

‘They know the Eugene audience. They live here. I can’t tell you about booking; I can just tell you it’s the part that matters.’

— LOIS WADSWORTH, FILM CRITIC

programs,” Schiessl says. The Metro’s schedule can also include seven-day-a-week matinee programming, popular with the theater’s retired audience, which is restricted in the current building on 13th Avenue because other companies share the space during business hours.

With a total of six screens, the Bijou is itching to get creative with their clientele and programming come March, the theater’s tentative opening. Tiered membership programs are in the works, costing anywhere from \$50 to a few hundred dollars annually, which will offer discounted admissions, swag, discounts at local businesses and free popcorn. There will be members-only events: advanced screenings, director meet-and-greets and, Schiessl hopes, an evening where members are bussed to a winery to watch a film under the stars.

“We want to work with Dan Halsted in Portland who programs the Grindhouse Film Festival,” Schiessl says. (Dan Halsted was recently Tased by cops in Portland while holding a stack of extremely rare kung fu 35mm prints — the very films that Schiessl will borrow for an upcoming series.) The Metro will also take a cue from the wildly successful Alamo Drafthouse, the aforementioned theater chain with the strict no talk, no text policy that grew from one cinema in Austin, Texas, to nine locations across the country. The Alamo Drafthouse curates regular film series like Terror Tuesdays (“Decapitation, evisceration, degradation and mutilation in 35mm!!!”), Fantastic Fest (“Films with the boring parts cut out”) and Heckle Vision (“Yr texted jokes appear on screen”). The Metro will devote one of the smaller screens to archival 35mm and 16mm prints like *Casablanca*, and Schiessl hopes to show ’80s action movies series, cult classic series as well as cater to the regional film festival circuit, including DisOrient and Cinema Pacific. “We’d love to even spend

a couple years and go through the American Film Institute’s Top 100 list if we could license all that stuff.”

MAY THE COMMUNITY BE WITH YOU

When the nascent Cinema Studies Program at the UO was searching for a local venue to show its students 35mm films for the department’s Film on Film series, the Bijou was the only place in town that had a 35mm print projector. The cinema studies major was added to the university in 2010, when 58 students signed up. Two years later, there are 300 majors and counting in cinema studies.

“Ed is very film. He wants to promote film in this community and was very excited about the new major,” Cinema Studies office manager Audra Mahoney says. In a town-and-gown collaboration, they screened *Sunset Boulevard* in the fall of 2011 and the rare Taiwanese film *City of Sadness* in the Spring of 2012. The university paid the fee to secure rights to the film and, in return, the Bijou admitted UO students and faculty free-of-charge. The screening was a shared success.

“I went to that showing, and this is that rare film from Taiwan and the theater was *filled*,” Mahoney says.

“That builds an audience. They bring their friends and we did much better than we usually do with classics,” Schiessl says. “Classics are something that we would really like to continue to show and having them help us cross promote and let us be their venue ... works really well for both of us.”

NOBODY PUTS THE BIJOU IN A CORNER

“I don’t think the movie theater culture is going to come back in full force,” Schiessl says, sitting in a pew in

the Bijou, where Lamont opened the cinema in 1982 with a 16mm projector and one screen. “Little niche, community-driven places like ours will probably thrive going forward and big movie houses are probably going to just slowly disappear.”

Schiessl is well aware that, in the current economy, small theaters are also vulnerable. Many boutique cinemas are closing because the switch to digital projection is too expensive (system purchase and installation can easily cost upwards of \$300,000) or they are stunted by virtual print fee contracts where integrators and film distributors absorb much of the cost of a digital projector in exchange for a commitment to play specific films — a sort of cinema indentured servitude, if you will. According to Schiessl, the contracts sometimes require that theaters destroy their archival projectors. “All of this will work itself out and the industry will ultimately benefit from digital,” he says, “but these next few years are going to be rocky for small cinemas.”

He foresees the end of an era, not only with the fall of multiplexes, cineplexes and megaplexes, but perhaps a tumble for Hollywood as well if it fails to adapt to an industry where films with good scripts, good actors and good production value can be shot for a few hundred dollars. “What does Hollywood have anymore?” Schiessl asks, a filmmaker himself. “A special effects budget. That’s the only thing that’s really going to set them apart from some up-and-coming Scorsese with a handycam.” For Hollywood to stay competitive, Schiessl predicts in the dim afternoon light of the original Bijou’s old Wilcox chapel, the industry must produce good content because the market will flood with high-quality, low-cost films from independent filmmakers.

If and when the flood arrives, the Bijou Metro will be waiting. ■



**525 HIGH ST.
EUGENE
541-683-1999**
Over 80 Varieties of locally made,
original soups

- Custom Salads
- Gourmet Sandwiches
- Full Espresso Bar
- Sourdough Bread Bowls
- Try a Soup Sampler!
- Frozen Quarts to go
- Gift Cards Available!

Check Us Out @
www.soupnationeugene.com

 Like us on Facebook and see our daily menu!

Organic Blankets
Wool or Cotton

15% Off During September!


541-343-1022
25 E. 8th Ave. Eugene
www.ecosleepsolutions.com



**SUSHI
SEOUL**

SERVING SUSHI, TERIYAKI,
FRESH GRILLED SEAFOOD,
KOREAN FOOD & BUBBLE TEA

**HAPPY HOUR
20% OFF
SUSHI & TERIYAKI
3PM-5PM & 9PM-11PM**

KARAOKE AVAILABLE AT NIGHTTIME BY RESERVATION

**SUMMER LUNCH
SPECIAL**



**BENTO BOX
\$5.95** REG. \$10.95
**12PM-3:00PM
EXP. 10/9/12**

2532 Willakenzie Eugene across from Sheldon HS | 342-6861 | 10am - 11pm Daily

“FEED YOUR CRAVINGS!”

BATES
STEAK HOUSE & SALOON
433 EAST BROADWAY



**NEW PARKING LOT
FOOD BOOTH**

TRI TIP & PULLED PORK
SANDWICHES
COOKED FRESH FROM OUR
BRAND NEW
EVENT TRAILER!
GRILLING IT UP
MONDAY-FRIDAY 11:30AM-4PM
**COME ON DOWN &
GIVE US A TRY!**

FOOD BOOTH MON.-FRI. 11:30AM-4PM & DINNER 7 DAYS A WEEK • (541)683-3108