Connecting One and Many - Reinventing the Procession of the Cinema Experience

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Connecting One and Many
Reinventing the Procession of the Cinema Experience

Kelly Halligan Sekely
Master of Fine Arts Thesis Project
Connecting One and Many
Reinventing the Procession of the Cinema Experience

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Fine Arts in Interior Environments at Virginia Commonwealth University

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Virginia Commonwealth University
Richmond, Virginia
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To my husband, Jack
Your support, understanding and encouragement knows no bounds. For not a second did your confidence in me waver, nor a moment did you ever hesitate to help. You have given as much of yourself to this program as I, and if there was an honorary MFA, it would certainly be yours. You are extraordinary, my hero and my heart.

To my pups, Brady & Bitsy
Thanks for the endless supply of enthusiastic love, laughs and puppy kisses when I really needed them.

To my mom & dad
You have always believed in me. Thank you for giving me the tools and the courage to make a distant dream become reality.

To my friends
Thank you for sticking by “the invisible woman” for the past two years, forgiving all the birthdays and special occasions I had to miss and phone calls I never made. Please know that just because I wasn’t around doesn’t mean I wasn’t thinking about you. It is finally time to catch up!

To my classmates
The bond we have formed is remarkable. Each of you hold a special place in my heart and my mind, and I am thankful every day that I was blessed with you in my life. Thank you for your support, the unending laughter and for truly understanding who I am.

To Camden Whitehead
Thank you for bringing something out in me that I didn’t realize was there.

To Christiana Lafazani
Thank you for giving me this opportunity, inspiring me through support and being a friend.

To Roberto Ventura
Your knowledge and talent are astounding. Thanks for inspiring me to work hard and harder.

Randomly important shout outs go to...
Jordan (gone but never forgotten), The Saunders Muhraney, Pohary Barn, Williams & Shenill, Commonwealth Architects, hair bands, Acangia wine, Impemco, Age of Excess, Keith Fabry Reproduction, Plato Art, Main Art, LoCaslo, Samia Grotto and Zorbas Pizza
Design’s memory, reaching that little part of the back of your mind that makes you feel good without exactly knowing why.

Design is recalling the vinyl seats in your grandma’s kitchen that your bare legs always stuck to on warm days. Design is the light through the paired windows that reminds you at hand-puppet charades. Design is the smell of oak that transports you back to the countless hours spent in your childhood fort. Design is the shade of green that invokes a picture of your dad in his favorite sweatshirt. Design is the color on the walls of the room where your husband proposed.

Memories exist for inspiration, so pay attention to and celebrate what is already there. That which has come before teaches, revealing decisive success, uncovering mistakes and providing a path for experimentation. Memory excites our unconscious emotion, connecting us to our history, the events which help us get to where we are going and realize how far we have come, making design much more than the walls you build or the flooring you select. Design is what those things help you remember because today is what becomes tomorrow’s past.
In the past, going to the movies was an event.

The grand marquee made a statement, ushering you inside. The elaborately decorated lobby transported you to a place in your dreams where riches and opulence abound. The curtained screen marked the start of a true storied spectacle as you sat close to your friends and neighbors dressed in their Sunday best. There was no denying that the cinema was the place to see, be seen and to socialize.

In contrast, today’s movie-going can be classified as more of a singular experience. You wait in long, solemn cattle lines to enter a cluttered lobby with loud video games, tacky candy machines and tunnel-like hallways. You sit in plush recliners in a sea of strangers and rush out of the theater before even the lights come up.

In response to this cultural shift, my proposed design solution will challenge the isolation of today’s cinema by recreating the procession associated with neighborhood movie-going of the early 1900s. I will reinvent a cinema built in 1937, the Bellevue Theater, and develop a design that is contemporary, incorporating both modern technology and interests of today. The design will explore the spatial connections between one and many, fostering both the individual and group experience associated with the big screen – the cinema procession of the past.

In the past, going to the movies was an event.

\[\text{Photo courtesy of www.16sparrows.typepad.com.}\]
\[\text{Photo courtesy of http://zollberg.co.cc/1930s-movie.html.}\]
The act of moving along or proceeding in orderly succession or in a formal and ceremonious manner

10

It is situated on a commercial strip, MacArthur Avenue, and is surrounded by eclectic restaurants, a neighborhood market, even a coffee shop and a well-known wine store. The single-screen cinema was built in 1937 and consists of a main level auditorium and lobby, a mezzanine lobby and balcony as well as a large projection room with film storage.

In my research, to determine how site informs cinema audience and program, I looked at three cinemas: the Rooftop Cinema in Melbourne, Australia, along with Cinebistro and the Westhampton Theater in Richmond, Virginia. The Rooftop Cinema with its unique program of city views, full-service bar and mix of classic new and art house films attracts tourists, keeps city commuters in the city for their entertainment choices and is an overall convenience for city residents. Cinebistro, located in an upscale mall with unique-to-market retailers, offers an in-theater dining and alcohol experience that is unique to the area which will draw upscale movie-goers from all parts of metro Richmond. The Westhampton, a 1938 cinema located in a prestigious Richmond neighborhood, has survived by translating its program to its elite surroundings, maintaining character through its architectural features but adding an additional screen and showing intellectual films seen nowhere else in Richmond.

In analyzing cinema programs, I continued to examine the Rooftop Cinema and Cinebistro, but added a large multiplex located within Richmond’s city limits, Movieland at Boulevard Square. For Cinebistro, The Bellevue Theater is located in the North Richmond neighborhood of Bellevue, a pleasant neighborhood with sidewalks, tree-lined streets and neighbors who care about neighbors.

In order to more fully understand the rhythm associated with a procession, I investigated three modern processions...a wedding, a funeral and a NASCAR race. I discovered that the more solitary portion of the procession fell within the middle of the event, with the group/social event beginning and ending the procession.

The Bellevue Theater is located in the North Richmond neighborhood of Bellevue, a pleasant neighborhood with sidewalks, tree-lined streets and neighbors who care about neighbors.

I found that circulation was not well planned as service staff delivering food and drinks use the same entrances and exits as guests which can cause dangerous and confusing situations. Where Cinebistro excels is in offering a luxury movie and dining experience while encouraging pre- and post-movie visits to their lounge. Rooftop Cinema’s program of a movie and dining truly appeals secondary to the experience offered by its location. There is no lobby and only a small box office, encouraging all interaction to take place on the roof while watching the movie or visiting the bar. Movieland succeeds in bringing luxury back to the movie-going experience in its seventeen auditoriums with custom wood and black velvet seats. But their lounge is underwhelming, its close proximity to the entrance, lack of separation from the lobby and utilitarian furnishings failing to create a destination experience.

Lastly, for inspiration, I looked to the process and work of Charles Rennie Mackintosh. Mackintosh, a Scottish designer and architect associated with the Arts & Crafts and Art Nouveau movements, used sketchbooks as reference books. In them he captured details, working quickly, unafraid of making mistakes. Many of his captured details made their way into his architectural and interior designs.

Research Summary

In analyzing cinema programs, I continued to examine the Rooftop Cinema and Cinebistro, but added a large multiplex located within Richmond’s city limits, Movieland at Boulevard Square. For Cinebistro,
Swanston Street is historically one of the main streets of Central Melbourne, making up the Central Business District. It passes a number of iconic Melbourne landmarks, including St. Paul’s Cathedral, Flinders Street Station, the Melbourne Town Hall, the State Library of Victoria, the City Square and Curtain House, and is home to both the university of Melbourne and RMIT University. The street has historically experienced problems with heavy traffic, homelessness and littering, but was redeveloped in 1992 with help from a number of public sculptures established through an art program, the most famous of these statues being a small bronze dog called Larry Latrobe. Nine tram routes currently run along the street and two of the busiest railway stations in the city are located at either end.
Rooftop Cinema is a destination location... shares building space with both edgy entertainment venues and popular local businesses is located among iconic landmarks on Melbourne’s main street is in close proximity to public transportation offers a unique program - rooftop movies and bar is close to two major universities is situated on a street that is auto-free which allows for a pedestrian-friendly environment - room for cafe tables, art installations, etc.

SITE ANALYSIS

ROOFTOP
ROOFTOP CINEMA, Rooftop Bar, Beatbox Kitchen

LEVEL 4
ROOFTOP CINEMA BOX OFFICE
RIGHT ANGLE STUDIO: A creative studio producing thoughts, words and deeds. Focuses on the inner-urban audience THREE THOUSAND: A subcultural guide to Melbourne which is published daily.

TANDRA: Web technology company.

LEVEL 5
PRIVATE RESIDENCE

LEVEL 4
WING CHUN BING PA KUNG FU ACADEMY: Provides a safe environment for teaching the principle-based system of Wing Chun. FITTE DE FELICE: An architecture, interiors and design practice focused on residential, commercial and hospitality projects.

LEVEL 3
METROPOLIS: Voted the best bookstore in Melbourne, it carries a specialist range of books focusing on all areas of art.

SOMEDAY STORE: Clothing & accessory boutique of designers Perks & Mini.

BUL: Expresses the grace and natural beauty of the seaside through a range of timeless fashion ideals.

LEVEL 2
THE TOFF IN TOWN: Classy late night boutique music venue and bar with a private club feel.

LEVEL 1
COOKIE BAR & RESTAURANT: An icon of Melbourne, this bar is classy and trendy, offering over 85 types of beer and modern food.

Built in 1922, the Curtin House, originally the Tattersalls Building, housed a gentlemen’s club on the first floor for the first eight years of its life. Later it became the headquarters of the Communist party until it was raided by police in 1940. In the 1980s, after decades of neglect, Curtin House became home to an artistic movement of opera performers and dancers, the following decade, however, saw it slide into virtual dereliction. Recently an entertainment-themed revitalisation has occurred, making the Curtin House the place to go to socialise.

Audience... city residents, college students, tourists: 1.5 million per year city commuters: 765,000 daily

The cinema’s unique program offers... city views an outdoor experience full-service bar food service mix of classic, new and art house films

This program attracts tourists, keeps city commuters in the city for their entertainment choices and is an overall convenience for city residents.
Within its “neighborhood,” Stony Point Fashion Park, Cinebistro:

- is in close proximity to female-focused shops like A Pea in the Pod, White House/Black Market, bebe and Ann Taylor.
- has exposure to ATM traffic.
- is in direct line of sight for those entering from Dillard’s rear parking lot.

However...

- it is located in an area of the mall with the highest concentration of vacant storefronts.
- its closest anchor, Dillard’s, is not a unique destination.
- it has poor parking lot signage and no direct entrance from the parking lot.
The Westhampton Theater opened in 1938 as a single screen theater with a balcony. In the 1980s, it was separated into two theaters. It is currently owned by Regal Cinemas and specializes in showing alternative, independent and foreign films. Located in one of Richmond's higher end neighborhoods and surrounded by the University of Richmond and two private schools, it is one of only two remaining movie houses still open inside the city limits of Richmond. All the other area theaters are multiplexes.

**AUDIENCE**

- Stony Point Fashion Park shoppers
- Upscale movie-goers
- Movie-goers looking for unique experience
- Adults over age 21 only
- Place of residence not an issue due to niche audience

This in-theater dining program is unique to the Richmond area. Since CineBistro's target audience is upscale movie-goers, this demographic will travel from all parts of metro Richmond for the experience. In essence, making the site and location inconsequential.

**PROGRAM**

- Gourmet menu
- Dining in theater seats or in lounge
- Alcohol served in-seat
- Outdoor terrace
- Reserved seating
- Classic movies shown in the lounge
- Six theaters

This in-theater dining program is unique to the Richmond area. Since CineBistro’s target audience is upscale movie-goers, this demographic will travel from all parts of metro Richmond for the experience. In essence, making the site and location inconsequential.
AUDIENCE
University of Richmond students
Residents of this prestigious West End neighborhood
Independent film aficionados
Upscale destination shoppers from all parts of metro Richmond
Movie-goers craving an elegant, authentic movie environment

The cinema’s unique program offers:
- two theaters
- art house and independent films
- gourmet concession stand
- paintings displayed by local art league
- elegant Williamsburg architecture

Located within Libbie & Grove’s “On the Avenue,” on an area that markets itself as having “retained its character with personalized service and attention that only local merchants and professionals can offer.” This neighborhood theater has survived by translating its program to its elite surroundings, becoming much like an art gallery. It has kept its character through maintenance of original architectural features, added a second theater to maximize choice, and made the decision to feature intellectual films which cannot be seen anywhere else in Richmond.
## CINEMA COMPARISON

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Movieland</th>
<th>Cinebistro</th>
<th>Rooftop Cinema</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of theaters</strong></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of seats per theater of seats</strong></td>
<td>17 - 300</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of aisles</strong></td>
<td>1 or 2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of rows</strong></td>
<td>9 - 16</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Seat dimensions</strong></td>
<td>27&quot; x 31&quot; x 42&quot;</td>
<td>33.5&quot; x 33&quot; x 44&quot;</td>
<td>25.5&quot; x 13&quot; x 32&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aisle width</strong></td>
<td>42&quot;</td>
<td>42&quot;</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Row depth</strong></td>
<td>4'2&quot;</td>
<td>8'0&quot;</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Box office</strong></td>
<td>Standard box office with entrance vestibule prior to entering lobby</td>
<td>Reception-like desk within lobby interior</td>
<td>Small black pod trimmed in lilac velvet with standard desk-height table</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lobby size</strong></td>
<td>Large, double-height open space; includes small bar and concessions</td>
<td>Mid-size space with box office and seating separated from lounge</td>
<td>No lobby</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Concessions</strong></td>
<td>Standard - candy, popcorn, soda, pizza; In-theater dining as well as standard movie concessions</td>
<td>Bar with meals served</td>
<td>Bar with meals served</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bar</strong></td>
<td>Yes, awkward corner near front entrance; Yes, with signature movie-themed drinks and large comfortable lounge</td>
<td>Yes, with signature movie-themed drinks and large comfortable lounge</td>
<td>Large rooftop bar with seating and views of movie screen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Patio</strong></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Rooftop bar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Party rooms</strong></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>In-theater dining</strong></td>
<td>Concessions only</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>In-theater alcohol</strong></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ENTRANCE
There is only one entrance to the cinema and that entrance is inside of the mall. Although Stony Point is an open-air facility, it makes locating Cinesbistro a challenge, especially for infrequent mall or cinema visitors. There are two sets of doors at the entrance which aid in traffic flow.

LOBBY/LOUNGE
The lobby provides a long bench for seating, a self-service ticketiosk and a reception/ ticketing area in a non-traditional box office. The lounge lies to the right and is shielded from the lobby by a wall screen. The lounge provides an ample bar with classic movies projected behind, comfortable seating groups as well as a standing bar. There is also a dining patio which projects into the mall’s public area. The lounge allows an opportunity to wait for your movie, have a cocktail or enjoy a meal.

CINEMA
There are six cinemas, all of approximately the same size. The majority of seats are lounge format with a retractable armrest for separation. Each seat reclines and enjoys its own swivel tablet for dining.

Although this is a cinema environment, natural light does play an important role. Daylight fills the space through large glass patio doors and large clerestory windows in the lobby and lounge. Central vertical symmetry appears to be the intended direction for the space. However, the existing structural footprint of the mall limited that placement. There are three theaters on each side of the imagined axis, however two of the cinemas on the right side of the structure had to be rotated to fit. The mass of spaces on each side of the axis remains equal.

The spaces which are given hierarchical importance are located around the perimeters of the structure, radiating from the back of house areas at the center of the space.

CINESTRO
Richmond, Virginia

There are six cinemas, all of approximately the same size. The majority of seats are lounge format with a retractable armrest for separation. Each seat reclines and enjoys its own swivel tablet for dining.

Although this is a cinema environment, natural light does play an important role. Daylight fills the space through large glass patio doors and large clerestory windows in the lobby and lounge.
CASE STUDY 2

ROOFTOP CINEMA  
Melbourne, Australia

One takes either the elevator or ascends the newly built exterior access stair to the 6th floor box office. The exterior access stairs from the 6th floor are the only means to the rooftop.

There is no lobby at the Rooftop Cinema. The small box office is on the 6th floor while the bar is on the rooftop. The bar of simple size and is covered by recycling timber pergola with awning. The rooftop is divided into seating areas with 160 brightly striped lounge chairs perched on green synthetic "smartgrass". Full meals are served and plenty of seating is offered.

Photo courtesy of www.travel.nytimes.com
Photo courtesy of www.rooftopcinema.com.au
Photo courtesy of www.architekturezt.com
Image courtesy of www.grantamon.com
The lobby celebrates the industrial history of the building with concrete floors, metal beams and a catwalk. Clerestory windows provide the opportunity for the large lobby to get ample daylight. There is a beer and wine counter with several dining tables directly to the left of the entrance. While this area was created to encourage patrons to relax with a beverage prior to and after their movie, its close proximity to the entrance and lack of separation from the main lobby fail to create a destination experience.

The entrance is a rectangular vestibule with four sets of double doors - one on each side and two on either end of the main facing wall - allowing access from all parts of the expansive parking lot. The small box office is inside, centered on the facing wall. This vestibule creates a defining entry experience, separating the parking lot from the lobby.

There are 17 auditoriums, each with between 100 and 300 seats. In contrast to the industrial feel of the lobby, the auditoriums are more luxurious with seats backed in customer wood with black velvet upholstery. Two auditoriums are equipped to show 3D movies.
Notice the vestibule detail at the Glasgow Art Club designed by Mackintosh in 1893, three years after the sketch of S. Maria Delle Grazie was completed.

Porch, S. Maria Delle Grazie, Milan, 1891

Glasgow Art Club vestibule

Sketchbooks

Sketchbooks are an integral part of the process of most artists, designers and creators. As discussed by Roger Billcliffe, “The sketchbook enables one to experiment, to play around with composition, plan, elevation or sections, to concentrate on specific features or arrangements, even to doodle; it will remain a record of, hopefully, private thoughts, and need have none of the deliberation or precision of measured drawings.”

Sketchbooks were of particular importance to architect Charles Rennie Mackintosh. Mackintosh sketched from childhood through to his fifties, even after he ceased to practice architecture. He sketched what was of interest to him, from buildings to flowers, from timetables to gravestones. To Mackintosh, “...his sketchbooks were reference books, to be thumb-through for a particular detail, an endless source of inspiration. But they were also scrap books, family albums, lasting memories of family holidays, where all of the group had their initials recorded on the drawing.”

Mackintosh did not hide the fact that he chose his subjects with purpose. He only sketched things which he knew could be used in his later designs. Mackintosh believed that architecture should be influenced by the past, but not dependent on it. This is indicative of the sketches he chose to create - nothing modern, usually traditional vernacular styled houses, cottages and cathedrals.

“Mackintosh was a natural and prolific draughtsman” [Billcliffe, 12.] He sketched quickly with “...no hesitation, no rubbing out of mistakes - if there are any they are cleverly incorporated into the design.” As in his own designs, his sketches concentrated on details which were given as much space and attention as his architectural sketches. Of particular importance to Mackintosh were structural details of flowers, of which he studied all his life. Also of note, Mackintosh would often use pattern and structure in his sketches, putting two sketches or a plan, section and elevation on one page with deliberate overlapping to form a pattern that relayed a personal design concept.
The square motif was a favorite of Mackintosh and was often used in the design of his interiors.

Notice how the flower elevation details influence the poster design.

The Willow Tea Room, 1904

Plate and Elevation of Table, Willersly, 1894

Foxglove, Corrie, Arran, 1895

Argyle Street Tearoom Table and Chairs, 1897

Image courtesy of Architectural Sketches & Flower Drawings

Notice how the flower elevation details influence the poster design.

The Hill House, 1904

Image courtesy of Charles Rennie Mackintosh

Image courtesy of www.victorianweb.org

Image courtesy of Architectural Sketches & Flower Drawings

Image courtesy of Charles Rennie Mackintosh

Image courtesy of Charles Rennie Mackintosh
History and Use

The Bellevue Theater was built in 1937 by architect H. Carl Messerschmidt in the North Richmond neighborhood of Bellevue. The theater drew movie-goers from all parts of the city, showing second-run movies and ten cent Saturday morning double-features while also hosting neighborhood talent competitions and women’s meetings. The Bellevue also served as the location for WRVA’s radio’s “New Dominion Barn Dance”, a live Saturday evening country music showcase, from 1957-1964.

Occasionally, Hollywood actors and actresses would visit the Bellevue to promote their body of work while Warren Beatty and Shirley MacLaine, who grew up in the Bellevue neighborhood, attended Saturday morning features. Johnny Cash and Willie Nelson graced the Bellevue stage with the New Dominion Barn Dance.

The theater was purchased 1966 by Samis Grotto to serve as the Shriner’s main headquarters. The Shriner’s leveled out the theater floor, covered the original marquee with white metal panels, converted the lobby into a kitchen and added furnishings. However, much of the building including light fixtures, carpeting and the original move screen and backdrop still remain intact.

Bellevue Theater

4028 Bellevue Avenue
Richmond, Virginia
1. Original exit sign
2. Original carpet in lounge and balcony
3. Original entrance doors removed and covered with kitchen counter and cabinets. Original molding still exists, but has been painted.
4. Original wall sconce in cinema area
5. View from the stage of the Bellevue
6. Stairs to the lounge
MacArthur Avenue is largely destination driven. Customers come with something specific in mind - to pick up something forgotten at the grocery store, for a pizza to take home, to drop off their car to be serviced. There is little to keep them on MacArthur beyond their intended purpose.

Quality of product or experience must outweigh convenience.

Dos Amigos offers fresh, build-your-own burritos, but the new business was struggling. They recently shut their doors after only a few months. They were replaced by a delivery restaurant, The Mill at MacArthur.

Carytown Books went out of business while Barnes & Noble and public libraries flourish.

Stir Crazy introduced later hours and added wine and beer to their menu but did not experience the increased traffic they needed to support the additional costs.
Through the acknowledgement that movies, once a group event, have become much of a solitary and personal experience, it seemed clear that through design I would investigate how individual and group could be melded into a single experience, a modern processional recreating the event of movies past.

What would define that individual and group experience were the main programmatic spaces in the cinema and how those spaces connected and transitioned.

Those main spaces are:
- entrance/lobby
- lounge
- cinema/auditorium
- balcony

**CONCEPTUAL MODEL**

**PURPOSE**
To explore connections between a group of objects

**METHODOLOGY**
Determine a set of rules for construction
- small square: one side connects
- medium square: corner connects
- large square: connects through

**QUESTIONS RAISED**
- What makes a group?
- Is it simply a collection of things that touch?
- Or is something considered a group due to proximity of physical connections?
PURPOSE
To examine connections between planes arranged to create a box.

METHODOLOGY
Combine, in different directions using differing connection methods, multiple planes of the same size which are constructed of different materials to create a solid box.

QUESTIONS RAISED
How is a plane defined?
Is it individual pieces which touch? In the same proximity?
What happens when one thing ceases to exist and another begins?
How are spatial connections defined?

- adjacencies
- separation
- intersection
- penetration
- overlap
- narrow
- widen
1. Lobby
   - Transitional space, moving from reality of street to the event of the movie
2. Lounge
   - Most connected to all other spaces
   - Center of social activity
3. Theater
   - Requires most solitary experience in the most physically dense space
4. Balcony

SPATIAL CONCEPT MODEL

LEVELS OF CONNECTION

RELATIONSHIP DIAGRAM

IMMEDIATELY ADJACENT
CLOSE & CONVENIENT
CONVENIENT
MINOR RELATIONSHIP
ACOUSTIC PRIVACY
NATURAL LIGHT AND/OR VIEW

PROGRAM
CRITERIA MATRIX

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Square Footage</th>
<th>Adjacencies</th>
<th>Level of Connection</th>
<th>Furnishings</th>
<th>Special Considerations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lobby</td>
<td>1,400</td>
<td>Cinema, restrooms, coat check, lounge</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>bench seating, modular sofa/chairs, standing-height tables</td>
<td>main entrance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cinema</td>
<td>2,800</td>
<td>Lobby, lounge, mezz</td>
<td>low</td>
<td>mezzanine seating</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s Restroom</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>Lobby</td>
<td>medium</td>
<td>wash basins, toilets, urinals</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men’s Restroom</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>Lobby</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box Office</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>Lobby</td>
<td>medium</td>
<td>ticket windows, counter, standing-height tables</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coat Check</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Lobby</td>
<td>hanging storage space</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stairwell to Basement</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Lobby</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

LEVEL 2

| Lounge | 300 | Lobby, restrooms, kitchen, VIP lounge | medium | seat with seating, week, sofas, ottomans |
| VP Lounge | 100 | Lobby, lounge, lobby | medium | sofa, chair, recliner, armchairs, side tables |
| Kitchen | 70 | | | more kitchenette-like; no full meals |
| Women’s Restroom | 100 | Lounge |
| Men’s Restroom | 100 | Lounge |
| Projector Room | 150 | Cinema | unit | entire projection equipment, see IBC code |
| Manager’s Office | 180 | Storage, lounge | medium | desk, office storage, includes side & cash supplies |
| Employee Lounge | 170 | Lobby | low | table, chair, comfortable seating |
| Room | 40 | | | |
| Storage | 60 | Managers office, projection room | | film storage |
| Janitor’s Closet | 150 | Partially located |
| Employee Hall/Balcony | 300 | | | open to lobby |

BUILDING CODE REQUIREMENTS

TOTAL SQUARE FOOTAGE
7,050

ZONING
A-1: Motion picture theaters, symphony & concert halls, TV & Radio studios with audiences, theaters

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS
Section 409 Motion Picture Projection Rooms
409.1: Room must be enclosed
409.2: Permanent construction, door area of 80 sf. on each side, ceiling shall be 7’6” or more, opening shall be no more than 25% of the wall area and must be closed
409.3: Each machine will be provided with an exhaust duct to the outside of the building
409.4: Lights that control the auditorium must be in the projection room and one other location
409.5: Must have reserve and film storage

SECTION 411 Special Amusement Buildings
Must have: auto fire detection, auto sprinkler, emergency voice/alarm communication system, exit markings

TYPE OF CONSTRUCTION
IBC Type X: Masonry Noncombustible

GENERAL BUILDING HEIGHTS AND AREAS
A-1/Type II Building complex

OCCUPANT LOAD
Cinema: Assembly with fixed seat (determined by number of seats, 5 wheelchair spaces needed)
Lobby: Assembly without fixed seats (determined by 50/50 combination of standing space and tables/chairs)
Lounge: Assembly without fixed seats (determined by 50/50 combination of standing space and tables/chairs)
Total Occupancy: 475

MEANS OF EGRESS
IBC 1044.7: Assembly with fixed seating
IBC 1007.4: Elevators
IBC 1009.1: Stairway
IBC 1010.1: Ramps
IBC 2902.1: Storage
IBC 2903.1: Plumbing

PLUMBING
IBC 2930.1: 1 toilet per 125 men (2 toilet minimum)
1 toilet per 150 women (4 toilet minimum)
1 lavatory per 300 (4 toilet minimum)
1 drinking fountain per 250 (1 minimum)
FINAL DESIGN DRIVER

Treat the cinema shell, which holds the structural components of the building, as a box which houses two halves: cinema lobby.

Remaining true to the materiality of the original structure, create a concrete core that penetrates both the cinema and lobby which holds the most connected space...the lounge.
Shoppers meandering the sidewalks of the MacArthur Avenue commercial strip are greeted by The Bellevue’s original marquee and box office.

Tickets are purchased, and movie-goers are welcomed at the gilded double doors by an usher who tears their ticket.

Guests then proceed through the expansive, efficacious lobby and embark on one of two routes:

**Group**
- Gathering space, preview area, lounge or VIP lounge
- This experience may or may not culminate in movie viewing

**Individual**
- Concession, cinema
- Movie viewing

Post-movie social gathering in group spaces
As the Bellevue Theater fronts the bustling commercial strip of MacArthur Avenue, the entrance is a main point of transition from that point of reality to the escape offered by the cinema experience.

Movie-goers enter into a voluminous, three-story lobby which allows for audible and visual connection to the lounge above. A concession stand and movie preview area are accessed under a single-story ceiling, which provides a more intimate setting for viewing and refreshment ordering.

A multi-landing ramp moves patrons into the cinema, the level change signaling the start of the individual event ahead.
The lounge is the most connected of all spaces, interacting with both the lobby and the cinema. It features a closed extension into the theater which encourages a group experience in cinema atmosphere, although the movie remains secondary to the social experience of the lounge.

The open balcony allows the social activity of the lounge to invigorate the lobby. It will also encourage the group experience to penetrate the isolation of the cinema space.
In a physical sense, the cinema is the most intimate of all spaces. However, its purpose begs for the most isolation. Minimal bench-like seating with sleek, retractable armrests promote a sense of group and discourage the isolation magnified by over-stuffed, oversized recliner seats.
**Connecting One & Many**

Reinventing the Procession of the Cinema Experience

In response to this cultural shift, my proposed design solution will challenge the isolation of the past where riches and opulence abound. The curtained screen marked the start of a dream where movie-going can be classified as a singular experience. You sit in plush recliners in a sea of strangers and long, solemn cattle lines only to enter a cluttered lobby with loud video games, tacky candy machines and tunnel-like hallways. In contrast, today's movie-going can be classified as a singular experience. You wait in line for a ticket, then rush out of the theater before even the lights come up.

**Concept**

As the Bellevue Theater fronts the bustling commercial strip of MacArthur Avenue, shoppers meandering the sidewalks are greeted by The Bellevue's original marquee and box office. Movie-goers are welcomed at the gilded double doors by an usher who tears their ticket. Does a plane require physical separation to signal a transition? What happens when one thing ceases to exist and something else defined? A multi-landing ramp moves patrons into the cinema, the level change provides a more intimate setting for viewing and refreshment ordering. Movie-goers enter into a voluminous, three-story lobby which allows for an audible and visual connection to the lounge above. A concession stand and movie preview area are accessed under a single-story ceiling, which a post-movie social gathering in group spaces.
The lounge is the most connected of all spaces, interacting with both the lobby and the cinema. This strategy allows the social activity of the lounge to invigorate the lobby. It will also encourage the group experience to penetrate the isolation of the cinema space.

In a physical sense, the cinema is the most intimate of all spaces. However, its purpose begs for the most isolation. Minimal bench-like seating with sleek, retractable armrests promote a sense of group and discourage the isolation magnified by over-stuffed, oversized recliner seats.

Not being a cinema aficionado or even one who attends the cinema often, I approached this design project knowing only that the cinema I designed would look nothing like the modern Movie Megaplexes that we are used to. Through much research, trial, error, implementation and critique I have learned that designing a cinema is technically difficult. There are acoustic considerations, sightline considerations, slope decisions, seat placement choices...all things which can be designed through the use of complex algebraic formulas. People go to the movies to enjoy the movie, so technically things must be perfect. These technicalities affect design decisions.

Designing inside of a blank box - a simple shell of a building - can appear liberating, but actually poses quite a challenge. With just a small 55' x 88' footprint, fitting an enthusiastic program inside while maintaining necessary connections and implementing building code can compromise the square footage allotted to programmatic elements. Editing a program is imperative but can be difficult to acknowledge when so entrenched in a design project.

Connections are about so much more than physicality and proximity. Connections are the experience of moving between spaces and what you take with you or leave when moving from one place to another. It is light, it sound, it is materiality and how those stimuli act upon one's senses.

Processions and rituals remain important to our society, both socially and traditionally. The loss of the procession as associated with movie-going has removed the social, community dimension that movies once offered. Without that procession through connected spaces, movies promise to remain an experience in isolation.

In retrospect, it was never my intention to design a movie theater. I chose the Bellevue Theater because I was drawn to it, because I felt like it had something to say to me and my dog as we walked by each day. I knew because of its location that this building, whatever I made it, could be a social hub for the Bellevue neighborhood...I initially envisioned The Bellevue as a community center, a place for civic meetings and art displays, craft lessons and yard sales. But, in the end I found out that a cinema could certainly create that same sense of community just as well, if not better.

I absolutely believe that architecture is a social activity that has to do with some sort of communication or places of interaction, and that to change the environment is to change behavior.

- Thom Mayne

\[\text{CONCLUSION}\]
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Jared Campbell Photography