't be much different than going to a museum ... on second thought , play it safe and stay away . " In 2013 , Portland Monthly said the venue " seems out of place " , a " dingy brick building " surrounded by the newly developed Southeast Division Street .

After multiple restaurants on Southeast Division were featured in Willamette Week 's annual restaurant guide in 2013 , the newspaper made humorous " predictions " about what might become of some of the street 's existing spaces . It predicted that the Oregon Theatre could become " McMenamins Mophouse & Brewery " , referring to the McMenamins regional chain of breweries , historic hotels , music venues and pubs . Willamette Week wrote , " When one of the nation 's last adult theaters finally succumbs to market pressure , McMenamins rehabs the space while keeping its historic character alive with ' voyeur ' dining booths , a sticky dance floor and VIP dining in the bored projectionist 's perch . " In 2014 , Willamette Week called the theater " seedy " .