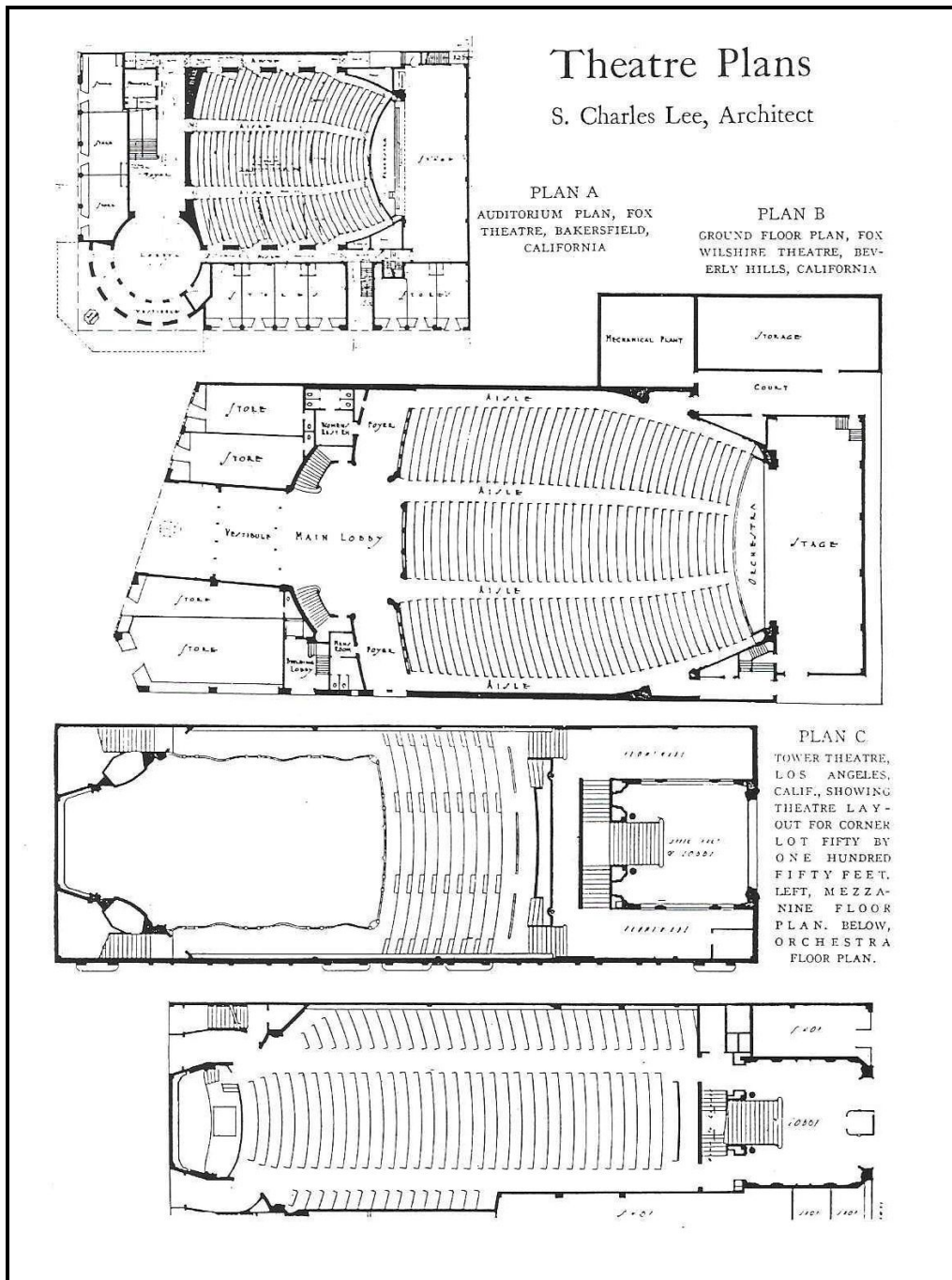


Air Conditioning American Movie Theatres 1917-1932

Theatre Architects



Air Conditioning American Movie Theatres 1917-1932

1927 List of Theatre Architects

From American Theatres of Today

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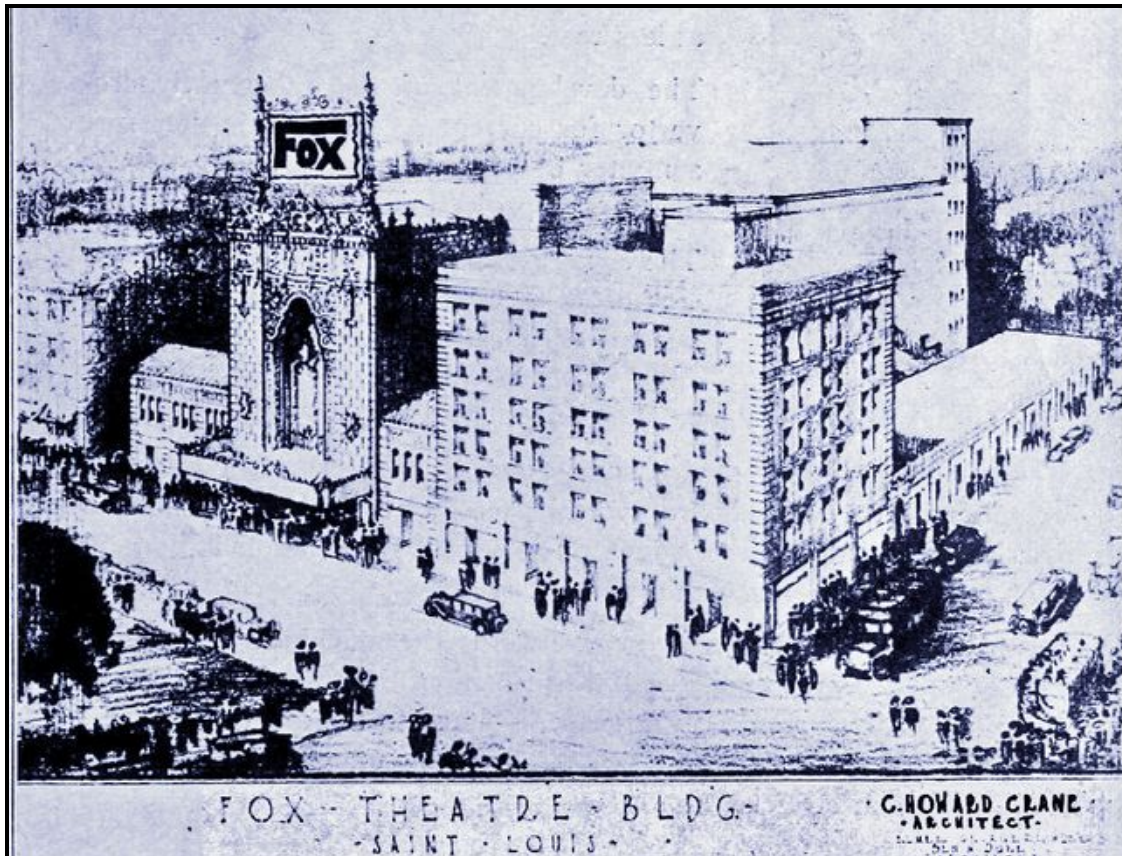
C HOWARD CRANE



Charles Howard Crane was born in Hartford, Connecticut, on 13th August, 1885. He moved to Detroit in 1904 where he worked as a draughtsman for several architectural firms, including Albert Kahn Associates, Smith, Hinchman & Grylls and Gustave A Mueller, before opening his own office in 1908.

Crane specialised in the design of movie theatres in North America and in his career this covered a total of some 250 theatres in total, with around 62 in the Detroit area. Major works included the 5174 seat Detroit Fox Theatre, (the largest of the Fox Theatres), the 4500 seat Fox Theatre in St. Louis and the 4088 seat Brooklyn Fox.

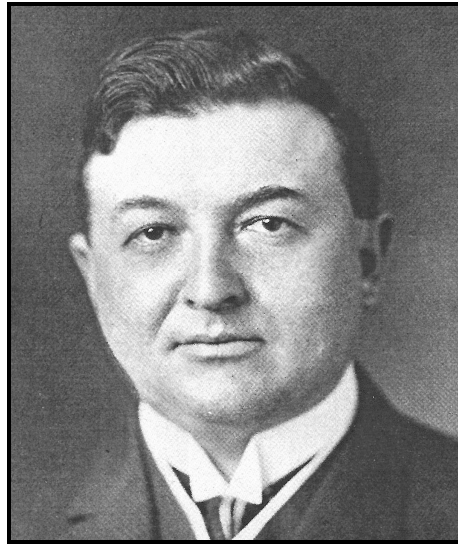
He died in London on the 14th August, 1952.



FOX THEATRE BUILDING, BROOKLYN, N. Y.

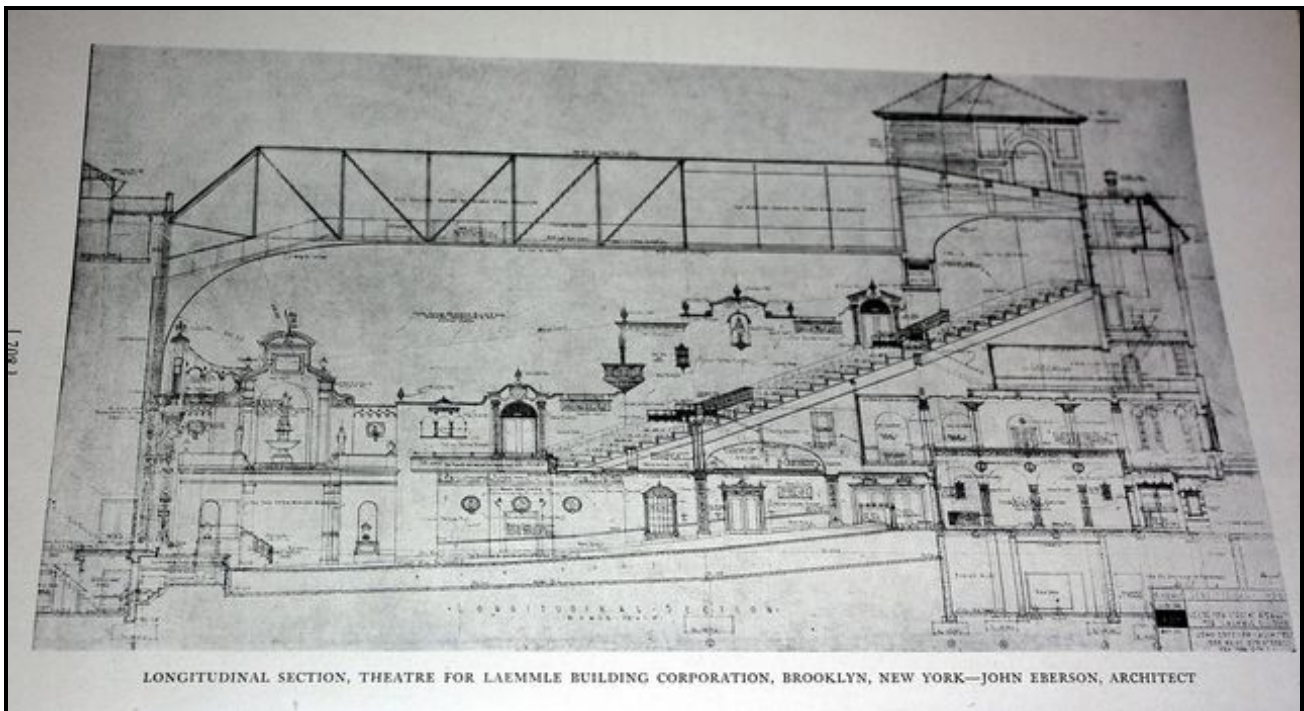


JOHN EBERSON



John Adolf Emil Ebersson was born in 1875 in Austria-Hungary (now Ukraine) and studied electrical engineering at the University of Vienna. He also served in the Austrian Army. In 1901 he immigrated to the United States and settled in St. Louis. After working in electrical contracting, he next worked for a theatre architecture and construction company. Moving to Hamilton, Ontario, in 1904 he carried out opera house design work. In 1910, he moved to Chicago designing theatres including the Fort Worth Majestic (1911) and the Austin Majestic (1915). He went on to experiment with his “atmospheric designs”, his first full example being the Majestic, Houston (1923).

In 1926, he moved to New York City, and went on to achieve acclaim for his atmospheric theatres, many of them executed in exotic revival styles, including Italian Renaissance, Spanish Revival, Moorish Revival and others.

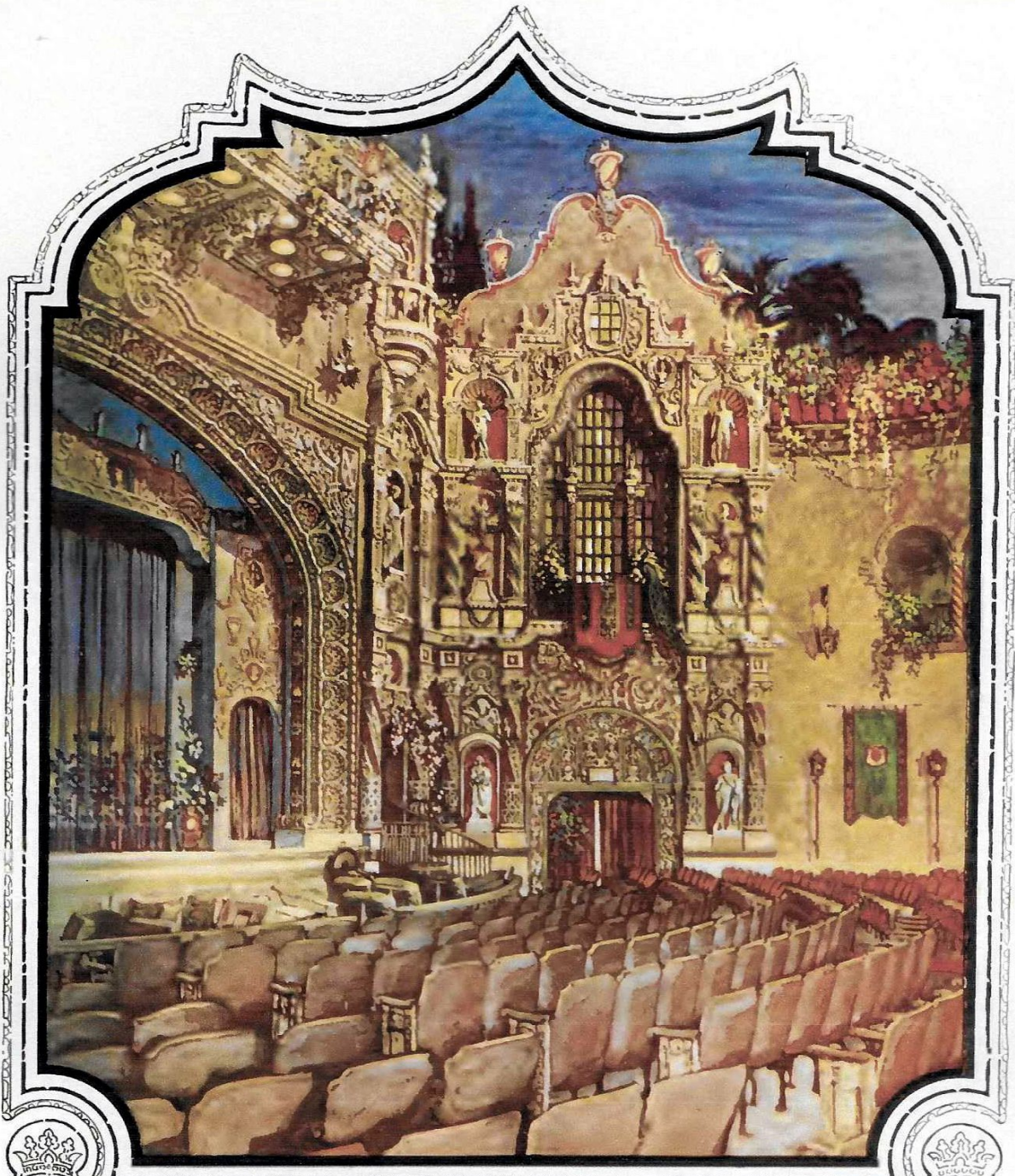


THE rapid and altogether astonishing growth of the so-called Atmospheric Theatre, as a popular attraction as well as a distinctive architectural form, is responsible for many new developments of paramount interest to theatre owners. And the reflection of this situation is to be found here in this new presentation of recent examples manifesting advances which have been made under the expanding art of the originator of a new phase in the evolution of art allied with showmanship.

The pages which follow furnish reproductions in full color of the architectural and decorative features revealing the underlying principle as well as the method of execution of the idea embodied in the Atmospheric-style. Since color is a leading, if not *the* leading factor in the atmospheric effects it is only through a use of color in reproduction that an accurate conception of the style can be conveyed.

Comparison of these new examples of the Atmospheric Theatre with those presented in a previous issue, published June 12, 1926, emphasizes the many interesting advancements and refinements developed in an availing effort to extend the scope of original models and pictorial conceptions.

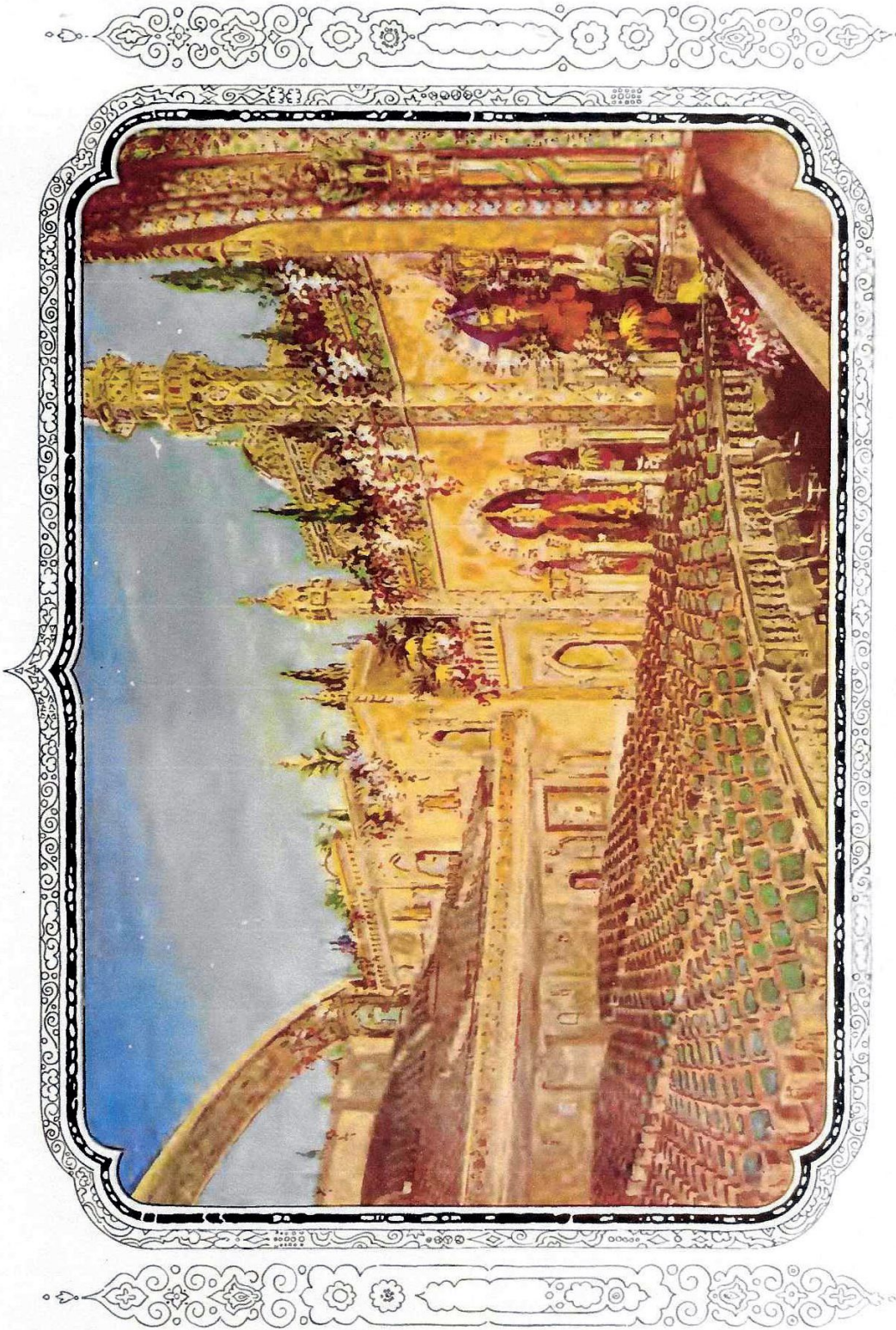
Equally interesting is such a comparison from the standpoint of its stimulation to thoughts of what the future may hold for the artist who has found in this style a medium richly endowed with opportunity for unfettered expression of imagination directed toward the development of new fancies and that most coveted showmanship ideal, Novelty.



A Spanish Facade

A close-up study of the proscenium and organ loft of the Tampa Theatre, Tampa, Florida. A colorful interpretation with a touch of ecclesiastical feeling.

JOHN EBERSON, ARCHITECT



Persian Shrine Courtyard
The auditorium of the Avalon Theatre, Chicago. Of particular interest are the tropical trees and plant ornament executed in proper scale.
JOHN EBERSON, ARCHITECT

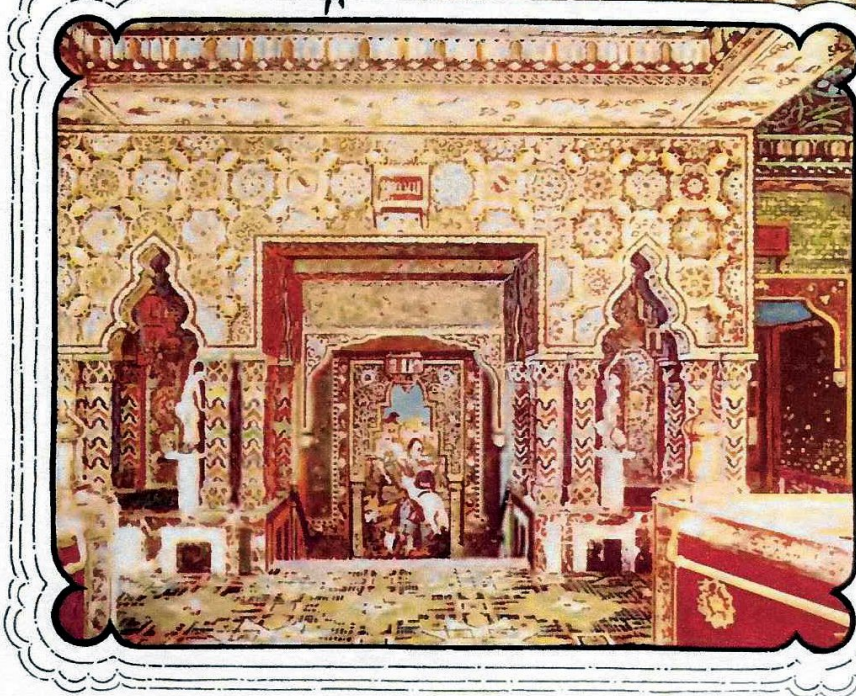
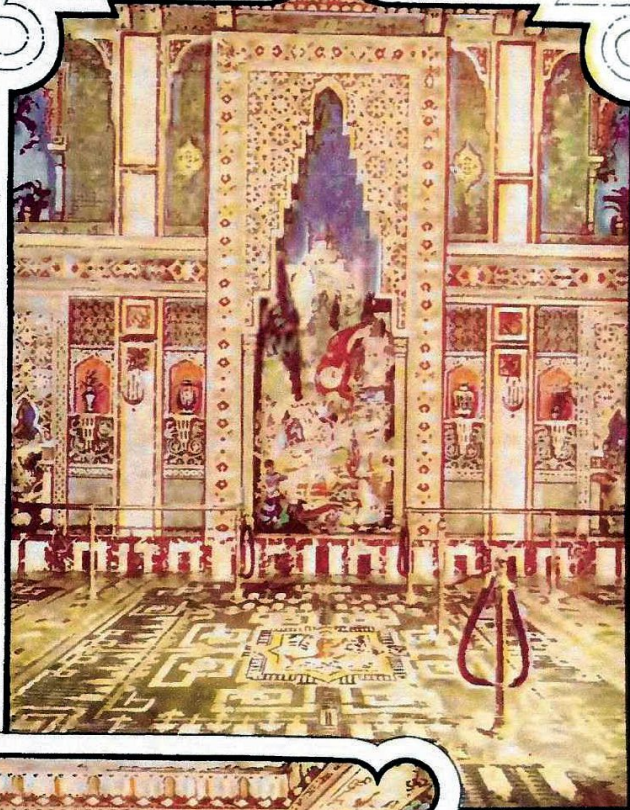


Italian Sidewall Colonnade
Sectional view of the auditorium of the Riviera
Theatre, Omaha. Note the cold air nozzles in rear sky
beam and orchestra floodlights under proscenium roof.
JOHN EBERSON, ARCHITECT

1926 Riviera Theatre, Omaha (2776)
Original picture caption "Cold air nozzles in rear sky beam and
orchestra floodlights under proscenium roof"

Avalon Mosaics

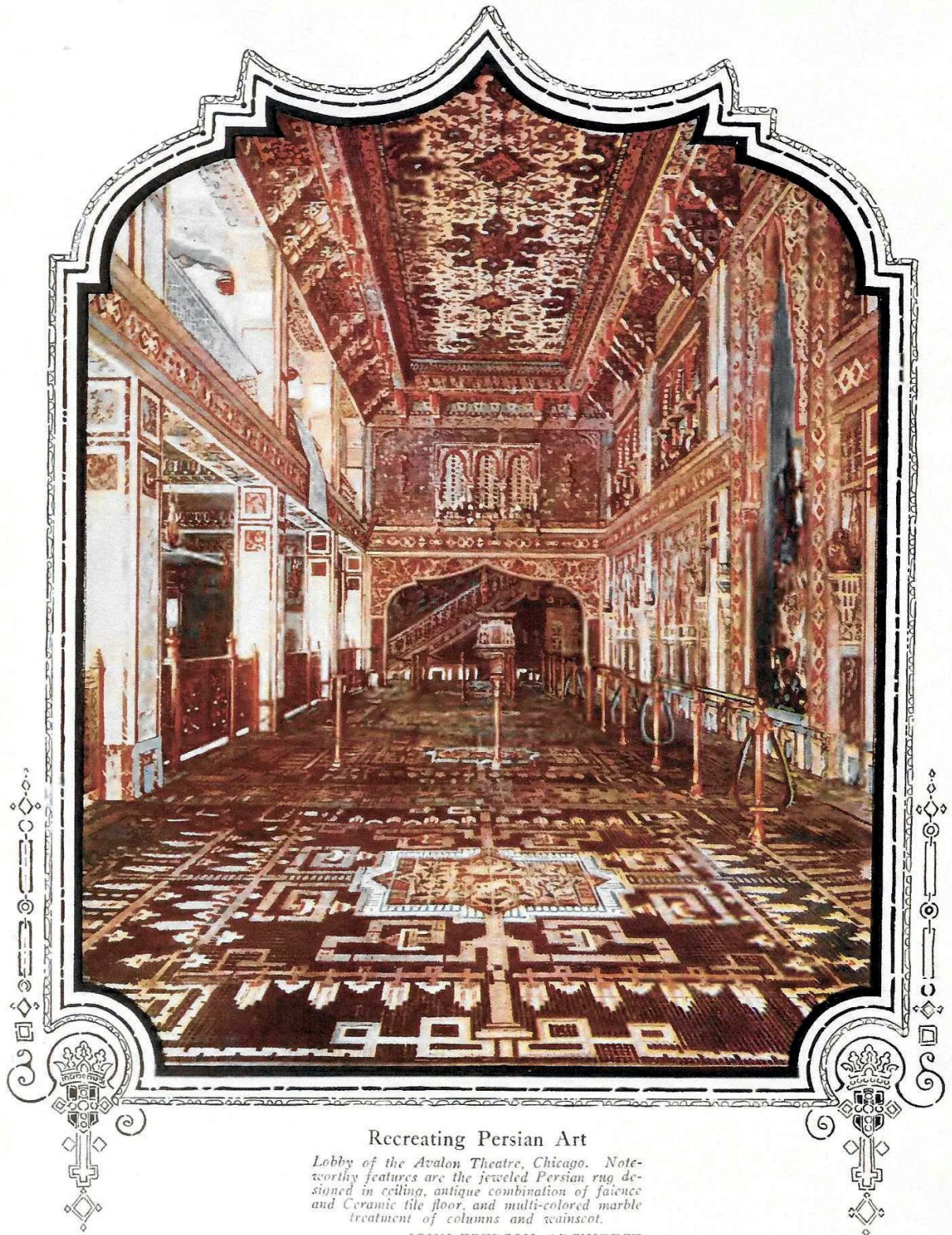
On the right is shown one of the Charles Morgan pastel mosaics which are a distinguished feature of the Persian atmospheric theatre in Chicago. It is set in a Persian gateway.



Avalon Shrines

A colorful feast for the eye are the shrines which frame the stairway entrance at the main level of the Avalon Theatre, Chicago. Carved ornament, interestingly textured and skilfully laid in myriad colors achieve a most pleasing kaleidoscopic effect.

JOHN EBERSON, ARCHITECT



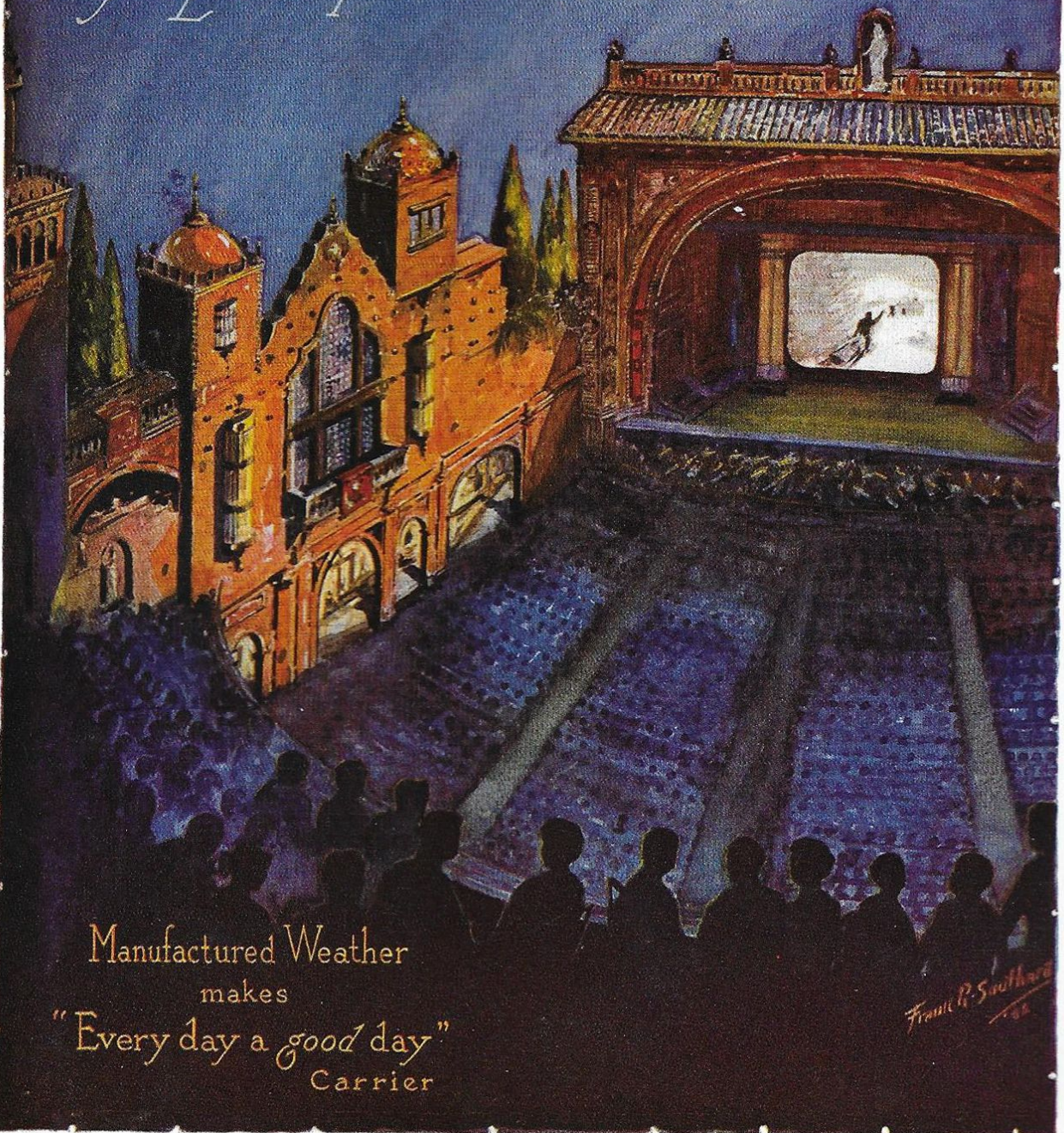
Recreating Persian Art

Lobby of the Avalon Theatre, Chicago. Noteworthy features are the jeweled Persian rug designed in ceiling, antique combination of faience and Ceramic tile floor, and multi-colored marble treatment of columns and reainscot.

JOHN EBERSON, ARCHITECT

Carrier Cooled

The Last Magic Touch
Creating the Outdoor Atmosphere
in John F. Berson Theaters



Manufactured Weather
makes
"Every day a good day"
Carrier

Francis P. Southard
1926

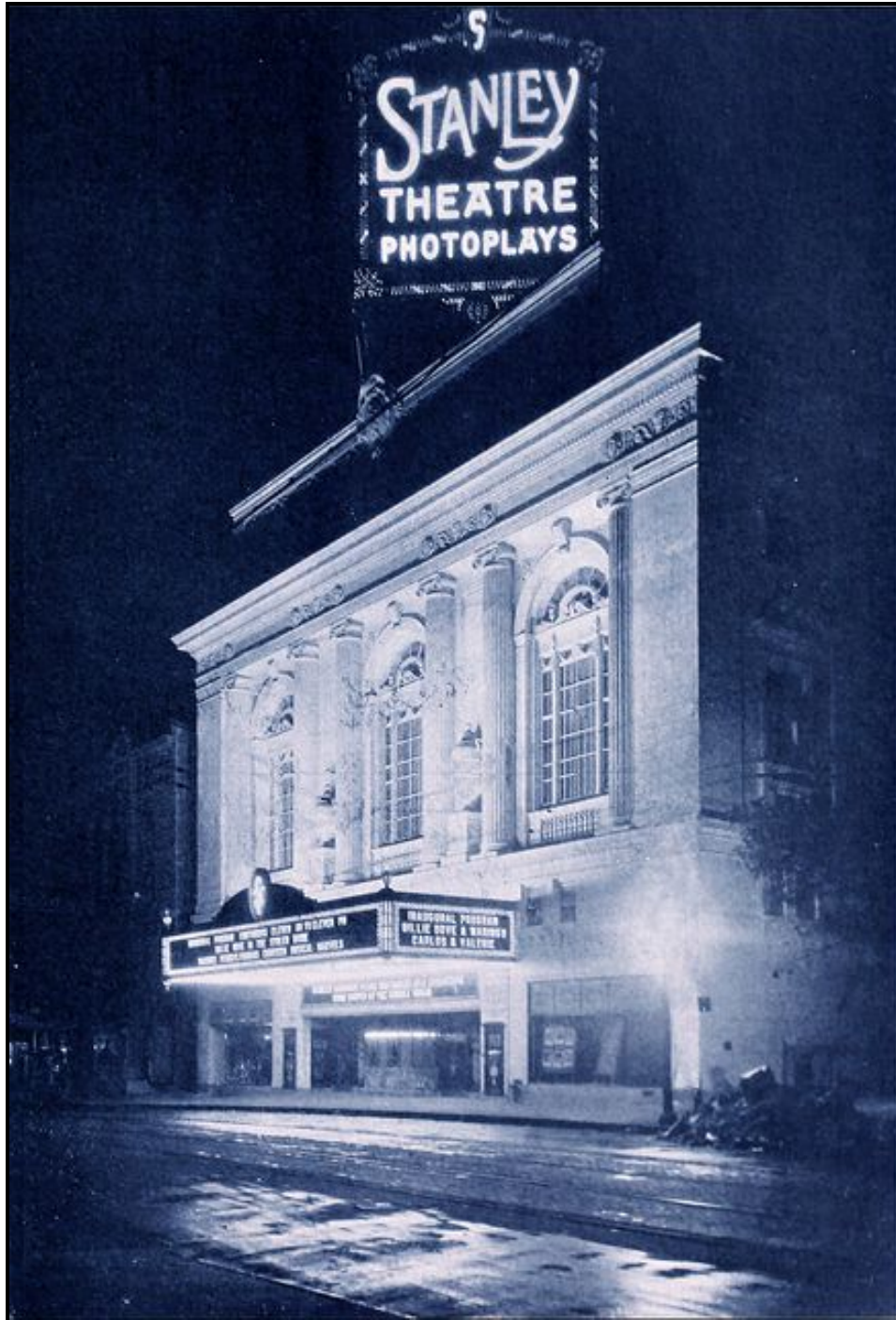
Carrier Engineering Corporation helped pioneer air conditioning in movie theaters beginning in the 1920s. Motion Picture News, June 12, 1926. Ross Melnick Collection

Olympia, Miami

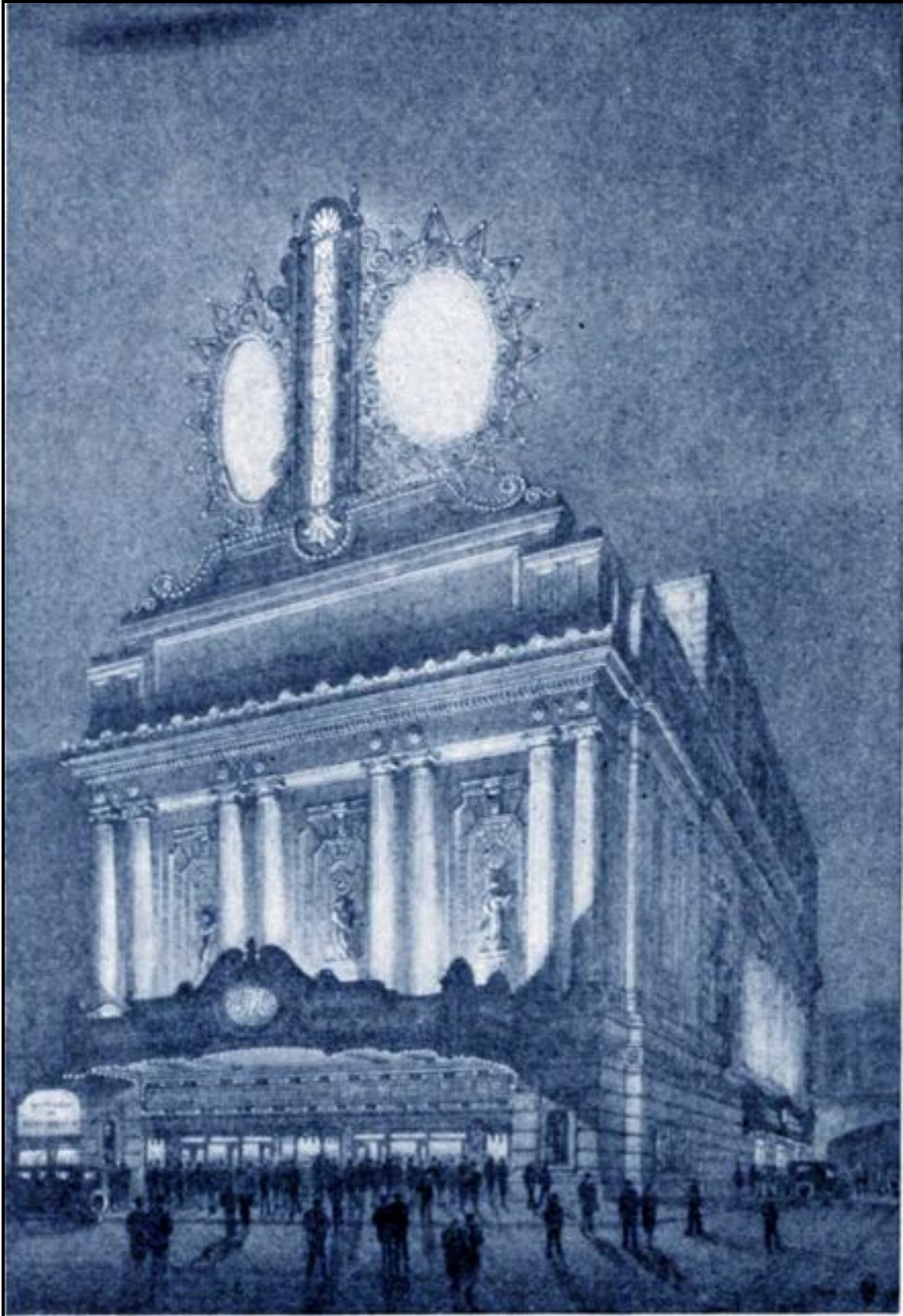
HOFFMAN-HENON

Hoffman-Henon was a prominent Philadelphia architectural firm known for their movie theatre designs. The senior partner was W H Hoffman who partnered with Paul J Henon Jr. They designed more than 100 theatres, 40 of them in Philadelphia.

Early designs include two Stanley Theatres in Philadelphia (1914 and 1921), the Stanley, Baltimore (1927), the Stanley, Pittsburgh (1928) and the giant 4,200 seat Mastbaum Memorial Theatre (1929), also in Philadelphia.



Stanley Theatre, Baltimore



Mastbaum Memorial Theatre, Philadelphia

HERBERT J KRAPP



He was born in New York City in 1887 and was an apprentice with the Hertz & Taliant firm. Between 1912 and 1916 Krapp began working directly for the theatre owners, the Shubert Brothers, becoming their primary architect and remaining with them until 1963. He designed a long list of Broadway theatres including: Ambassador, Biltmore, Imperial, Majestic and also RKO Proctors in New Rochelle. He died in 1973 in Florida.



Biltmore Theatre, New York

THOMAS W LAMB



Thomas White Lamb was born in Dundee, Scotland, in 1871, moving to the United States at the age of 12, going on to study architecture at Cooper Union in New York, then working as an Inspector for the City of New York. Next, he set up as an architect in New York and achieved recognition as one of the leading architects in the boom in movie theatre construction of the 1910s and 1920s. He worked for a number of well-known chains including Fox Theatres, Loew's Theatres and Keith-Albee. His designs included a number of New York theatres including the City Theatre (1909), Mark Strand (1914), Rialto (1916) and Rivoli (1917). His most notable theatres include the Capitol, New York (1919); Fox, San Francisco (1929), and Warners' Hollywood (1930). He is credited with the design of at least 174 theatres. Lamb died in 1949 in New York City at the age of 71.



Fox Theatre, San Francisco



Keep Cool

AT THE

Rivoli

We have invested over \$100,000 in a refrigerating cooling plant to keep you cool and comfortable when the world is sweltering. Unseen, unheard, resistless are the huge motors with a combined pulling power of 221 horses—representing but a small part of the marvellous equipment which absolutely assures a temperature that is just right. Delightfully refreshing days and evenings all summer at

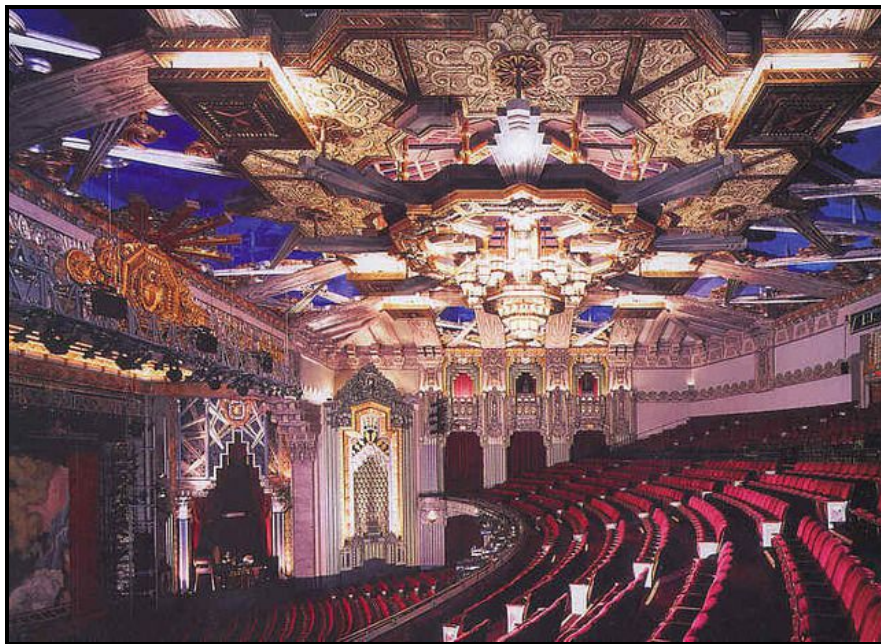
The **RIVOLI THEATRE**
BROADWAY at 49th STREET.
THE HOME OF *Paramount Pictures*

B MARCUS PRITECA



Benjamin Marcus Priteca was born in Glasgow, Scotland, on 23rd December, 1889. From 1904 to 1909, he served an apprenticeship in Edinburgh under architect Robert MacFarlane Cameron, while earning Degrees from the University of Edinburgh and the Royal College of Arts.

In 1909, he immigrated to the United States where he settled in Seattle, Washington. In 1910 he met the Seattle vaudeville theatre owner Alexander Pantages, who commissioned him to design the San Francisco Pantages Theatre (1911). This was the first of many. Priteca went on to design 22 theatres for Pantages and another 128 for other theatre owners. Notable theatres of his design include: Pantages, Los Angeles (1920); Pantages, San Diego (1924) and Pantages in Hollywood (1929). Priteca died in Seattle on 1st October, 1971, being posthumously awarded Honorary Membership of the Theatre Historical Society of America.



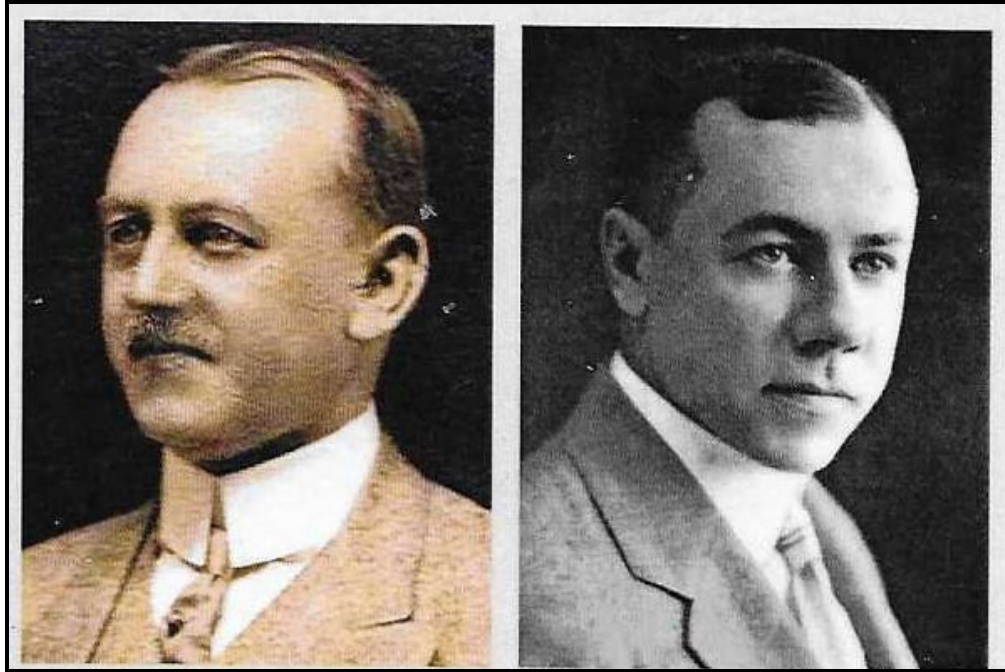
Pantages Theatre, Los Angeles



PANTAGES THEATRE - HOLLYWOOD, CALIF. - BUILT 1930

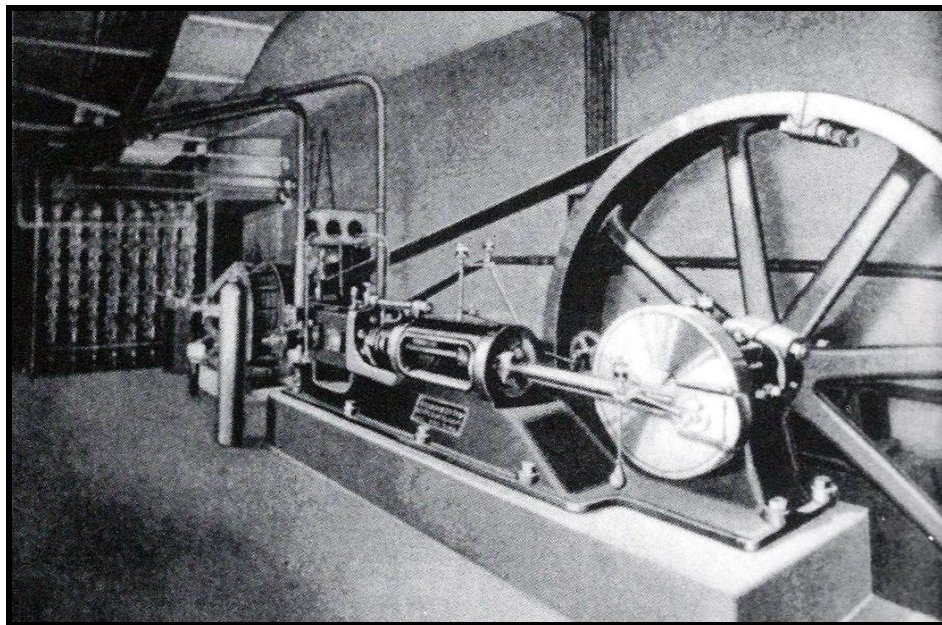
L A K E Y G R O S S M A N

RAPP & RAPP



The brothers Cornelius Leslie Rapp (1861-1926) and George Leslie Rapp (1878-1941) of Carbondale, Illinois, were partners in the architectural firm of Rapp and Rapp, particularly active in Chicago, Illinois, during the early 20th century. The firm designed over 400 theatres, including in Chicago: Central Park (1917), Chicago (1921), Tivoli (1921), Uptown (1925), Oriental (1926), all for the Chicago theatre chain of Balaban & Katz.

The Central Park is regarded as the first movie theatre to be fully air conditioned. This was carried out by the Wittenmeier Machine Company using their patented CO₂ refrigeration system which employed a direct-expansion cooling coil mounted in the airstream of a spray washer unit. The Chicago theatres listed above were similarly air conditioned.



CO₂ refrigerating plant at the Central Park, Chicago

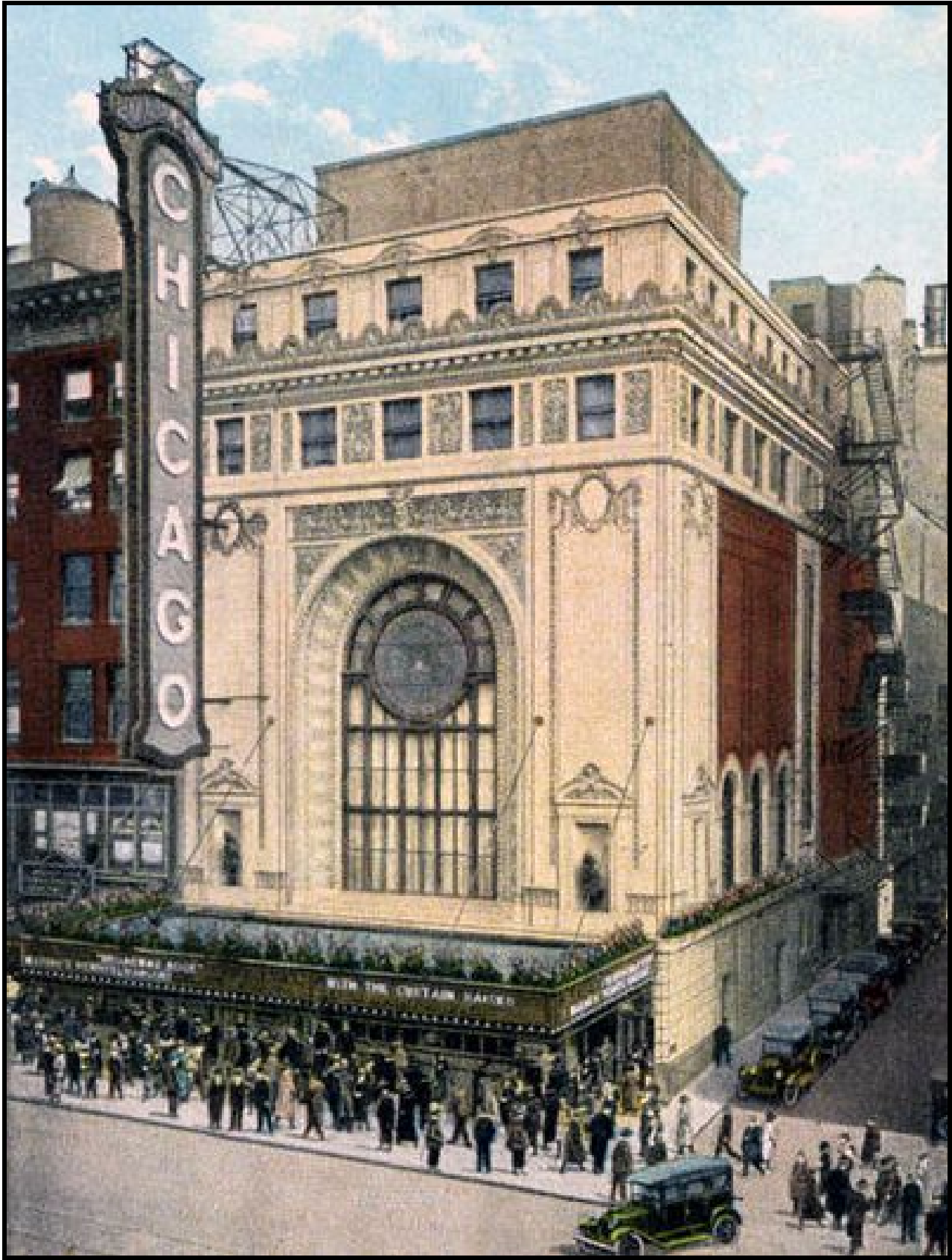


Central Park, Chicago

Rapp & Rapp also designed three major movie theatres in New York City: Paramount, Brooklyn (1926), Paramount, Times Square (1928) and Loew's Kings Theatre in Brooklyn (1929).

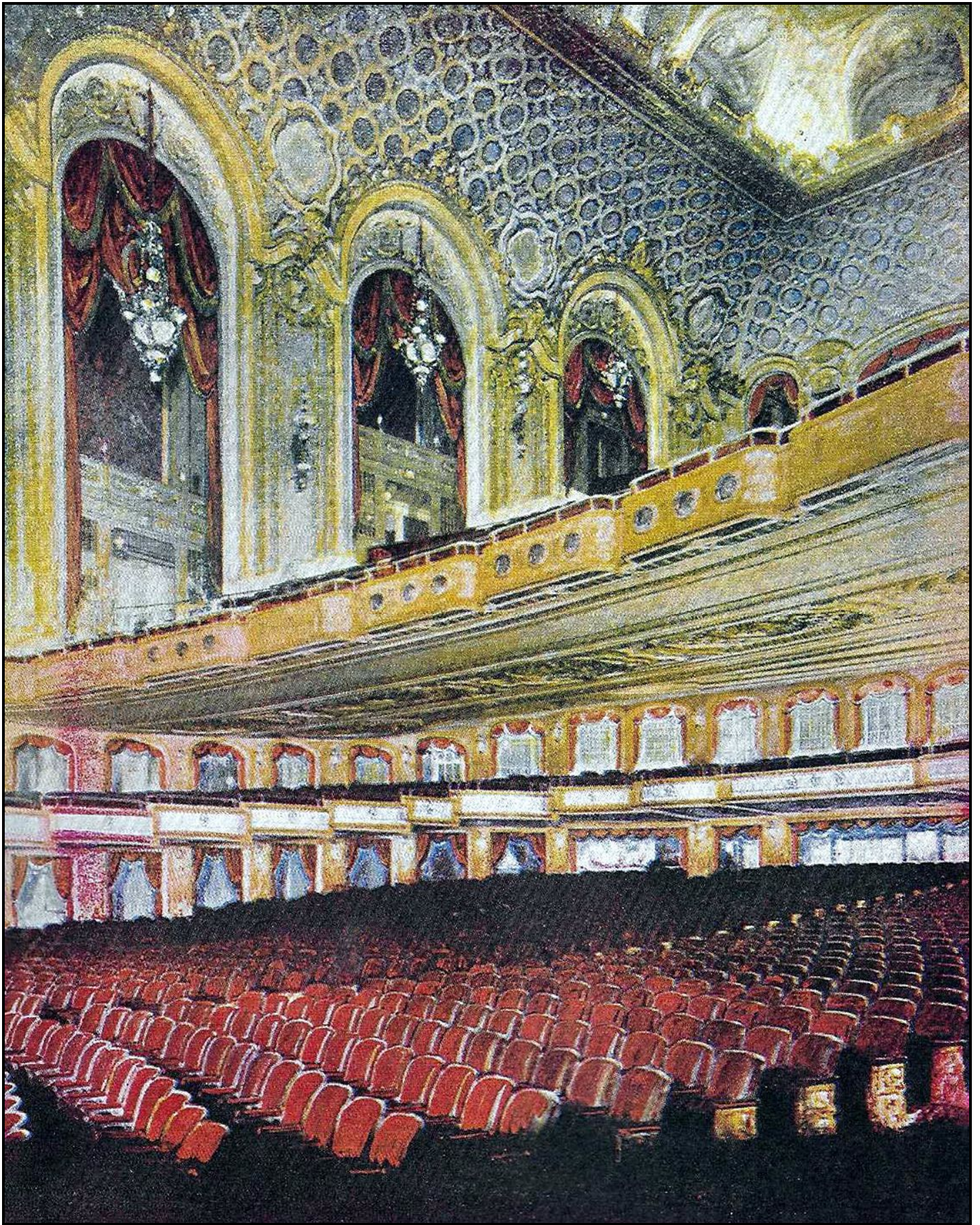


Paramount in Brooklyn

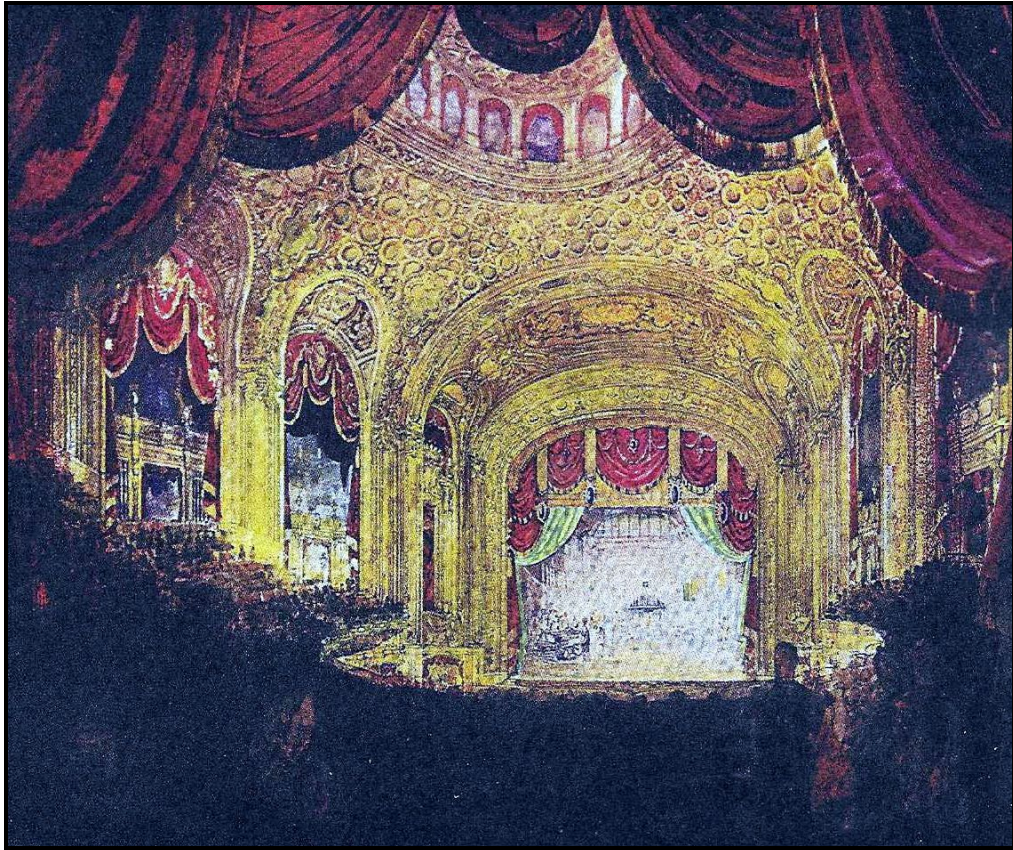


The Chicago Theatre in Chicago

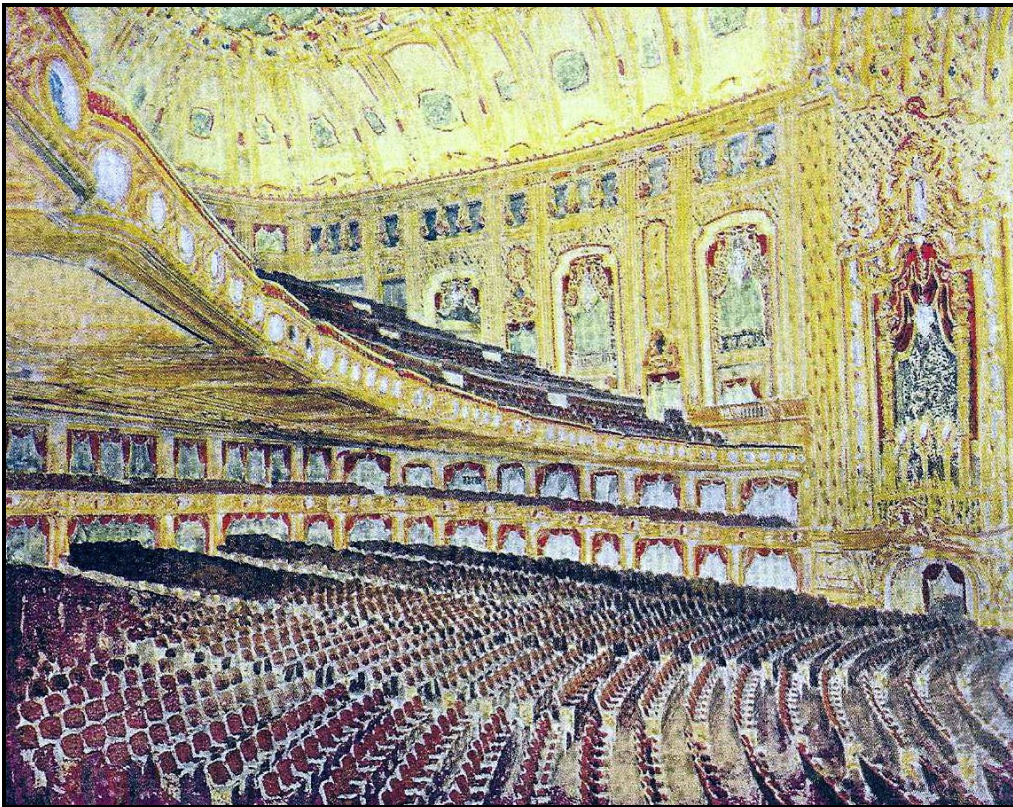




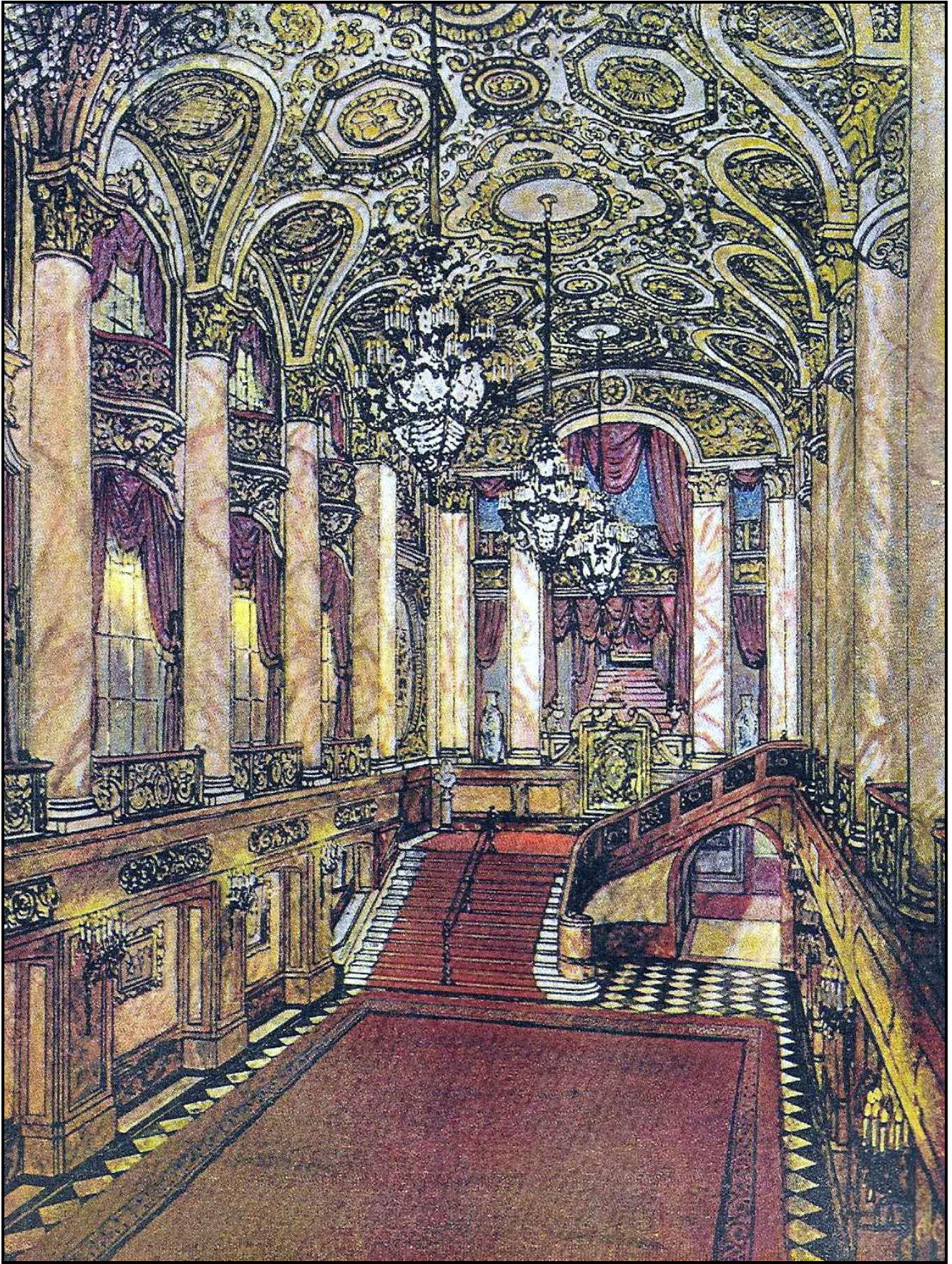
Paramount Theatre, New York



Paramount Theatre, New York



Uptown Theatre, Chicago



Michigan Theatre, Detroit

S CHARLES LEE



Simeon Charles Levi (later Lee) was born in Chicago on the 5th September, 1899. His interest in mechanics led him to Lake Technical High School where he graduated in 1916, working after school in the office of Chicago architect Henry Newhouse, a family friend who specialised in the design of theatres and small movie houses. Lee attended Chicago Technical College, graduating with honours in 1918. His first job was as an architect for the South Park Board of the City of Chicago but then enlisted in the Navy. After his discharge in 1920 he entered the Armour Institute of Technology to study architecture. While in Chicago, Lee worked for Rapp and Rapp- well known for movie theatre design.

In 1922, Lee moved to Los Angeles where his first major movie palace design was the Tower Theatre (1926). This launched a career that would make him the principal designer of motion picture theatres in Los Angeles and California during the 1930s and 1940s. These include the Los Angeles Theatre (1931) and Fox Wilshire (1930). He is credited with designing over 400 theatres throughout California and Mexico. He died 27th January, 1990.



Tower Theatre



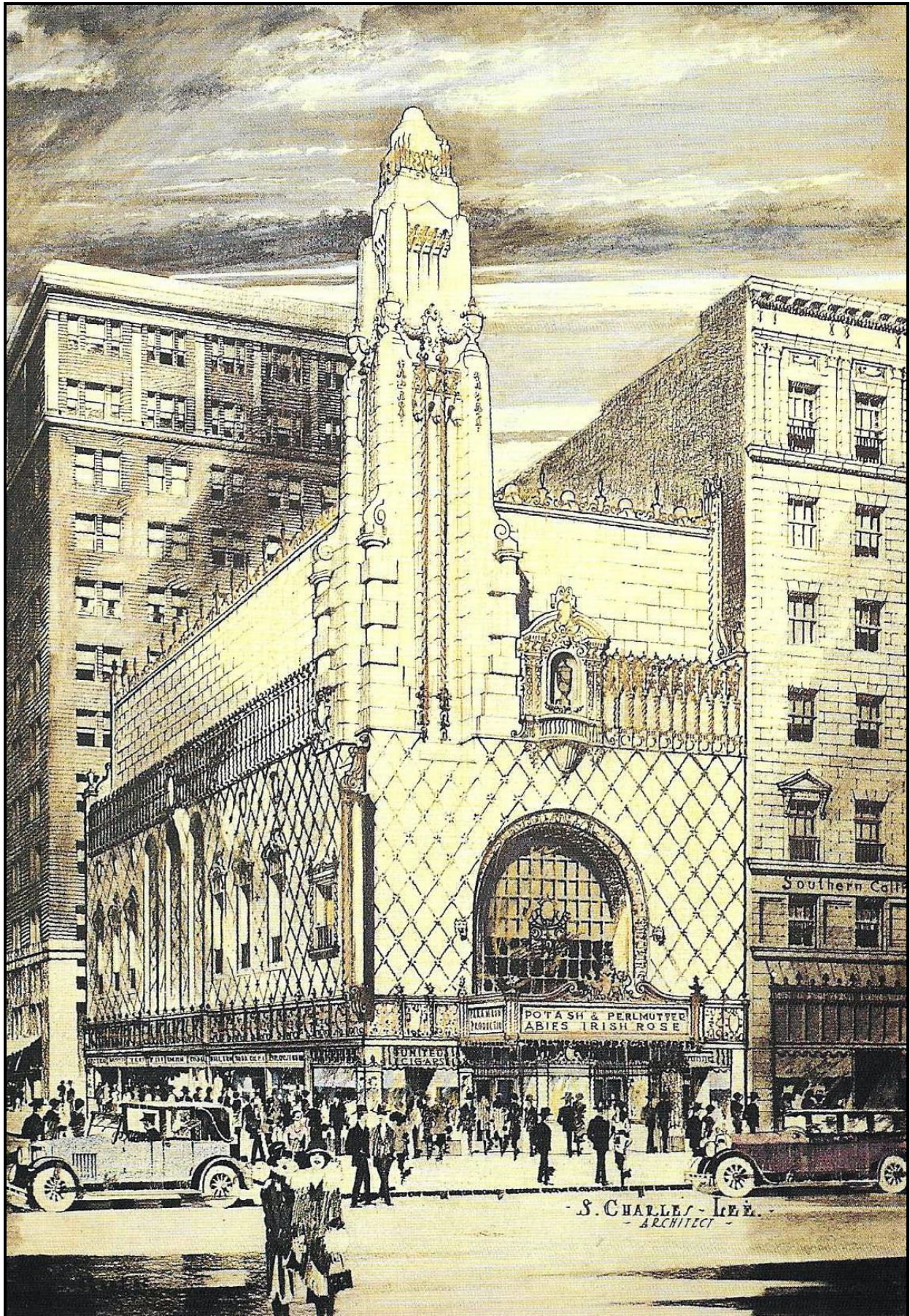
Los Angeles Theatre

Ads for the Tower Theatre in 1927 read:

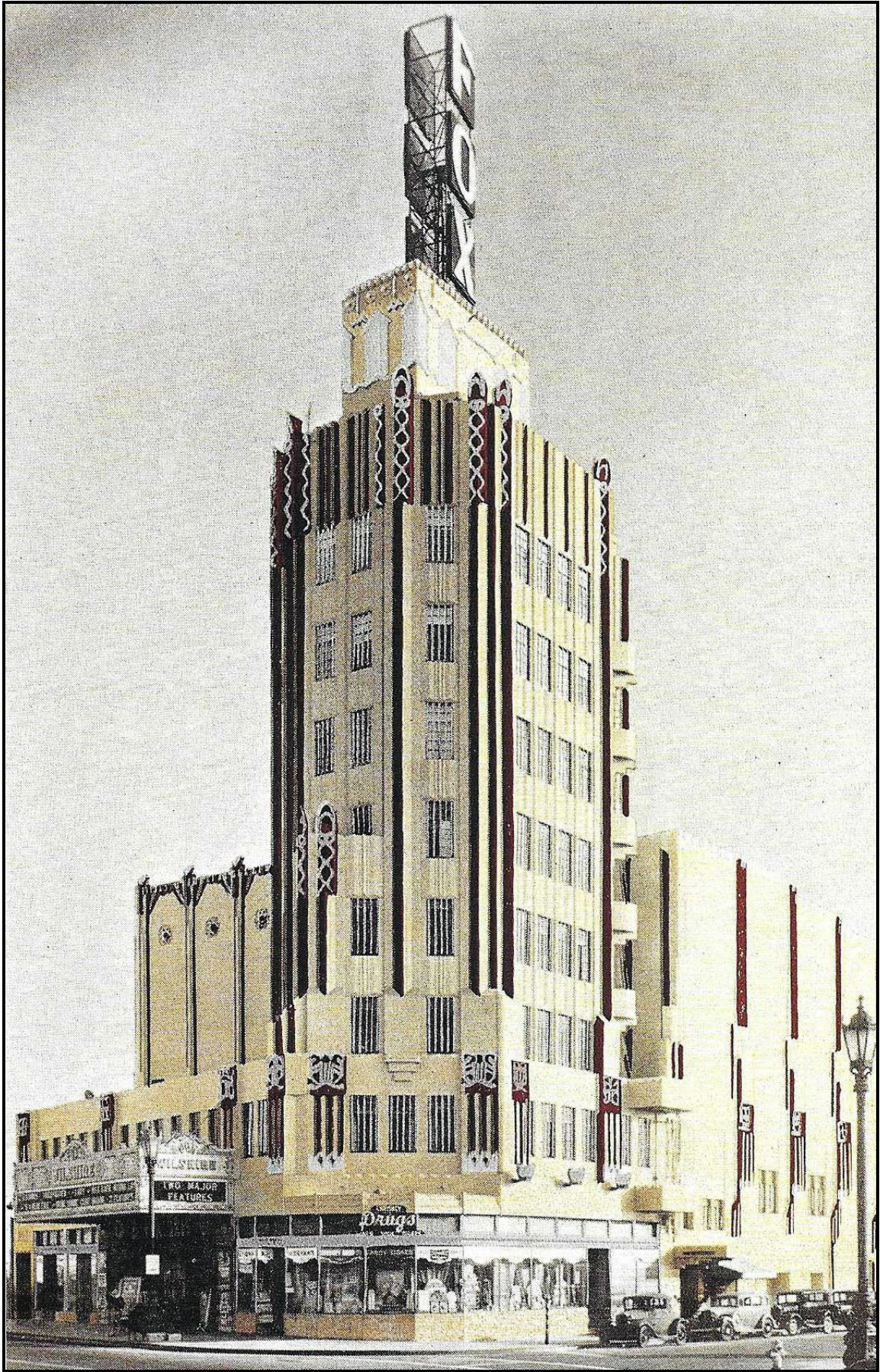
Leave Your Fan at Home!

Manufactured Weather makes every day a good day at the Tower Theatre. When you enter you will realise that H L Gumbiner has fulfilled one more great obligation to his public. He has included in this theatre the marvel of manufactured Weather. This is a Carrier Conditioned Theatre providing to the patrons a copious supply of air that is washed and purified, air that is warmed and humidified for ideal comfort in winter, air that is cooled and dehumidified for invigorating comfort in summer, air that is diffused throughout the theatre without the slightest draught.

Eager to promote his investment, Gumbiner had a window installed on the landing between the first floor and the restrooms from which patrons could view the weather machinery.



Tower Theatre, Los Angeles



Fox Wilshire Theatre



Fox Theatre, Phoenix, 1931 (notice sign *Cooled By Refrigeration*)



Lee piloted his private Beechcraft all over California enabling him to visit clients and the sites of his many theatres under construction.

JOHN JACOB ZINK

John Jacob Zink (1886-1952) was an American architect who designed movie theatres in Baltimore and Washington D.C.

He studied at the Maryland Institute and practiced with Wyatt and Nolting. He studied at the Columbia School of Architecture, worked with the famous architect Thomas W Lamb and then with the well-known Baltimore City architect Ewald G Blanke from 1916 until 1924. He went on to establish his own firm designing some 16 movie theatres in what was described as the "Streamline Moderne" style.

