



The Rex Theatre was located at 186 Wickham Street, in Fortitude Valley - an inner suburb NE of the Brisbane CBD. The theatre officially opened on Friday, the 8th May, 1936. The Rex Theatre was designed by architect, Mr. Arthur W.F. Bligh, whilst the builder was Mr. R. Provan. The theatre was constructed in the basement of the former Foy and Gibson warehouse and air-conditioned from the time it opened. The Rex had a seating capacity approaching 1,100 spread over two levels. Opening as a vaudeville theatre it featured comedian, Syd Beck and a consortium of artists called the "Jesters" - who were assembled by the theatre's lessee, Mr. Graham Mitchell. A year later, the Rex switched to film; its first feature being *The Great Ziegfeld* opening on Friday, the 16th July, 1937. The bio supported two (2) Super-Simplex 35mm projectors and the theatre was fitted out with a R.C.A. high-fidelity sound system. During WW2 the Rex reverted back to legitimate theatre and vaudeville. The shift took place

with performances of *The Dover Road* by the Garrick Theatre Players commencing on the 6th June, 1940. A temporary stage was installed in the auditorium to enable the theatre to shift between stage and screen. Hoyts Theatres acquired a lease of the Rex in 1950. The Rex Theatre was purchased by Supermarket Ltd. in 1951 - a subsidiary of Sanders Chemicals Ltd. When Hoyts fitted out its Regent Theatre in the CBD with CinemaScope, it found itself short a venue for major films. Possessing only one other theatre in the CBD (the St. James), the Rex was upgraded to a first-release theatre. The architectural firm of Roberts & Hall was engaged by Hoyts Theatres to supervise the fit out of the Rex for CinemaScope. In 1967 The Rex was further upgraded with Victoria 8 projectors to accommodate 70mm screenings. The Rex was renamed the Town Cinema for the opening of *Khartoum* on the 8th June 1967. Despite lying outside the Brisbane CBD, the Town enjoyed a number of moderately successful 70mm seasons including *Khartoum*, *Doctor Dolittle*, *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* and *Waterloo*. The theatre was destroyed by a fire on the 18th January, 1974 whilst screening the film *Alvin Purple*. The site was redeveloped into a retail shopping complex and offices.

Please Note – The film titles tabled below with BLUE cells cannot be confirmed if these were a 70mm presentation. Our research of *Australia in 70mm* has found no tabloid advertising or sessions directory promoting the film in 70mm. The film titles will remain tabled until confirmed either way.

70MM OPENINGS	OPENED	CLOSED	WKS
Khartoum	08/06/67	23/08/67	11
The Agony and the Ecstasy	24/08/67	04/10/67	6
Doctor Dolittle	21/12/67	21/02/68	9
Solomon and Sheba – reissue	14/03/68	20/03/68	1
Doctor Dolittle – reissue	01/08/68	28/08/68	3
Exodus – reissue	07/11/68	13/11/68	1
Those Magnificent Men in their Flying Machines – reissue	05/12/68	18/12/68	2
Chitty Chitty Bang Bang	19/12/68	26/02/69	10
Chitty Chitty Bang Bang – reissue	01/05/69	14/05/69	2
The Longest Day – reissue	05/06/69	18/06/69	2
Chitty Chitty Bang Bang – reissue	14/08/69	27/08/69	2
The Bible – reissue	23/09/69	29/09/69	1
Custer of the West – reissue	08/01/70	21/01/70	2
It's a Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World – reissue	29/01/70	11/02/70	2
Khartoum plus 633 Squadron – reissue	19/02/70	25/02/70	1
Star! – reissue	12/03/70	18/03/70	1
The Longest Day – reissue	19/03/70	25/03/70	1
Marooned	30/07/70	26/08/70	4
Patton	22/10/70	04/11/70	2
Cromwell – reissue	26/11/70	24/12/70	4
Waterloo	26/12/70	24/03/71	13
Krakatoa East of Java	29/04/71	19/05/71	3
It's a Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World – reissue	02/09/71	22/09/71	3
The Great Battle	23/09/71	13/10/71	3
Too Late the Hero	28/10/71	03/11/71	1
The Sound of Music - reissue	09/12/71	02/02/72	8
Nicholas and Alexandra - reissue	08/06/72	14/06/72	1
Young Winston	07/12/72	07/03/73	13
Lost Horizon	17/08/73	17/10/73	9

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS – Tabloid advertisements for *Khartoum* and *Krakatoa East of Java* sourced from the Brisbane Courier Mail microfiche held at the New South Wales state library.



TOWN BRISBANE WIDESCREEN TIMELINE

**PREMIERED 70MM
KHARTOUM
8th June 1967**



**KRAKATOA
EAST OF JAVA
29th April 1971**



TOWN THEATRE
Wickham Street, Fortitude Valley

OPENED
8th May 1936
as the, REX THEATRE

RENAMED
HOYTS TOWN THEATRE
8th June 1967