

CATHS NEWSLETTER



NOVEMBER 2024

NEXT MEETING - Sunday 24 November - Guest Speaker David Kilderry

The November meeting will be held at the Sun Theatre, Yarraville on **Sunday 24 November**, commencing at 9.30. In keeping with past years, there will be no business section - just a few announcements, then our Guest Speaker, David Kilderry who will speak on the history of the drive-in theatre. David's talk will be fully illustrated on the big screen. David's talk will be followed by the usual friendly coffee break and then a program of films will be presented.

VALE PETER YIANNOUDES

The Cinema Industry mourns the loss of Peter Yiannoudes on 6 November 2024.

Born on February 2, 1935, in the village of Vouni, Limassol, Cyprus, Yiannoudes immigrated to Melbourne on July 8, 1956, bringing experience from the film industry in Cyprus. Shortly after arriving, he became the representative of the Greek production company, Finos Film.

In 1958, Yiannoudes co-founded Cosmopolitan Motion Pictures in Melbourne with Stathis Raftopoulos and Andreas Papadopoulos. Papadopoulos left the company early leaving Yiannoudes and Raftopoulos running the enormously expansive and successful enterprise. Coinciding with the peak post-war migration boom, with Melbourne becoming home to a huge Greek population, and also coinciding with the advent of television, enabling the purchasing of many movie theatres at affordable prices, this was a confluence that created a hugely successful enterprise for many decades up to the early 1980s, when assimilation, VHS tapes, and SBS Television took over the role of entertaining European ethnic populations in particular.

Working alongside Christos Louis in Sydney, the team shaped Greek cinema's presence in Australia, importing over 1,100 Greek films and numerous international productions between 1958 and 1982. Cosmopolitan Motion Pictures also published "O *Kinimatografikos Astir*", the first Greek film magazine in Australia.

Beyond cinema, Yiannoudes was a highly active community figure. He received the Medal of the Order of Australia in 2013. In 2010, he published a book titled "*With Greek Cinema Across Australia – Behind the Screenings and Scenes*", with a second book expected to be published soon.

Cosmopolitan Motion Pictures once operated, either full time or part time, over 30 cinemas screening Greek films in Melbourne (many of them owned Freehold), Adelaide, and other regional areas around Australia during its peak in the 1970s.

Melbourne's Westgarth, Astor and Sun Theatres owe their existence today predominantly due to the Greek film era which saved them from demolition for many decades.

The community will miss Peter Yiannoudes, who defined a generation of Greek migrants.

Source: *Neos Kosmos*, with additional text by George Florence, nephew of Stathis Raftopoulos, whose father worked at *The National Theatre Richmond*, and who got his own introduction to the world of movie theatres at *The National*, leading to a 33-year career as proprietor of *The Astor Theatre, St Kilda*

CATHS - Cinema Pioneers event at the Capitol Theatre, Melbourne.

On Sunday afternoon, 10 November, CATHS members were treated to an afternoon of discovery at the Capitol Theatre. In Commemoration of the 100th Anniversary of the theatre's opening in 1924, a number of special events have taken place in the past weeks.

The Sunday afternoon event, which was held specifically for the members of CATHS and the Cinema Pioneers, included tours of areas normally not accessible to the public. This was followed by an on screen presentation which included a screening of *The Lost City of Melbourne*.

CATHS was pleased to provide the display of original artefacts from our archive (at right), which included original programs and advertising from the opening and the early days of the theatre.

MELBOURNE and the MOVIES - BOOK REVIEW

What do you know about Melbourne and its place in the history of movie film over the last century and even further back? Confessed Certified Cinephile, Ross Campbell records a mountain of wealth in his 440pp "*Melbourne and the Movies*" just released at a launch at the Astor Theatre St Kilda.

To say that he fell in love with movies at the age of 16 is an understatement. From then and over the decades he became totally immersed in film, from a young novice to professional.

Truly professional, in so many areas such as an award-winning documentary director and producer, technical consultant to the Melbourne International Film Festival for three decades, a curator of music for silent film screenings and artistic director for silent film and orchestra for Melbourne Festival of Arts and much more.

His volume reflects on film in Melbourne as early as 1896 when Lumiere Brothers, film manufacturing company in Lyon France, had cinematographer M Marius Sestier photograph the Melbourne Cup on Tuesday 3 November 1896. That film was later premiered to a packed house at the Princess Theatre.

Some three years later, Campbell writes of pioneering Melbourne film making by the Salvation Army, reflecting on their brilliant foresight with their multi-media two-hour epic "*Soldiers of the Cross*".

"Every film is great, be it short story or magnum opus", Campbell reminds us, as it is "...an astonishing achievement to harness the vast array of disparate talents into a vision splendid".

It is an astonishing chronological volume, that accurately brings to the fore stories of cinema theatres that we have lost, highlighting those we still have, films glorious and not so glorious while including many many luminaries some well-known, some not so well known that have been a part of Melbourne's and indeed the world's film culture over the decades.

Delve into history, savour nostalgia.

Available at bookstores or www.melbourneandthemovies.com.au

Credits: Ross Campbell photo by Peter Benn.
Book Cover image by Guy Holt and Bill Kerr.

Review by Graeme McCoubrie, courtesy of *The Melbourne Observer/The Local Paper*

ROSS CAMPBELL will be at our November meeting and will have books on hand for sale

