



Welcome to The Louisville Palace Theater



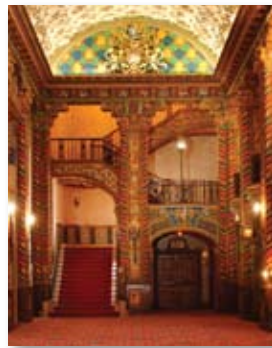
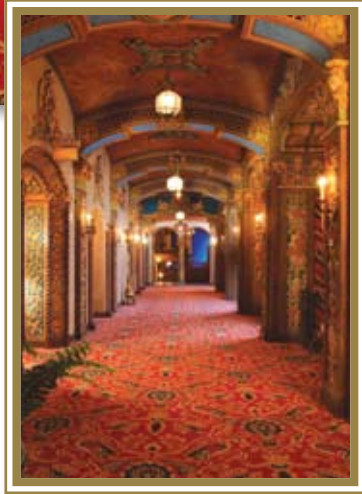
Thanks to the dedication of Durkan, The Palace Theater, an architectural landmark amid the Louisville landscape, stands proudly as a triumph of restoration and preservation.

The Spanish baroque-style structure was built in 1928 as a Loews and United Artists State Theater at a reported cost of \$2 million—exceedingly expensive for that period. The architect, John Eberson, was a legendary fixture in theater design. He is credited with scores of other gems created here in the U.S., as well as overseas, during a career that spanned more than 60 years. Additional examples of his work include The Paradise, Chicago, which was demolished; and, The Majestic, in San Antonio, one of only a reported 12 still standing.

Romanian born, Eberson was strongly influenced by the flourish of European opera houses, and favored lavish ornamentation and elaborate details. It is reflected in the interiors of The Palace where he applied a generous use of opulent colors, predominantly cobalt blue and gold, and where dramatic carved reliefs and statuary decorate the space. The vaulted ceiling of the grand foyer features 139 carvings; and, throughout the public areas are sculpted busts of Socrates, Beethoven and Dante, among other historic personalities of the arts.

The drama of the theater's architecture nearly rivaled that taking place on stage. In addition to operating as a first-run movie palace with the accompaniment of a mighty Wurlitzer organ, The Palace's stage was home to vaudevillian productions, burlesque, legitimate theater and a variety of musical artists. The theater prospered through the late 60s as Louisville's grand "palace for entertainment." Like so many of America's grand stage and film "palaces," though, the Louisville Palace endured the perils of urban development, including two decades of neglect when it was in disuse.

The renaissance of this majestic building was signaled by its



purchase by Clear Channel Entertainment. Beginning in the 90s, they undertook a multi-million dollar restoration to recreate the opulence that had been the hallmark of this architectural treasure. Continuously, over the last decade, improvements have been incorporated into the space, including technological additions to its operational and mechanical systems ushering the venue into the 21st century.

One of the more recent and, perhaps, most brilliant restoration feats lies at the feet of everyone who enters The Palace: The carpeting. It represents a mammoth customization project undertaken by Durkan, a brand of The Mohawk Group. It required the company to replicate the original Baroque-style pattern—a design that was pieced together using archival photos, including a black and white image from the Louisville Historical Society, as the point of reference. The installation was ordered, created and completed in a record six weeks at the end of 2002, and it is a tribute to all involved: Commercial Floor Tech, the installer who originally recommended to The Palace management that the carpet could be replaced with a freshly minted “twin”; Eric Johnson Enterprises, the local floor covering contractor whose in-house design team worked hand-in-hand with the manufacturer; and, the design team at Durkan who took on the mission to reproduce the carpet with exacting care. The 3,500 yards of medallion pattern was a challenge to install, covering The

Palace’s odd-sized spaces, a curved balcony, and staircase with innumerable steps that had to each be handled separately. Precision and accuracy were required for dead-center placement of the medallion.

The refurbishment of The Palace is a wondrous achievement. It is a Louisville hub that keeps the city’s history and culture alive and vibrant. It is a historic treat for those who have an abiding respect for the past. And, it is a tribute to the dedicated team of design talents who contributed to its perpetuation.

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