

Where to begin. If there ever was a bit of kismet, it was how I "discovered" Salem Cinema... in the spring of my freshman year of college, there was a guy I'd been hanging around with who had told me of his love for this little movie theater and his love for a little movie he'd seen there called Cinema Paradiso. I went home over spring break and found a copy at the local video store I worked for in high school. I, too, fell in love.

On a bike ride one day, I decided to stop into this cinema to ask if I could order a Cinema Paradiso poster to give to him as a birthday gift. The owner was there, greeted me with a warm smile and took my name and phone number so she could call me when the poster arrived.

It wasn't until about a month later that I saw my first movie there, and then each of the three successive movies, before heading home for summer break. I already missed it. I was smitten.

Before coming back to school, I decided to type up a letter – yes, on my electric typewriter – inquiring about a job for the fall. Loretta responded with a letter of her own, letting me know that she would like to talk to me and what times I could call her back. She remembered my name from when I ordered that Cinema Paradiso poster.

And so our cinematic history began...I started out working three nights a week behind the counter that fall, became her manager upon my college graduation. And, almost 30 years later, I am still smitten by this marvelous and magical world of movies that enriches, and is enriched by, our community in immeasurable and innumerable ways.

Please consider supporting Oregon movie theaters like Salem Cinema, because our story isn't ready to end just yet, but we need help to survive.

- Unlike most other businesses, movie theaters experienced a total shutdown for nearly a year – during this time we did everything we could possibly think of to pivot: virtual screenings offered through studios, Popcorn Fridays, streaming fundraisers hosted by a local theatre company and local musicians, sustaining monthly campaigns, GoFundMe – just to be able to barely tread water.
- Movie theaters were not included in the \$25 million that went to live performance venues last year – heartbreaking.
- Movie theaters have largely been overlooked in the relief aid programs.
- Movie theaters face a long road to recovery with little new film product and with crippling capacity restrictions. Even with greater capacity allowances (50% and above), theaters will still be limited to roughly 25% capacity due to 6' social distancing requirements – currently our largest auditorium is "sold out" at 36 people; our smallest at only 10 people.
- Funds are desperately needed to help address fixed costs incurred while movie theaters were required to be closed – rent, utilities, insurance costs, etc. all still needed to be paid with or without movies on the screen!
- Movie theaters have incurred costly capital expenses related to re-opening – signage, training, HVAC upgrades, new ticketing systems, specialized sanitizing equipment, etc.

I appreciate your thoughtful consideration in support of SB 5555.

Abby King

Salem Cinema Manager and Director of Publicity & Advertising

P.S. Loretta still has that type-written letter I wrote in the summer of 1991.