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New Rheem Theatre Takes its First Step

By Sophie Braccini



Beau Behan, CAIFFA Program & Promotion Director , and Derek Zemrak, President & Founder Photo Andy Scheck

Theatre. "We plan to offer a mix of blockbuster movies, independent films and other media arts in an effort to stimulate and enrich the culture of the Lamorinda community," says CAIFFA's Beau Behan.

Local author and film historian Larry Swindel, a regular speaker at the last incarnation of the Rheem Theater, attended the event with some friends. There he met Behan, and Swindel agreed to continue speaking at the presentations of classic movies. Swindel will introduce the next classic film, "On the Water Front," at 7:00 p.m. on July 17th at the New Rheem Theatre.

CAIFFA's team is planning other ways to entertain Lamorinda residents of all ages. On Thursday, July 15th, the theater will reach out to teens and young adults with a movie and live music night. For the price of a ticket guests can enjoy the movie of their choice, followed at 10 p.m. by a live concert featuring rap phenomenon Broadway Floe Montana. "We will offer this type of event about once a quarter," said Behan, "and we are preparing other events for other types of viewers.

CAIFFA is aware that it is community support that will make or break the theater's future. The business community's backing was already apparent at the opening, as many local restaurants such as Ristorante Amoroma, Terzetto Cuisine, Kirin Sushi, Chef Chao, and China Moon provided finger food, while Parkmon Vineyards and the Lamorinda Wine Growers Association poured some of their best wines.

"We want this place to be your New Rheem Theatre," said Behan in his opening statement, "we want to hear about you, tell us what you want to see, what events should take place here and together we will make it happen." For more information about the theater, CAIFFA membership and showtimes go to <http://www.thenewrheemtheatre.com>.

A cornucopia of enthusiastic supporters filled the New Rheem Theater for its grand re-opening as individuals of all ages laughed, munched and greeted friends in a festive community atmosphere.

"This new direction for the theater has the potential to turn Rheem into a destination," reflected Moraga Mayor Ken Chew. Movie-goers from Lamorinda and beyond came to share drinks and appetizers, and learn about the plans of the theater's new management, the California Independent Film Festival Association (CAIFFA). The crowd was delighted with CAIFFA's vision for the theater's future, which includes everything from new comforts to unique events.

"They are planning to install lounge chairs in one of the theaters!" said Moraga's Janet Foreman. Mary Coe, Adjunct Professor in the School of Economics and Business Administration at Saint Mary's College, was passing food as a token of her support. "Edy (Schwartz, President of the Moraga Chamber of Commerce) asked me if I could help tonight," said Coe, who lives in Orinda, "This new programming strategy is a great cultural opportunity for Lamorinda and for Saint Mary's College."

For its opening on June 25 the theater screened an eclectic array of films, which will continue to be the trademark of the New Rheem

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