

Bijou: Theater aims for less traditional

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like "Clerks" (1994) to documentaries such as "Bowling for Columbine" (2000).

Like the movies, everything about the theater is alternative.

Moviegoers won't find aspects that sometime ruin the movie experience at traditional theaters. "We try not to advertise too much. We don't show Coke ads," Thomas said.

Instead, films start off with a slide show that mixes photographs and local sponsors.

Concessions consist of organic fruit juice, organic popcorn, ice cream, coffee, bagels, soda and candy.

Customer service is also personal at the Bijou.

"I want the customer to feel at home here. I want them to feel like they can ask for something if they think it's too hot or too cold, if the sound isn't turned up enough. I want them to feel (the) staff is approachable.

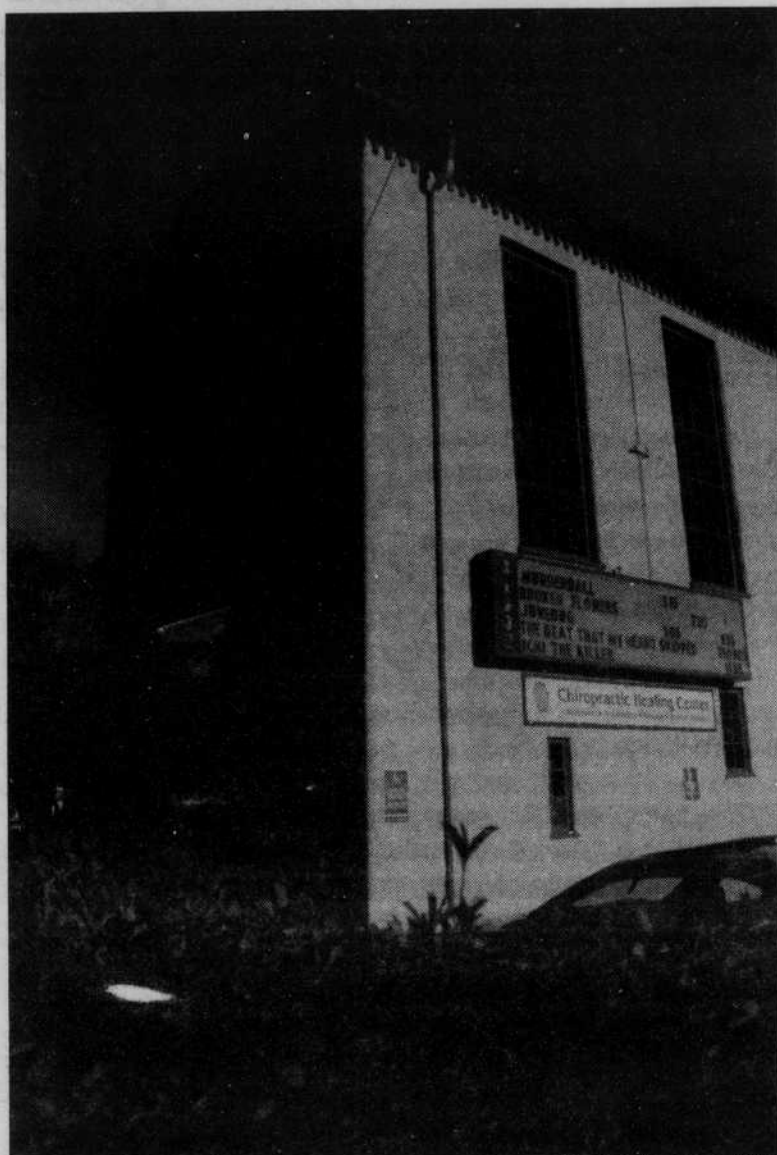
"Except not so much at home that they chat in the theater," Thomas said with a chuckle.

Thomas started working at the Bijou selling tickets and concessions as a 21-year-old student at the University of Oregon. She left in 1999 but returned in 2001.

"I love it here. I love the building. It really matters to me what I do for a living. I'm not plugged into some corporate world. It makes me feel like I'm doing something worthwhile," she said.

Thomas said she feels a connection to the place because of the distinctive building, personal experiences and the job itself.

"I grew up here in a way. I met a bunch of boyfriends here," she said.



ZANE RITT | PHOTOGRAPHER

The Bijou Art Cinemas, at 492 E. 13th, have shown movies ranging from "Monty Python and the Holy Grail" to "Bowling for Columbine."

The Bijou offers showings from Thursday through Saturday for \$7; Sunday through Wednesday for \$5; matinee showings before 6 p.m. are \$4; late-night shows after 11 p.m. Friday and Saturday are \$4; and Sunday late night shows are \$3. Late-night shows typically feature local films.

Those interested can call the Bijou

at 541-686-2458, visit www.bijou-cinemas.com or stop by the theater at 492 E. 13th Ave., four blocks west of campus between Mill and Ferry streets. Parking is available at the theater or at the Women's Care Center at 13th Avenue and Patterson Street.

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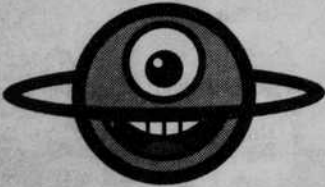
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