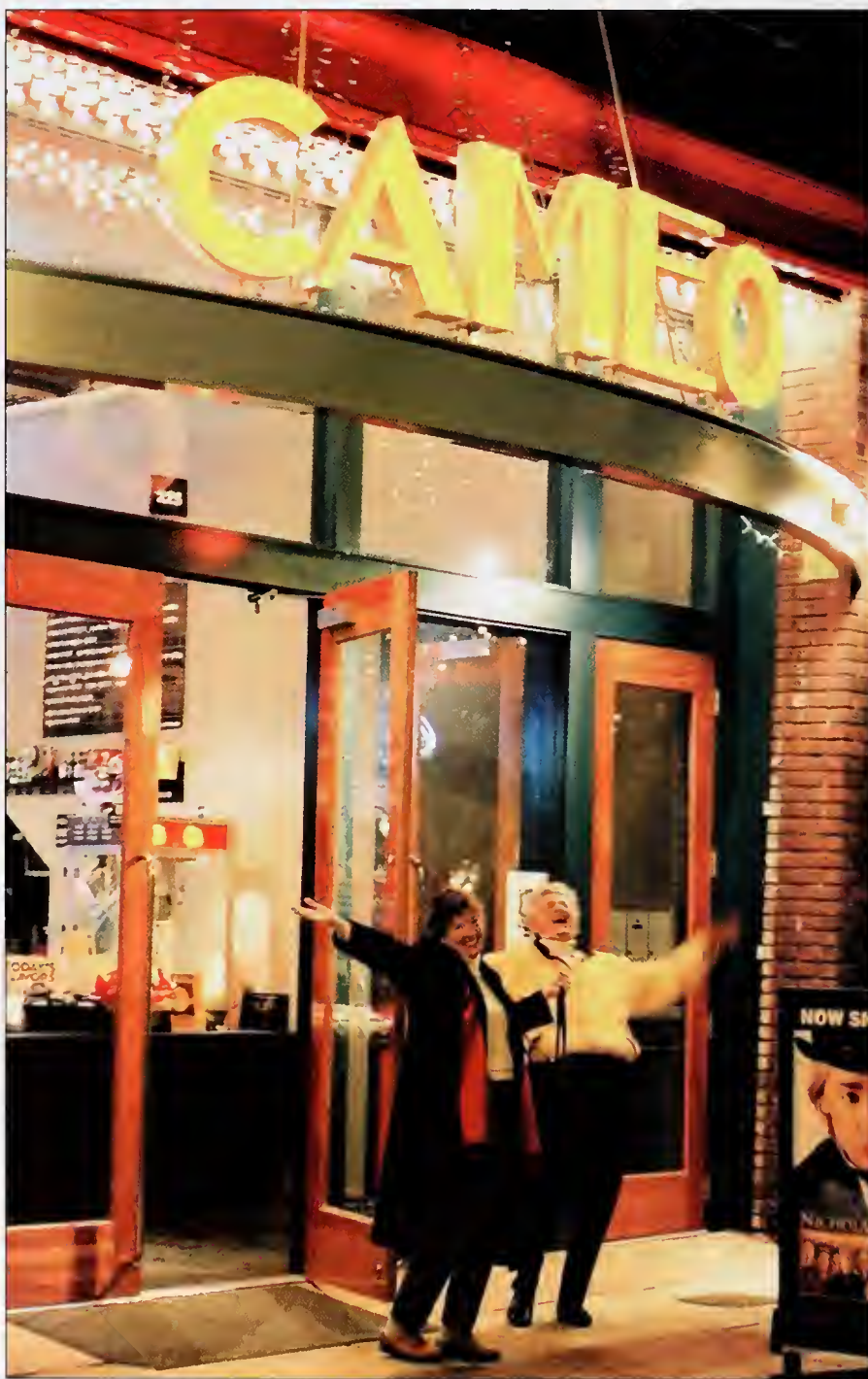


CAMEO ROLE

Fayetteville, N.C.'s Cameo Carves a Niche With Interesting Fare and Architecture *by Jon Alon Walz*



CAMEO APPEARANCE: Two regular patrons demonstrate their affection for their favorite theatre.

Hollywood of the 1920s and 1930s bore witness to a city in rapid evolution. The seductive silent stars of the day were challenged to appeal to an ever more sophisticated and critical audience that was fervently growing in size; meanwhile, literally down the street, a mad cadre of the nation's most promising young architects were toiling to design and construct enough vogue and gargantuan movie palaces to accommodate and impress the new mobs.

Unquestionably, this kind of grand, popular cinema to which America became addicted in the '20s and '30s—and still attempts to emulate in the design of the new multiplexes of the 21st century—had as much to do with grand architecture as it did with grand acting and grand movies. To this day, Grauman's Chinese Theatre in Hollywood remains the most definitive symbol of what "Hollywood" is or ever was—much more so than any movie.

Architects Nasim Kuenzel, Chris Kuenzel and Eric Lindstrom decided that Fayetteville, N.C., could use some of the Tinseltown magic that can only be conjured by playing great product in a beautiful theatre. Their talents in design and construction helped produce the latter, but they had to jump into a whole new career to ensure the former.

Fayetteville, a city of 132,000 in central North Carolina, can trace its roots back to the colonial settlers of the early 1700s. As an active political center in the period leading up to the America Revolution, the city was a base for patriots petitioning against King George and was ultimately the city in which the state of North Carolina ratified the new U.S. Constitution in 1789 (in, as was customary for the time, a bar—the Cool Spring Tavern.)

In 1914, Fayetteville became home to one of the first silent movie theatres in the state as well—the Dixie Theatre.

Located in what was until recently a dilapidated, virtually abandoned stretch of the city's historic downtown core, the Dixie operated as a theatre for "probably only about 10 years," according to