



GARNEAU THEATRE

8708 - 109 STREET NW

CITY OF EDMONTON
HISTORIC RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT PROGRAM



DESCRIPTION OF HISTORICAL PLACE

The Garneau Theatre is a prominent cinema and commercial retail structure at 109 Street and 87 Avenue in the city of Edmonton. Constructed in 1940, the building is situated on four city lots located just south of the High Level Bridge in the neighbourhood of Garneau. The facades and marquee incorporate Art Deco elements executed with two-tone brick and stucco. The theatre's main entrance is set back from the three commercial storefront units.

HERITAGE VALUE

The Garneau Theatre is significant for its Art Deco Style and its status as an Edmonton landmark. Built in 1940, the Garneau Theatre is valued as a significant example of the local variation of the Art Deco style. The Art Deco style was an early incarnation of the modernist movement in Edmonton that has had an enormous effect on the architectural character of the city.



The facades incorporate Art Deco elements that were common to modernist architecture in the early 1940s. The Art Deco influence is reflected in the building's rectangular form, the prominent horizontal lines of the front façade and the rear brick portion, and the form and massing of the marquee.

The use of colour also shows a modernist influence; two-tone paint is used to enliven surfaces and distinguish geometric decorations such as the storefront speed lines and the stepped marquee. This use of colour is also evident on the rear portion, where darker bricks form a series of broad horizontal lines. These stylistic features reflect the work of its architect William G. Blakey, a modernist architect of considerable importance in Edmonton.

The Garneau Theatre was the second cinema built in Edmonton outside the downtown core. The building's age, its prominent location on 109 Street and its distinctive marquee designed to attract maximum attention all contribute to its landmark status.





CHARACTER DEFINING ELEMENTS

The heritage value of the Garneau Theatre is expressed in such character-defining elements as:

- + the building's orientation on its lot;
- + dignified form, scale and massing as expressed by its flat roof, two storey high rectilinear box (60 feet by 125 feet) with a height of 30 feet containing the theatre and the one storey retail portion fronting 109 Street;
- + two tone brown brick on the rectilinear rear portion of the building;
- + the stucco overhangs with soffit lighting or pot lighting that illuminate the word "GARNEAU" on the north and south elevations;
- + the word "GARNEAU" in the darker brown brick on the north and south elevations;
- + the marquee, including the vertical stuccoed tower, the neon signage, and the ladder affixed to it;
- + marquee soffit lighting;
- + the theatre lobby entrance located between two storefronts;
- + fenestration, including glass block and doorways in the retail portion fronting 109 Street, with the use of commercial stainless steel framed doors and windows; and
- + original interior elements in the theatre lobby entrance such as the terrazzo floor finish.

Designated as a Municipal Historic Resource through Bylaw 15270 in October 2009.



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