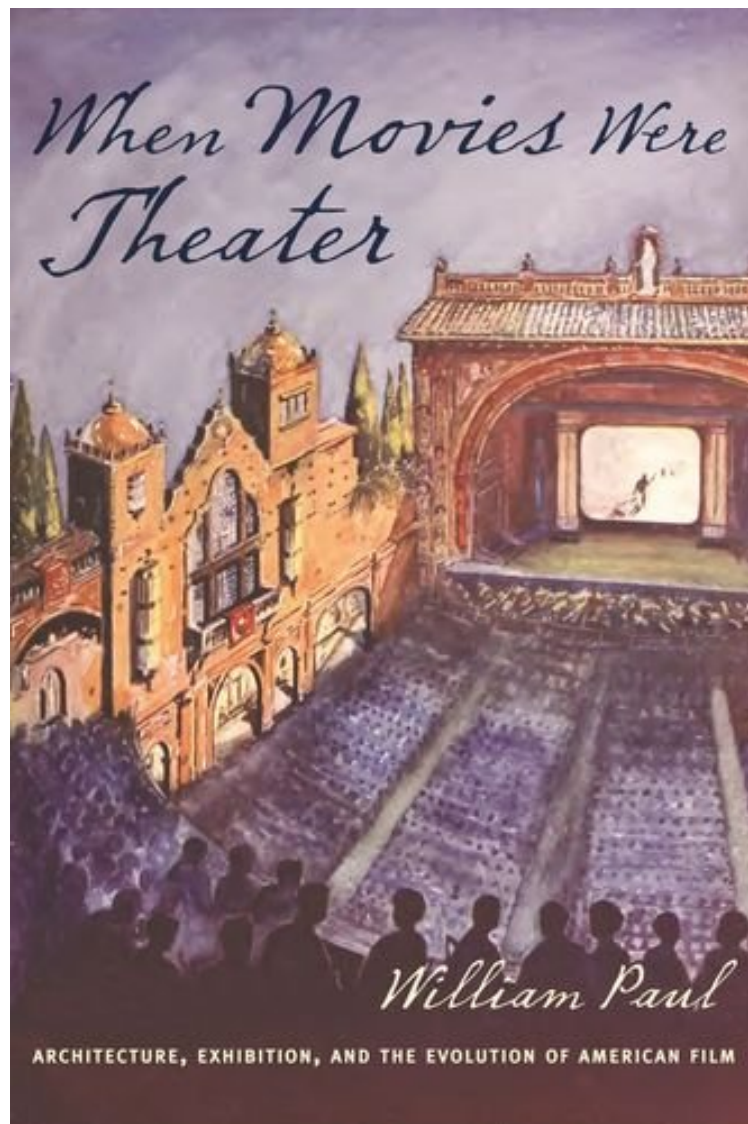


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## When Movies Were Theater: Architecture, Exhibition, and the Evolution of American Film (Film and Culture Series)

William Paul

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**William Paul : When Movies Were Theater: Architecture, Exhibition, and the Evolution of American Film (Film and Culture Series)** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised When Movies Were Theater: Architecture, Exhibition, and the Evolution of American Film (Film and Culture Series):

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By R. Margaret Paul  
Winner of the 2017 Richard Wall Memorial Prize of the Theater Library Association!

There was a time when seeing a movie meant more than seeing a film. The theater itself shaped the very perception of events on screen. This multilayered history tells the story of American film through the evolution of theater architecture and the surprisingly varied ways movies were shown, ranging from Edison's 1896 projections to the 1968 Cinerama premiere of Stanley Kubrick's *2001*. William Paul matches distinct architectural forms to movie styles, showing how cinema's roots in theater influenced business practices, exhibition strategies, and film technologies.

Just as the very concept of 'going to the movies' in a theatrical space seems under threat and antiquated, William Paul's informed and rigorous look back at what going to the movies once meant culturally, aesthetically, and architecturally seems particularly urgent and apt. *When Movies Were Theater* offers digital-age moviegoers and screen watchers a fascinating and provocative study of the spaces in which we see movies. (Thomas Doherty, author of *Hollywood and Hitler, 1933-1939*) *When Movies Were Theater* is a brilliantly argued, superbly researched study of the spaces and physical contexts that determine our experience of movies. Paul shows that the history of stage and screen has involved many architectural changes, and that the framing environment—whether indoors or out, whether at home or in a multiplex—decisively affects both the form of films and our understanding of them. His book is of groundbreaking importance and should be read by everyone with a serious interest in the ever-evolving medium of moving images. (James Naremore, author of *An Invention Without a Future: Essays on Cinema*) *When Movies Were Theater* is an impressive achievement. William Paul demonstrates that the history of film should not and cannot be separated from the history of theatre, including the history of theatre buildings. A major accomplishment in research and analysis, Paul's book offers essential scholarship for both film scholars and theatre historians. (Thomas Postlewait, author of *The Cambridge Introduction to Theatre Historiography*) In this fascinating study, Paul investigates the complex and ever-changing theatrical space of motion picture exhibition. He also offers his insights into the unexpected ways that these spaces influenced film production and vice versa. (Charles Musser, author *The Emergence of Cinema: The American Screen to 1907*) If you are interested in how the architecture within American movie houses shaped the cinema and vice-versa, William Paul's often brilliant tome is an instant classic. (Gerald Peary *The Arts Fuse*) This is a book that will change our thinking of cinema.... It is a broadening of our views on the history of cinema as a cultural practice at the crossroads of many different fields: theater, architecture, technology, economy, and art.... [*When Movies Were Theater*] deserves a place on the very top of all compulsory reading on the history of cinema. (Jan Baetens *Leonardo*)  
About the Author  
William Paul is professor of film and media studies at Washington University in St. Louis. He is also the author of *Ernst Lubitsch's American Comedy* (1983) and *Laughing Screaming: Modern Hollywood Horror and Comedy* (1994).