

**PRESENTATION TO THE LIBRARY BOARD
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AL FRICKER, JEANNIE MAH, FLORENCE STRATTON, & LORRAINE WEIDNER
RPL FILM THEATRE**

We represent a group of RPL Film Theatre enthusiasts. Last month members of our group met with Julie McKenna and Jennifer Matotek to discuss some of our concerns. We thank them for that opportunity.

At the meeting, we posed several questions about changes made to the Film Theatre guide. In 2014, it was transformed from a one-page double-sided sheet to an eight page, coloured, glossy booklet.

This change was apparently validated on the basis of an early 2014 public survey of 287 respondents, in which 43% reported they only attend the RPL Theatre a few times a year, and 10% less than once a year. Of the respondents, only 34% reported liking the new guide, while 30% were ambivalent and 36% disliked it.

Members of our group, many of whom attend the film theatre at least once a month, if not multiple times a week, fall into the latter category: We dislike the new guide. Here are three of our reasons.

1. First, functionality:

Laid out like a calendar, the old guide was easy to follow. Moreover, it presented all the required information in one place: film title, country of origin, release date, and description or review of the film—all were right there along with the date and time of screening.

Film theatre patrons developed the practice of attaching the guide to their fridges with magnets. We always knew where it was and we were reminded of RPL Film Theatre screenings at least three times a day.

The new guide is not very functional. For one thing, it is not easy to follow. Only the film title and date and time of screening are laid out like a calendar on the booklet's centre page. To find a description or review of a film or a film's release date or country of origin, patrons have to rifle through the booklet.

Even worse, each household now needs to have two guides: one from which the centre page can be extracted and attached to the fridge, and another to consult for film descriptions. The latter has to be kept track of for a two month period. Who can do that!

Has the new guide translated into more movie patrons? Many of us have missed screenings we would have liked to attend because of the guide's dysfunctionality.

2. Our second concern with the new Film Theatre guide is cost. Since our meeting with Julie and Jennifer, we have done some research.

- It is our understanding it cost \$1,600 to print 7,500 copies of the 2016 November-December Film Theatre Guide.
 - The last run in 2013 of the simple one-page double-sided sheet guide cost \$995 for 10,000 copies. Taking into account a slight increase in paper cost, that would be equivalent to \$1,100 today.
 - Do the math:
 - It costs 21 cents to print each copy of the new guide, versus 11 cents per copy for the old guide, making the new guide almost double the price of the old one.
 - 7,500 copies of the old guide would cost \$825 to print, versus \$1,600 for the new guide, a saving of \$775 for every printing.
 - The guide is printed six times a year, which would mean a saving of \$4,650 per year if the old guide format were followed.
3. Our third concern with the new Film Theatre guide is environmental. A multi-page, glossy, coloured booklet obviously produces more waste than a one page sheet. Moreover, glossy colour printing is much harder on the environment than black and white printing—the print form of the old guide until 2013.

Since 66% of respondents to the 2014 survey were either ambivalent about or disliked the new guide, and since many film theatre fans find the new guide difficult to follow and keep track of, and since the new guide is substantially more costly to produce than the old guide, and since it is harder on the environment, and since it doesn't seem to have translated into more movie patrons, we are asking for a return to the old guide format.

At the meeting with Julie and Jennifer, we also raised questions about changes to screening times, in particular the cancellation of the 9 pm Sunday screening. The 2014 survey gave no indication that the Sunday double bill was threatened or that the 9 pm screening would be dropped if a Sunday matinee screening were added. Indeed, we assumed that the Library's intention was to enhance Film Theatre programming!

No Sunday double bill changed the rhythm of life in Regina, and many of the regular and loyal viewers are no longer seeing RPL films. We ask for a return of the 9 pm Sunday screening.

We thank you for your support for the RPL Film Theatre. By screening films that would otherwise not be available, it plays a crucial role in the cultural life of Regina, adding to the cultural richness of our city.

We also thank you for the opportunity to make this presentation.