

Star-Telegram

Lone Star Sounds: Will venerable Ridglea Theater get its second chance?

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The *Star-Telegram's* Sandra Baker reported the stunning news this week: Bank of America, long rumored to be interested in buying Fort Worth's **Ridglea Theater** and tearing most of it down, had backed out of the sale.

I'd be lying if I said I wasn't startled. All outward signs pointed to BoA going through with the sale and demolishing nearly 90 percent of the building. It's a tremendous development, not only for keeping alive the possibility of preservation but also sustaining a live music venue in a city woefully slight on midsize rooms.

So what does this mean for the venue? Too early to tell, but Dallas-based **FixFunding** will likely keep the building on the market, available for other interested parties like **Levi Weaver**, who is interested in potentially converting the Ridglea into something like a community arts space/arthouse cinema.

I spoke with Weaver this week, the only other party that I am aware of who made an offer for the Ridglea. Aside from his ebullient reaction to the news, Weaver says that he has not heard -- yet -- from FixFunding as to whether it will revisit his bid. (Prior to BoA's exiting the deal, he made an offer, along with his investors, that was rejected.)

As for the building's tenants, they're ecstatic. Reached by phone, booking agent **Wesley Hathaway** cheered. "You have made my day," she said. "I really want Levi to get it; he has a fabulous vision that would be incredible."

As things stand now, Weaver is the only other interested party, with investors ready to back him, that is ready to step up and buy the Ridglea. It's worth repeating that this doesn't mean Weaver automatically steps up and takes control of the venue. Regardless, hopefully those who fought so hard against the bank's proposed plans will seize this opportunity to step up and truly preserve the theater.

Quick hits

Grand Prairie's inaugural Fall Indie Fest, which tosses film into the mix, kicks off at 5 p.m. Friday in downtown Grand Prairie. Bands on tap include **Smile Smile**, **Sarah Jaffe**, **Telegraph Canyon** and many, many more. For more info, visit fallindiefest.com....A reminder that the **UNT One O'Clock Lab Band** will celebrate the release of *Lab 2010* at **McDavid Studio** on Sunday.

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