



IN 1940 "DUKE ELLINGTON AND HIS FAMOUS ORCHESTRA" PLAYED AT THE MICHIGAN FOR TWO DAYS BETWEEN FILM SCREENINGS. THE ANN ARBOR NEWS DISPLAY AD PROMISED "PRIMITIVE RHYTHMS, WEIRD MELODIES, AMAZING SYNCOPATIONS . . . MUSIC NO OTHER BAND CAN PLAY."

HENRY ALDRIDGE WAS ONE OF THE LEADERS IN SAVING THE MICHIGAN THEATER. FOR YEARS HE HAD WORKED WITH OTHERS TO RESTORE THE BARTON THEATER PIPE ORGAN, ORIGINALLY USED TO ACCOMPANY SILENT FILMS.



FOUNDED IN 1963, THE ANN ARBOR FILM FESTIVAL HAS BEEN HELD AT THE MICHIGAN THEATER EVERY YEAR SINCE 1980. IT IS THE LONGEST RUNNING INDEPENDENT AND EXPERIMENTAL FILM FESTIVAL IN NORTH AMERICA.

MICHIGAN THEATER AND EAST LIBERTY STREET, 1929. THE FILM "FINDERS KEEPERS," STARRING JACK OAKIE, WAS PLAYING.



THE ARCADE THEATER, ON NORTH UNIVERSITY FROM 1915 TO 1928, SHOWED SILENT MOVIES—OFTEN TO RAUCOUS STUDENT AUDIENCES. IT BURNED IN DECEMBER, A FEW MONTHS BEFORE TALKIES ARRIVED IN TOWN.



CONVERTED FROM A ROLLER RINK TO A THEATER IN 1907, THE MAJESTIC ON MAYNARD STREET FOCUSED ON VAUDEVILLE BUT ALSO SHOWED MOVIES. BUTTERFIELD THEATER MANAGER GERALD HOAG MOVED LIVE PERFORMANCES TO THE MICHIGAN THEATER WHEN IT OPENED IN 1928. THE MAJESTIC CLOSED IN 1942 AND HOAG THEN TRANSFERRED THE ENTIRE MOVIE STAFF TO THE NEW STATE THEATER.



1914 PROGRAM AD

## UPTOWN THEATERS

The Michigan Theater opened January 5, 1928, acclaimed as Ann Arbor's own movie palace—"a shrine to art." Ida Mae Chadwick and her Dizzy Blondes, a flapper dance revue, accompanied the silent film "A Hero for a Night" with a live orchestra and the Barton pipe organ. The following year, in 1929, the Michigan converted to talkies. During the Great Depression, live vaudeville and bands played between

the movies. In 1932 you could see newsreels, cartoons, features, and hear live musicians—all for 50 cents.

In 1942, after the start of World War II, the Art Deco State Theater opened "ablaze with radiant beauty." Showing movies only, it succeeded the aging Majestic Theater on Maynard Street. The Michigan and the State became the major venues for movies in the 1950s with the closing of the Main Street theaters—the Whitney,

the Orpheum, and the Wuerth. From then to the 1980s most foreign art films played at the Campus Theater on South University Avenue and later at the Fifth Forum on South Fifth Avenue.

Movie theaters were threatened by competition from television and later from suburban multiplexes. Owners reacted in 1979 by dividing the State into four mini-theaters. The upper two survived after the

lower two were converted to retail space.

The Michigan closed in 1979. The people of Ann Arbor responded by buying it and began raising funds for restoration. As a nonprofit, it has become the premier showplace for independent films, the Ann Arbor Film Festival, the Ann Arbor Symphony, the Not Just for Kids series of live-on-stage programs, popular music concerts, and live theater.