



The Forum Cinema was located at 749 George Street, Sydney. The cinema opened to the public as the **Lyric Theatre** on Friday, 31st March, 1911. As a J.D. Williams Amusement Co. Ltd cinema (later merged with Amalgamated Pictures, West's Limited and Spencer's Pictures to form Union Theatres), the 3-tiered theatre comprised of stalls, dress circle and gallery. The Lyric was slow to embrace CinemaScope and for a time promoted screenings "on the Giant Lustrous Wydascope Screen"— which basically involved the

magnification of a cropped 35mm Academy Aperture image and a slightly larger screen opening. The Lyric underwent extensive remodelling in 1960; closing on the 5th February for 20-weeks. The remodelling embraced the permanent closure of the gallery, erection of a false ceiling (which extended from the front of the gallery to the proscenium), the removal of side balconettes at the front of the dress circle, re-seating throughout the auditorium and installation of Cinemeccanica Victoria-X dual-gauge 70/35mm projectors and a 6-channel stereophonic sound system. A new stage and pelmet were constructed in front of the existing proscenium, with near to "wall-to-wall" curtains concealing a new screen with a 38-foot x 17-foot opening and adjustable masking. The theatre reopened as the Greater Union Forum cinema on the 23rd June 1960. Its first attraction was **Porgy and Bess** – presented in Todd-AO 70mm and was followed by Spartacus (63-week season). The theatre became the venue for the screening of Samuel Bronston historical epics such as **El Cid**, **55 Days at Peking** and **The Fall of the Roman Empire**. It also enjoyed considerable success with **The Great Race** and **Earthquake**; the latter screened in 70mm and Sensurround. The Forum was closed by Greater Union on 30th April 1980, with **Jesus** as its last film. The Forum was then leased by independent exhibitors for revival and Chinese films. It was demolished in 1983.

70MM OPENINGS	OPENED	CLOSED	WKS
Porgy and Bess	23/06/60	07/12/60	24
Spartacus	08/12/60	22/02/62	63
Black Tights	23/02/62	19/04/62	8
El Cid	21/04/62	21/03/63	47
55 Days at Peking	26/07/63	09/07/64	50
The Fall of the Roman Empire	10/07/64	03/06/65	47
Circus World	04/06/65	15/09/65	15
In Harm's Way	16/09/65	28/10/65	6
The Great Race	16/12/65	17/11/66	48
Cheyenne Autumn	18/11/66	22/12/66	5
Lost Command	23/12/66	02/03/67	10
Is Paris Burning	03/03/67	08/06/67	14
South Pacific – reissue	09/06/67	28/09/67	16
Oklahoma! – reissue	13/04/68	09/05/68	5
Guns for San Sebastian	10/05/68	06/06/68	4
Zulu – <b>First Time Sydney in 70mm</b>	12/07/68	22/08/68	6
Becket – Reissue 70mm Panavision	04/10/68	31/10/68	4
Seven Brides for Seven Brothers – <b>First Time Sydney in 70mm</b>	01/11/68	12/12/68	6
Ben-Hur – <b>First Time Sydney in 70mm</b>	13/12/68	20/02/69	10
55 Days at Peking – reissue	21/02/69	03/04/69	6
Mackenna's Gold	05/04/69	19/06/69	11
Those Daring Young Men in Their Jaunty Jalopies	02/10/69	19/02/70	20
Castle Keep	20/02/70	19/03/70	4
The Wild Bunch	20/03/70	09/07/70	16
2001: A Space Odyssey – reissue	11/08/72	24/08/72	2
2001: A Space Odyssey – reissue	06/10/72	16/11/72	6
Scrooge	17/11/72	30/11/72	2
Gone with the Wind – reissue	01/12/72	24/12/72	3
Ryan's Daughter – reissue	07/12/73	20/12/73	2
Earthquake	20/12/74	13/11/75	47
Doctor Zhivago - reissue	19/11/76	16/12/76	4
2001: A Space Odyssey – reissue	24/03/78	19/06/78	14
2001: A Space Odyssey – reissue	23/11/79	13/12/79	3
Car Wash plus <b>The Wiz</b> - reissue	11/06/80	11/06/80	1 Day
The Poem of Dance - reissue	26/07/80	26/07/80	1 Day
Ice Station Zebra - reissue	09/08/80	09/08/80	1 Day
Star Trek: The Motion Picture plus <b>Logan's Run</b> - reissue	20/08/80	20/08/80	1 Day
Russian Adventure - <b>First Time Sydney in 70mm</b>	25/08/80	30/08/80	6 Day
Grand Prix - reissue	30/08/80	30/08/80	1 Day
<b>Sgt Pepper Lonely Hearts Club Band</b> plus <b>Grease</b> - reissue	06/09/80	06/09/80	1 Day
The Wizard of Oz plus <b>The Wiz</b> - reissue	25/10/80	25/10/80	1 Day
<b>That's Entertainment</b> plus <b>That's Entertainment Part 2</b> – reissue	10/12/80	10/12/80	1 Day

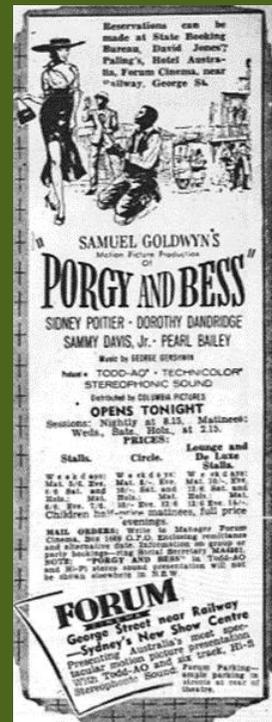
**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS** – Tabloid advertisements for **Porgy and Bess** and **Earthquake** sourced from the tabloid microfiche held at the New South Wales state library.



## FORUM SYDNEY WIDESCREEN TIMELINE

### PORGY AND BESS

23<sup>rd</sup> June 1960



### SENSURROUND 70MM

### EARTHQUAKE

20<sup>th</sup> December 1974



## FORUM

FORUM SYDNEY  
749 George Street, Sydney

OPENED  
31<sup>st</sup> March 1911  
as the, Lyric Theatre