

Category: Odeon Theatres, Photo Essay

Odeon Danforth Theatre, later the Rex Danforth

By Tom Swartz on 11/23/2018



Odeon Danforth Theatre, later Rex Danforth, was once located at 425 Danforth Ave. east of Yonge in the north end in The Danforth/Ossington neighbourhood of Toronto.

Built in 1934/37 and designed by architect [Gordon Ashbee](#), the movie house opened on April 24, 1934, along with the Grand South. The exterior featured a tall, unadorned sign and an unconventional marquee gently curved towards the entrance.

The auditorium was a shade of Art Deco and had curved seats. Large identification signs above the seating and giant signs extended around the side walls, reminiscent of the Grand South.

The main floor seating had side wings, which the building had a push-back stage of seats. My Young, a show often for The Globe and Mail, mentioned: "The Danforth end of the road is really a two-way street."

The Danforth was one of four theatres that were part of the Grand South, owned by J Arthur Kahn. The other four included the [Grand](#), [Palace](#), [Canton](#) and the [Grand](#).

In the late-1970s, the theatre was renamed the Rex Danforth and showed Grand Prix, On Wings of Eagles, and The Great Escape on the stage at the otherwise seasonal Theatre for an evening concert.

The building was sold in 1994 for \$1.5 million and later became home to Estimote Fitness. Today, Grand Prix Fitness occupies the former theatre.

Odeon Danforth Theatre Photos



1934 - Odeon Danforth Theatre marquee at night. Photo courtesy of Toronto Archives. Photo ID: 001-101-101-101



1934 - Odeon Danforth Theatre, later Rex Danforth, was once located at 425 Danforth Ave. east of Yonge in the north end in The Danforth/Ossington neighbourhood of Toronto.



1934 - Odeon Danforth Theatre stage and audience at the opening of Grand Prix (Toronto Archives. Photo ID: 001-101-101-101)

1934 - The auditorium and entrance of the Odeon Danforth Theatre before the renovation work and the stage extension. Photo courtesy of Toronto Archives. Photo ID: 001-101-101-101

1934 - Odeon Danforth Theatre marquee at night. Photo courtesy of Toronto Archives. Photo ID: 001-101-101-101

1934 - Odeon Danforth Theatre marquee at night. Photo courtesy of Toronto Archives. Photo ID: 001-101-101-101

1934 - The Toronto City Council meeting the demolition and renovation of the Odeon Danforth Theatre. Photo courtesy of Toronto Archives. Photo ID: 001-101-101-101

1934 - The Toronto City Council meeting the demolition and renovation of the Odeon Danforth Theatre. Photo courtesy of Toronto Archives. Photo ID: 001-101-101-101

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