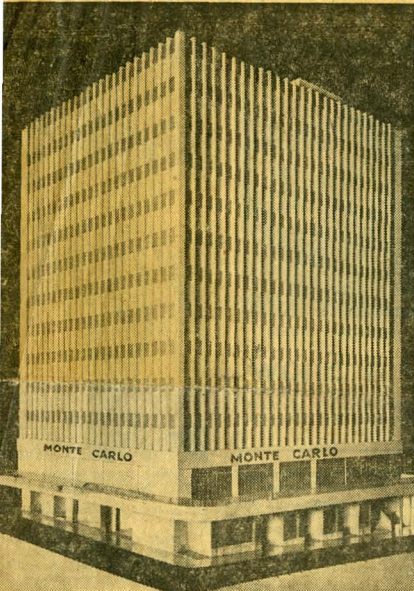


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# JOHANNESBURG'S NEW THEATRE

## An Intimate Luxury Cinema in the City



PHILADELPHIA CORNER, the imposing new business block at the corner of Jeppe and Von Wielligh Streets, was built to the designs of Mr. Bernard Janis, and erected by the Industrial Underwriting and Investment Company Ltd. The MONTE CARLO THEATRE, which occupies the storey below street level, is entered from Jeppe Street.

SOMETHING new has been added to South Africa's entertainment world. On Thursday next, March 20, the Mayor of Johannesburg, Mr. E. B. Attwell, will open the *Monte Carlo Theatre*. Here, in an imposing 13-storey building at the corner of Jeppe and Von Wielligh Streets, is the country's first intimate cinema, a luxurious theatre sited below street level to ensure perfect conditions.

*Empire Films* will entertain a distinguished first-night audience on the opening night and the guests will see something revolutionary in theatre construction.

Already, through the *Piccadilly Theatre* and under the able chairmanship of the Managing Director, Mr. William Boxer, *Empire Films* have established a reputation for giving the discriminating South African cinema-goer the cream of British and Continental film productions. At the *Piccadilly* nine- and ten-week runs have had the indelible seal of public approval on the management's taste and judgment in programme planning. That same taste and care will go to the programmes to be shown at the *Monte Carlo*, which has already been declared to be the loveliest little cinema

*Monte Carlo* have gone many years of intensive experience in picture-theatre construction and an up-to-the-moment knowledge of the latest innovations in cinema equipment and design in America and Europe. The colour scheme and general decorative lay-out are based on the latest researches into relaxation colour values, and explain the choice of flesh-tint cold cathode lighting for the ceiling illumination which is complementary to the tones used in the furnishings, and both restful and relaxing.

In the *Monte Carlo* the correlated efforts of architects and artists have, without doubt, given Johannesburg its most modern and up-to-date theatre, a theatre that is essentially novel in style and decor, but above all things restful and intimate. But while decorative considerations have been everywhere taken into account, coolness, comfort and complete visibility from every seat in the house have been the paramount consideration.

The floor "rake" has been calculated to a nicety by the architects, to ensure for all a free view of the screen, and the installation of Permus retractable seats saves the early patrons from being inconvenienced by late-comers.

Besides the *Monte Carlo*, only three other theatres in the whole of Africa (all of them *Empire Films Houses*) enjoy this particular facility, which is only one of the many considerate touches that help to make the *Monte Carlo* the most comfortable and accommodating cinema in town.

The decoration of foyers and auditorium is in keeping with the intimate proportions of the theatre. Sculpture and bas-reliefs by Herman Wald lend touches of taste and distinction to the plain wall surfaces, that are perfect in feeling and scale. The intriguing "Black Light"

murals by Harro Fromme are sympathetic and charming elements, executed with all the skill we expect from this artist.

The Western Electric Westrex Master Sound System installed in the cinema is the very best procurable, with a remarkably high fidelity throughout the whole of its frequency response. In fact its accuracy of reproduction far exceeds the average performance in many of the world's most important picture houses. In this, as in the acoustical and sound-insulation arrangements, which were the concern of Messrs. Dowson and Dobson, perfect aural reception in every part of the house has been aimed at.

The air-conditioning system, devised and installed by Messrs. Butler and Herbert, was specifically designed to ensure ideal conditions for Johannesburg audiences at all seasons of the year, and an ingenious system of fluorescent ceiling illumination, with fittings by New Era Fluorescent Lights, provides a restful interval-atmosphere.

Not least important among the *Monte Carlo's* facilities are the refreshment bars, where everything from milkshakes and ice-cold cola drinks to light meals will be served, in surroundings that imaginative architectural design (with an eye on Spanish inspiration) has made a pleasurable *mise en scene* for every social occasion. It is a subtle touch of Bohemia. Indeed,

that gives the Spanish bar a touch of Home from Home, where everyone drops in. And Messrs. Frederick Sage are to be congratulated on a fine piece of interior design, carried out with taste and discrimination. As in the foyers and shop the touch of their expert craftsmanship tells.

Elegance with utility, efficiency, the appointments of the *Monte Carlo*, from Kirsch Sun-Venecian Blinds and Ceiling Windows, to the situation of all plumbing and water systems installed, the scenes by Kirsch Smith and Sons' Cafeteria equipment by Messrs. A. H. Ba smooth-working stage fixtures by Wenman and Williams . . . all these contribute to the creation of perfect entertainment.

In face of shortages in banking supplies *Empire Films* achieved their end . . . a cinema that comes up to all their standards. Their premises are designed to continue uphold their record of past successes, with the whole cinematic achievement to . . . achievements in names like Associated Pathé, Alexander Korda, Priestley, Powell and Berger, and a host of great stars, lovely women and distinguished men, too many to mention.

New productions from France and Italy, we checked and viewed and with a jealous eye for But the representation masterpieces with quality will have a programme schedule criterion will a "What is Best?" But if the *Monte Carlo* is best, then it will be the public to judge.

nothing has been spared to make the *Monte Carlo Theatre* the most perfect of its kind. Everything, from auditorium furnishings to technical equipment, has been chosen with one aim in view — the maximum comfort and convenience of the patron. These considerations and the consistent high standard of cinematic entertainment for which *Empire Films* have a long-established reputation, will assure the *Monte Carlo* a double welcome among critical cinema-goers and a Five-Star placing on their list of cinema Musts.

In building the *Monte Carlo Theatre* all the interior appointments and technical installations came under the supervision of the Company's Consulting Engineer, Mr. W. Eric Marshall, M.S.A.I.E.E., who personally directed all the engineering and cine-technical side of the work. His expert touch is also to be seen in the decorative lighting effects and the furnishing schemes in both auditorium and foyers.

PHOTOGRAPH BY J. H. ...