

Cinema St. Louis Announces Plans To Purchase The Hi-Pointe Theatre

by Marla Stoker Ballenger
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ST. LOUIS - Cinema St. Louis (CSL) is thrilled to announce plans to acquire the Hi-Pointe Theatre as their new base of operations and programming beginning in January 2023. Opening in 1922, the Hi-Pointe Theatre has been a cherished landmark for multiple generations of film lovers, and CSL plans to continue that tradition for years to come.

The Hi-Pointe Theatre is the oldest locally owned and continuously-operating arthouse theater in St. Louis. In 1977 the James family acquired the theater, and under their stewardship, the theater has become an iconic St. Louis landmark. The James family shared: “After 45 years of owning the beloved Hi-Pointe Theatre, we have decided that it is time to end our run. We have been blessed to share this theater with 3 generations of our family and have had the privilege of helping it reach the magical age of 100 years. We know that Cinema St Louis is the perfect sequel to our story. They share the same passion and vision, and we are confident that they will be able to carry on our family's legacy for the next 100 years. We thank you for your continued patronage, dedication, and support through the years. We will miss you all.”

Cinema St. Louis' vision is to create cinematic experiences that enrich, educate, entertain, and build community. The organization has presented programming for more than 30 years when they've been able to secure venues. This acquisition would allow the organization to offer diverse, year-round programming and affordable experiences in the most continual and sustainable manner possible. CSL's Executive Director, Bree Maniscalco, stated that "Cinema St. Louis is grateful for this opportunity to not only preserve the last remaining arthouse cinema in St. Louis but also to finally create a permanent home for the organization and make film accessible for the entire St. Louis community. CSL will host its annual film festivals, educational programming, and filmmaker seminars at the Hi-Pointe Theatre. The organization will also offer repertory film series throughout the year as well as screenings of first-run films."

This acquisition will:

- Use film festivals and special events to establish the Hi-Pointe as a unique regional destination to draw visitors to St. Louis.
- Increase access to film and filmmaking for underrepresented audiences.
- Showcase local talent and bring global, well-recognized films to St. Louis.
- Expand free educational and enrichment opportunities to K-12 students through filmmaking camps and screenings throughout the year.

For additional information on CSL visit: <https://www.cinemastlouis.org>.