



# The **BELCOURT** Campaign

A World-Class Film Center for a Thriving City

RESTORE · PRESERVE · INSPIRE

## **CAMPAIGN QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

### **How can I support the Belcourt Campaign?**

The success of this project is possible only because generous donors have stepped up to ensure the Belcourt will continue to serve audiences for many years to come. We are asking our audience and donor community to consider a stretch gift to the Belcourt Campaign. A stretch gift means different things to different people, but because this campaign is for a capital project it means gifts can be pledged with payments up to five years. The largest gift to this campaign to date is \$1 million.

If you'd like to discuss a leadership gift, a pledge, or naming opportunities, please contact:

Brooke Bernard, Development Director, [brooke@belcourt.org](mailto:brooke@belcourt.org) or 615-846-3150 x21.

Gifts to the campaign do not replace annual memberships or other donations (we need that support to keep doing the work we currently do!)—but if you would like to bundle everything into one gift, we would be happy to work with you. Please contact [brooke@belcourt.org](mailto:brooke@belcourt.org) to structure a gift that can be pledged over a five-year plan.

You can make a gift to the campaign at any time at [www.belcourt.org](http://www.belcourt.org).

### **How will Belcourt memberships be affected?**

All memberships at every level will be extended through the duration of the period when the theatre is closed. Of course, memberships can continue to be used at Belcourt pop-up screenings and off-site events during construction.

Though we won't be issuing new membership cards until each member's next renewal (a helpful cost savings initiative), your extended expiration date will be in our records. Likewise, if you renew during construction, your membership will be extended to account for the length of time lost to the theatre's closure.

### **How will the Belcourt's programming be affected?**

We will continue our film programming until we start construction in January 2016 (in fact, we're looking forward to another busy "Doctober" next month). Once we begin construction and the building is closed, we will be partnering with organizations around the city for pop-up screenings. We'll be announcing those as they are confirmed.

### **When will construction start—and finish?**

Construction is scheduled to start in January 2016 and to be completed by June 2016. R.C. Mathews Contractor will oversee the work. Tuck-Hinton is the architectural firm for the project.

### **Why does the entire theatre have to close during this project? Can it be done in phases, and stay partially open?**

Given the building's age and the complexity of core systems (e.g., sprinklers, electrical, HVAC), it's not possible or practical to phase this project. The architects (Tuck-Hinton Architects) and builders (R.C. Mathews Contractor) have already conducted extensive research on the building—for which there are no extant original blueprints—and have planned the most effective, efficient construction schedule for the project, given the building's needs.

This period, January to June, is also ideal because it's the most "quiet" period for new releases, and a time when film viewership is at its lowest. The Belcourt will not be entirely "dark" during this time, however—we're already planning a series of pop-up screenings around town with community partners. And we will continue our annual Red Carpet Evening fundraiser—this year on February 28, 2016 at a location off-site.

### **Why not just fix the restrooms and leave everything else alone?**

Though the limitations of the Belcourt's restrooms and their lack of wheelchair accessibility are certainly a feature our patrons are very familiar with—and definitely a key aspect of this construction project—they're not stand-alone problems. Because so

many of the theatre's spaces don't meet modern fire, safety and accessibility codes, once a construction permit is pulled for any project large or small, all of the building's outdated accessibility and safety features must be fixed. That includes fundamental shortcomings like single egresses (entrances/exits) from upstairs projection and administrative spaces and dressing room spaces below the historic hall. Adding the required second egresses alone would fundamentally change the theatre spaces. These features and other renovations and refurbishments are essential to protecting and preserving the building—and can't be postponed.

### **What other building projects has the Belcourt undertaken over the years?**

The theatre has evolved throughout its history, adapting to the changing city and neighborhood. When the theatre opened in May 1925, its entrance was actually on 21st Avenue (where the Villager Tavern is now), but was re-oriented by 1927 because of the opening of a competitor, the Belmont at the corner of Blakemore and 21st Avenue. Its original hall, the 1925 Hall, has seen a long series of structural changes. The initial 800-seat capacity was reduced to install "modern" amenities such as air conditioning, for example, and changing film technologies required physical changes.

In the late 1960s, the Belcourt's second screen was added on, in a then-new hall that was simply attached to the original structure. In 2008-2011, Belcourt supporters gave generously to support new seats, draping, carpeting, and aisle lighting in both halls. In 2013, the Belcourt installed two new 4K digital cinema projectors and upgraded its sound system. Both of those recent upgrades will continue to serve patrons as part of this renovation.

### **What about parking during construction—and beyond?**

The Belcourt's parking lot will remain open during construction as much as possible. The renovation/restoration project is a major undertaking so construction vehicles, trailers and refuse receptacles will be present for the duration of the closure period. We will keep as much of the lot open as possible at all times.

*(as of September 10, 2015)*