

Salem is a beautiful city, and it would not be what it is today without its commitment to the arts. Early Salemites knew this town by its theaters and opera houses, and as time wore on the city grew up. Now, Salem Cinema acts as a repository for Salem's finest creative works. This is one of the few places in our area that will show a locally made film, featuring local actors, and small businesses. One of the rare gems that works within the community to show people outside of Salem just how wonderful things are here. A local and independent movie theater connects Salem's residents to fine films from all over the globe that they would not normally have access to and allows creative Salemites a path toward exhibiting their own creative works. The magic of going to the movies is something that isn't lost on me either. That smell of popcorn, the community experience of viewing a film together and laughing in step with a room of strangers, the feeling of coming back to earth when you leave the movies and walk to your car-- all of that is special. It's a kind of togetherness that I have surely missed.

Our local movie theater, one of only a few of its kind, has faced incredible adversity in the last year. Movie theaters are a source of joy and diversion, and they are one of the only businesses that has had to remain closed for such long durations. While doors are closed and movies are not playing, costs still come. Months pass and rent comes due. Bills stack up against zero income. With limited capacity outside of the control of the owners only allowing so much revenue and required operating costs eating at those profits, I fear that without your support Salem's independent cinema days are over.

I strongly urge you to support Salem Cinema through the allocation of this grant. Our local theater is a place where people gather together, and share a wonderful experience-- a piece of togetherness surely needed in our divided world. It is a place where local directors and actors see their names on the big screen for the first time. It is a place where local movies are shown, local business is celebrated, and where Salem's rich history of support for the arts is upheld.