Most of the time, there is nothing remarkable about a movie theatre today; but that wasn’t always the case. When the great American movie palaces began opening in the early 20th century, they were some of the most lavish, stunning buildings ever seen. However, they wouldn’t last— with the advent of in-home television, theatre companies found it harder and harder to keep them open.
Some were demolished, some were converted, and some remain empty to this day.

Variety Theatre, Cleveland, Ohio

[Photo Credits] After the Final Curtain
The Fall of the American Movie Theatre
Matt Lambros (Photographer), 2016
Air Conditioning American Movie Theatres
1917-Present Day

Paramount Theatre
NEWARK, NEW JERSEY

Date Remodelled: 1917
Seating Capacity: 3642
Owner: Paramount from 1931
Architect: Thomas W Lamb
Date Abandoned: Closed 1986
Became Army/Navy surplus store. Awaiting demolition
Air Conditioning American Movie Theatres
1917-Present Day

Metropolitan Theatre
DETROIT, MICHIGAN

Date Built: 1922
Seating Capacity: 1450
Owner: Warner Bros 1925
Architect: Thomas W Lamb
Closed 1977. Demolished 1978
Originally air conditioned by Wittenmeier
Air Conditioning American Movie Theatres 
1917-Present Day

Loew’s Poli Theatre
BRIDGEPORT, CONNECTICUT

Date Built: 1922
Seating Capacity: 3642
Owner: Loew’s
Architect: Thomas W Lamb
Date Abandoned: Closed 1975
Air Conditioning American Movie Theatres
1917-Present Day

Grand Theatre
STEUBENVILLE, OHIO

Date Built: 1925 (Theatre 1885)
Seating Capacity: 1450
Owner: Charles, Edward, Howard & Bigio
Architect: Unknown
Closed 1979. Shop. 2010 Restoration planned
Originally air conditioned by Carrier 1927
State Palace Theatre
NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA

Date Built: 1926
Seating Capacity: 3285
Owner: Loew’s
Architect: Thomas W Lamb
Originally air conditioned by Wittenmeier
Loew's Canal Theatre
NEW YORK, NEW YORK

Date Built: 1927
Seating Capacity: 2279
Owner: Loew’s
Architect: Thomas Lamb
Date Abandoned: Closed 1980
Now warehouse
Carolina Theatre
CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA

Date Built: 1927
Seating Capacity: 1100
Owner: Operated by H F Kinsey for Paramount
Architect: R E Hall
Originally air conditioned by Carrier 1927
Air Conditioning American Movie Theatres
1917-Present Day

Boyd Theatre
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

Date Built: 1928
Seating Capacity: 2450
Owner: Alexander Boyd
Architect: Hoffman-Henon
Date Abandoned: Closed 2002. Largely demolished
Originally air conditioned by Carrier Corporation
Uptown Theatre

PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

Date Built: 1929
Seating Capacity: 2040
Owner: Samuel Shapiro
Architect: Magaziner, Eberhard & Harris
Date Abandoned: Became church, vacated 2003
Restoration planned. Originally Carrier air conditioning
Air Conditioning American Movie Theatres
1917-Present Day

Loew’s Kings Theatre
BROOKLYN, NEW YORK

Date Built: 1929
Seating Capacity: 3398
Owner: Loew’s
Architect: Rapp & Rapp
Date Abandoned: Became church, vacated 2003
Closed 1977. Restored, reopened 2015
Originally air conditioned by York Ice Machinery
Kings Theatre, Brooklyn
Kings Theatre, Brooklyn
This book by Matt Lambros (2016) contains photographs of many Movie Theatres which have been neglected and fallen into a bad state of repair. A listing of the theatres covered in his book follows on the next page. There are many additional photographs and other theatres on his website; mlambroscopy.
Loew’s Poli Theatre, Bridgeport, Connecticut
Adams Theatre, Newark, New Jersey
Paramount Theatre, Newark, New Jersey
Boyd Theatre, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Uptown Theatre, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Franklin Park Theatre, Dorchester, Massachusetts
Embassy Theatre, Port Chester, New York
Loew’s Canal Theatre, New York, New York
Shore Theatre, Brooklyn, New York
Loew’s Kings Theatre, Brooklyn, New York
Lyric Fine Arts Theatre, Birmingham, Alabama
Loew’s State Theatre, New Orleans, Louisiana
Grand Theatre, Steubenville, Ohio
Variety Theatre, Cleveland, Ohio
Eastown Theatre, Detroit, Michigan
Liberty Theatre, Youngstown, Ohio
Studebaker Theatre, Chicago, Illinois
Kenosha Theatre, Kenosha, Wisconsin
Jayhawk Theatre, Topeka, Kansas
Paramount Theatre, Marshall, Texas
Fox Theatre, Inglewood, California
Warner Theatre, Huntington Park, California