

"I love the opportunity to
support something that I truly
enjoy and hope everyone gets
a chance to experience."

**"Film Streams...
has become a
major cultural
institution for
our city."**

— Omaha World-Herald

"Thanks for making
Omaha more fun!"

"I consistently have movie/theater
experiences at Film Streams that give me
pause to think about the larger world around
me and the impact of film as a medium."

**Film Streams
At the Ruth Sokolof Theater
2008 Year-End Report**

Dear Film Streams Friends and Supporters,

In late 2008, we sent out a web survey to our members, as well as non-members signed up to receive email updates from Film Streams. While the numerical feedback was outstanding—100% of respondents described their overall satisfaction with our theater as “Excellent” (88%) or “Good” (12%)—the best part for us was reading the dozens and dozens of overwhelmingly positive notes that people wrote into the survey. I can’t tell you how much these comments mean to us, except to say that the thoughts expressed—some of which you’ll find on this report—are both the reason we’re here and the inspiration that keeps us working hard to bring new and innovative film events to our community.

As numbers go, 2008 was a remarkable year. We sold just under 40,000 tickets, with more than 42,000 visitors coming to the Ruth Sokolof Theater to enjoy a wide variety of films, forums, Q&A’s, and special events. We’ve done our best to compile the past year’s highlights here, including some fun stats about our most popular films and a rundown of the numerous community partnerships and education events that blossomed in 2008. Most important for our future, though, are the figures that speak to your continued and increased involvement. To date, Film Streams has 1,737 members, with the average gift rising this year by 24% (from \$77.12 in 2007 to \$95.29 in 2008). We sincerely appreciate all your generous support! Without you, the programming recapped in this report, and the many wonderful events coming in 2009 and beyond, simply wouldn’t be possible.

Best wishes for a happy and healthy 2009,



Rachel Jacobson
Director, Film Streams at the Ruth Sokolof Theater

Feature 2008

A FILM STREAMS EVENT

Our first annual fundraiser, Feature 2008 brought 1,000 people to the Holland Performing Arts Center and raised over \$188,000 for the Ruth Sokolof Theater. Below: Oscar-winning filmmaker and Film Streams Board Member Alexander Payne interviews special guest Laura Dern. Backstage, Alexander shares a moment with Feature 2008 Event Chairpersons Betiana and Todd Simon.

“Both the [Ruth Sokolof Theater] and its extensive offerings are the sort of resources one expects to stumble upon happily in second-city American metropolises—Seattle, Dallas, Philadelphia, even Washington or Chicago.”

— *When Omaha Met Cinema*
(The New York Times, March 16, 2008)



Alexander Payne and Laura Dern



Alexander Payne with Betiana and Todd Simon

First-Run Films

This past year brought 48 first-run premieres to the Ruth Sokolof Theater, including a diverse selection of American independents, foreign films, and documentaries.

"I want movies that make me think and feel."



Top 10 Grossing Premieres of 2008

1. **Slumdog Millionaire** (UK/USA/India)
– in only its first two weeks!
2. **The Savages** (USA)
3. **The Diving Bell and the Butterfly** (France)
4. **Happy-Go-Lucky** (UK)
5. **Mongol** (Germany/Kazakhstan/Russia/Mongolia)
6. **Up the Yangtze** (Canada/China)
7. **Let the Right One In** (Sweden)
8. **Tell No One** (France)
9. **Son of Rambow** (UK)
10. **Man on Wire** (USA)

Repertory Films

From Hitchcock to Herzog and Kurosawa to Kubrick, our 2008 repertory program featured some of the greatest directors in cinema history, along with remarkable eras (European 60s), dynamic cultures (Cinemateca), beloved genres (Movie Musicals, Film Screams!), our Feature 2008 special guest (Laura Dern), and a number of revivals and special engagements (LET'S GET LOST, ANNIE HALL, THE EXILES). In all, 117 films returned to the big screen in Omaha in 2008 as a result of this program.

"Where else can you see THE UMBRELLAS OF CHERBOUG on the big screen?"

Top 10 Grossing Classics of 2008

1. **Let's Get Lost** 1988
2. **It's A Wonderful Life** 1946
3. **Dr. Strangelove** 1964
4. **A Hard Day's Night** 1964
5. **North by Northwest** 1959
6. **2001: A Space Odyssey** 1968
7. **The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari** 1920
8. **Annie Hall** 1977
9. **A Time for Burning** 1966
10. **Rear Window** 1954



"My son (19 years old) had not previously seen many of the 'classic' films you have shown. He has really enjoyed them, and it is good to see that they are as entertaining for a much younger audience as they were for me when I first saw them as much as fifty years ago."

Community Development

In 2008, our extraordinary Community Development Committee oversaw many fantastic collaborations (listed below) and developed a streamlined RFP process allowing organizations to propose film-related events that will help to further their missions. Collaborations planned for 2009 include screenings of *ANTWONE FISHER* (with Project Harmony; Antwone Fisher in person),

Japan Foundation Film Festival (Feb 18 – Mar 10, 2008)
Screenings and discussions presented with Creighton University.

The Greatest Silence: Rape in the Congo (Apr 7, 2008)
Screening & discussion presented with the YWCA.

Vote Democracy! Series (Apr 15 – May 6, 2008)
Screenings & discussions presented with
NET Television & NET Radio.

Beaufort (May 1, 2008)
Special screening & discussion with Rabbi Aryeh Azriel
(Temple Israel), Dr. Naser Alsharif, & the Very Reverend
Ernesto Medina (Trinity Episcopal Cathedral).

Helvetica (May 14, 2008)
Presented with AIGA-Nebraska.

When the Levees Broke (Jun 28, 2008)
Presented with the Omaha Summer Arts Festival, Omaha
Performing Arts, and featuring the Hot 8 Brass Band.

Praying with Lior (Aug 25, 2008)
Screening & discussion presented with the National Council of
Jewish Women & Omaha Down Syndrome Parents Network.

GONE WITH THE WIND (Lauritzen Gardens & Omaha
Community Playhouse), *AMADEUS* (Omaha Symphony),
FOOD FIGHT (Alegent Health), *TWO MILLION MINUTES*
(Youth Leadership Omaha), a new season of the Met Opera
Live in HD with Opera Omaha, and our ongoing “Bemis Artists
Talk Film” series with the Bemis Center.

Cinemateca series (Aug 29 – Oct 2, 2008)
Presented with UNO's Office of Latino
& Latin American Studies.

Refusenik (Sept 17, 2008)
Special screening & discussion presented with the
Jewish Omaha Film Festival & sponsored by The Shirley
and Leonard Goldstein Supporting Foundation
& the Anti-Defamation League.

War Dance (Oct 14, 2008)
Presented with Computers for Africa.

A Time for Burning (Oct 18, 2008)
Screening & discussion presented with It's Time
Omaha and featuring director Bill Jersey.

Chop Shop (Nov 6, 2008)
Screening & discussion presented with
the MACCH Homeless Youth Task Force.

Met Opera Live in HD (ongoing)
Presented with Opera Omaha.

Education “You and your stellar team have provided our students with a remarkable experience. Our sincere thanks for all you do to educate our film consumers and creators.”

With the generous support of the Qwest Foundation, Film Streams launched our Film History & Criticism Program for High School Students in 2008. Hundreds of students from throughout the city and beyond have visited the Ruth Sokolof Theater as part of this program, including students from Omaha Central, Omaha South, Omaha North, Omaha Northwest, Benson, Westside, Creighton Prep, Gretna, Millard North, Millard West, Brownell Talbot, Marian, Duchesne, and Bellevue West. Students enthusiastically

viewed and discussed films ranging from 1960s French New Wave (*THE 400 BLOWS*) to classic Hitchcock (*PSYCHO*, *REBECCA*) to a Spanish expressionist film from the 1970s (*SPIRIT OF THE BEEHIVE*). The program focuses on film literacy and critical thinking, with students learning how to interpret films in a cultural context, empathize with characters in ways beneficial to their own personal development, and analyze film as an art form.

Special Events

In 2008, we hosted a number of special events and guests at the Ruth Sokolof Theater, including directors Jennifer Venditti (*BILLY THE KID*) and Yung Chang (*UP THE YANGTZE*), *Mysterious Skin* author Scott Heim (co-hosted with the Downtown Omaha Lit Fest), a pair of “Arthouse” talks with

“These extra events you are doing are wonderful. I think Film Streams is a true cultural gem.”

the Bemis Center, a screening of *THE CABINET OF DR. CALIGARI* with live score composed and performed by Orenda Fink, Todd Fink, & Ben Brodin, and the beginning of another popular Met Opera *Live in HD* season, presented with Opera Omaha.

Finances

Contributed Income

Individual Giving & Membership	\$188,595.00	21.13%
Foundation Support	\$105,000.00	11.76%
Corporate Support	\$27,600.00	3.09%
Government Support	\$34,918.00	3.91%
Feature 2008	\$188,175.02	21.08%

Total Contributed	\$544,288.02	60.97%
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Earned Revenue

Box Office	\$251,944.00	28.22%
Concessions	\$64,681.33	7.25%
Other (Rentals, Interest, Merch)	\$31,813.26	3.56%

Total Earned Revenue	\$348,438.59	39.03%
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Total Income	\$892,726.61
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Expense

Rent, Utilities & Operations	\$234,386.90	26.26%
Payroll & Benefits	\$338,078.13	37.88%
Film Rental, Shipping & Booking	\$146,638.81	16.43%
Marketing	\$58,870.11	6.60%
Admin General	\$51,004.30	5.71%
Events (Feature 2008)	\$63,609.84	7.13%

Total Expense	\$892,588.09
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Film Streams Supporters

Many thanks to the following contributors for their support of the Ruth Sokolof Theater.

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