DESIGNING for CINEMAS



Join an architect on a tour of his favourite cinema designs!

Sharon Parsons

Nelson Literacy Directions

Designing for CINEMAS

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Dear Reader

Like most people, I love going to cinemas to watch movies. I have often thought about the talented people who create these special places for us to enjoy movies with our families and friends.

So I decided to write a book about the people who design cinemas, to find out how they create a space for us to be entertained.

CHECK OUT CHAPTER NINE TO FIND OUT WHY DOGS ARE AT THE MOVIES, TOO!

My research led me to some very helpful people with a passion for movies and cinemas. One of these people is Ian Swan, an architect who specialises in designing cinemas. Join Ian, on pages 8–27, as he takes you on a tour inside one of his favourite cinemas.

Enjoy!

Sharon Parsons

My sincere thanks to the following people for their time, information, images and enthusiasm for this book:

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1 Shoosh, the Movie Has Started

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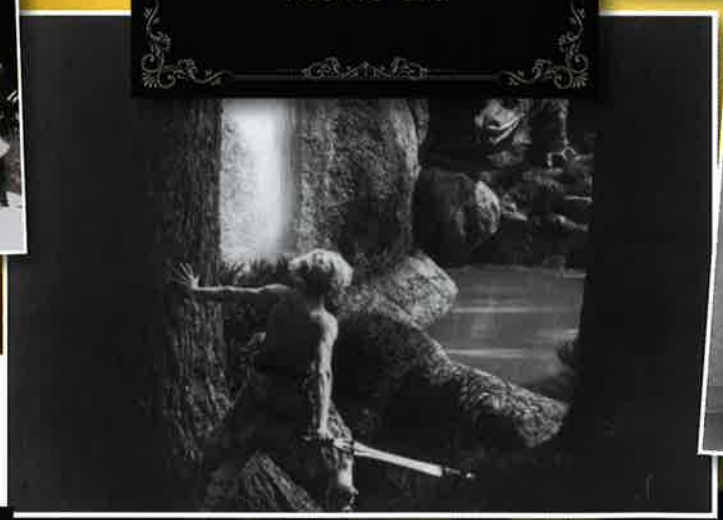
Everyone loves to see movies at the cinema, but think about a time when there were only black-and-white movies with no sound – they were called silent movies. Entertainers used to perform music or narrate a story while the silent movie was screened, to add extra entertainment for the audience. Title cards on the screen told what was happening; the audience had to read fast before the next scene! Even in those pre-digital days, going to the cinema was an interactive experience.





images from the silent movie era









Talkies

From the late 1920s "talkies", or movies with sound, were produced. Today, technology has advanced so much that we can see movies in 2-D and 3-D on massive screens in multi-cinema complexes, at drive-in cinemas and in garden settings. We can also watch movies in planes, and on computers, mobile phones and other hand-held devices.

4-D MOVIES

This term refers to a special kind of movie experience – viewing 3-D movies in places like theme parks with extra physical effects, such as vibrating chairs, wind or special lighting.

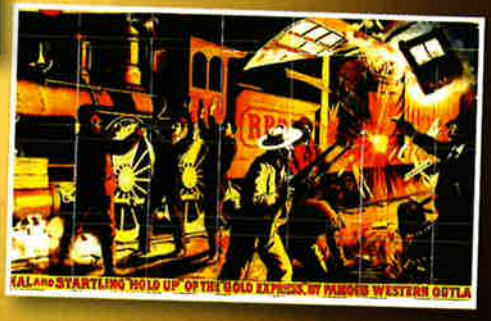


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movie posters from the silent movie era









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Charlie Chaplin, the actor



Charlie Chaplin, the director

A Great Silent Movie Actor

Charlie Chaplin (1889–1977) was born in England and he was a famous actor and director of silent movies. He created a vagrant character called "the tramp", who had nice manners and wore good-quality clothes. Charlie performed his tramp characterisation in many movies because it was so popular.

A Movie Timeline

1894
Black-and-white silent movies
1

early 1900s
Black-and-white silent movies + title cards
2

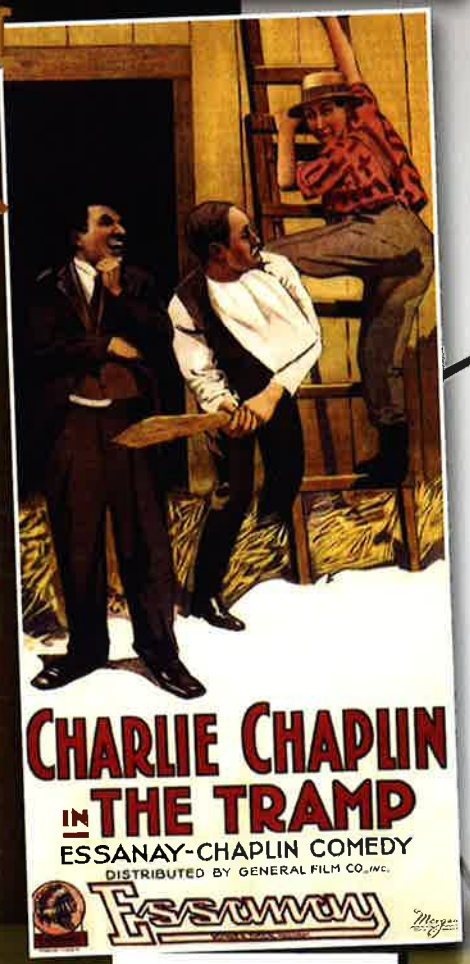
early 1900s
Black-and-white movies + sound
3

1920s
Colour movies + sound
4

1990s
Colour movies with more special effects
5

2000s
3-D movies more popular + digital movies
6





a movie poster for The Tramp

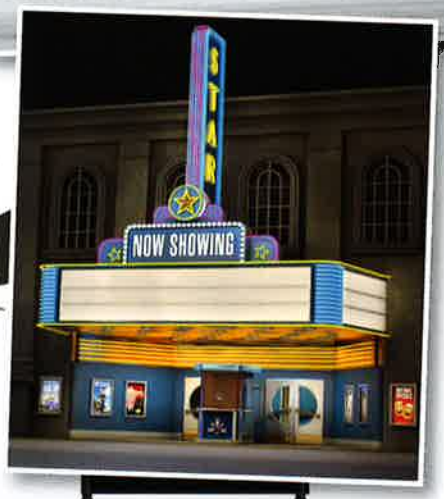
A Movie Trail

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Every year, hundreds of new movies are released into cinemas worldwide. In 2010, almost 900 new movies made about 10 billion dollars at the box office. So how do movies get from studios to cinemas? Follow an example of a movie trail below.



a theatre used for silent movies in Florida, USA



1. **Movie studio companies** (produce or make the movies)
2. **Film distribution companies** (make copies of the movies and hire them to the cinemas for a negotiated period of time)
3. **Exhibitors** (companies or individual people who manage cinemas)

TOP 5 MOST PROFITABLE MOVIES OF ALL TIME

In 2011, the movies that had made the most money ever were:

Avatar (2009): 2.8 billion dollars; ***Titanic*** (1997): 1.8 billion dollars; ***Lord of the Rings – Return of the King*** (2003): 1.1 billion dollars; ***Pirates of the Caribbean – Dead Man's Chest*** (2006): 1.1 billion dollars and ***Toy Story 3*** (2010): 1.1 billion dollars.

2 Who Designs Cinemas?

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Architect, Ian Swan

Ian Swan is an Australian architect who has specialised in designing cinema interiors for about 30 years. When he began designing cinemas, they were stand-alone cinemas for 35-mm film movies, whereas today they are multiplex cinemas for 2-D and 3-D movies, with 35-mm film projectors and digital projectors, in large shopping centres.

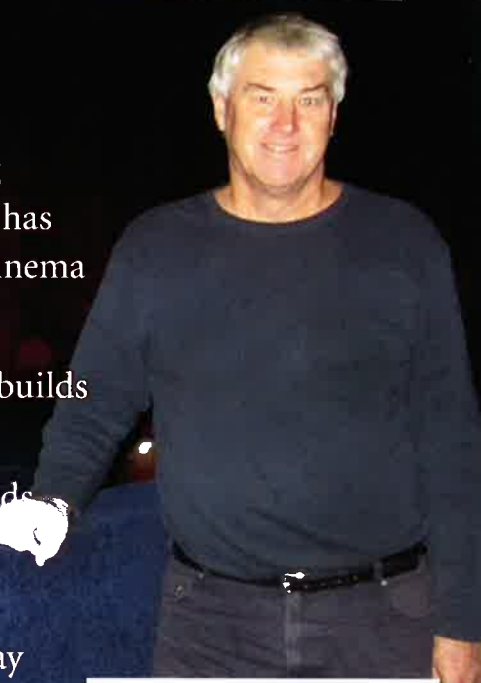


Most cinemas are built inside or adjacent to shopping centres. Ian needs to know what kind of cinema shell has been built for him to work with. The three kinds of cinema shells are:

Cold-Water Shell: the shopping centre owner only builds the roof, and the internal and external walls.

Warm-Water Shell: the shopping centre owner builds a cold-water shell but pays for electrical wiring, air conditioning and heating.

Hot-Water Shell: the shopping centre owner will pay for everything attached to the cinema shell. In these cases, a movie exhibition company asks an architect like Ian to design the lighting and sound systems, fittings (e.g. seats and carpets) and special areas (e.g. the projection room).

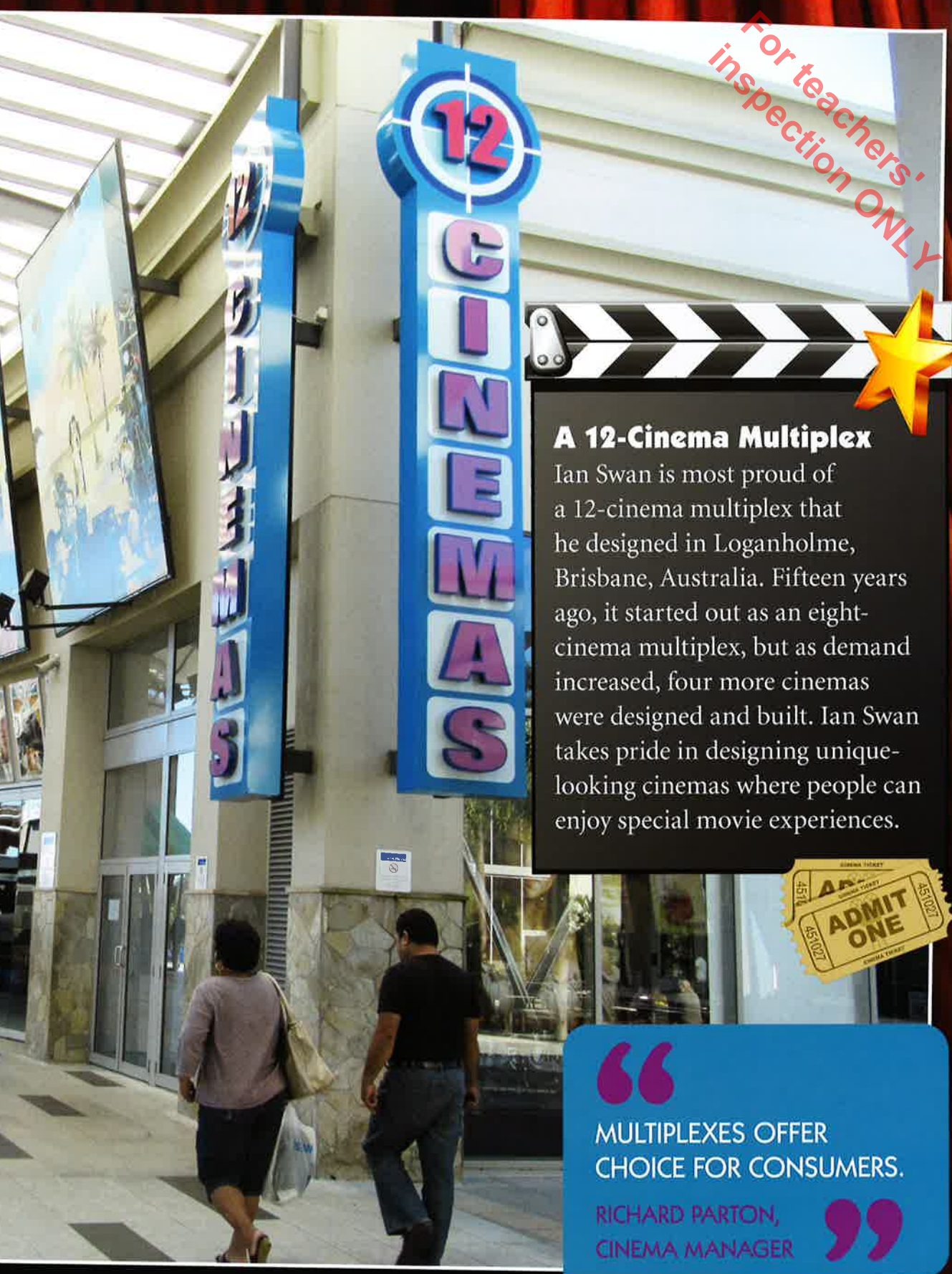


Ian Swan inside a cinema that he designed at the Loganholme multiplex

> "THE MOST REWARDING PART OF MY JOB IS WHEN I SEE PEOPLE ENJOYING MY CINEMA DESIGNS."
> IAN SWAN



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A 12-Cinema Multiplex

Ian Swan is most proud of a 12-cinema multiplex that he designed in Loganholme, Brisbane, Australia. Fifteen years ago, it started out as an eight-cinema multiplex, but as demand increased, four more cinemas were designed and built. Ian Swan takes pride in designing unique-looking cinemas where people can enjoy special movie experiences.

"MULTIPLEXES OFFER CHOICE FOR CONSUMERS."

RICHARD PARTON, CINEMA MANAGER