FOX THEATRES
The Fabulous Five
1928-29
Part Three
Fox San Francisco
Fox St Louis
LIGHTING

Eur Ing BRIAN ROBERTS CEng Hon.FCIBSE
Life Member ASHRAE

CIBSE HERITAGE GROUP
FOX SAN FRANCISCO

OPENED 1929

SEATING CAPACITY 4651

OPERATOR Fox Theatre Corporation

ARCHITECT Thomas W Lamb

LIGHTING SWITCHBOARD Westinghouse with Hub Electric Company components

STATUS Demolished 1963

The Basement plan shows there was a mechanical ventilation plant
THE FOX SAN FRANCISCO

Drawing by Architect Thomas W Lamb 1928-29
FOX THEATRE
SAN FRANCISCO

DEDICATED TO CALIFORNIA
FRIDAY - JUNE 28 - 1929
WORLD’S FINEST THEATRE
DEDICATED TO CALIFORNIA
JUNE 28, 1929

FOX

New Fox Theatre Supplement of the
San Francisco Examiner

San Francisco’s Message to all California

San Francisco, one of the most beautiful cities in the world, joyously dedicates the finest theatre in the world to California...

San Francisco, May 30

Mayor of San Francisco
THE FOX SAN FRANCISCO

(Cinema Treasures)
The Lobby
(Cinema Treasures)
Stage with double row of footlights (San Francisco Theatres)
THE FOX SAN FRANCISCO

Auditorium (San Francisco Theatres)

Lighting switchboard (Motion Picture News)
Painting with light
in San Francisco

In the new Fox Theater of San Francisco, the modern artist paints with light. Auditorium, stage and lobby serve as a canvas for the ever-changing scene of variegated colors. With the operation of a single switch on the mammoth Westinghouse theater switchboard, the lighting effects for an entire scene are reproduced.

Colored light has a marked psychological effect upon the audience, and if controlled so as to vary from color to color with the mood of the play, brings the audience closer to the spirit of the production.

Westinghouse theater switchboards can help you achieve unusual lighting effects. Obtain a copy of C. 1792 from the nearest Westinghouse office.

Service, prompt and efficient, by a coast-to-coast chain of well-equipped shops

Westinghouse

(Tune in the Westinghouse Salute over the N. B. C. nation-wide network every Tuesday evening.)
Plan of Engineering Services basement (Fox: The Last Word)
THE FOX SAN FRANCISCO

Demolition (video capture from YouTube; The Fabulous Fox)
The Fox being demolished 1963 (Theatres of San Francisco)
FOX ST LOUIS

OPENED 1929
SEATING CAPACITY 5060
OPERATOR Fox Theatre Corporation
ARCHITECT C Howard Crane
STATUS Restored 1981 & 2013 and in use

The Fox had a central vacuum cleaning system
THE FOX ST LOUIS

Drawing by Architect C Howard Crane
1927

CONSTRUCTION OF THE FOX THEATRE

William Fox, who founded the movie production company that carried his name, begins construction on the Fox Theatre in St. Louis. The theatre replaces the rough-cut limestone Grand Avenue Presbyterian Church located at 527 N. Grand Boulevard. C. Howard Crane, one of the leading movie palace architects of the period, designs the theater. Crane began his career in architecture in Detroit and was known for designing movie palaces with ornate craftsmanship and incredible acoustics.

Crane designs the theatre in a style known as “Siamese Byzantine,” a conglomeration of Moorish, far Eastern, Egyptian, Babylonian and Indian themes of various periods.

1928

BREAKING GROUND

With nearly a year and a half between ground breaking and grand opening, an army of workers is called into build the St. Louis Fox. Construction is under the supervision of the Aronberg-Fried Company, Inc. Eventually the construction crew is joined by the artisans and craftsmen responsible for the Fox’s opulent interior. The grand lobby of the Fox is designed to recall ancient Indian religious buildings in a style known as “Siamese Byzantine”. With rows of flanking columns, the 90-foot lobby is reminiscent of the rock-cut Buddhist monastery halls, and the terrazzo lobby floor is covered with a crimson and gold chenille carpet imported from Czechoslovakia.
1929

OPENING NIGHT

The Fabulous Fox Theatre opens in January with a showing of the film “Street Angel”. For 50 cents, a person can experience live entertainment, music from two organs, Fox Movietone News, and of course, the “talkie.” Gov. Henry S. Caulfield dedicates the new $5,000,000 Fox Theatre, sharing civic honors with Mayor Miller and former Mayor Henry E. Kiel. Reporters note that the new Fox theatre is “bewildering in richness and dazzling in appointments...striking a note that reverberated around the architectural and theatrical worlds.” The extravagant interior of the Fox is reflected in plaster finishes, hand stenciled walls, marble bathroom fixtures, leather-lined elevators, gilt paint, glass “jewels,” velvet throne chairs and intricately cast brass.

2013

CEILING RESTORATION

The Fox restores the auditorium ceiling, cleaning, painting and repairing fabric. The project requires the entire auditorium be scaffolded from floor to ceiling to allow for a complete cleaning, touch up painting and fabric repair. The auditorium dome is designed as a canopy tent with alternating panels of jewel-studded intricate plasterwork and Indian fabric. Plaster tassels, fringe and filigree work embellish the canopy perimeter which is supported by gigantic spears that point to the center opening. Colors are hand-matched to restore the ornamental plaster “spokes” and stencils cut to replicate the original damask pattern in the fabric “drapes” of the “tent.”

(www.fabulousfox.com)
THE FOX ST LOUIS

The fabulous lobby
THE FOX ST LOUIS

The auditorium
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Some Websites with Theatre and/or HVAC & R History

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