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Prospect's New Homage to Art Deco Cinema

NOVEMBER 28, 2016 by [JOHN DEXTER \(HTTP://ADELAIDEREVIEW.COM.AU/WRITERS/JOHN-DEXTER/\)](http://adelaidereview.com.au/writers/john-dexter/)



A new development set to house a new Palace Nova cinema, office space and food outlets on Prospect Road will recall the glory of the Art Deco era and celebrate the area's industrious history.

"I'm an Art Deco enthusiast, but that's not the reason why this has got that twist to it," says Steve Maras of his group's new development on Prospect Road. "When you look around at a lot of the older cinemas that were rolled out in the 1930s, and when you look around at some of the grand cinemas around the world, they are very much of that sort of Art Deco period."

The four-storey building set to house a brand new venture from Palace Nova, six new retail/hospitality venues and a top-floor balcony-lined office space will be an homage to the Art Deco style.

"We wanted it to be modern, but to pay homage to the era," Maras says. Curvature is key for Maras, who notes the curved lines on the building's edges and shopfronts draw back memories of the early 20th century style. Classic finishings are also important to drive that feeling home.



"The entry to the cinema will be that very 1930s look of wooden doors, brass handles. If you didn't know that it was being built in 2016 you might think it was a 1930s build. The vertical fin that runs down the building's centre spine, which will have 'Cinema' on it, and that is very much reminiscent of the era."

Once inside, visitors should be impressed by a scale of grand design, says Maras. "As you walk in to the cinema, it won't be at ground level, there'll be a void, this two-storey volume of space right away to give you that feeling of grandeur."

The cinema itself will comprise 14 screens, stretching across level one and two of the four-storey edifice. Eight of those cinemas will be 'boutique', only seating 25 to 30 patrons, catering to the niche audiences and films Palace Nova has long served, while six cinemas will house up to 160 seats for blockbuster films, and high volume openings.

Palace Nova's Marketing Manager, Yolanda Sulser tells The Adelaide Review that "Prospect will screen the same quality mix of films as Palace Nova Eastend, but will expand into a wider range of films to cater to the suburban family lifestyle market of the area."

News of the Prospect cinema plans comes shortly after Palace Nova's East End cinemas absorbed the Nova Building's operations into the Cinema Place premises, and expanded from 10 screens in two venues to 12 in one.



In a comfortable twist of fate, Tectvs Architects, the same firm that outfitted the Nova Building for the Maras Group, has also designed the new Prospect location.

While this development is fresh to public eyes, it has long been in the works. Maras says his group purchased the site in 2008, sensing potential in the Prospect strip.

"We bought it because we saw Prospect Road as a bit of a sleeper, as a great strip and a concentrated one," he says. "It's come a long way since council improved the public realm there."

Yet the idea for a cinema wasn't immediately apparent for Maras, who says "we weren't quite sure

what we would do with the site". In the intervening eight years, the row of six or seven tenancies were let out on six-month rolling leases, in what Maras says was a great opportunity for young entrepreneurs to experiment.

"It was basically a blank canvas for retailers and foodies to go through. Over that time we had about 20 to 25 businesses roll in." Having chaired Renew Adelaide for years, Maras is passionate about the development of new business that will bring more variety to Adelaide's service sectors. He cites one such success from those years as Devour, the dessert bar which shifted to Davenport Road, and whose owner, Quang Nguyen, has recently opened the fortuitously named café Third Time Lucky on Henley Beach Road.



The new building will host six tenancies for retail and hospitality opportunities, with Maras expecting those spots to "predominantly be food based – cafés, dessert bars, wine bars, that sort of thing". He hopes the new businesses and cinema development will revitalise Prospect for evening trade.

"Everything that comes in on the ground floor is designed to be operational day and night, because what Prospect Road needs is 'evening activation'. Cinemas are always the anchor that brings people there at day and night, and this cinema will work seven days a week from the morning until night."

Another aspect of the multi-use building that Maras is excited about is the top floor, which he says is ripe to become a co-working space. Thanks to Prospect's growing appeal, the attractive social offerings downstairs and the NBN network supplying the district with high-speed broadband, Maras says the spot will have very strong commercial potential.

“It’s basically open plan with balconies looking north, south and east, and there’s nothing around there of equivalent height, so the view from there will be fairly spectacular,” he says.

While the development is closer to a futuristic mini-mall’s design than the traditional street-facing shopfronts that one finds along Adelaide’s arterial roads, it will also be anchored in the area’s long story of industry and transport.

“There used to be a mural on this building which was the Prospect Transportation Mural,” Maras says. “We’re actually getting the mural screen printed, and we’ll be putting it on the façade panel. When we did our consultation with the local community, that one came up. It had been painted in the 1980s and held a lot of significance for a lot of people in Prospect.”



The same building also used to house the longstanding glove and protective clothing manufacturers A.S. Horne. Their name will stay on the building’s northern façade along with a tribute to the business.

“We found these glove moulds of the gloves that they would make in one of the cellars,” says Maras “We’re actually recreating the gloves in different colours and having them pinned to the wall. People will look at it and ask, ‘What is that?’ then see the story there.”

With construction now under way, the new complex should be completed by next August, with Palace Nova in Prospect operating from November 2017.

“All the panels are going up, so if you drive by there now you’ll see it’s in full swing.”

Photos: Courtesy of Maras Group

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Laramie Levar

What an incredibly wonderful concept a futuristic art deco cinema situated in Prospect its a winner cant wait for it to become a living reality we require these palaces of the mind to escape the mediocrity of our existence, bring it on. regards Laramie.

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