



SHOWTIME IN SAN LORENZO

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A Brief History of the Lorenzo Theatre

The Lorenzo Theatre was designed by Alexander Canton.

United Artists purchased the land from the Bohannon Organization to erect the theatre. It was built during 1946-1947 at the cost of \$465,000. It originally held over 700 seats.

Dutch artist Anthony Heinsbergen, who painted murals in over 700 movie theatres, created the murals. About 200 of those theatres still exist, including The Orinda and The Paramount.

The Lorenzo Theatre houses the first black light murals in Northern California, far before black light became fashionable in the 60s.

The theater opened in April 1947. The first films shown were *Dark Mirror* and *Swell Guy*.

The Lorenzo was remodeled in the early 70s and reopened as The New Lorenzo. (Some of the seats in the back were removed and a section in the back was blocked off. The snack bar was rebuilt.)

The New Lorenzo closed in 1982, without any prior announcement. The last film shown was *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*.

The Lorenzo Theatre was one of the winners of the 1986 Art Deco Society Preservation Awards.

In 1999, Larry Leal founded the non-profit, Lorenzo Theatre Foundation.

In 2001, The Lorenzo Theatre became a California Historic Resource.

On September 12, 2002, the Lorenzo Theatre was designated as a Historic Preservation (HP) District by the Alameda County Board of Supervisors, making it the first Historic Preservation District in Alameda County.

The Lorenzo Theatre is currently owned by Alameda County.

The dissolution of the Alameda County Redevelopment Agency resulted in the loss of funding to renovate the exterior. Alameda County has no specific plans for the theater's future, but continues to support its eventual renovation and reuse.



ALAMEDA COUNTY
Community Development Agency

