The City of Seattle

Landmarks Preservation Board

Mailing Address: PO Box 94649 Seattle WA 98124-4649
Street Address: 700 5th Ave Suite 1700

REPORT ON DESIGNATION LPB 553/12 (corrected)

Name and Address of Property: Neptune Building
1301-1313 NE 45th Street

Legal Description: Lots 22, 23 and 24 of Block 2, of Brooklyn Addition, according to the plat thereof recorded in Volume 7 of Plats, page 32, records of King County, Washington; except the northerly portion of Lot 24 taken by the City of Seattle in the widening of NE 45th Street (Ordinance No. 10568); situated in the City of Seattle, King County, State of Washington.

At the public meeting held on November 14, 2012, the City of Seattle's Landmarks Preservation Board voted to approve designation of the Neptune Building at 1301-1313 NE 45th Street as a Seattle Landmark based upon satisfaction of the following standards for designation of SMC 25.12.350:

C. *It is associated in a significant way with a significant aspect of the cultural, political, or economic heritage of the community, City, state or nation.*

D. *It embodies the distinctive visible characteristics of an architectural style, or period, or method of construction.*

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

Location and Neighborhood Character

The Neptune Building is located at the southeastern corner of the intersection of NE 45th Street and Brooklyn Avenue NE. The building is located one block to the west of University Way NE, the commercial spine of the University District. A two-story commercial bank is located across the street to the north and the 22-story University of Washington

Administration Office Building, formerly the Safeco Tower, is located across the street to the west. Diagonally across the intersection on the northwestern corner of the intersection of NE 45th Street and Brooklyn Avenue NE, is the 15-story Hotel Deca, the former Meany Hotel (1931, Robert C. Reamer). A mixture of older residential properties and newer multi-family residential buildings is located to the north. A new Sound Transit station is planned to the south of the subject building. Interstate 5 is located approximately seven blocks to the west. Nearby City of Seattle Landmarks include University Methodist Episcopal Church and Parsonage, at 4142 Brooklyn Ave. NE; University Presbyterian Church, 4555 16th Avenue NE; the Wilsonian Apartments, 4700-4720 University Way NE; University Heights Elementary School, 5031 University Way NE; and the Benton's Jewelers Street Clock, 3216 NE 45th Street.

Site

The building occupies the entire site. The site measures approximately 103 feet east-west and 110 feet north-south. The northwestern corner is the highest elevation of the site and the site slopes downward approximately 2 feet to the east and 4 feet 6 inches to the south. The site is urban with concrete sidewalks on the northern and western sides. The eastern side of the building abuts a 14-foot wide paved alley and the southern side abuts a one-story brick masonry building fronting onto Brooklyn Avenue NE. One deciduous street tree is located near the building's northeastern corner. Two street light standards are located near the northwestern building corner on both NE 45th Street and on Brooklyn Avenue NE and on NE 45th Street near the northeastern corner of the building where the alley joins NE 45th Street.

Building Form and Exterior Features

The subject building is an eclectic vaguely Renaissance Revival style mixed-use building that consists of two rectangular blocks, a northern mixed-use three-story section, and a lower southern block containing the theater auditorium. Face brick on the two primary street façades, the northern and western façades, and the northern portion of the eastern alley façade is buff colored. All windows on the second and third floors on the northern and western façades, and the northern portion of the eastern façade, have projecting brick sills unless noted. The secondary façades, the southern and southern portion of the eastern, are raw board-formed cast-in-place concrete. The flat roof is covered with a built-up asphaltic roof.

The northern façade is primary, and is composed with a classical basement, a two-story shaft separated from the basement by a simple projecting cast-stone band, and minimal sheet-metal cornice for a capital. The façade has seven vertical bays, the eastern three and westernmost on street-level each being a retail storefront, the fourth bay from the east providing access to the second and third floor, and the remaining two on street-level making up the theater entrance. The eastern and western street-level retail bays each have non-original aluminum storefront glazing with a different configuration, and each has a wooden spandrel with the upper transom area with a different configuration. The westernmost, corner retail space has a large projecting vinyl awning and a chamfered entry leaving a freestanding square corner column. The projecting triangular non-original marquee is mounted above two lower open

bays of the theater entrance. The marquee has a lower green neon stripe, a lighted sign board, and an upper name section with "NEPTUNE" spelled out in neon, with a horizontal neon trident bifurcating the name with the trident points making up the ending "E."

The upper two stories are masonry faced with recessed window bays with decorative fretwork diapering in the second-floor spandrels. The masonry bay support piers have edge quoins of darker brick and a simple vertical rectangular recessed panel extending up the piers nearly to the center of the second-floor windows. The cornice frieze is composed of a series of shallow projecting corbels of alternating triples of soldier course and stacked brick supporting a simple sheet-metal cornice. The original configuration of all of the second-floor windows and most of the third-floor windows was a pair of four-over-one wood-sash double-hung windows, with the upper sash divided into four vertical lights. The lower portions of these windows were modified at some time and now have two-light sliding units leaving the upper original portions as a fixed unit. The third and sixth window bay from the east on the third floor only, have smaller double-hung units and a wide brick mullion with two pairs of kitchen vegetable safe vents within the mullion. The third floor window header is composed of a soldier course of darker brick.

The theater entrance is recessed and has a dark brown tile wainscot with mounted aluminum frames for theater bills. The sixth structural pier from the east is absent, with a ticket booth faced with pink ribbed square tile in its place. The ceiling in the recessed entry has a sheet-metal ceiling with pairs of green neon tubes spaced approximately 24 inches apart running north-south, with additional spaced recessed spots. Four pairs of solid doors with upper portlights with brass surrounds access the theater lobby. The exterior entrance floor is a checkerboard of grey and cream terrazzo squares.

The northern portion of the building's western façade is similar in composition to the northern façade. The northern portion on the second and third floor has four unequally sized window bays, the first and third bays from the north have pairs of windows, the second from the north is narrow with a shorter original configuration three-over-one double-hung window on the third floor, and an aluminum egress door on the second floor, and the fourth bay from the north has single windows rather than the predominate paired windows. The second floor egress door has a projecting metal fire escape balcony and wall mounted ladder. On street level, there are three bays, the northern bay has one retail space accessed by the chamfered entry described above, the central recessed bay is blank, with a projecting awning sheltering a concrete stairway leading downward to a basement retail space, and the northern bay is relatively blank with an upper one-over-one wood-sash double-hung window, and a smaller double-hung window at street level, both near the southern edge of the northern three-story block.

The southern portion of the western façade is two-story with original wood-sash windows, except as noted. On street level there is a pair of small one-over-one double-hung windows on the north, a single fixed 12-light fixed window north of center, a central pair of 12-light fixed windows, and a single 12-light fixed window followed by a horizontal four-over-one double-hung window near the building's southern edge. An emergency exit doorway is located at street-level near the southern building edge. The second floor has three window groups, a tripartite group of small 12-light fixed windows with no projecting brick sills on the northern side; a central spaced group of three vertical windows, each with three-over-one double-hung windows below and an upper nine-light transom with a horizontal mullion; and

a group of four small 12-light fixed windows with no projecting brick sills on the southern side. The second-floor windows are framed with header and stacked brick masonry, with all groups framed by a larger fretwork border.

The first floor of the southern façade abuts an adjacent one-story building and the upper floor portion is rough board-formed concrete.

The eastern façade abuts an alley and has a surface of rough board-formed concrete on its southern portion and the northern portion is faced with brick. There is an emergency exit doorway on the southern side at grade. A single wood-sash double-hung window is located above the exit door and the second floor has five wood-sash double-hung windows spaced along the façade. The northern portion of the eastern façade is a near mirror of the northern portion of the western façade, without the chamfered corner retail entry.

Plan and Interior Features

The subject building consists of two portions, a northern three-story with basement mixed-use portion, and a southern auditorium portion with a partial basement, sloping main floor, a mezzanine/balcony, and a partial second floor.

The northern three-story portion has three street-level retail spaces fronting NE 45th Street corresponding to the three eastern structural bays. The fourth structural bay is shared by retail on the east and the entry vestibule leading to a stairway accessing the second floor offices. The fifth and sixth bays from the east have a recessed entry beneath the marquee with four pairs of entry doors leading to the theater lobby. A freestanding ticket booth is located in center of the entry. The most western street-front bay has another retail space extending southward along Brooklyn Avenue NE and a corner entry. At the southern end of the northern building portion a stairway curves downward and to the north accessing a basement-level retail space (former barber shop). The basement of the northern three-story portion has a full basement generally providing storage for the retail spaces, with the exception of a boiler room on the southeastern side and the basement-level retail space on the southwestern corner.

The second floor has a double-loaded corridor extending east-west the length of the building, providing access to offices and emergency egress doorways at either end. An elevator is centrally located off of the corridor with restrooms provided to the south. Two two-story light courts provide natural light to the inner offices. The third floor is accessed by way of a central stairway leading up to another double-loaded corridor providing access to eight efficiency apartments with egress stairways at either end. Two two-story light courts provide natural light to the inner apartments.

The theater portion of the building begins at the entry along NE 45th Street and extends southward into the southern auditorium portion. A central concession booth modeled after a boat serves to direct foot traffic either to the right down a wide ramp to the west leading to a hallway running along the western wall of the building providing access to the four doorways leading to the corridors at the western (higher) end of the auditorium, or up a smaller ramp on the eastern side of the concession stand leading to the mezzanine level. A smaller ramp on the eastern side of the mezzanine ramp leads downward and east to doors leading to the northeastern corner of the auditorium.

The auditorium slopes downward from the west, with the eastern portion of the northern and southern walls curving inward. Theater seating is arranged between two central walkways and walkways along the northern and southern walls. The screen is mounted on the eastern end, surrounded by fixed curtains. Emergency egress doorways are located near the northeastern and southeastern corners, each within one of a series of shallow arched wall niches. The remains of two large arched organ screens are located above these arches on the northern and southern walls. Mezzanine seating extends over approximately one third of the lower auditorium seating. The mezzanine is supported on its eastern edge by two round columns. Three structural columns along the northern and southern walls along the mezzanine support a frieze of shells interspersed with larger shell cartouches. A Neptune's head with lighted eyes adorns each column, and two others are mounted at the northeastern and southeastern corners of the auditorium at frieze level. Above the frieze the walls curve inward to a simple ceiling border moulding. A large central oval screened ceiling vent has a central hanging chandelier.

Public restrooms are located at the mezzanine level, with the men's located at the top of the mezzanine ramps and to the east and the women's located at the end of the western corridor leading to the western mezzanine entry doorways. A stairway on the western side of the women's toilets leads up to the projection booth. A secondary lobby is centrally located behind the mezzanine seating. Please note that since 2010 the theater auditorium has been modified.

Structural System

The building is a reinforced concrete building with concrete interior columns supporting heavy-timber construction of the main floor with heavy timber construction on the second and third floor, and roof. Steel trusses span north-south above the auditorium.

Documented Building Alterations

The building retains a fair degree of integrity. Exterior changes include major retail storefront modification, at least three marquee revisions, and revisions to the theater entry area including tile replacement. All original storefronts below the transom level of the four retail spaces and the entrance to the second and third floors were replaced with aluminum storefront units in 1956. The original storefront transoms are generally in-place, most have been either modified or covered over. The original marquee was probably replaced in the late 1920s as part of the alterations described below, and appearing in a 1937 King County Assessor's photograph of the building. The marquee was replaced sometime in the early 1940s, appearing in a 1946 photograph. The marquee was replaced a third time in the early 1950s, appearing in a 1952 King County Assessor's photograph. The current marquee dates from approximately 1980, after an emergency order was issued by the City of Seattle to repair or replace the existing sign. The sign was slightly modified in 1981. Photographs show that the theater entry tile was replaced between 1937 and 1952. Glazing has also been modified on the second and third floor on the northern façade and on the northern portion of the western façade. Interior changes to the building entrance are not clear, but probably include minor changes to the building lobby and stairway.

Marcus B. Priteca oversaw remodeling of the theater in the late 1920s, including replacement the original painted maritime scenes in the auditorium with Art Deco motifs. A concession stand was probably added at that time. The original three-manual Kimball console organ that was located in the central orchestra pit was removed in 1943 and relocated to Mckinley Auditorium on the Seattle Pacific University Campus.[1] The existing boat-shaped concession-stand dates from the 1980s, when the Landmark Theater Corporation extensively renovated the theater. Renovations also included complete seat replacement, conversion of the theater screen to a wide-aspect screen, repainting of the entire theater interior, and the addition of stained glass along the sides of the auditorium. Another organ was installed in 1988, to accompany silent film revivals, but was removed around 1998.

After obtaining a lease for the theater portion of the building in 2010, the Seattle Theater Group (STG) made some modifications to the theater, primarily to the auditorium. All seating in the auditorium was removed and the sloped floor was terraced to allow movable seating and tables. The stage was extended westward to accommodate live performances. A bar was also added to the rear of the auditorium. Some minor upgrades were made to the restrooms and sprinklers were added.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Historic Site Context-University District

Christian and Harriet Brownsfield first settled the general area, now known as the University District, in 1867, calling their acreage "Pioneer Farm." In 1875, the Brownsfields were granted one of Washington Territory's rare divorces and in the 1880s, Christian Brownsfield sold most of his acres to speculators. After two failed tries by others to develop the farm into a new north-end suburb, first named Lakeside and then Kensington, James A. Moore, in partnership with the Clise Investment Company, platted the Brooklyn Addition on December 19, 1890. The land was cleared in 1891, the same year that the new Washington State Legislature Campus Committee recommended the adjacent educational reserve land section to the east of the new town as the new site for the State University. Lots within Brooklyn sold well and the area was incorporated into the city of Seattle in 1891, along with Magnolia, Wallingford, Green Lake, and most of Ravenna. After annexation, many of the original plat street names were renamed to align with the city's regular street numbering system.[2]

In 1893, in expectation of serving the new University and reaching the commercial district that would grow around it, David Denny ran the northern extension of his Rainier Power and Railway Company streetcar line over a trestle he built at Latona and through Brooklyn northward to William and Louise Beck's private Ravenna Park. The streetcar line was run up 14th Street, formerly Columbus Street and now University Way N.E. Prior to Denny's streetcars, the Seattle, Lake Shore & Eastern Railway, which ran from the Seattle waterfront

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[1] Puget Sound Pipeline Online, "Neptune Theatre," Puget Sound Theatre Organ Society, http://www.pstos.org/instruments/wa/seattle/neptune.htm, accessed August 15, 2010. pp. 1-2. The first organ was sold in 1943, and moved to McKinley Hall on the Seattle Pacific University campus. The organ was eventually sold and broken up for parts.

[2] Walt Crowley, *National Trust Guide, Seattle*, (New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons, 1998), p. 204.

through Smith Cove and Interbay and eastward to the north shore of Lake Union and eventually around the north end of Lake Washington, provided some freight and passenger service to the area.[3]

The cornerstone of the "University Building" (now Denny Hall) on the new university campus was laid on July 4, 1894, and students moved to the new "Interlaken Campus" in September 1895.[4] In the ensuing years, the area became familiarly known as the University District due to its association with the University, and more particularly with the commercial building and covered streetcar waiting station called "University Station."[5] The local post office was moved in 1902, from Latona to a small building across the street from "University Station" creating an early core of commercial buildings.[6] In 1895, the year the University opened at its new locale, the *Seattle Polk Directory* listed 11 businesses in the entire neighborhood.[7] Over the years the commercial area continued to grow northward along the streetcar line. In 1903, the community's first school, University Heights Elementary School, was built at the upper part of the district on the western side of 14th Avenue NE. In the early 1900s, the area north of NE 45th Street along 14th Avenue NE, also became the home to several fraternity houses. In 1901, Phi Delta Theta, at 4542 14th Avenue NE, was the first fraternity established there, and by 1906, there were five societies, including the sorority Delta Gamma along 14th Avenue NE.[8] When new tracts were added immediately north of the University, and due to the growth of the student body after the Alaska Yukon Exposition (AYP) held on the campus in 1909, many Greek societies built larger houses along the newly created University Boulevard (17th Avenue NE), or in the immediate vicinity. By 1915, only one Greek society remained on 14th, whereas 11 were located on the Boulevard and another nine on 18th Avenue NE.[9]

The northern end of 14th Avenue NE (now University Way) was landscaped in 1907, with the dedication of Cowen Park. Charles Cowen acquired the upper end of the Ravenna ravine in 1906, and gave eight acres to the Seattle Park Department the following year. The adjoining private Ravenna Park was acquired by the city in 1911.[10]

Still largely residential except for a two-block long stretch south of NE 43rd, 14th Avenue NE was paved in 1908 in preparation for the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific (AYP) exhibition held on the southern portion of the University of Washington campus. The Wallingford streetcar line, which had arrived the previous year, transformed NE 45th Street into a major east-west thoroughfare. Over the next few years, commercial storefronts slowly replaced the large houses left by the fraternities and sororities. The Tudor-styled College Inn, still standing on the northwestern corner of NE 40th Street and University Way, was built in 1909, in time for

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[3] Leslie Blanchard, *The Street Railway Era in Seattle: A Chronicle of Six Decades*, (Forty Fort, PA: Harold E. Cox, 1968), p. 38. Crowley, p. 204.

[4] Norman J. Johnston, *The Fountain & the Mountain, The University of Washington Campus, 1895-1995* (Woodinville, WA: Documentary Book Publishers Corporation1995), pp. 20-21.

[5] Paul Dorpat, "Seattle Neighborhoods: University District—Thumbnail History," HistoryLink.org, June 18, 2001, http://www.historylink.org/index.cfm?DisplayPage=output.cfm&File_Id=3380, accessed October 10, 2001, p. 3.

[6] Dorpat, p. 3.

[7] R. L. Polk Co., *Polk's Seattle City Directory*, 1895.

[8] R. L. Polk Co., 1901, 1906. Dorpat, p. 5.

[9] R. L. Polk Co., 1915.

[10] Dorpat, p. 4.

the opening of the AYP exhibition.[11]

The first motion pictures shown in the University District were probably during the AYP at the Hawaiian Building, in the form of short educational films and travelogues. Movie houses followed soon after, with their size and ornamentation increasing as the films themselves became more ambitious and elaborate. Before the advent of sound, five movie theaters opened and operated in Seattle's University District. The Pleasant Hour Theatre (4009 14th Avenue NE, closed in 1915) was the first, opened on January 8, 1910 across the street from the College Inn. Next was Ye College Play House (4322 14th Avenue NE, renamed College Play House in 1922, closed 1922), which opened in 1912. The entrance of this theater stood on the east side of University Way where the main entrance of University Book Store is today.[12]

By 1915, there were more than 150 businesses on 14th Avenue NE listed in the business section of the *Seattle Polk Directory*, but no taverns, reflecting the legislated ban on alcohol within one mile of campus.[13] A large white glazed terracotta Neo-Classical bank (1912, George Huges) built on the northeastern corner of NE 45th Street and University Way NE, became the cornerstone of the growing commercial district after its construction in 1912. The New Home Theatre (5510 14th Avenue NE) opened in 1915 and was renamed Cowen Park the following year. It was later remodeled for use as a warehouse. The building was renovated and re-opened as University Theater in 1971, closing in the mid-eighties. Originally designed as a box type theater with virtually no architectural significance, it survives today as a live performance venue.[14]

A new steel bascule bridge replaced the old wooden Latona University Bridge in 1919, and still links the University District with the Eastlake community.[15] The main street of the commercial district, 14th Avenue NE, was renamed "University Way" in 1919.[16] In 1920, University President Henry Suzzallo urged the use of Tudor Gothic or University Gothic style in new construction in the University District, and between 1920 and 1931, thirty-five new Greek chapter houses were built in the "Greek Row" area, either in the Collegiate Gothic or Georgian styles, and some private commercial and apartment construction also followed suit.[17] The district received its own high school in 1922, when the Floyd Naramore-designed Roosevelt High School was opened north of Ravenna and Cowen Parks.[18] The University Bookstore, now anchoring the district's retail community, moved into a relatively modest A. Warren Gould-designed building on University Way in 1926.[19] The major retailer

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[11] Dorpat, p. 4.

[12] Dorpat, p. 4. David Jeffers, Unpublished database of Seattle Movie Theaters, n.p. Alan J. Stein and Paula Becker, *Alaska Yukon Pacific Exposition*, Seattle, WA: HistoryLink.org, 2009, p. 150.

[13] R. L. Polk Co., 1915. Dorpat, p. 5.

[14] Jeffers, n.p.

[15] Myra L. Phelps, *Public Works In Seattle, A Narrative History, The Engineering Department*, 1875-1975, Seattle, WA: Seattle Engineering Department, Kingsport Press, 1978), pp. 46-47.

[16] Crowley, p. 205.

[17] Roy Nielson, *UniverCity, The Story of the University District in Seattle*, (Seattle, WA: University Lions Foundation, 1986), p. 62.

[18] Nile Thompson and Carolyn Mar, Building for Learning, Seattle Public School Histories, 1862-2000, (Seattle, WA: School Histories Committee, Seattle School District, 2002), pp. 263-265.

[19] Nielson, pp. 68, 70.

J.C. Penny opened a large department store just north of NE 45th Street in 1928, lending the district the appearance of a small city.[20]

Apartment living was a way of life for both faculty and students in the University District from the beginning, and during the 1920s at least 20 apartment buildings were erected in the District, including several in the Collegiate Gothic style. The seven-story Wilsonian Apartments, a Seattle Landmark, built in 1922 at the corner of NE 47th, was one of the first major buildings built on University Way north of NE 45th Street. Originally a hotel, the Wilsonian was designed by architect Frank Fowler to include a restaurant and ballroom. The building was similar to many other structures in the district, having brick facing and simpler ornamentation than the Collegiate Gothic decoration urged by President Suzzallo.[21]

Apartment examples of this style are the seven-story Commodore Apartments (1925, 4005 15th Ave. NE), eight-story University Manor Apartments (1926, 1305 NE 43rd St.,), the eight-story Malloy Apartments (1928, 4337 15th Ave. NE), and eight-story Duchess Apartments (1927, 4005 15th Ave. NE, adjoining the Commodore Apartments), all designed by architect Earl Roberts.[22] The Brooklyn Building constructed for the General Insurance Company was an example of Collegiate Gothic applied to a multi-story commercial building.

The Neptune Theatre (1303 NE 45th Street) opened in November 1921, and survives today, within the three-story mixed-use Neptune Building, with street level retail space and the theater entrance on the first floor, professional offices on the second, and residential apartments on the third. Warner Brother's Egyptian Theatre (4537 University Way) was opened on Christmas Day 1925, with a live appearance by Charlie Chaplin's brother and film star Sydney. Featuring an ornately designed Egyptian motif interior, it was the largest suburban movie theater in the state with 1300 seats. Renamed Hamrick's Egyptian in 1926, and again as Egyptian in 1928, the building was sold and remodeled in 1960. The shell survives today, although the interior has been stripped and divided into smaller business spaces.[23]

The enthusiastic expansion of the 1920s, was replaced with relative stagnation during the Depression years, although the financial downturn in the end could not stop the construction of the Art Deco style tower, the Meany Hotel, which was begun in 1929, and finished in 1931. Burton and Florence James did open the Seattle Repertory Playhouse in a remodeled storehouse (Arthur Loveless, altered) on the lower "Ave" in 1928, and Glen Hughes and the University Drama Department pioneered theater in the round at a nearby leased building on NE 42nd Street in 1935.[24]

The Varsity Theater (4329 University Way NE) opened in 1940, in a former food market.

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[20] Nielson, pp. 71.

[21] Nielson, pp. 68, 70.

[22] Larry E. Johnson, "Landmark Nomination Report, Murray Marsh/Cosmopolitan Motors," (Seattle, WA: The Johnson Partnership, May 2006), p. 12.

[23] Nielson, pp. 67, 70. Jeffers, n.p.

[24] Cassandra Tate, "James, Burton W. (1888-1951) and Florence Bean James (1892-1988)," HistoryLink.org, February 19, 2002, http://www.historylink.org/index.cfm?DisplayPage=output.cfm&file_id=598, accessed October 10, 2010, pp. 1-2. Cassandra Tate, "Hughes, Glenn (1894-1964)," HistoryLink.org, February 14, 2002, http://www.historylink.org/index.cfm?DisplayPage=output.cfm&file_id=3694, accessed October 10, 2010, pp. 1-4.

The theater was twinned in the 1980s, and continues to operate as a movie theater today.[25]

World War II brought little physical change to the District, although rubber-tired trolleys replaced streetcars in May 1940.[26] Post-war prosperity generated more building within the District. University enrollment nearly tripled from a pre-war level of 5,000 students, caused primarily by returning veterans financed by federal programs. The District became more auto-oriented and parking meters were installed and parking lots constructed after 1946. University Village was developed down slope to the northeast of the University near the former town of Ravenna. This small shopping center would develop into a major retail center and draw customers from the more congested "Ave."

By the mid-1960s, University enrollment approached thirty thousand, generating demand for student housing. As a result, many older residential properties were converted to rooming houses. The late 1960s and early 1970s brought social unrest to the District and tension between merchants, students, and "street people," culminating in several nights of conflicts with police during August 1969.[27] A direct outgrowth of public conciliation after these disturbances was the University Street Fair, still an annual summer event in the District. The success of temporarily closing off the streets from vehicular use during the fair prompted the community to reconsider a proposal to turn University Way NE into a permanent pedestrian shopping mall. The proposal never was realized. The decline of traditional families within the District led to the closing of University Heights School (now University Heights Community Center) in the early 1980s.

The Movie House, renamed Grand Illusion Theater (1403 NE 50th, Remodel by the Johnson Partnership, 2001) and The Seven Gables Theater (911 NE 50th) both currently in business, are small structures converted for use as theaters and were originally part of art-house pioneer Randy Finley's Seven Gables chain. Metro Cinemas at 4500 8th Avenue NE is the only neighborhood multiplex, opened in the late eighties and is currently in operation.[28]

The University District continues to suffer from absentee landlords and competition from the now upscale University Village. Vacant and poorly maintained storefronts mark the desertion of the District by higher-tier retail stores including J.C. Penny, Martin & Eckmann's, Jay Jacob, and Nordstrom. Countering this trend is the continued presence of the University Bookstore, and other well-known specialty stores, the Farmer's Markets held at University Heights Community Center every Saturday since 1993, and recent major investment to the immediate west of the District along Roosevelt Way NE. In 2005, the City completed an extensive urban redesign of the "Ave," to encourage a more pedestrian-friendly environment. At the northern end of the District, the Department of Parks and Recreation is currently completing major improvement to Cowen & Ravenna Parks, and the School District has rehabilitated the historic Roosevelt High School.

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[25] Nielson, pp. 89. Jeffers, n.p.

[26] Nielson, pp. 89.

[27] Cal McCune, *From Romance To Riot, A Seattle Memoire*, (Seattle, WA: Cal McCune, 1996), pp. 73-98.

[28] Jeffers, n.p.

Building History: *Neptune Theater*

Architect Henderson Ryan designed the Neptune Theater Building and Neptune Theater (1303 NE 45th Street) in 1921, as a mixed-use commercial building for owners E. L. Blaine, A.B.L. Gellerman, and their Puritan Theatre Company.

The Neptune Theater Building is the only intact survivor of the five University District movie theaters opened during the silent era. Dedication ceremonies were presented by the University Commercial Club on the evening of Wednesday, November 16, 1921, before a full house. The opening night screening of *Serenade* (1921), directed by Raoul Walsh and starring Miriam Cooper was presented with live musical accompaniment performed by B. Lingren on the Neptune's three-manual Kimball theater organ, said to be the largest Kimball on the west coast.[29] Patrons were directed to their seats by ushers dressed in Dutch costumes. Comedic and scenic shorts were included in the mixed program along with an additional organ concert.

The original appearance of the theater on opening night was described in detail in the University Herald:

> The house seats over a thousand persons and although primarily for moving pictures will be used from time to time for "University Nights" when students put on acts.
>
> The stage is twelve feet deep and can be used for plays requiring little scenery. Matinees will be given each day and two shows in the evenings.
>
> **No Stairways**
>
> Two inclines lead from the marble finished lobby opening on Forty-fifth past the check-room to the main floor. Two inclines lead to the balcony, one past the ushers' dressing room, men's rest room, and public telephone booth. The other incline leads past the ladies room and public promenade or restroom.
>
> On either side of the stage are a series of five arches with exits through the central arch. The "flower garden" is behind the arches. Above the arches is grill work (sic) covering the organ pipes. A new feature, the creating of atmosphere in the theater during storm scenes is to be installed. In the two arches on each side nearest the stage, water will be thrown on plate glass in such a way as to give the effect of a driving rain storm.
>
> **Good Ventilation**
>
> The theater is ventilated by forced air brought through the grill work in the center of the ceiling and out through grill work on the main floor and the back of the balcony. The film operators (sic) room is at the back of the balcony.
>
> The ushers will wear Dutch costumes. The total operating force will be about ten or twelve persons.

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[29] AFI, "Serenade," AFI Catalog of Feature Films, http://www.afi.com/members/catalog/DetailView.aspx?s=&Movie=11973, accessed September 12, 2010, pp. 1-2.

Ivory pilasters pierce the walls and extend to the cornice of shells where they are surmounted by huge heads of Neptune. The indirect lights come from shells at **the top of Neptune's head.**

Between the cornice and the panals (sic), fitting perfectly into the triangular space, a sea gull, floats on a background of blue.

Taupe and Blue Scheme

Above the cornice, the blue cloud colored sky covers the dome. A running border of interlacing seaweed and star fish (sic) on an iridescent background intersects the sky.

Above the arches on each side of the screen are tridents in relief. Over each exit arch is a clock with storks in relief on each side. Taupe and blue have been carried out in the furnishings. The main stage's curtain is taupe velvet with a blue velvet lambrequin. The exits have taupe curtains. Blue drapes are behind the "flower garden" in the arches. The walnut seats are upholstered in blue imitation leather. The ladies rest room is furnished with in blue, old gold, and tan.

Safety Precautions

The theater is constructed of fire proof material. The balcony has two exits behind the front inclines. The (sic) lower floor has two rear exits. Since there are no stairs to be used by the public but inclines or ramps there would be no congestion in case of fire.

DECORATIVE FEATURES SUGGESTIVE OF MARINE ...

The decorative scheme of the theatre centers around the name of the theatre, Neptune, king of the sea. The decorations throughout suggest sea growth, sea animals or under sea scenes.

The key note (sic) of the color scheme is taupe tan. The walls tinted a light taupe tan form a background for ivory pilasters, warmtinted (sic) shells and borders of seaweed and star fish (sic).

The grill work (sic) in front of the organ pipes has been pronounced by many as the best work of its kind. It is composed of tridents, Neptune's symbol of power, with elongated handles broken occasionally by starfish encircled by shells.

At the top of the grill work (sic) and above the stage are spandrels decorated in Italian Renaissance scroll of conventionalized sea horses, lobsters and sea.

Many Sea Scenes

Frescoed panels under sea scenes begin about the middle of the theater and extend toward the back. Enclosed in kelp growing on either side and gracefully waving across the top are different species of Southern sea fish and sea plants. One panel has attracted attention due to its peculiar striped fish that swim among coral trees and sea cactus.

The building is owned by E.L. Blaine and A.B. L. Gellerman, the theater by the Puritan Theater Company. Mr. Blaine is acting manager of the theater.

H. Ryan is the architect and F. Richmond Smith the contractor of the job. The interior decorating of the theater was done by Charles Weisnborn and Carl R. Berg.

Sign Illumination

The huge sign with Neptune riding on blue waves placed over the lower part of the sign, gold "U" superimposed upon Neptune Theater on a purple background is on the Forty-fifth and Brooklyn corner of the building. The Forty-fifth street side of the building will be illuminated by floodlights of 2,000 watts located on the marquee. The Brooklyn avenue side will be illuminated by two clusters of lights. The parking strip will be planted in shrubs.

HUGE KIMBALL ORGAN ORCHESTRA BY ITSELF

The $26,000, giant organ which is being installed in the U-Neptune theater, Forty-fifth and Brooklyn, is in reality a symphony orchestra. Ever (sic) instrument used in a symphony is represented. The largest pipe is more than thirty-two feet long and the shortest is less than a quarter of an inch.

A.D. Longmore, resident of this district, who is installing the organ, says that there is no better in the city anywhere. It is the last model put out by W.W. Kimball of Chicago and equipped efficiently. Half of the organ pipes are located on each side of the stage. Technicaly (sic) it is known as a three-manual, electric action organ. The stock keys are on a circular sweep and the foundation stops are indicated by white tablets that can be distinguished at a glance. Reeds and brasses are on red stop keys, celestes on amber, and couplers on black. It is blown on high pressure and contains several miles of wire. There are double stops on both manuals and pedals, and under each key-board (sic) there are eight double-touch combinations.

B. Lingren former organist at the Everett theater has been secured as organist.

BUILDING ALREADY HAS MANY TENANTS SIGNED

The second floor of the U-Neptune theater building is occupied on the Forty-fifth side by dentists. Dr. Alfred Thompson who has already moved in has the only separate sterilizing room west of New York. The other dentists are Dr. Robert F. Hampson, Dr. E.R. Fried, and Dr. Robert E. Morris. Dr. Bryne, physician and surgeon and Dr. Hazel Glass, chiropractor will also have offices on the second floor.

The third floor has eight, two and three bedroom apartments. The four stores on the street floor are occupied by the J.H. Mendenhall and Company, pens and kodaks. The "Butter Cup," a dairy products and lunch operated by Frank G. Graham and Josse R. Evans, Katherine Veak, millinery and ladies furnishings and the Hook Confectionary company.[30]

Ownership and operators have changed hands several times since 1921. The management team of Jensen and von Herberg operated the Neptune Theater during the late 1920s, briefly renaming the theater the Liberty, between January and June of 1927. Jensen and von Herberg were probably responsible for hiring architect P. Marcus Priteca and theater interior designer

[30] University District Herald, "New U-Neptune Theater To Give Initial Performance Wednesday," November 11, 1921. p. 1.

Anthony B. Heinsbergen in the late 1920s, to renovate the Neptune's interior, including an Art Deco paint scheme that replaced the original nautically inspired interior.[31]

Dr. E.R. Fried, one of the original second-floor tenants solely owned the building by 1936.[32] The theater's organ was removed in 1943.[33] Emil B. Fries purchased the building in 1972, and the property is still held by his decedents.[34]

The theater was operated as part of the Evergreen State Amusement Company, a subsidiary of the Fox Theater chain, between 1935 and 1961. The Sterling Theaters, Inc. operated the theater between 1964 and 1969. During the early 1970s, the theater declined, and featured X-rated films under the management of Harold Greenland. The Sterling Recreation Organization took over management in 1975, presenting a successful and popular repertory program, in addition to Friday and Saturday midnight movies for many years. The Landmark Theater Group acquired the Neptune Theater lease in 1981, and undertook an extensive renovation including the addition of the existing boat-shaped concession stand.[35]

A hybrid Morton pipe organ was installed in the Neptune between 1988 and 1998.[36]

On November 29, 2010, Landmark Theatre Corporation, a subsidiary of Silver Cinemas Inc., announced that they would cease operations at the Neptune in February 2011. The same day the Seattle Theater Group announced that they had signed a lease for the theater with plans to present a diverse program of "dance, music, film, theatre, and arts education."[37]

Located near the University District's busiest intersection, the Neptune has existed as the backdrop for ninety years of local history and development, while providing a social and cultural hub for countless students and local residents. The Neptune Building and the Neptune Theater represent one of the last remaining examples of neighborhood theater architecture from an era when film was a primary source of entertainment.

Historic Context: *Popular Theater Development in Seattle 1885-2010*©

Theater development in Seattle, both popular live productions and later motion pictures, is interwoven with both technological advances, and the individual theater promoters and their architects, creating seven overlapping historical periods: pioneer theater, Klondike Goldrush

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[31] Chris Skullerud, Indexed catalog of Seattle Theaters, Museum of History and Industry.

[32] King County Assessor, PRC Account #114200-0235, Puget Sound Regional Archives, p. 5. Dr. Fried had owned the property and the house that was demolished to build the Neptune Building, and may have retained an ownership interest in the building from the beginning.

[33] Puget Sound Theatre Organ Society, "Neptune Theatre," p. 2.

[34] King County Assessor, p. 2.

[35] Scribd., "Washington State Theatre Circuits," http://www.scribd.com/doc/34839451/Washington-State-Theatre-Circuits, accessed November 29, 2010, p. 2. Scribd., "Seattle-Tacoma movie theatres and drive-ins," http://www.scribd.com/doc/34839448/Seattle-Tacoma-movie-theatres-and-drive-ins, accessed November 29, 2010, p. 8.

[36] Puget Sound Theatre Organ Society, "Neptune Theatre," p. 2-4.

[37] Moira Macdonald, "Changes at the Neptune Theatre," Popcorn & Prejudice: A Movie Blog, *Seattle Times*, http://seattletimes.nwsource.com/html/popcornprejudiceamovieblog/2013549032_changes_at_the_neptune_theatre.html, accessed November 29, 2010, p. 1. Moira Macdonald, "Seattle Theatre Group to take over the Neptune," Popcorn & Prejudice: A Movie Blog, *Seattle Times*, http://seattletimes.nwsource.com/html/popcornprejudiceamovieblog/2013549213_seattle_theatre_group_to_take.html, p. 1.

and vaudeville, silent films, downtown motion picture palaces, neighborhood and suburban theater expansion, television and theater decline, and contemporary developments.[38]

Pioneer Theater

Henry Yesler's mill kitchen, a small log structure built in between 1852 and 1853, was probably the site of the first indoor public performance of any kind in Seattle. The cookhouse, near the intersection of Commercial Street (1st Avenue S) and Mill Street (Yesler Street), was the largest interior space in the small settlement for several years and was pressed into service for meetings, court proceedings, and other functions, including public readings or amateur entertainment. Later, the first professional entertainments, usually readings and impersonations were held at Plummer's Hall located on the second floor of Charles Plummer's store at the corner of Commercial Street (1st Avenue S) and Main Street, after its construction in 1859. The following year, Yesler built a comparable facility, Yesler's Hall, a second floor house near the original cookhouse, which provided a venue for a series of traveling minstrel shows and other itinerant variety acts. Yesler's Pavilion, was built at the corner of Front Street and Cherry Street in 1866, receiving a proscenium arch in 1870, and a drop curtain in 1875. The Pavilion staged popular dramas, usually originating out of San Francisco, such as "Uncle Tom's Cabin."[39]

"Box-theaters" were the prominent type of popular theater in Seattle beginning in 1876, with the Theater Comique (renamed Eclipse in 1882) in the basement of a Saloon on Washington Street. Others included Maison Dore Garden (1883) in the Yesler Block at Commercial Street (1st Avenue S) and James Street, and the Alhambra Theater (1884, later the Standard Theatre) on Second Street between Washington Street and Main Street. Box theaters usually had a small stage at one end of a central auditorium with a row of boxes around the sides connected with a bar in the rear. They presented variety entertainment, but their association with saloons limited the clientele to what would be considered less than respectable citizens. All were located south of Yesler Way in what became known as the "restricted area."[40]

As far as "legitimate" theaters in pioneer Seattle, Squire's Opera House, built by Watson C. Squire on Commercial Street (1st Avenue S) between Washington Street and Main Street, was built in 1879, and was the first to present a New York City based production in 1882. Also in 1882, Smith's Bijou Theater opened at the northwestern corner of Washington Street and 2nd Avenue. In 1884, when George Fry built Fry's Opera House at the northeastern corner of First Avenue and Marion Street, Seattle had its first large venue with 1,300 seats.[41]

In 1886, John Cort (1868-1929), a former actor turned legitimate theater manager, moved to Seattle from Chicago and purchased the Standard Theatre in Pioneer Square. In order to secure better bookings, Cort organized one of the first variety circuits in the United States, extending from Butte to San Francisco and including Seattle, Olympia, Spokane, Tacoma, and smaller towns. Reliable theater bookings in Seattle itself were facilitated by the arrival of

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[38] The terms "theater" and "theatre" are used interchangeably in this section with "theater" used as the default spelling.

[39] Seattle Historical Society, *Seattle Century, 1852-1952*, (Seattle, WA: Superior Publishing Company, 1952), pp. 84-85. Eric L. Flom, *Silent Film Stars on the Stages of Seattle*, (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, 2009), p. 16. Eugene C. Elliott, A History of Variety-Vaudeville in Seattle From the Beginning to 1914, (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 1944), p. 2.

[40] Washington State Historical Society, *Washington, A Guide to the Evergreen State*, (Portland, OR: Binfort & Mort, 1941), p. 145.

[41] Seattle Historical Society, pp. 84-85. Eric L. Flom, *Silent Film Stars on the Stages of Seattle*, p. 16.

railroad service to nearby Tacoma in 1883, and the arrival of the Northern Pacific to Seattle in 1884. Under Cort's management the Standard became the most popular entertainment venue in Seattle, allowing Cort to build a new 800 seat Standard Theatre (1888, destroyed 1889) at the southeastern corner of Occidental Avenue and Washington Street. The theater was steam heated, had 19 individual boxes on the upper balcony, and was the first venue in the city to have electric lighting. The Great Fire of June 1889, destroyed virtually all of Seattle's theaters, including the Standard, Yesler's Hall, Squire's Opera House, and Frye's Opera House. Within two weeks of the fire, Cort was operating a tent theater, before rebuilding the Standard (1889, altered), by November of that year.[42]

Cordray's Theatre (ca. 1890, destroyed ca. 1907), located at the northeastern corner of 3rd Avenue and Madison Street, served a slightly more respectable crowd with seven-night-a-week shows. Originally a former dry-goods store, the theater opened as the Madison Street Theater, although it shortly was renamed after its first owner, John Cordray. Cordray is credited with introducing "polite vaudeville" to Seattle between 1890 and 1896. In 1891, Cordray brought Sarah Bernhardt to Seattle where she played to a sold out, standing-room-only, 1,500 person audience. The theater was later renamed the Third Avenue Theatre and became the first venue for theater booking agents William M. Russell (1849-?) and Edward L. Drew (1871-1949).[43]

John Considine (1868-1943), another former actor turned showman and who would later become a friendly rival of John Cort, became manager of the People's Theater (ca. 1890, altered) another box theater located at 172 Main Street, in 1891.[44]

The 1,500 seat Seattle Theatre (1892-93, destroyed 1915 for the construction of the Arctic Club) at 700 Third Avenue and managed by J.P. Howe, was the first theater built after the Great Fire, and attracted upper-class clientele since it was adjacent to the original Rainier Club.[45] Architect Charles Saunders (1858-1935) designed both the theater and the club after his return to Seattle in 1891.[46]

Vaudeville and the Goldrush

Although variety shows had reached Seattle in the 1870s, the term vaudeville, a corruption the French "Van de Vire," came into common use after 1884. Variety and vaudeville were both a group of specialized performance with individuals or groups performing discrete "acts." Burlesque was a type of variety show with risqué entertainment. Although the terms "variety" and "vaudeville" were often used interchangeably, vaudeville generally consisted of higher quality entertainment, including nationally and internationally known talent. A typical vaudeville bill consisted of seven acts, each with a "star," and with their attendant musicians, stagehands, electricians, and management personnel, together taking a

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[42] Eric L. Flom, "Cort, John (1861-1929)," HistoryLink.org Essay 3296, August 9, 2001, http://www.historylink.org/index.cfm?DisplayPage=output.cfm&file_id=3296, accessed March 29, 2010), pp. 1-2.

[43] *The Argus*, "The Theaters of Seattle," (Seattle, WA: H.A. Chadwick, December 19, 1903, pp. 38-39.

[44] Murray Morgan, *Skid Road*, (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 1982), pp.124-125.

[45] *The Argus*, pp. 38-39.

[46] Jeffrey K. Ochsner, "Charles W. Saunders," in *Shaping Seattle Architecture*, (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 1994), p. 36.

considerable weekly fee to support. In order to assure a regular audience, vaudeville troops were moved regionally or nationally from city to city along a regularly assigned route.[47]

Early variety shows tended to be on the vulgar side until New York's Tony Pastor began offering "a straight, clean variety show" suitable for family viewing. The concept of operating a chain of variety theaters originated in New York around 1880, but after 1885, B.F. Keith and E.F. Albee began building a syndicate that began in Boston, but grew quickly to include theaters in Providence, Philadelphia, and New York. During the 1890s, Keith and Albee absorbed several small vaudeville circuits throughout the country. A few successful regional circuits were established, however, including: Sylvester Z. Poli's in New England, Marc Klaw and Abraham L. Erlanger's also on the Eastern Seaboard, and the Orpheum circuit in San Francisco.[48]

The financial depression of 1893-1896, heavily impacted Seattle theaters and their owners, and only the Third Avenue Theatre and the Seattle Theatre survived. Many box theater owners left town, including John Cort, who unsuccessfully attempted to establish a chain of theaters along the Northern Pacific Railroad route. John Considine moved to Spokane where his new box house was eventually shut down by an "anti-vice" movement.[49]

The Klondike Gold Rush, beginning in 1897, turned Seattle into a boomtown, attracting thousands of new people to the town. Seattle's population grew from 80,000 in 1900 to 237,000 in 1910. The new prosperity coupled with a rough-and-tumble populace eager for entertainment, turned Seattle into a theatrical center. Both Cort and Considine returned to Seattle during this period seeking renewed fortune and respectability. By the end of the 1890s, renewed financial confidence allowed the creation of vast theater circuits that spanned the country and comprehensive networks of booking offices handled promotion and production, and Seattle played a major role in this development.

John Cort continued to purchase, or form business relations, with several theaters along the West Coast, controlling 37 outright by 1903. Around 1900, Cort formed an alliance with Klaw and Erlanger to bring additional dramatic talent to his Western circuit, establishing Cort as the top theatrical manager in the Pacific Northwest.[50]

Flush with growing success and with the great optimism following the Gold Rush, Cort hired architect Edwin W. Houghton (1856-1927) to design his 2,278-seat Grand Opera House (1898-1900, theater destroyed by fire in 1917, now a parking garage) at 217 Cherry Street two blocks north of what was known as the "restricted zone," in Pioneer Square. The theater was completed in two stages and was originally called the Palm Garden. Until James Moore opened the Moore Theater 1907, the Grand was the premier venue in Seattle.[51]

The Moore Theater (1932 2nd Avenue, 1907) in the new Moore Hotel on newly re-graded land north of the central business district, was also designed by Edwin W. Houghton. John

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[47] Elliott, p. 45.

[48] Glen Hughes, *A History of The American Theater*, 1700-1950, (New York, NY: Samuel French, 1951), pp. 304-306.

[49] Richard C. Berner, *Seattle 1900-1920*, (Seattle, WA: Charles Press, 1991), p. 86.

[50] Eric L. Flom, "Cort, John (1861-1929)," pp. 2-3.

[51] Jeffrey K. Ochsner and Dennis A. Anderson, "Edwin W. Houghton," in *Shaping Seattle Architecture*, (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 1994), p. 49. Houghton would design several theaters for John Cort and his expanding theater circuit including throughout the West including: Spokane Theater (1901-2) in Spokane; Beck's Theater (1901-02, destroyed) in Bellingham; Sutton's Grand Opera (1902, destroyed) in Butte, MT.

Cort was appointed manager of the new 2,400-seat theater. The opening night crowd on December 28, 1907, swelled to 3,000 with standing room to watch Joseph Blethen's play "The Alaskan."

While Cort continued to consolidate his syndicate, his friendly rival John Considine formed an alliance with New York politician and financier Tim Sullivan, to form the Sullivan-Considine circuit, which eventually grew to control 21 theaters in the Pacific Northwest, and was affiliated with another 20 in California, as well as booking theaters in the Midwest. In Seattle, Considine owned both the Star Theater (later State Theater, destroyed) at 920 1st Avenue and the Orpheum Theater (originally a skating rink, remodeled 1907, destroyed 1908) at 1010 2nd Avenue. In 1907, Considine leased the original Coliseum Theater (destroyed 1913 for the King County Courthouse) located at the southeastern corner of 3rd and James Street from the Orpheum Circuit and renamed it the Orpheum. Considine soon formed the Northwest Orpheum Circuit and by linking it with the Orpheum Circuit, formed a nationwide popularly priced vaudeville circuit. He opened the Majestic Theater (destroyed) at the corner of Second Avenue and Spring Street in 1909.[52]

The Klaw and Erlanger syndicate attempted to expand into Seattle by commissioning architects Howells and Stokes to design the 1,650-seat Metropolitan Theater (1910-11, A.H. Albertson associate, destroyed 1956, for the Olympic Hotel's northern porte cochere) at 415 University Street in the University Tract styled after the Doge's Palace in Venice. Cort and many other theater owners dissatisfied with the quality of Klaw and Erlanger's booking, countered by organizing the Independent National Theater Owner's Association, which grew to include 1,200 national theaters. Bowing to financial pressure, the syndicate allowed theaters to negotiate both independent and syndicate attraction. Cort relocated to New York in 1912, where he became a producer and manager.[53]

A latecomer to the Northwest theater scene, but one person who would eclipse all others, was Alexander Pantages. Pantages' initial experience in vaudeville was in Dawson City, Yukon Territory, during the Gold Rush, where he ran a theater. Relocating to Seattle, he opened the Crystal Theater in a storefront on the northeastern corner of 2nd Avenue and Seneca Street, playing vaudeville interspersed with motion pictures. Pantages was manager, ticket taker, booking agent, projectionist, janitor, and sometime performer. Keeping his ticket prices down to 10 cents, Pantages prospered and opened the Pantages Vaudeville Theater in 1904, on the northeastern corner of 2nd Avenue and Seneca. In 1907, he opened the Lois Theater, named after his wife, which played only stock theater.[54]

Pantages began expanding his circuit, first regionally by buying theaters in Tacoma, Spokane, and Vancouver. After the 1906 earthquake and fire in San Francisco, Pantages was able to acquire a small chain of six theaters there. In 1911, he opened a theater in Portland, Oregon, and in 1912, expanded northward to Canada, building, buying, or leasing theaters in Edmonton, Winnipeg, Victoria, Calgary, and Vancouver. Pantages and his family relocated to Los Angeles in 1917. By 1926, he owned approximately 30 vaudeville theaters and had

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[52] Berner, p. 88.

[53] Eric L. Flom, "Cort, John (1861-1929)," HistoryLink.org Essay 3296, August 9, 2001, http://www.historylink.org/index.cfm?DisplayPage=output.cfm&file_id=3296, accessed March 29, 2010, p. 3.

[54] Arthur Tarrach, "Alexander Pantages: The Seattle Pantages and His Vaudeville Circuit," Master of Arts Thesis, University of Washington, 1973, p. 6-12.

management contracts on around another 42, in both the United States and Canada, together forming the "Pantages Circuit." Pantages stressed elegance, cleanliness, and good taste in his venues, and presented a mixture of live vaudeville acts coupled with the latest films. He sold his West Coast theaters in 1928 to part of the Orpheum circuit, and the remainder to RKO in 1929.[55]

Pantages met 21-year-old architect B. Marcus Priteca (1889-1971) in 1910, and was impressed by his ability to solve challenging design problems. Priteca would go on to design all of Pantages' new theaters, beginning with the San Francisco Pantages Theater (1911, destroyed), and lasting until Pantages broke up and sold his circuit between 1928 and 1929. In Seattle, Priteca designed the Seattle Pantages (a.k.a. Rex Theater, later Palomar Theater ca. 1936, 1913-15, destroyed 1967) in 1913, at 1300 3rd Avenue. Priteca's theaters were primarily motion picture theaters and demonstrated Priteca's early preference for fantastically expressed Classical style themes. Working in collaboration with decorative painter Anthony B. Heinsbergen, Priteca designed Pantages theaters throughout the United States and Canada as far away as Kansas City, Memphis, and Edmonton.[56]

Silent Films

Although Seattle had a relatively early introduction to light projection technology with a demonstration of a stereopticon showing dissolving views of England, France and the Holy Land in Yesler's Hall in 1871, the first commercial motion pictures were shown in Seattle in December of 1871, using Thomas Edison's kinetoscope, only a few months after their premier on the East Coast. Although not theaters, the kinescopes, popularly known as "peep shows" were installed in rows within storefronts along 1st Avenue. Seattlites were introduced to projected motion pictures ("veriscope") of the Corbett/Fitzsimmons heavyweight fight at the Seattle Theatre in August 1897. The first actual movie theater in Seattle was Edison's Unique Theater, half owned by John Considine, which opened in 1902 at 1410 2nd Avenue, followed by La Petit Theater at 222 Pike Street, and the Odeon Theater at 1412 2nd Avenue. The Dream Theater at 712 1st Avenue may have been the first theater in the United States to install an organ for musical accompaniment. By 1908, there were approximately eight theaters showing silent films in a cluster located from Pioneer Square northward along 1st and 2nd Avenues including the Alaska Theatre at 524 2nd Avenue and the Exhibit Theater at 906 2nd Avenue.[57]

Motion pictures were also shown as between acts at vaudeville theaters and often at the end of the bill, as patrons often left prior to the last act. Films were less expensive than live acts so the theater operator wasn't paying for performers playing to empty seats.[58]

By 1910, films continued to improve and the establishment of reliable nationwide distribution and advertising increasingly gave films the edge in popular entertainment—especially as they were cheaper than live acts. As vaudeville began to wane, film venues grew. Seattle theater owners and operators Claude Jensen and John G. von Herberg (aka

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[55] Tarrach, pp. 12, 22, and 26.

[56] Miriam Sutermeister, "B. Marcus Priteca," in *Shaping Seattle Architecture*, (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 1994), pp. 180-182.

[57] Eric Flom, "Turning Point 10: Close-Up on Seattle's Early Film History," HistoryLink.org Essay 9310, June 15, 2001, http://www.historylink.org/index.cfm?DisplayPage=output.cfm&file_id=9310, accessed March 29, 2010, pp. 1-2.

[58] Tarrach. p. 37.

Peter Coyle) in 1911 converted their Alhambra Theater (later Wilkes theater, ca. 1917, closed 1922) at the southwestern corner of 5th Avenue and Pine Street, to exclusively show motion pictures.[59] In 1912, James Q. Clemmer opened the first Seattle venue built exclusively for motion pictures, the Clemmer Theater, located at 1414 2nd Avenue.[60] Jensen and von Herberg followed in 1914, with the 1,700-seat Liberty Theatre (Henderson Ryan, 1914-1955) in the Blaine building at 1520 1st Avenue. Designed by architect Henderson Ryan (1856-1927) with a vaguely neo-Classical styled terra cotta street façade theater, the theater had no orchestra pit to accommodate vaudeville acts, but featured what is thought to have been the first real theater organ, a mammoth Wurlitzer Hope-Jones Unit Orchestra, built to accompany silent films.[61] The Colonial Theatre at 1515 4th Avenue (closed 1972) was also an early exclusively silent film venue.

Downtown Motion Picture Palaces

By the end of 1915, Seattle had approximately 80 motion picture theaters scattered throughout the city, ranging from small storefront theaters to larger venues such as the Liberty Theater.[62] "First-run" theaters were located within Seattle's downtown area, and as the focus of the central business district shifted northward they would eventually cluster along 5th Avenue north of University Street. This cluster of higher-class theaters began in 1914, with the Coliseum Theater (1914-15, altered for retail, City of Seattle Landmark) located at 500 Pike Street. The theater was designed by B. Marcus Priteca for developer Joseph Gottstein and was considered by some as the finest motion picture theater at that time located west of the Mississippi. With Jensen and von Herberg as operators, the Coliseum set a new standard to be met by future Seattle downtown theaters.

The 1920s and the early 1930s, are often referred to as the "Golden Era of Hollywood." They were also the greatest years for the building of downtown theater "palaces" in Seattle, and in other major American cities. Most were dual venues offering both motion pictures and vaudeville performances.

Robert C. Reamer's elaborate Fifth Avenue Theatre (Joseph L. Skoog, associate architect; closed 1972, restored and altered for live productions) in the Skinner Building located at 1308 5th Avenue, opened in 1926. The lobby and theater hall motif was inspired by traditional Chinese wood structures found in the Forbidden City.

The 2,700-seat New Orpheum Theater and six-story office building (demolished in 1967 for the Westin Hotel) opened at 1900 5th Avenue for the 40th anniversary of the Orpheum vaudeville circuit in 1927. B. Marcus Priteca designed the theater, the largest at the time in the Pacific Northwest, in a loose interpretation of the Spanish Renaissance style. The exterior, also vaguely Spanish Renaissance, had an elaborate electrical display with a roof sign that was the largest sign on the Pacific Coast. The letter "O" of the word "Orpheum"

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[59] Flom, "Turning Point 10: Close-Up on Seattle's Early Film History," p. 2.

[60] Flom, "Turning Point 10: Close-Up on Seattle's Early Film History," p. 2.

[61] Puget Sound Theatre Organ Society, "Liberty Theatre," Puget Sound Pipeline Online, http://www.pstos.org/instruments/wa/seattle/liberty.htm, accessed March 29, 2010, p.1.

[62] R. L. Polk Company. *Polk's Seattle City Directory.* 1915.

was 16 feet high and contained 250 lamps. Nearly 4,000 lamps were used in the upper sign, and 8,000 lamps, of more than 15,000 watts, comprise the entire exterior signage.[63]

The 3,000-seat Seattle Theater (renamed Paramount Theater in 1930, restored and altered for various performance venues) at 911 Pine Street opened in 1928. Seattle businessman L.N. Rosenbaum and Hollywood financier Adolf Zucher provided the estimated three million dollars of capital for the theater. The design of the building and theater is attributed to the Chicago architectural firm of Rapp and Rapp, although B. Marcus Priteca designed the commercial and studio spaces within the building.[64]

The Spanish Baroque themed Fox Theater (planned as the Mayflower, later renamed the Roxy, the 7th Avenue, the Emerald Palace, and finally the Music Hall; destroyed 1992) designed by Seattle architect Sherwood D. Ford (1872-1948), opened 1929, at 702-710 Olive Way. The theater was the last large downtown theater to open before the onset of the Great Depression.

Lesser downtown theaters completed during this period included the Embassy Theater (1926, Henry Bittman, altered, now a nightclub) at 1409 3rd Avenue, the Music Box Theater (1928, Henry Bittman, destroyed) at 1414 5th Avenue, the Blue Mouse Theater (1928, demolished 1972) at 1421 5th Avenue, the Spanish/Moorish style Capitol Theater at 1508 3rd Avenue (1924, later Telenews ca. 1940, demolished ca. 1960), the 745-seat Winter Garden Theater at 1515 3rd Avenue (Frank H. Fowler, 1920, later Garden Art Theater, closed and altered 1979), and the Art Deco styled Pike Street Theater (1933, Henry Bittman; later Roosevelt Theater, later remodeled by S.H. Croonquist as the Town Theater; destroyed).

The Blue Mouse had the distinction of being the first Seattle venue to offer a recorded musical score and sound effects accompanying Warner Brother's *Don Juan,* starring John Barrymore, in March of 1927.[65] The same theater introduced Seattle audiences to "talkies" later in December, with sound-on-film Fox "Movietone News" of Charles Lindberg's departure for the first solo flight across the Atlantic followed by his reception hosted by President Calvin Coolidge.[66] On December 30, 1927, the second successful feature film with sound, The *Jazz Singer*, starring Al Jolson, was also shown at the Blue Mouse.[67] Using Warner Brothers' Vitaphone sound-on-disc technology to reproduce the musical score and sporadic episodes of synchronized speech.[68]

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[63] Eric Flom, "Orpheum Theatre (Seattle)," HistoryLink.org Essay 4267, December 12, 2003, http://www.historylink.org/index.cfm?DisplayPage=output.cfm&File_Id=4267, accessed March 29, 2010, pp. 1-2.

[64] Eric Flom, "The Seattle Paramount Theatre opens on March 1, 1928," HistoryLink.org Essay 3945, September 30, 2002, http://www.historylink.org/index.cfm?DisplayPage=output.cfm&file_id=3945, accessed June 15, 2010, pp. 1-2.

[65] David Wilma and Eric Flom; "Sound motion pictures debut in Seattle at Blue Mouse on March 18, 1927;" HistoryLink.org Essay 2483; May 22, 2000, revised September 28, 2003; http://www.historylink.org/index.cfm?DisplayPage=output.cfm&File_Id=2483, accessed March 29, 2010, p. 1.

[66] Eric Flom and David Wilma, "Sound-on-film motion picture technology debuts in Seattle at the Blue Mouse on December 2, 1927," HistoryLink.org Essay 2484, May 22, 2000, http://www.historylink.org/index.cfm?DisplayPage=output.cfm&file_id=2484, accessed March 29, 2010, p. 1.

[67] David Wilma and Eric Flom; "The Jazz Singer, first successful feature film with sound, debuts in Seattle at the Blue Mouse on December 30, 1927;" HistoryLink.org May 22, 2000, revised December 24, 2002, revised January 18, 2003, June 15, 2010, http://www.historylink.org/index.c'fm?DisplayPage=pf_output.cfm&file_id=2485; accessed June 15, 2010; p. 1.

[68] Wilma and Flom, "The Jazz Singer, first successful feature film with sound, debuts in Seattle at the Blue Mouse on December 30, 1927, p.1.

Talking pictures would offer insurmountable competition to vaudeville, which soon faded from the popular entertainment scene.

Neighborhood and Suburban Theater Expansion

As the downtown became saturated with first-run houses, second-run theaters were developed in the commercial districts of the older and newly-annexed neighborhoods to the north, east, and south of downtown.

East of downtown, Capitol Hill had the 440-seat Society Theater (201 N Broadway, 1909, renamed Broadway Theater 1921, remodeled ca. 1940, interior demolished ca. 2000) that opened in 1909. Ballard, a separate town until 1916, had a least three motion picture houses, the Ballard (5132 Ballard Avenue, 1909), Crystal, and Tivoli theaters running as early as 1910, and added the Majestic Theater (2044 Market Street, later Roxy Theater, finally Bay Theater, demolished 1998) in 1915.[69] By 1912, there was the Queen Anne Theatre on Queen Anne Hill, the Alki (Alki Avenue, closed 1913), Olympus (2644 California Avenue SW, closed 1919), and Apollo (California Avenue SW near SW Edmunds Street, closed 1926) theaters in West Seattle, and the Valley in Rainier Valley.[70] The first Green Lake Theater (312 NE 72nd Street, closed 1928) opened in 1914, and the White Center Theater (9603 16th Avenue SW, closed 1942) opened in 1916.[71]

By the 1920s, nearly every commercial area of Seattle had at least one neighborhood theater. Generally, neighborhood theaters were smaller than the downtown first-run venues, with only a few exceptions, ranging from around 350 to 1,000 seats. The neighborhood theaters also followed the fashion of the downtown theaters by often incorporating exotic design motifs, such as Moorish, Spanish, or Egyptian, to enhance a sense of fantasy apart from the daily grind. Although many of the older and smaller neighborhood theaters closed with the advent of "talkies," the ones with owners willing to make the large initial capital investment in new technology thrived. The standard fare was a newsreel, a comedy short, and a feature film. Located in smaller commercial districts surrounded by single-family homes, most offered weekend children's matinees, often with live hosts and sing-a-longs. Neighborhood theaters also catered to families, often featuring "crying rooms," where mothers with fussy babies could retreat to and still be able to watch films without bothering other patrons. Raffles or prize drawings of food, appliances, or other items where regularly held to boost attendance. Concession stands became increasingly important revenue generators beginning in the 1930s, and many older theaters were remodeled to incorporate them into the lobby. As the design trends shifted in the late 1930s, first to Art Deco and Moderne styles, and later to the Modern Contemporary, many older theaters were remodeled and new theaters were built in these later styles.

Capitol Hill added the 900-seat Olympic Theater (1427 E Pine Street, later Venetian Theater, demolished 1959) in 1927. Queen Anne Hill added the 702-seat Straley's Cherio Theater (1529 Queen Anne Avenue N, later Queen Anne Theater ca. 1932, demolished 2004) on the top of the hill in 1925, and the Uptown Theater (511 Queen Anne Avenue N, remodeled ca. 1945, altered, closed in 2010, and reopened in 2011) at the foot of the hill in 1926. Beacon

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[69] R. L. Polk Co. *Polk's Seattle City Directory,* 1910.

[70] R. L. Polk Co. *Polk's Seattle City Directory,* 1912.

[71] R. L. Polk Co. *Polk's Seattle City Directory,* 1914 and 1916.

Hill's 600-seat Grey Goose Theater (2352 Beacon Avenue S, later Beacon Theater, demolished) opened around 1929.[72]

The 500-seat Mission style Roycroft Theater (708 19th Avenue, 1925, closed and altered) open in 1925 in the Central District, and a little farther east the Anzier Theater (2203 E Madison Street, later Gala, closed 1941, building altered to Savoy Ballroom and later Birdland) catered primarily to African-Americans and the 480-seat Victory Theater (1319 Rainier Avenue S, demolished) was located to the south. In the Madrona neighborhood, the Garden Theater (2815 East Cherry Street, demolished ca. 1950) opened in 1924. Further south the 386-seat Columbia Theater (4916 Rainier Avenue S, ca. 1923, later Rainier Theater, now Columbia City Theater as a music venue) opened in 1923. In the Montlake Neighborhood, the Spanish Colonial style Montlake Theater, (2410 East Lynn Street, ca. 1926, closed and altered ca. 1944) opened in 1926.[73]

In West Seattle and White Center, the Classical Revival style Portola Theater (2343 California Avenue SW, closed 1942) opened in 1919, followed by the 746-seat Spanish influenced Granada Theater (5011 California Avenue SW, G.C. Field and B. Marcus Priteca, later Egyptian, closed 1958, reopened 1964 as Granada Organ Loft, closed 1974, demolished 1977) opened in 1926. A latecomer, the modern style Coy's Center Theater (1617 W Roxbury, closed 1955) opened its doors in 1942. The Portola Theater was almost completely demolished in 1942, and replaced by the 1,000-seat Admiral Theater (2343 California Avenue SW, altered, City of Seattle Landmark) designed by B. Marcus Priteca.[74]

North of the Ship Canal, the Ballard neighborhood added the 1,800-seat Bagdad Theater within the Fraternal Order of Eagles building designed by architect William R. Grant (2218 Market Street, 1927, closed 1949). Further north and to the east in the Greenwood neighborhood, the 450-seat Bathhouse Playhouse (7720 Greenwood Avenue N, 1924, later Ridgemont Theater demolished 2001) opened in 1924, and the 468-seat Grand Theater (140 N 85th Street, later Greenwood Grand Theater, closed and remodeled in 1996 as the Taproot Theater) was located in the heart of Greenwood's commercial district.[75]

In Wallingford the 490-seat Guild 45th Theater (2115 N 45th Street, briefly known as the Paramount Theater and Bruen's 45th, altered) originally opened in 1919. In Green Lake, the Moorish style Arabian Theater (7610 Woodland Park (now Aurora) Avenue N, Now St. Germaine Foundation, 1930,closed ca. 1954) opened in 1930, as the Great Depression began. The Second Green Lake Theater designed in the Moderne style by architect Bjarne Moe (7107 Woodlawn Avenue NE, closed 1950, now Pacific Color) opened just before World War II in 1939.[76]

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[72] Patrick Crowley and Ross Meinick, "Cinema Treasures, Classic Movie Theaters in Washington," http://cinematreasures.org/location/country=181&state=49&show=all&sort=location, accessed June 21 and 22, 2010, various pages by specific theater.

[73] Crowley and Meinick. Junius Rochester, *The Last Electric Trolley, Madrona & Denny Blaine*, (Seattle, WA: Tommie Press, 2002), pp. 96-97. Eugene Smith, *Montlake: and Urban Eden*, (La Grande, OR: Oak Street Press, 2004), p.150.

[74] Crowley and Meinick. Clay Eals, "*West Side Story*," (Seattle, WA: West Seattle Herald/White Center News, 1987), pp. 212-222.

[75] Crowley and Meinick.

[76] Crowley and Meinick.

The University District, with its growing university student population eventually could boast of three theaters, beginning with the 968-seat Neptune Theater (1303 NE 45th Street) in 1921, adding the Egyptian Theater (4537 University Way, closed 1960) in 1925, and the Varsity Theater (4329 University Way NE, 1940, altered 1985) in the terra cotta Meister Building in 1940. A little to the north in the Roosevelt District, the 420-seat Hollywood Theater (6550 NE Roosevelt Way, 1923, closed, now Cloud 9) opened in 1923.[77]

As Seattle grew outward creating post-World War II suburbs, movie theaters were built to serve the new or expanding neighborhoods. In Magnolia, the 960-seat Moderne style Magnolia Theater (2424 34th Avenue W, B. Marcus Priteca, demolished 1974) opened in 1948, and the 660-seat Moderne style Lake City Theater (3120 NE 125th Street, ca. 1948, closed ca. 1980, now a Mennonite church) opened the same year in Lake City. In North City, Architect Bjarne Moe's Moderne style Crest Theater 16505 5th Avenue NE (1949, remodeled 1978, and triplexed in 1980) opened in 1949.[78]

In 1951, John Graham and Associates designed the Northgate Theater (10 Northgate Plaza, with decorator Anthony B. Heinsbergen, 1951, demolished 2005) at the northwestern corner of the first shopping mall in the United States. The 1,300-seat theater was designed in a sleek Contemporary style, and incorporated Northwest Indian themes in the lobby and house.[79]

Former haberdasher turned motion picture operator, John Danz (ca. 1896-1961) acquired and operated a number of Seattle's second-run motion picture theaters in the downtown, in the neighborhoods, and in the growing suburban areas. By the time that his son Frederic inherited the family business in 1961, the company owned and operated 25 local motion picture theaters.[80]

Television and Theater Decline

Prior to World War II, mass entertainment directed to families in their own homes was almost exclusively by radio broadcasting. Motion pictures were still limited to theater showings. In 1941, the Federal Communication Commission (FCC) issued its first television broadcast licenses to NBC and CBS owned stations in New York, following adoption of NTSC television engineering standards, however few televisions were publically available due to World War II related production restrictions, technological limitations, and consumer costs. After the manufacturing freeze on personal goods was lifted in 1946, television usage in the United States increased exponentially. War-related technological advances, the gradual expansion of the television networks westward, the drop in set prices allowed by mass production, increased leisure time, and additional disposable income, all contributed to the introduction of popular entertainment into American households. With television sets selling for under $200 in 1947, television became affordable for millions of Americans. While only 0.5% of U.S. households had a television set in 1946, 55.7% had one in 1954, and 90% by

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[77] Crowley and Meinick. Roy Nielson, *UniverCity, The Story of the University District*, (Seattle, WA: University Lions Foundation, 1986), pp. 65, 67, 7, 89, 113.

[78] Crowley and Meinick.

[79] Crowley and Meinick. The Northgate Theater paved the way for many of the suburban theaters that were located within shopping malls like the Lewis and Clark Theater (15820 Pacific Highway, Federal Way; 1957; with mural by Anthony B. Heinsbergen, depicting Lewis, Clark, and Native Americans).

[80] Eric L. Flom, "Danz, Fredric A. (1918-2009)," HistoryLink.org Essay 7306, May 18, 2005, http://www.historylink.org/index.cfm?DisplayPage=output.cfm&file_id=7306, accessed June 22, 2010, p. 1.

1962.[81] Commercial color broadcasts appeared in 1953. Locally, the first television broadcast occurred on November 26, 1948, televising the West Seattle/Wenatchee high school football game in Memorial Stadium.[82]

In some ways television's original model was based on commercial radio, with many early programs ported over to television, just as many musical vaudeville acts were featured in early "talkies." Comedy radio shows could expand into situation comedies, and popular music could be accompanied by dance and variety acts.

By 1955, television was "hittin hell of the theaters," a trend that continued well into the later years of the 20th century.[83] Weekly theater attendance, which was at an all-time high of 65% of the United States population in 1930, dropped to approximately 25% by 1953, before leveling off at a little under 10% by 1966.[84] Television brought popular entertainment directly into American living rooms, providing free entertainment across the demographic spectrum for the initial investment in a television set and the time required to watch program sponsors' advertisements. By the mid 1950s, television programming included highbrow plays and symphony performances, news broadcasts, light situation comedies, and daytime children's entertainment.

Locally, while Frederic Danz was able to diversify his company, then known as Sterling Recreation Organization (SRO), by expanding into other forms of entertainment such as bowling alleys, radio stations, and restaurants; other smaller operators were forced to close. The decline in theater attendance led to the demolition of both first-run downtown movie palaces and second-run downtown and neighborhood theaters. Nearly all of Seattle's major first run theaters were demolished, with the wrecking ball leveling the Orpheum Theater in 1967, the Blue Mouse Theater in 1972, and the Music Hall (former Fox Theater) in 1992. Only the Moore (City of Seattle Landmark), the Paramount (City of Seattle Landmark), and the 5th Avenue theaters remain, although the latter two have been converted to live show venues. The grand Coliseum Theater (City of Seattle Landmark) has been converted to retail. The lesser downtown and neighborhood theaters, although sometimes small enough to fit niche markets, including pornographic or art-house films, were closed and either demolished of converted to other uses. Nearly all the neighborhood theaters disappeared over the next several years, either converted to other uses or demolished for redevelopment.

Contemporary Developments

Technological evolution, the creation of multiplex theaters, and the development of an audience for alternative cinema, has changed the national and local theater landscape over the last several years.

Technological Innovation: Thomas Edition used 35mm film in his pioneering Kinetoscope, and this became an industry standard in 1909. 35mm film produced a screen aspect ratio, or height-to-width relationship, of 3:4. This standard prevailed through the development of

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[81] Cobbett Steinberg, *TV Facts*, (New York, NY: Infobase, Facts on File, 1980), p. 86.

[82] Eals, p. 220.

[83] Walt Coy, interview in West Seattle Herald, 1973, in "*West Side Story*," (Seattle, WA: West Seattle Herald/White Center News, 1987), p. 221.

[84] Michelle Pautz, "The Decline in Average Weekly Cinema Attendance: 1930-2000." in *Issues in Political Economy*, Volume II, 2002, (Elon, NC: Elon University, 2002), p.1. Original statistics from: Motion Picture Association, "1999 Motion Picture Attendance Study," Worldwide Market Research, October 6, 2000.

sound technology and the introduction of color films in the 1930s. Minimal technological improvements were made from the 1930s to the 1950s, when the motion picture industry attempted to stem the decline in motion picture theater attendance by creating performances unavailable to the home television viewer.

The Cinerama process using three synchronized 35mm projectors and a deeply curved screen was premiered in 1952, although few theaters were built or adapted to this technology. The Paramount Theater introduced Seattle audiences to the technology in 1956 with a showing of "This is Cinerama," and Seattle's Martin Cinerama Theater (Raymond H. Peck, 1962, restored 1998) was built to coincide with the opening of Seattle's Century 21 Exposition.[85] Cinemascope and later Vista Vision, which optically squeezed images onto 35mm film and allowed the projector lens to expand the image, was introduced in 1953 and 1954, respectively. In 1955, 70mm film cinema was introduced with the Todd-AO technology. By the end of the 1950s, the standard aspect ratio for cinema screens became wider, either 1:2.35 or 1:1.66.

After "Optical" soundtrack technology was introduced in the late 1920s and early 1930s, and adopted as an industry standard, no real change occurred in motion picture sound until the 1970s, when Dolby Laboratories introduced a print format originally identified as Dolby Stereo. The film industry had clung to the "Academy " standard optical mono sound with a high ratio of background sound and distortion due to its worldwide universality. The first motion pictures utilizing this new technology were produced in 1977, *Star Wars* and *Close Encounters of the Third Kind.* The new technology quickly was adopted as the new standard and soon nearly all films were released with stereo film tracks. Four-channel surround sound from stereo optical soundtracks was introduced in 1987.[86]

Multi-projector, multi-screen surround cinema was introduced during Montreal's Expo 67, although the technology was soon abandoned in favor of a single-projector/single-camera system utilizing a "rolling loop" film transport called IMAX.[87] The first IMAX film was demonstrated at Expo '70 in Osaka, Japan. IMAX films do not use the standard optical soundtrack, in favor of a separate synchronized six-channel 35mm magnetic film.[88] The Pacific Science Center opened its IMAX 70 Eames Theater in 1979, the first in Seattle.[89]

Multiplexes: Until the late 1960s and early 1970s, cinemas typically had one screen and the occasional cinema had two, making it difficult to see any particular film during the prime viewing times. Therefore it would take longer for the public to see any particular film even though each showing probably had a significant size audience. A downtown theater would keep the house full week after week during prime times until everyone who wanted to see the film did, effectively extending the life of the film, before transferring the film to second run theaters. With the multiplex concept, theater venues got larger, using one ticket booth and concession stand to service several smaller screen theaters offering multiple time slots for the

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[85] Seattle's Cinerama is one of only three theaters in the world that are capable of showing three-projector Cinerama films.

[86] Dolby Laboratories, "The Formula for Film Sound Success," http://www.dolby.com/about/who-we-are/our-history/history-4.html, accessed June 28, 2010. p. 1.

[87] IMAX Corporation, "History and Milestones," http://www.imax.com/corporate/profile/historyMilestones/, accessed June 28, 2010. p. 1.

[88] IMAX Corporation, p.1.

[89] Pacific Science Center, "About the Theaters," http://www.pacsci.org/imax/, accessed June 28, 2010. p. 1.

same film. Multiplexes also allowed management flexibility in scheduling several films at once, and they could respond more quickly & flexibly to popularity or non-popularity of films being shown.

Even though the number of theaters declined throughout the later part of the 20th century, the actual number of screens, albeit smaller, and theater seating increased. In 1990, there were 23,689 screens nationwide, but by 2000 there were 37,396, an addition of 13,707 in ten years.[90] With so many screens and theater seats available, when a new movie opens, everyone who wants to see it does so in the first few days, rather than the first few weeks. Less popular films, therefore are overlooked and ill attended, quickly disappearing from the screen or issued in home video format, a new technology that put additional competitive pressure of neighborhood theaters which relied on "B movies" for income. Without enough new premier film releases to fill seats, films play to less optimum capacity which ultimately decreases cinema revenue.[91]

Although some older theaters were "twined," most growth came from new multiplex complexes often associated with shopping malls. Traditional motion pictures will continue to decline because they are not the new, state-of-the-art facilities with stadium seating and other new amenities. In order to keep up with competition, cinema chains are forced to build new multi-million dollar multiplexes while other traditional theaters are losing money, but cannot close due to long-term leases and contracts.

Underground and Independent Film Venues: American cinema audiences generally were limited to viewing films produced by major studios until a new cinema audience that sought out the unusual, emerged in the late 1950s and early 1960s. This loose group, a mixture of modern art aficionados and college students, favored forgotten film noir classics such as Howard Hawks' *The Big Sleep*, avant-garde foreign films such as Henri-Georges Clouzot's *Les Diaboliques*, and new independently produced "underground" films such as Andy Warhol's *Vinyl*. Originally focused in New York City and San Francisco where film festivals introduced these films to a new generation, small interest groups of movie buffs developed in and around college campuses throughout the United States.

The first film festival in the Pacific Northwest was organized by Bellevue Arts & Crafts Fair volunteers Carol Duke and Mary Jo Malone in 1967, at the suggestion of Tom Robbins, then art critic for the Post-Intelligencer. Robbins had just arrived from New York and was a regular at the New Yorker Theater's Monday experimental film shows. The Bellevue Film Festival ran annually from 1967 to 1981, featuring experimental films such as Scott Bartlett's *Metanomen* and Bruce Baillie's *Mass for the Dakota Sioux*.[92]

In 1968, two Boeing engineers and movie buffs, Art Bernstein and Jim O'Steen, purchased the 1925 Woman's Century Club On Seattle's Capitol Hill, renaming it the Harvard Exit. The pair used the 400-seat main auditorium to show a mixture of art-house and independent films, with Berstein personally introducing each film before the showing.[93]

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[90] Terry Pristin, "Movie Theaters Build Themselves Into A Corner." *New York Times*, Late Edition, September 4, 2000, p. A1.

[91] Harlan J. Levy, "Tons of Screens, Not Enough Viewers," *New York Times*, Late Edition, March 11, 2001, p. CT 1.

[92] Robin Oppenheimer; "Bellevue Film Festival, 1967-1981;" HistoryLink.org Essay 3469; January 9, 2002; http://www.historylink.org/index.cfm?DisplayPage=output.cfm&file_id=3469; accessed June 29, 2010. pp. 1-2.

[93] Cinema Treasures, "Harvard Exit Theatre," http://cinematreasures.org/theater/11481/, accessed June 29, 2010. p. 1.

Local entrepreneur Randy Finley (b. 1942), recognizing the growing popularity of art-house, foreign, and independent cinema, created a small second-floor theater. The Little Theater, in a former dentist office in Seattle's University District in 1970. Operating on a shoestring, Finley would eventually acquire 16 theaters as the Seven Gables chain, including the Guild 45th in Wallingford, the Varsity and Seven Gables in the U-District, the Broadway on Capital Hill, the Ridgemont in Phinney Ridge, the Lakewood in Tacoma, the Crest in North Seattle, as well as theaters in Portland, all showing a mixture of alternative cinema.[94]

Probably the most influential and wide-ranging spin-off of the Pacific Northwest's interest in alternative cinema is the Seattle International Film Festival (SIFF). Originally organized in 1976, by Dan Ireland and Darryl MacDonald, the first year the group ran a two-week, 18-film program at the Moore Theater. SIFF annually offers an eclectic, wide-ranging program including everything from European, Asian, and Contemporary World Cinema to the premieres of American Independent and major studio releases. The group is presently based at the Egyptian Theater, a former Masonic Hall on Capitol Hill, showing films at several local historic venues including the Admiral, the Harvard Exit, the Neptune, the Uptown, and the Paramount theaters.[95]

Seattle not only has an enthusiastic theater audience willing to view alternative films, but also has become a center for experimental filmmaking. The Northwest Film Forum provides a strong support base for local filmmaking, offering a year-round schedule of filmmaking classes for all ages, and supporting filmmakers at all stages of their careers. Founded in 1995, by filmmakers Jamie Hook and Deborah Girdwood, the Northwest Film Forum provides support to approximately 250 filmmakers in the production of nearly 80 films, and offers more than 60 workshops yearly. Starting at Randy Findley's original Little Theater, the Northwest Film Forum now screens over 200 independently made and classic films annually, at their new two screen venue on Capitol Hill, as well as providing workshop, studio space, and gear rentals.[96]

Original Building Owners-Edward L. Blaine and August B. L. Gellerman

The original developers of the Neptune Building were Edward L. Blaine (1863-1954) and August B. L. Gellerman (1870-1948), as principals of the Puritan Theater Company.

Edward Linn Blaine was born in Lebanon, Oregon, on April 27, 1862. He was the son David E. and Catherine V. (Paine) Blaine, early Seattle Pioneers. The Blaines were Methodist missionaries who arrived in Seattle in 1853. David founded Seattle's first church, called the Little White Church, and Catherine became Seattle's first teacher and school administrator. Edward Blaine followed his parents to Seattle in 1890, after graduating from Wesleyan University in 1886. Blaine served on the Seattle City Council between 1910 and 1913. He was active in the community, serving as president of the Washington Children's Home and as a trustee of the Seattle Community Fund. He also was a trustee at the College of Puget Sound (now the University of Puget Sound) between 1905 and 1945. Blaine was a principal

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[94] Doug Merlino, "Finley, Randy," HistoryLink.org Essay 7275, March 22, 2005, http://www.historylink.org/index.cfm?DisplayPage=output.cfm&file_id=7275, accessed June 29, 2010. pp. 1-3.

[95] Bijan Tehrani, "Carl Spence talks about Seattle International Film Festival," Cinema Without Borders, 2007, http://www.cinemawithoutborders.com/news/130/ARTICLE/1279/2007-05-23.html, accessed June 29, 2010. p. 1.

[96] Northwest Film Forum, "About Us, Organizational Overview," http://www.nwfilmforum.org/live/page/about, accessed July 6, 2010. p. 1.

of Greff Construction, a heavy construction firm that completed among many other projects, the Cedar River Dam for the City of Seattle. Blaine passed away on September 30, 1954.[97]

August Bernhardt Louis Gellerman was born in Taylor Falls, Minnesota, on February 22, 1870. Gellerman came to Washington State in 1890, working as a teacher and founded a short-lived college in Longview. Gellerman then moved to Tacoma where he continued to teach and also served as a Methodist minister between 1898 and 1905. In 1905 he entered into real estate and the insurance business, moving to Seattle around 1905. In 1916, he ran unsuccessfully for Washington State governor for the Prohibition Party, placing fourth. Besides his investment in the Neptune Theater Building, Gellerman also had an interest in the Nickelodeon Theater in Portland, Oregon. He moved to Indianola in 1941, and died on March 25, 1948, in Burbank, California, while visiting.[98]

Original Building Owners-Samuel Fried and Earl Roy Fried

The subject building's underlying land was owned in 1910 by Samuel Fried (1863-1925), the father of Earl Roy Fried (1888-1953). By the time the building was constructed in 1921, Earl Roy Fried had been licensed to practice dentistry, and established a practice on the second floor of the building. The Fried family probably owned at least some portion of the property at that time. By 1936, Earl Roy Fried owned the building outright.

Subsequent Building Owner-Emil B. Fries

Emil B. Fries (1902-1997) was listed in the King County Assessor's files as the owner of the building in 1972.[99]

Fries was born in Brewster, Washington, of a Mennonite family in 1902. Nearly blind from birth, Fries graduated from the Washington State School for the Blind in 1924. He was awarded a bachelor's degree in jurisprudence from the University of Washington in 1930, earning his way by tuning pianos. Fries headed the piano tuning department for the Washington State School for the Blind from 1931 to 1949, until the school phased out the program. Fries then founded the Piano Hospital and Training Center in Vancouver, Washington. The school was renamed the Emil Fries School of Piano Tuning and Technology after his death in 1997.[100]

Fries was the author of the autobiographical book, *But You Can Feel It* (1980), and co-authored with his father, *From Copenhagen to Okanogan: An Autobiography of a Pioneer* (1951).

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[97] Arthur H. Allen, *Who's Who In Washington State*, (Seattle, WA: Arthur H. Allen, Publisher, 1927), p. 34.

[98] Steven L. Grafe, "Ungovenor, 1916-August Bernhardt Louis Gellerman," Olyblog.net, pp. 1-2, April 12, 2008, http://www.olyblog.net/ungovernor-1916-august-bernhardt-louis-gellerman, accessed November 18, 2010.

[99] Curtis Thompson, the owner's appointed representative, stated on November 14, 2012, that the subject property has remained in the hands of his family since it was built in 1921. This would suggest that the Fried and Fries families were interconnected.

[100] Clifford E. Olstrom, Undaunted By Blindness, (Watertown, MA: Perkins Products, 2010), n.p.

Historic Architectural Context-Eclectic Commercial

The Neptune Theater Building is a masonry-clad building typologically considered a "mixed-use" commercial building. The building has minimal architectural styling and what architectural styling it may exhibit could be classed vaguely as simplified Renaissance Revival style.

When steel-framed construction was pioneered in Chicago in the 1890s, architects were free to increase the size of windows in commercial buildings, resulting in increased façade transparency and higher interior light levels, as well as allowing retail merchants "show windows" on the street-level facades.[101] At the same time and as a direct consequence of several disastrous downtown fires throughout the United States, building codes were developed, initially to protect property and eventually to save lives. After a major fire had destroyed Seattle's nascent central business district in 1889, fireproof construction was mandated for new buildings in downtown Seattle. Freed from the limitation of load-bearing masonry construction, architects employed Classical revival styles, particularly Renaissance Revival, which provided architects with the opportunity to dress their buildings with florid ornamentation utilizing versatile, relatively light terra cotta, rather than heavier carved stone. During this early period of experimentation, architects continued to articulate larger buildings in the three-part Classical manner of base, shaft, and capital, with a base of one story, a shaft of two or three stories, and a capital of one story. The Alaska Building (1903-04, Eames and Young) is thought to be the first "skyscraper" built in Seattle. Charles W. Saunders was among the first Seattle architects to explore steel-frame construction with the original Bon Marché Store (1900-02, Saunders & Lawton, destroyed) on the southwestern corner of Second Avenue and Pike Street, and the Lumber Exchange Building (1902-03, Saunders & Lawton, destroyed) at the southwestern corner of Second Avenue and Seneca Street.[102]

Theaters were often included as major portions of mixed-use commercial buildings. The Moore Theater (Edwin W. Houghton) completed in 1907, on Second Avenue in the newly re-graded area north of the what was considered the central business district, is an early Seattle example of a mixed-use building, with the 2,400-seat theater and hotel sharing one relatively large six-story building faced with glazed brick masonry and detailed in a fairly minimal Renaissance Revival style. Alexander Pantages' six-story Seattle Pantages Theater (B. Marcus Priteca, later renamed Palomar and Rex, demolished) completed in 1913, on the northeastern corner of Third Avenue and University Street, was embellished with Renaissance Revival style corbelling, festoons, and cartouches and included both retail and office spaces on the upper floors.[103] The Blaine Building (Henderson Ryan, demolished) with its 1,700-seat Liberty Theater that was completed in 1914, on First Avenue across from the Pike Street Public Market, was another early mixed-use example. The building was clad in white terra cotta with Renaissance Revival styling topped with an elaborate parapet featuring gas-lit torches. The theater itself was located behind street-front retail, with second and third-floor offices. Other later downtown mixed-use theater buildings designed with Renaissance Revival or Classically inspired detailing include the Orpheum Theater Building (1927, B. Marcus Priteca, demolished) and the Seattle Theater Building (1930, later Paramount,

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[101] R. Furneaux Jordan, A Concise History of Western Architecture (Norwich, G.B.: Jarrold & Sons, 1969), p. 308.

[102] Jeffrey Karl Ochsner, "Charles W. Saunders," pp. 34-39.

[103] Both Alexander Pantages and architect B. Marcus Priteca occupied offices within the building.

restored and altered).

Building Architect-Henderson Ryan (1856-1927)

The architect of record for the Neptune Theater Building was Henderson Ryan.

Henderson Ryan (Rian) was born near Valhermosa Springs, Morgon County, Alabama on January 16, 1856.[104] He married Harriet M. Oden in 1878.[105] Ryan attended the Agricultural and Mechanical College of Kentucky (now University of Kentucky) between 1873 and 1877.[106] Between 1893 and 1894, he worked with architect Herman Hadley as the builder of the Richardsonian "Old Central" (NHR, OK ID # 71000672), the first building on the Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College (Now University of Oklahoma) campus.[107] Ryan relocated to Seattle, WA, in 1898, working originally out of his home at 1517 Queen Anne Avenue N as a contractor-builder.[108] He began listing himself in the city directories as an architect in 1901, and moved into offices on the third floor of the Globe Building around 1903.[109]

Over his architectural career, Ryan usually worked alone, or in brief professional associations. He employed John Cruetzer for design and construction assistance after 1906.[110] In 1912, Ryan formed a brief partnership with Irvin B. Gayer, listing the firm as Ryan and Gayer, Architects and Engineers in the 1912 Portland City Directory.[111]

Most of what we know of Ryan's early architectural career is derived from an advertising supplement printed around 1907, where Ryan provided a list of projects he designed and supervised including the "Moore Building, Waldorf and Roycroft Apartments, the Broadway Building, Swedish Baptist Church, Antonia Apartments, the Raleigh Hotel, Ballard Library, Taylor Apartments, Keene Apartments, and many others including some of the finest homes in Seattle." He also noted a recently completed design for the "United States wireless telegraph station near Nome," that was adopted as a standard design for further wireless stations in Alaska.[112]

Of the Seattle buildings mentioned above, his first known major commission was the design for a Public Library (1903-1904, now Carnegie's Restaurant) in the then independent town of Ballard. This symmetrically arranged brick building has a rusticated base and red brick exterior extending upward two-stories crowned by a hip roof. A prominent central pedimented portico extends outward from the entry façade with four colossal order flat pilasters with Corinthian capitals supporting the main entablature. A second-floor balcony is faced with an undulating convex sheet-metal frieze with a pressed floral motif. A central

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[104] U.S. Bureau of the Census, "Eighth Census of the United States, Eastern Division, Morgan, Alabama," 1860, p. 5.

[105] U.S. Bureau of the Census, "Twelfth Census of the United States, Seattle, Ward 3, King, Washington," 1900, p. 12.

[106] LeRoy Fischer and Kent Ruth, "Old Central," National Register of Historic Places Nomination, United States of the Interior, National Park Service, OK ID # 71000672, July 27, 1971.

[107] Matthew A. Harris, Research and Reference Coordinator, University of Kentucky, e-mail to Larry E. Johnson, April 26, 2010.

[108] R.L. Polk Company, Polk's Seattle City Directory, 1898.

[109] R.L. Polk Company, Polk's Seattle City Directory, 1901, 1903.

[110] Dennis A. Anderson, "Crutzer, John," In Shaping Seattle Architecture: A Historical Guide to Architects. pp. 34-39. Edited by Jeffrey Karl Ochsner. Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 1994. p. 341.

[111] Richard Ellison Ritz, *Architects of Oregon*, (Portland, OR: Lair Hill Publishing, 2002), p. 346.

[112] National Publishing Company, "Henderson Ryan," in *Seattle of Today*, p. 133.

Romanesque stone arch is located immediately behind the balcony. Ryan used a similar sheet metal frieze (since replaced) to face a second-story balcony in a Capitol Hill house he designed for piano merchant G.W. Cline, also in 1904. This large house, basically a modified four-square, was described a "A Study in Venetian Mission," in an article appearing in *Pacific Builder and Engineer*.[113] Ryan later designed an unrealized Italianate 12-story office tower for Cline that was to have been located at the corner of 3rd Avenue and Stewart Street.[114]

Ryan designed the Swedish Baptist Church (1904-1905, destroyed), located in Seattle's Cascade District. This building was located at the northwestern corner of Pine Street and 9th Avenue in Seattle, and had its entrance facing Pine Street, with a central gable roof flanked by corner towers, the corner tower breaking an otherwise symmetrical composition by having a higher bell loft and tall pyramidal roof. Stylistically the building is Romanesque, with a stone base surmounted by red brick masonry. The central entry doorway featured three round arches supported on square stone columns, with a tripartite arched window arrangement above a central circular rose window with stone facing on the gable end.

Ryan published a design for the Raleigh Hotel (ca. 1905, originally the Moore Building, altered) that originally called for an 11-story building on 4th Avenue near Spring Street, although only the first five stories were completed. The original design was symmetrically arranged around a Romanesque arched entry and featuring a trellised roof garden that was popular during this period.[115]

Ryan is also credited with the design of several residential hotels and apartment buildings built in Seattle in the early years of the twentieth-century. They include the seven-story Waldorf Hotel (1905-06, demolished 2000) at Pike Street and 7th Avenue, the three-and-a-half-story Roycroft (1907) on Harvard Avenue, the three-story Grandview (1907) on Eastlake Avenue, and the three-story Fredonia (1908, significantly altered) on E Mercer Street, all are of brick or stucco construction and similarly styled with round arched entries with projecting bay windows. The Waldorf's entrance archway led onto an enclosed entrance courtyard, while the Roycroft features a second-story recessed courtyard framed by a frontal archway above the entrance vestibule. The Fredonia originally had conical tile roofs on the corners of the two street facades and Flemish style scrolled raised parapet sections.[116] Other apartment projects completed during this period include the Antonia Apartments (demolished), the Taylor Apartments (demolished) on Taylor Avenue, and the Keene Apartments (demolished) on 19th Avenue.

The Broadway Building (ca. 1905, demolished) located at the northeastern corner of the intersection of Broadway and E Madison Street was similarly detailed of Ryan's other early apartments, but featured a round corner tower with a conical sheet-metal roof with a projecting flagpole.[117]

The four-story Maryland Apartments (1910-11, City of Seattle Landmark) departs from the

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[113] *Pacific Builder and Engineer*, "A Study in Venetian Mission," September 11, 1904, p. 8-9.

[114] University of Washington Libraries, Special Collections Division, postcard file, "Seattle, Buildings, Cline."

[115] National Publishing Company, p. 63.

[116] University of Washington Libraries, Special Collections Division, architect's file, un-sourced photo of Fredonia, ca. 1909.

[117] Seattle Municipal Archives, Photograph Collection, item No: 52936, December 6, 1955.

Ryan's usual quasi-Romanesque style with a projecting three-story tall central entrance portico composed of four square brick columns supporting a third story balcony. The Maryland's entrance façade has a partial stone basement/first floor, diapered red brick with shallow arched windows on the second-floor, with the third and fourth floor faced with a light buff-colored brick.[118]

During this period, Ryan was commissioned to design a small brick commercial building in Columbia City for the Rainier Valley Investment Company (1912, altered).[119]

Around 1913, theater owners and operators Claude Jensen and John G. von Herberg (a.k.a. Peter Coyle), commissioned Ryan to design a lavish theater on First Avenue, just north of Pike Street, that would be devoted primarily to showing motion pictures. The resulting Liberty Theater (1912, demolished 1955), within the three-story Blaine Building, was a symmetrically arranged neo-classically inspired composition faced with light-glazed terra cotta. The central theater entrance and suspended marquee was flanked by higher building masses with ornate parapets featuring large urns that appear to have been capable of producing a flame. A large central flagpole was centrally located on the central parapet. The theater originally featured a lighted standing Lady Liberty with her raised torch sign that was suspended from the building face above the marquee. The interior featured an elaborately decorated proscenium arch extending upward to an arched ceiling with landscape paintings. Grillwork concealed the pipes of what is thought to have been the first large Wurlizer theater organ. Henry W. Bittman was the project engineer.[120]

For the Liberty, Ryan developed new ramp design that provided easy balcony access while maximizing auditorium space, which he patented in 1916.[121]

The success of the Liberty propelled Jensen and von Herberg to the forefront of the rapidly developing motion picture circuit.[122] With Ryan as their architect and using the basic model developed at the Liberty, the duo developed several theaters in Montana, Oregon, and Washington, often under the "Liberty" name.[123]

The Rialto Theater (1916, demolished) in Butte, Montana was designed by Ryan with a floor plan almost identical to The Liberty.[124] The theater had a Neo-classical exterior with torch-urns at the corner and large flagpoles. Also in Butte, the group developed the Peoples Theater (ca. 1916, demolished).[125] Other theaters in Montana possibly designed by Ryan include the Marlow Theater (1918, demolished) in Helena, and the Liberty Theater (1922, altered) in Great Falls, the latter having also having a Neo-classical exterior with Ryan's signature

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[118] T. William Booth, "Maryland Apartments," City of Seattle Landmark Nomination, April 12, 1989, p. 5.

[119] Department of Neighborhoods, "Rainier Valley Investment Company," Historical Sites Survey, http://web1.seattle.gov/dpd/historicalsite/QueryResult.aspx?ID°=1212487871, accessed March 18, 2010, pp. 1-2.

[120] University of Washington Libraries, Special Collections Division, "Blaine Building," architectural drawings, shts. 1-11. Puget Sound Organ Society, "Liberty Theater," http://www.pstos.org/instruments/wa/seattle/liberty.htm, accessed April 7, 2010. pp. 1-6.

[121] Horace Barnes, "Patented Ramp in Liberty Theatre Seattle," Pacific Builder and Engineer, April 17, 1917, p. 16.

[122] Eric Flom, "Susan Edgerly remembers her father, Seattle motion picture exhibitor John G. von Herberg, and her Seattle, childhood," HistoryLink.org, Essay 3661, January 16, 2002, http://www.historylink.org/index.cfm?DisplayPage=output.cfm&file_id=3661, accessed April 7, 2010. pp. 1-2.

[123] Horace Barnes, p. 16.

[124] Barnes, p. 16.

[125] Barnes, p. 16.

torch-urns and a large flagpole.[126]

In Oregon, Ryan designed the Whiteside Theater (1922, NHR 2009) for the Whiteside family in Corvallis, Oregon, with an Italian Renaissance brick exterior featuring a central round arch with a tripartite group of arched windows above the marquee. A large cast-stone cartouche with a supporting mascaron is mounted at the parapet.[127]

In Washington State, besides the original Liberty Theater, Ryan designed the Liberty Theater in Yakima (ca. 1919, altered) for Jensen and von Herberg, and the Neptune Theater (1922) in Seattle, in the University District.[128] The Yakima Liberty was also Neo-classically styled with light-glazed terra cotta, with two torch-shaped pinnacles and a central flagpole at the parapet. The Neptune Theater appears to have been a smaller and stripped-down version of the Rialto Theater in Butte, sharing the same corner orientation.

Ryan retired to California in 1923, and died at age 71, on August 29, 1927.[129]

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[126] Barnes, p. 16. Puget Sound Organ Society, "Liberty Theater," http://www.pstos.org/instruments/mt/great-falls/liberty.htm, accessed April 7, 2010. p. 3. Photos of Great Falls Liberty Theater show characteristic grouping of flaming urns and central flagpole.

[127] Carol Chin, etal., "Whiteside Theatre," National Register of Historic Places Nomination, United States of the Interior, National Park Service, NRIS No. 0900060.

[128] Eric Flom, pp. 1-2. University District Herald, "New U-Neptune Theatre to Give Initial Performance Wednesday. November 11, 1921.

[129] Jo Ann Simmons, "Holmes/Ryan/Smith/Lancaster/Kyle/Hill/McLeod/Simmons Families Genealogy," http://trees.ancestry.com/tree/1786059/person/-1892135803?ssrc=, accessed April 27, 2010.

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Architectural Drawings

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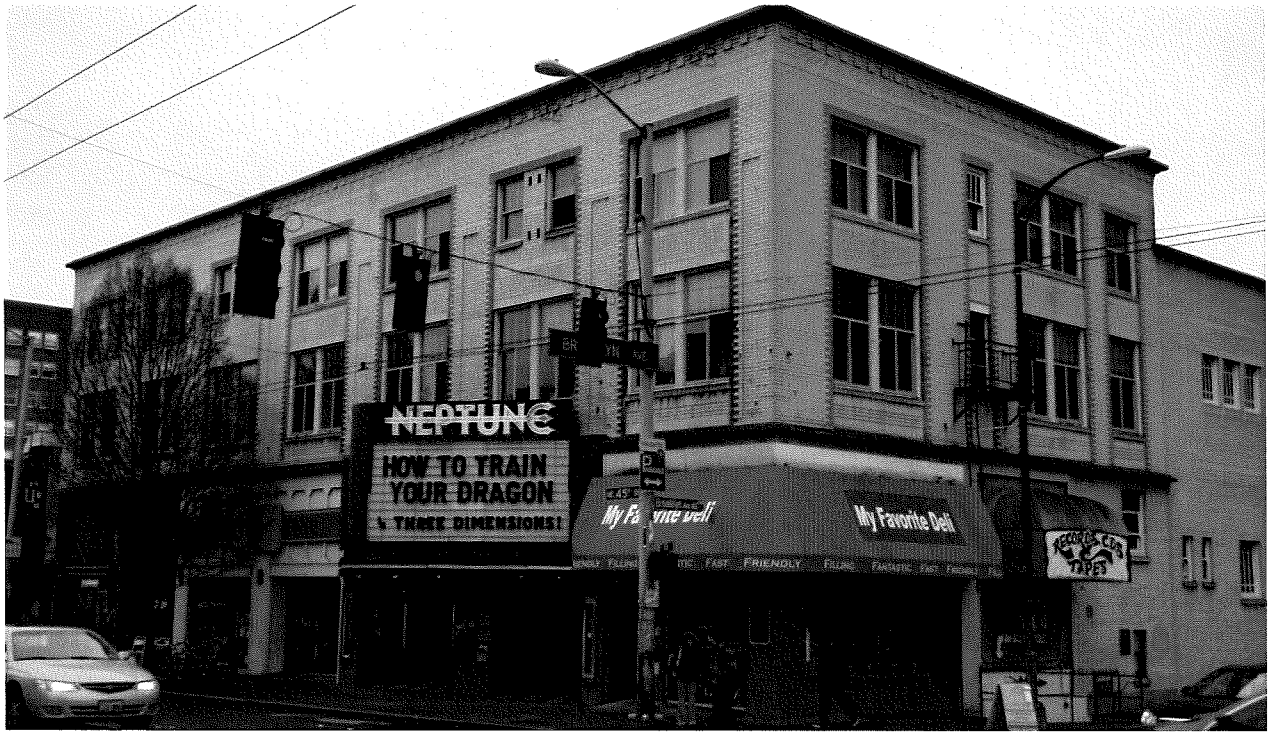
The features of the Landmark to be preserved include: The exterior of the building, and the following interior spaces: the upper and lower ramps, and the auditorium.

Issued: November 21, 2012

Karen Gordon
City Historic Preservation Officer

Cc: Craig Thompson
Jim Greenfield, Davis Wright Tremaine
David Peterson, NK Architects
Larry Johnson, The Johnson Partnership
Mark Hannum, Chair, LPB
Diane Sugimura, DPD
Alan Oiye, DPD
Ken Mar, DPD



Neptune Building, 1301 Northeast 45th Street, 2010

Neptune Building, 1301 Northeast 45th Street, 1937