Landmarks Preservation Commission
November 10, 1987; Designation List 195
LP-1314

BARRYMORE THEATER, first floor interior consisting of the auditorium, the stage, the staircases leading from the first floor to the balcony floor; the balcony floor interior consisting of the balcony, the upper part of the auditorium and ceiling; and the fixtures and interior components of these spaces, including but not limited to, wall and ceiling surfaces, doors, stair railings and attached decorative elements; 243-251 West 47th Street, Manhattan. Built 1928; architect, Herbert J. Krapp.

Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 1019, Lot 12.

On June 14 and 15, 1982, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation as an Interior Landmark of the Barrymore Theater, first floor interior consisting of the lobby, the auditorium, the stage, the staircases leading from the first floor to the balcony floor and all connecting entrance areas; the balcony floor interior consisting of the balcony, the upper part of the auditorium and ceiling, and the upper part of the stage house; and the fixtures and interior components of these spaces, including but not limited to, wall, ceiling and floor surfaces, doors, stair railings and attached decorative elements; and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site (Item No.10). The hearing was continued to October 19, 1982. Both hearings had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of law. Eighty-one witnesses spoke or had statements read into the record in favor of designation. Two witnesses spoke in opposition to designation. The owner was among those in opposition to designation. The Commission has received many letters and other expressions of support in favor of this designation.

DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

The Barrymore Theater interior survives today as one of the historic theater interiors that symbolize American theater for both New York and the nation. Built at the end of the 1920s, the Barrymore was among the numerous theaters constructed by the Shubert Organization, to the designs of Herbert J. Krapp, that typified the development of the Times Square/Broadway theater district.

Founded by the three brothers Sam S., Lee and J.J. Shubert, the Shubert organization was the dominant shaper of New York's theater district. Beginning as producers, the brothers expanded into the building of theaters as well, and eventually helped cover the blocks east and west of Broadway in Midtown with playhouses.

Herbert J. Krapp, who designed almost all the Shuberts' post-World War I theaters, was the most prolific architect of the Broadway theater district. Having worked in the offices of Herts & Tallant, premier theater designers of the pre-war period, Krapp went on to design theaters for the two major builders of the post-war era, the Shubert and Chanin organizations.

The Barrymore interior represents a typical and important aspect of the nation's theatrical history. Latest, among those surviving, of the theaters constructed for the Shuberts in the Broadway district, it was built in honor of, and named for, the Shuberts' star performer, Ethel Barrymore. Beyond its historical importance, the Barrymore interior is a handsome design, a mock-Elizabethan tour-de-force featuring raised plaster strapwork, elaborate boxes with porticos, and a dramatic coved ceiling and dome.

For half a century, beginning with Ethel Barrymore's starring roles, the Barrymore Theater has served as home to countless numbers of the plays through which the Broadway theater has come to personify American theater. As such, it continues to help define the Broadway theater district, the largest and most famous concentration of legitimate stage theaters in the world.

The development of the Broadway Theater District

The area of midtown Manhattan known today as the Broadway theater district encompasses the largest concentration of legitimate playhouses in the world. The theaters located there, some dating from the turn of the century, are significant for their contributions to the history of the New York stage, for their influence upon American theater as a whole, and in many cases for their architectural design.

The development of the area around Times Square as New York's theater district at the end of the 19th century occurred as a result of two related factors: the northward movement of the population of Manhattan Island (abetted by the growth of several forms of mass transportation), and the expansion of New York's role in American theater. The northward movement of Manhattan's residential, commercial, and entertainment districts had been occurring at a steady rate throughout the 19th century. In the early 1800s, businesses, stores, hotels, and places of amusement had clustered together in the vicinity of lower Broadway. As New York's various businesses moved north, they began to isolate themselves in more or less separate areas: the financial institutions remained downtown; the major retail stores situated themselves on Broadway between 14th and 23rd Streets, eventually moving to Herald Square and Fifth Avenue at the turn of the century; the hotels, originally located near the stores and theaters, began to congregate around major transportation centers such as Grand Central Terminal or on the newly fashionable Fifth Avenue; while the mansions of the wealthy spread farther north on Fifth Avenue, as did such objects of their beneficence as the Metropolitan Museum of Art. [1]

The theater district, which had existed in the midst of stores, hotels, and other businesses along lower Broadway for most of the 19th century, spread northward in stages, stopping for a time at Union Square, then Madison Square, then Herald Square. By the last two decades of the 19th century, far-sighted theater managers had begun to extend the theater district even farther north along Broadway, until they had reached the area that was then known as Long Acre Square and is today called Times Square.

A district of farmlands and rural summer homes in the early 1800s, Long Acre Square had by the turn of the century evolved into a hub of mass transportation. A horsecar line had run across 42nd Street as early as the 1860s, and in 1871, with the opening of Grand Central Depot and the completion of the Third and Sixth Avenue Elevated Railways, it was comparatively simple for both New Yorkers and out-of-towners to reach Long Acre Square. Transportation continued to play a large part in the development of the area; in 1904 New York's subway system was inaugurated, with a major station located at 42nd Street and Broadway. The area was then renamed Times Square in honor of the newly erected Times Building. [2] The evolution of the Times Square area as a center of Manhattan's various mass transit systems made it a natural choice for the location of legitimate playhouses, which needed to be easily accessible to their audiences.

The theater business that invaded Long Acre Square at the end of the 19th century consisted of far more than a few playhouses, for at that time New York was the starting-point for a vast, nationwide entertainment network known as "the road." This complex theater operation had its beginnings in the 1860s when the traditional method of runnng a theater, the stock system, was challenged by the growing popularity of touring "combination" shows. In contrast to the stock system, in which a theater manager engaged a company of actors for a season and presented them in a variety of plays, the combination system consisted of a company of actors appearing in a single show which toured from city to city, providing its own scenery, costumes, and sometimes musical accompaniment. Helped by the expansion of the nation's railroads after the Civil War, the combination system soon killed off the majority of stock companies. [3] By 1904 there were some 420 combination companies touring through thousands of theaters in cities and towns across the country. [4]

Of crucial importance to the operation of the combination system was a single location where combination shows could be cast, rehearsed, tried out, and then booked for a cross-country tour. Since New York was already regarded as the most important theater city in America, it is not surprising that it became the headquarters for the combination system. In addition to the many theaters needed for an initial Broadway production for the combinations before they went on tour, New York's theater district encompassed rehearsal halls, the headquarters of scenery, costume, lighting, and makeup companies, offices of theatrical agents and producers, theatrical printers and newspapers, and other auxiliary enterprises. Close to the theater district were boarding houses catering to the hundreds of performers who came to New York in the hope of being hired for a touring show or a Broadway production.

As theaters were built farther uptown, the auxiliary enterprises also began to move north. By the turn of the century,

> the section of Broadway between 37th Street and 42nd Street was known as the Rialto. Theater people gathered or promenaded there. Producers could sometimes cast a play by looking over the actors loitering on the Rialto; and out-of-town managers, gazing out of office windows, could book tours by seeing who was available.[5]

The theater district that began to move north to Long Acre Square in the 1890s was thus a vast array of business enterprises devoted to every facet of theatrical production.

The movement of the theater district north along Broadway had proceeded at a steady pace during the latter part of the 19th century. The Casino Theater was opened on the southeast corner of Broadway and 39th Street in 1882. A year later, it was joined by a most ambitious undertaking--the construction of the Metropolitan Opera House on Broadway between 39th and 40th Streets. In 1888, the Broadway Theater was erected on the southwest corner of Broadway and 41st Street. Five years later, the American Theater opened its doors at Eighth Avenue between 41st and 42nd Streets, as did Abbey's Theater at Broadway and 38th Street and the Empire Theater at Broadway and Fortieth Street.

It remained for Oscar Hammerstein I to make the move into Long Acre Square itself. At the close of the 19th century, Long Acre Square housed Manhattan's harness and carriage businesses, but was little used at night, when it seems to have become a "thieves' lair."[6] In 1895 Hammerstein erected an enormous theater building on Broadway between 44th and 45th Streets. The original plan for the Olympia called for a "perfect palace of entertainment--which would have included three theaters, a bowling alley, a turkish bath, cafes and restaurants."[7] Only part of this visionary plan ever became a reality. On November 25, 1895, Hammerstein opened the Lyric Theater section of the building, and a little over three weeks later he inaugurated the Music Hall section. Never a financial success, the Olympia closed its doors two years after it opened. Nevertheless, it earned Hammerstein the title of "Father of Times Square."

By the turn of the century Hammerstein had built two more theaters in the Long Acre Square area, and in the years 1901-1920 a total of forty-three additional theaters appeared in midtown Manhattan, most of them in the side streets east and west of Broadway. Much of this theater-building activity was inspired by the competition between two major forces in the industry, the Theatrical Syndicate and the Shubert Brothers, for control of the road. As each side in the rivalry drew its net more tightly around the playhouses it owned or controlled, the other side was forced to build new theaters to house its attractions. The result was a dramatic increase in the number of playhouses, both in New York and across the country. After World War I, as the road declined and New York's theatrical activity increased, the general economic prosperity made possible the construction of thirty additional playhouses in the Times Square area, expanding the boundaries of the theater district so that it stretched from west of Eighth Avenue to Sixth Avenue, and from 39th Street to Columbus Circle.[8]

The stockmarket crash of 1929 and the resulting Depression caused a shrinkage in theater activity. Some playhouses were torn down, many were converted to motion picture houses, and later to radio and television studios. From the time of the Depression until the 1960s no new Broadway playhouses were constructed. Fortunately, the theaters that survive from the early part of the century represent a cross-section of types and styles, and share among them a good deal of New York's rich theatrical history.

(MMK)

Evolution of Theater Design

The frenzy of theater construction that occurred in New York during the first thirty years of this century brought with it an evolution in architecture and decoration.[9] At the close of the 19th century American theaters were still being built in the style of traditional European opera houses, with high proscenium arches, narrow auditoriums, two or three balconies built in a horseshoe configuration, and dozens of boxes, some set into the front of the first balcony. Although contemporary notices of the theaters attributed specific (though often vague) styles or periods to them, their interiors were more often than not a melange of styles and colors.

With the increase of theater construction after the turn of the century came a new attitude toward theater architecture and decoration as firms such as Herts and Tallant, Thomas W. Lamb, and others, began to plan the playhouse's exterior and interior as a single, integrated design. The Art Nouveau style New Amsterdam Theater, which opened in 1903, signalled this new seriousness in theater design.

Perhaps influenced by such European experiments as Wagner's Festival Theater at Bayreuth, American theater architects after the turn of the century began to structure their playhouses along different lines. Proscenium openings were made lower and wider, auditoriums were made shallower, seating was planned in a fan shape, and the number of balconies was usually reduced to one. Boxes were cut back to a minimum. The theaters that were built just before and after World War I for the most part shared this new configuration.

Because many of New York's extant playhouses were built during the period in which New York was serving as the starting-point for nationwide tours, they represent a style of theater architecture that is characteristic not only of New York but also of other cities across the United States, for a show which was originally produced in a New York theater would require similar conditions in the theaters in which it toured, and theater owners often hired the same architects to design and build theaters in several cities. Thus, New York's theaters set the standard for theater construction across the United States, as an inspection of designs for theaters in various cities will show.[10]

(MMK)

The Broadway Theater in American Theatrical History

The playhouses still standing in the Broadway theater district share among them over eighty years of American theatrical history. In the early years of the century, when American theater was still heavily influenced by Europe, the theaters played host to such great international stars as Sarah Bernhardt, Eleonora Duse, and Mrs. Patrick Campbell, and to adaptations of such European successes as The Merry Widow and Floradora.

It was in the Broadway theaters that the beginnings of a distinctly American drama could be seen in the Western melodramas of David Belasco, the social comedies of Clyde Fitch and Langdon Mitchell, and the problem plays of Edward Sheldon and Eugene Walter. With the rise of the "little

theater" movement in the second decade of the century, it seemed that theatrical leadership had passed from Broadway to such experimental "art" theaters as the Provincetown Playhouse and the Neighborhood Playhouse. Before long, however, the innovations of the little theaters infused Broadway with new life. Beginning with the production of Eugene O'Neill's first full-length play, Beyond the Horizon, on Broadway in 1920, the playhouses of Broadway presented the work of a new generation of playwrights, including, in addition to O'Neill, Maxwell Anderson, Philip Barry, S.N. Behrman, Rachel Crothers, Sidney Howard, George S. Kaufman, George Kelly and Elmer Rice.

The Depression of the 1930s brought with it a new concern with political and social issues, and the dramas presented in the Broadway playhouses reflected that concern. Commercial producers gave us plays by Lillian Hellman, Robert E. Sherwood, and Thornton Wilder, whle the Group Theater and other new organizations introduced such writers as Clifford Odets and Sidney Kingsley. The Broadway theaters continued to house challenging plays during the 1940s and 1950s, when new talents such as Tennessee Williams, Arthur Miller, and William Inge first began writing for the theater.

Meanwhile, musical comedy had blossomed from the adaptations and imitations of European operetta popular at the turn of the century to a uniquely American art form. By the 1940s and 1950s the works of Rodgers and Hammerstein, Cole Porter, Irving Berlin, Jerome Kern, and many others, were being exported from the stages of Broadway to theaters around the world.

The 1960s and 1970s were decades of ferment and change, both in and out of the theater. As in the 1920s, the impetus for theatrical experimentation came from outside of Broadway, and as in the 1920s, the experimentation helped to revitalize the Broadway theater. Today, the playhouses of Broadway are showcases for the best plays of the Off- and Off-Off Broadway theaters, as well as for exciting productions from theatrical workshops, regional theaters, and outstanding foreign companies.

Having moved gradually northward all during the 19th century, New York's theater district finally came to rest at Times Square, where it has remained for almost ninety years. The economic Depression of the 1930s discouraged speculative ventures such as the construction of new theaters, while after prosperity returned in the wake of World War II, the cost of renting land and constructing a theater was prohibitively high. The northward movement of the theater district may also have been discouraged for a number of years by the existence of the Sixth Avenue Elevated Railway, which crossed from Sixth to Ninth Avenues at 53rd Street, thereby providing a natural northern boundary for the theater district.[11]

The Barrymore Theater, as one of the Broadway theaters surviving today in the theater district, contributes to the totality of the district's history by virtue of its participation in that history.

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Notes

1. The discussion of the northward movement of Manhattan's business and theaters is based on Mary Henderson, The City and the Theatre (Clifton, N.J.: James T. White and Co., 1973), pp. 130-131, 168-170.

2. W.G. Rogers and Mildred Weston, Carnival Crossroads: the Story of Times Square (New York: Doubleday, 1960), pp. 39-78; Howard B. Furer, New York: A Chronological and Documentary History 1524-1970 (Dobbs Ferry, N.Y.: Oceana Publications, 1974), p. 34 ff.; The New York Subway (New York: Interborough Rapid Transit Co., 1904; reprint ed., New York: Arno Press, n.d.).

3. Alfred L. Bernheim, The Business of the Theatre (New York: Actors Equity Association, 1932; reprint ed., New York: Benjamin Blom, 1964), p. 26.

4. Jack Poggi, Theater in America: The Impact of Economic Forces, 1870-1967 (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1968), p. 6.

5. Brooks Atkinson, Broadway, rev. ed. (New York: Macmillan, 1974), p. 11.

6. Philip Paneth, Times Square, Crossroads of the World (New York: Living Books, 1965), p. 20.

7. Henderson, p. 263.

8. Henderson, p. 195-196.

9. The discussion of the developments in American theater architecture is based upon: Ned A. Bowman, "American Theatre Architecture: the Concrete Mirror Held Up to Yankee Nature," The American Theatre: The Sum of its Parts (New York: French, 1972), pp. 199-233; Burr C. Cook, "Twenty Years of Theatre Building," Theatre, 36 (August 1922), 98-99; Arthur S. Meloy, Theatres and Picture Houses (New York: Architects' Supply and Publishing Co., 1916), p. 29.

10. See, for example, the discussion of various theaters in Randolph Williams Sexton and Ben Franklin Betts, eds., American Theaters of Today, 2 vols. (New York: Architectural Book Pubs., 1927, 1930; reprint ed., New York: Vestal, 1977).

11. Stanley Buder, "Forty-Second Street at the Crossroads: A History of Broadway to Eighth Avenue," West 42nd Street: "The Bright Light Zone" (New York: Graduate School and University Center, CUNY, 1978), p. 62.

The Shuberts

Sam S. Shubert (d.1905), Lee Shubert (c.1873-1953), and Jacob J. Shubert (c.1877-1963) formed perhaps the most powerful family Broadway has ever seen. Children of an immigrant peddlar from Czarist Lithuania,[1] the

Shuberts rose to become the dominant force in legitimate theater in America. By 1924 they were producing 25 per cent of all the plays in America, and controlled 75 percent of the theater tickets sold in this country.[2]

The Shuberts' career in the theater actually began in front of a theater: Lee Shubert sold newspapers outside Wieting's Opera House in Syracuse. Soon his brother Sam began to help him. The manager of Wieting's then made Lee his personal errand boy. Sam Shubert was the first in the family actually to work in a theater: soon after his brother's promotion to errand boy he was given a small role in a Belasco production at Wieting's. Belasco was to remain Sam Shubert's idol throughout his career.[3]

Sam Shubert was the driving force behind the family's rise in the theater industry. From a first job as program boy at the Bastable Theater in Syracuse, he moved to Syracuse's Grand Opera House as assistant treasurer (ticket seller) and then treasurer. At eighteen he returned to Wieting's Opera House as treasurer.[4] In 1894 he assembled enough money to buy the road rights of Charles Hoyt's A Texas Steer, and took the play on a tour of inexpensive houses. The tour was a success and the next season he repeated it with Hoyt's A Stranger in New York.[5] In 1897 the Shuberts used the money of local backers to build their own theater in Syracuse, the Baker, with Jacob Shubert serving as manager.

Their success upstate convinced the Shuberts that they were ready to enter the theater world in New York City. In 1900 Sam and Lee Shubert obtained the lease of New York City's Herald Square Theater at Broadway and 35th Street (demolished 1915), while Jacob managed their upstate business. The Herald Square Theater at that time was unpopular with theatergoers, but the Shuberts changed that with a successful production of Arizona by Augustus John. They proceeded to engage the well-known actor Richard Mansfield, and he appeared at the Herald Square in 1901 in a popular production of Monsieur Beaucaire.[6] The success of these productions encouraged the Shuberts to expand their activities in New York City. In 1901 Sam Shubert leased the Casino Theater on 39th Street; he secured the American rights to the London hit A Chinese Honeymoon and in 1902 it opened at the Casino to rave revues. The show ran for more than a year, and three companies presented it on the road.[7]

The Shuberts followed the success of A Chinese Honeymoon with further expansion in New York City. In 1902 they acquired the lease of the old Theater Comique on 29th Street and Broadway, remodeled the interior and reopened it as the Princess. As an opening attraction they brought Weedon Grossmith and his English company to America in their popular production of The Night of the Party. The following year, 1903, the Shuberts leased the New Waldorf Theater in London and the Madison Square Theater in New York City. They also sold a property on 42nd Street to the composer Reginald DeKoven, who built the Lyric Theater there as a home for the American School of Opera and leased it back to the Shuberts.[8] The Shuberts then signed a ten-year agreement with Richard Mansfield to open each season at the Lyric, to be followed by DeKoven's productions with the American School of Opera.

By this time the Shuberts were outgrowing the financial means of their upstate backers. Lee Shubert found two new financial backers, Samuel Untermyer and Andrew Freedman. Untermyer was a New York attorney with connections to many New York bankers and investors. Freedman was the owner of the New York Giants baseball team, had extensive New York real estate holdings as well as associations with the Morgan Bank, and was among the small group building New York's first subway. With the political influence and capital made available to the Shuberts by Untermyer and Freedman, they were able to expand their theater holdings in cities across the country, including Chicago, Boston, New Haven, St. Louis, and Philadelphia.

By 1905 the Shuberts controlled thirteen theaters. They had also found two additional backers who enabled the growing Shubert empire to expand still further, George B. Cox of Ohio and Joseph L. Rhinock of Kentucky. Cox was the immensely wealthy political boss of Cincinnati and Rhinock was a member of Congress who had extensive race track and real estate holdings. In May of that year, however, Sam Shubert was killed in a train wreck. He had been the driving force behind the Shubert empire, and many in the theater industry thought the Shuberts' dramatic rise would now end. Lee Shubert, however, took over his brother's role and within six months of the latter's death had quadrupled the Shubert chain and planned five memorial theaters to Sam.[9]

The Shuberts' success in acquiring and building theaters across the country and in booking and producing shows brought them into conflict with the central booking agency controlled by Marc Klaw and A.L. Erlanger. In 1905 Klaw and Erlanger's Syndicate managed most of the roughly one thousand lucrative theaters of the approximately 3000 theaters in the country.[10] Every touring company had to pass through the Syndicate's stage doors. The Shuberts began to fight in earnest with Klaw and Erlanger in 1904 when they learned that their musical The Girl From Dixie wouldn't be able to get a road booking unless the brothers stopped renting their own theaters. Following his brother's death, Lee Shubert announced to the press that Harrison Fiske, David Belasco and the Shuberts were joining forces and were inviting "other independent producers" to join them in an "open door" independent circuit. The need for such a circuit was emphasized in November 1905 when Mme. Sarah Bernhardt arrived in New York for a Shubert tour. Klaw and Erlanger denied her the use of any of their theaters thinking that this action would force the Shuberts to accept their terms. The idea backfired and created enormous public support for the Shuberts as Mme. Bernhardt played in tents and town halls across the country. The struggle for control of theatrical bookings between the Shuberts and Klaw and Erlanger continued through the 1910s. By 1920, after countless lawsuits, the Shuberts gained supremacy.

In the five years following Sam Shubert's death the family continued to expand their holdings in New York City. In 1908 they hired Ben Marshall of Marshall & Fox, Chicago, to design a playhouse on West 39th Street. In what was to become a common Shubert practice, they named the theater after one of their stars, calling it Maxine Elliott's Theater (demolished). This was the first theater that the Shuberts built themselves, neither remodeling nor leasing an existing theater. In 1909 they were involved, along with a number of other investors, in the building of the New (later Century) Theater on Central Park West at 62nd Street (demolished). At the same time they were building a second theater of their own in New York on

West 41st Street, the Comedy Theater, designed by architect D.G. Malcolm (demolished). In 1910 the Shuberts hired architect Albert Swasey to design a small playhouse on West 39th Street, named Alla Nazimova's 39th Street Theater (demolished).

During the 'teens the Shuberts continued to expand their control of New York's theaters. Lee Shubert became the business director of the Century Theater on Central Park West. There he met Alfred Gwynne Vanderbilt who owned the American Horse Exchange on Broadway at West 50th Street. The Shuberts acquired the Exchange from Vanderbilt and hired Swasey to remodel it as a theater. It opened in 1911 as the Winter Garden Theater with Jacob Shubert as manager. The Shuberts also bought the Astor Theater on Broadway and 45th Street (demolished) as well as an interest in three Manhattan theaters owned by the Selwyn brothers, and continued to build their own New York theaters. In 1913 they opened two theaters designed by Henry B. Herts, the Sam S. Shubert Memorial Theater on West 44th Street and the connecting Booth Theater (with Winthrop Ames as a partner) on West 45th Street. The Shubert Theater building also became home to the family's corporate offices.

Over the following decade the Shuberts proceeded to cover the Times Square area with Shubert theaters, all designed by architect Herbert J.Krapp, formerly of the Herts & Tallant office. In 1917 three new Shubert houses opened: the Morosco on West 45th Street (demolished), named for West Coast producer Oliver Morosco; and a second adjoining pair, the Broadhurst on West 44th and the Plymouth on West 45th, just east of the Shubert-Booth pair. The Broadhurst was initially managed by playwright George Broadhurst and the Shuberts, while the Plymouth was built in partnership with producer Arthur Hopkins. In 1918 the Shuberts built the Central Theater on Broadway and 47th Street (it survives today as the Forum 47th Street movie theater).

In the 1920s the Shuberts continued their fast-paced expansion both in New York and in other cities across the country. In 1920 they acquired complete ownership of the Century Theater on Central Park West.[11] That same year, they announced plans for six new theaters on West 48th and 49th Streets, all to be designed by Herbert J. Krapp. Of the four of these theaters eventually built, three opened in 1921: the Ritz on West 48th Street, and the Ambassador and the Forty-Ninth Street (demolished) on West 49th. The Edwin Forrest (today called the Eugene O'Neill) on West 49th Street opened in 1925.

While the Shuberts were building and acquiring theaters for use as legitimate houses they were also involved in other aspects of the entertainment business, many of them in competition with the legitimate stage. Lee Shubert at one time owned one-third of Samuel Goldwyn's motion picture company, and later sat on the boards of both Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer and United Artists.[11]

The Shuberts also became involved in vaudeville. In 1910 in Syracuse the Shuberts had reached an agreement with B.F. Keith, who virtually controlled vaudeville in the East. They agreed to stay out of vaudeville for ten years in return for a share in Keith's Syracuse profits.[12] With the agreement's expiration in 1920, Lee Shubert announced plans to produce vaudeville shows, making inevitable a battle with Keith's United Booking

Office (UBO) and its monopoly of the eastern vaudeville circuit. The booking battle with Keith caused intense comptetition for stars and control of theaters. Eventually, however, it became clear that vaudeville was no comptition for the growing popularity of motion pictures, and the Shuberts abandoned the enterprise.

In 1924 the Shuberts issued four million dollars worth of Shubert theater stock. The prospectus detailed the assets owned by the Shuberts, not the least of which was their control or ownership of 86 "first class" theaters in New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, Boston and 27 other major cities. The 30 theaters they owned or controlled in New York City represented half of the seating capacity on Broadway. The Shuberts owned seven of Chicago's fifteen theaters, and they booked three of the others. They went on to announce in their prospectus that the producers who booked through their organization included the Theater Guild, Winthrop Ames, Brady, Comstock, Gest, Hopkins, Sam Harris, William Morris and 40 others. Finally the Shuberts noted that 20 percent of the total time on their circuit was devoted to their own productions.[13] The stock sold out.

In addition to the four theaters on 48th and 49th Streets announced in 1920, the Shuberts built Krapp-designed theaters throughout the Times Square area. In 1921 Jolson's 59th Street Theater opened (demolished). The Shuberts named it for Al Jolson who opened it but never appeared in it again. In 1923 they opened the Imperial Theater on West 45th Street and in 1928 the Ethel Barrymore on West 47th Street. In addition to building their own theaters, the Shuberts owned or leased at various times many other New York theaters including the Belasco, the Billy Rose (now the Nederlander), the Cort, the Forty-Fourth Street, the Harris, the Golden, the Royale and the St. James.

While the Shubert Organization continues to function today (the sole survivor among the early 20th century theater entrepreneurs), its contribution to the stock of Brodway theaters ended with the Depression. That contribution, however, was of enormous importance for the creation of the Broadway theater district, and the surviving Shubert-built theaters today bear witness to the productivity of one of the most active and influential families in American theater history.

(EH)

Notes

1. Jerry Stagg, The Brothers Shubert, (New York: Random House, 1968), p. 3.

2. Stagg, p. 217.

3. Stagg, p. 12.

4. Ibid.

5. "The Death of Sam S. Shubert, New York Dramatic Mirror, May 20, 1905, p 13.

6. Reviewed in The Theatre, January, 1902.

7. "The Death of Sam S. Shubert," p. 13.

8. Stagg, p. 208.

9. Stagg, p. 75.

10. Stagg, p. 98.

11. Stagg, p. 165.

12. Stagg, p. 164.

13. Stagg, p. 230.

Herbert J. Krapp

The character of today's Broadway theater district owes more to architect Herbert J. Krapp (1883-1973) than to any other architect. He designed sixteen of the extant Broadway theaters (almost half the total),[1] fourteen of which are in active theatrical use, as well as five that have been demolished.[2] Despite his enormous output, however, little is known today of his life and work.

Herbert Krapp's career coincided with the rise of the Shubert organization as the major force in the New York theater. Upon his graduation from Cooper Union, Krapp joined the office of noted theater architects Henry Herts and Hugh Tallant, who had designed some of the handsomest early twentieth-century theaters in New York, including the Lyceum (1903), New Amsterdam (1902-03), Helen Hayes (1911, demolished), and Longacre (1912-13). According to Krapp's daughter, the partners were becoming increasingly debilitated by morphine addiction, and gradually entrusted Krapp with responsibility for design and office operations.[3] Be that as it may, when the Shuberts next decided to build new theaters, in 1916, they turned to Krapp for designs, and proceeded to commission from him a dozen theaters in Times Square in as many years (1916-1928). Throughout his professional career Krapp remained the preferred Shubert architect. He designed their theaters in New York, Boston, Philadelphia and elsewhere, supervised Shubert theater alterations nationwide, and was even the architect for their private residences.[4]

Besides his twelve Shubert theaters, Krapp designed nine other Times Square houses. Six, built between 1924 and 1927, were for the Chanin Construction Company. Only three, the Alvin, the Hammerstein (now the Ed Sullivan), and the Waldorf (demolished) were designed for independent interests. A brilliant acoustician and gifted architect of great invention, Krapp was responsible for scores of theaters throughout New York City and State (including three movie houses in Queens: the Sunnyside in Woodside and the Jackson and the Boulevard in Jackson Heights) and others stretching from Palm Beach to Detroit. His office records document alterations to literally hundreds of theaters across the country.

Krapp's Broadway theaters closely reflect the interest and needs of a new breed of theatrical entrepreneur, the large-scale speculative owner/builder. Prior to the rise of the Shuberts as major theater owners, most theaters had been erected for independent impresarios, including Oscar Hammerstein who built the first Times Square theater and whose Victory Theater (1899) still stands on 42nd Street, Daniel Frohman who built the Lyceum (1903), Charles Dillingham who built the Lunt-Fontanne (1910), and David Belasco and John Cort who built the theaters that bear their names (1907 and 1912). At the turn of the century, Klaw and Erlanger's Theatrical Syndicate dominated most of the Times Square theaters, but did not sponsor a unified building campaign as the Shuberts eventually did. Since the Shuberts were building theaters largely as financial ventures, most of their buildings tended to be simpler than those designed for the impresarios who were attempting to draw attention both to their theaters and to themselves. The theaters that Krapp designed for the Shuberts are relatively restrained on both the exterior and interior, but they reflect Krapp's mastery of theater layout, as well as the general stylistic trends established by the earlier and more elaborate theater designs in the Times Square theater district.

Krapp's earliest theaters, the Plymouth (1916-17) and Broadhurst (1917), were built as a pair located immediately to the west of Henry Herts's earlier Shubert pair, the Shubert and Booth. The designs of the Plymouth and Broadhurst echo those of the earlier theaters. Like the Shubert and Booth, Krapp's houses have rounded corners that face towards Broadway (the direction from which most audience members arrived). Each corner is accented by an entrance with a broken pedimented enframement and by an oval cartouche. These forms imitate, in a simplified manner, the ornamental forms on Herts's buildings. In addition, Krapp's theaters are faced with bricks separated by wide, deeply inset mortar joints in a manner favored by Herts. The Plymouth and Broadhurst facades are simpler than their neighbors, but they were clearly designed to complement Herts's theaters and create a unified group of Shubert houses.

The Plymouth and Broadhurst are not adorned with a great deal of applied stone or terra cotta. This lack of architectural ornament is typical of Krapp's designs for the Shuberts;[5] the facades of these theaters are generally enlivened by diaper-patterned brick and occasionally by the use of ornamental iron balconies. The use of diaper-patterned brick can be seen on the Plymouth and the Broadhurst, but it is most evident on the Morosco (1917, demolished), Ritz (1921), Ambassador (1921), and the 46th-Street facade of the Imperial (1923). Krapp's use of diaperwork might have been inspired by Herts & Tallant's use of an ornate diaper pattern of terra cotta on their Helen Hayes Theater (1911).

After building a large number of new theaters between 1916 and 1923 the Shuberts undertook very little construction in the Times Square area from 1924 through 1927. During these years the Chanin Construction Company emerged as the major theater builder in the area. The Chanins also turned to Krapp for their theater designs. Major New York City builders, the Chanins considered theaters to be sound financial investments from which they could not fail to profit. The six theaters that Krapp designed for the Chanins are more ornate than those he designed for the Shuberts. One reason may be that the Chanins, new to the theater world, decided that

their theaters should project an elegant image; another, that as a building company, they were more concerned than the Shuberts about the exterior appearance of their buildings. Still another factor may have the greater availability of money in the middle of the 1920s as compared to the years during and immediately following World War I when most of the Shubert theaters were erected.

Krapp's first two theaters for the Chanins, the Forty-Sixth Street (1924) and the Biltmore (1925), are neo-Renaissance style structures with extensive terra-cotta detail that includes rusticated bases, monumental Corinthian pilasters, and ornate cornices and balustrades. Krapp's next commission, the Brooks Atkinson (1926), has a facade with the Mediterranean flavor that came to be favored by the Chanins. Referred to at the time as "modern Spanish" in style[6], the Brooks Atkinson is a brick building articulated by three Palladian openings supported by twisted columns. Roundel panels and a Spanish-tiled parapet are additional Spanish forms on the facade. Krapp's largest commission from the Chanins was a trio of theaters, the Golden, Royale, and Majestic, all built between 1926 and 1927 in conjunction with the Lincoln Hotel (now the Milford Plaza Hotel). Like the Brooks Atkinson, these three theaters were described as being "modern Spanish in character."[7] All three were constructed of yellow brick and adorned with areas of decorative terra-cotta pilasters, twisted columns, arches, parapets, and columned loggias.[8]

Following his work for the Chanins, Krapp designed three independent houses, all of which were stylistically unusual. The Waldorf (1926, demolished) which stood on West 50th Street was an ornate French neo-Classical-style structure; the Alvin (1927, now the Neil Simon) an impressive neo-Federal style red brick building; and the Hammerstein (now the Ed Sullivan) a neo-Gothic theater housed in a tall office building. The latter two were commissioned by theatrical impresarios, hence their more elaborate design as compared to Krapp's work for the Shubert and Chanin theater chains.

In 1928 the Shuberts commissioned their final theater from Krapp. The Ethel Barrymore is among Krapp's finest and most unusual designs. The theater is a monumentally scaled structure combining an extremely ornate rusticated Beaux-Arts-style base with a superstructure boldly modeled after the windowed facade of a Roman bath.[9]

Like the exteriors of his buildings, Krapp's interiors are stylistically varied, reflecting the design eclecticism of the first decades of the twentieth century. On many occasions the style of the interior has little to do with that of the exterior. Most of the theater interiors designed for the Shuberts have Adamesque style ornament, a style deriving from the neo-Classical designs originated by the eighteenth-century English architect Robert Adam. Krapp's Adamesque interiors display the refined, elegant forms common to the style, and such features as delicate garlands, rosettes, and foliate bands. The "Spanish" theaters that Krapp designed for the Chanins have interior details such as twisted columns, arcades, and escutcheons that match the style of the exteriors. All of Krapp's interiors were designed to create a relaxing and comfortable environment for the theatergoer. The decor of the auditoriums is simple yet elegant, and generally complemented by similarly designed lobbies and lounges.

Although Krapp lived to the age of 86, he apparently designed no theaters during the last forty years of his life. Because of the theater glut caused by financial problems during the Depression, theaters ceased being a lucrative architectural specialty. Krapp survived as a building assessor for the City of New York, and turned increasingly to industrial design. A twentieth-century Renaissance man, he supplemented his architectural practice with the patterning of silver- and flatware and especially with his design of mechanical couplings.[10] The theaters he designed in the early decades of this century, however, remain a lasting legacy, and many of his buildings, such as the Majestic, Imperial, Plymouth, and 46th Street Theaters, are counted among the most successful and sought-after on Broadway.

(ASD)

Notes

1. Krapp's sixteen theaters are the Alvin (now the Neil Simon), Ambassador, Brooks Atkinson, Ethel Barrymore, Biltmore, Broadhurst, 46th Street, Golden, Imperial, Majestic, Eugene O'Neil, Plymouth, Ritz, Royale, and Ed Sullivan (originally Hammerstein). The Central (1567 Broadway at 47th Street) is now a movie house and all but its cornice is covered with billboards.

2. The five theaters designed by Krapp that have been demolished are the Bijou (209 West 45th Street), Century (932 Seventh Avenue between 58th and 59th Streets), 49th Street (235 West 49th Street), Morosco (217 West 45th Street), and Waldorf (116 West 50th Street).

3. Interview with Mrs. Peggy Elson, Herbert Krapp's daughter, by Janet Adams, November 16, 1984.

4. Herbert Krapp papers, currently in the possession of Mrs. Peggy Elson, New York City.

5. The 49th Street Theater (1921) was an exception. This building had a terra-cotta facade articulated by fluted pilasters.

6. "Souvenir Program," issued for the opening of the Mansfield (now Brooks Atkinson) Theater, Feburary 15, 1926, n.p.

7. "Souvenir Program," issued for the opening of Chanin's Royale Theater, January 11, 1927, n.p.

8. The use of restricted areas of very ornate detail set against an otherwise unornamented facade is reminiscent of Spanish Baroque or Churrigueresque architecture.

9. This theater is often overlooked because the present rectilinear marquee cuts the facade in half, hiding the ornate base and destroying the subtle juxtaposition between the top and bottom sections of the building.

10. Herbert Krapp papers, and interview with Mrs. Peggy Elson.

The Barrymore Theater

When the actress Ethel Barrymore (1879-1959) came under Shubert management, Lee Shubert agreed to build a theater and name it in her honor. Forty-nine years old at the time, she had already long been known as the "First Lady of the American Theater." With her brothers, the actors Lionel and John, she was considered a member of the "Royal Family of the Theater," and had in fact been satirized in 1927 in a George S. Kaufman play called "The Royal Family."[1] Her career had been launched in 1901 when Charles Frohman, the impresario of the famed Empire Theater (on West 39th Street; demolished), picked her to star in Clyde Fitch's Captain Jinks of the Horse Marines.[2] In 1916, while pursuing a stage career, she began starring in motion pictures, while the industry was still in its infancy. Having a theater built and named for her by the Shuberts indicated the heights to which she had risen by the late 1920s.

With the prosperity of the 1920s at its highest, the Shuberts and their architect, Herbert Krapp, outdid themselves in producing an exceptionally handsome theater. Breaking with the traditional neo-classical theater styles, or the rarer neo-Georgian or even the occasional Moorish, Krapp designed a unique facade featuring an enormous terra-cotta grille-work screen. For the interior Krapp created a tour-de-force mock-Elizabethan design featuring raised plasterwork in a strapwork pattern, on walls which, according to the New York Times on the morning after the theater's opening, "by treatment present an appearance of great age." The ornamental treatment of the theater's boxes was especially elaborate, including a portico set within a series of arches. An outstanding feature was the coved ceiling within which was a thirty-six foot wide dome, from which hung a cut-glass chandelier. The Times described the new Barrymore theater as a "striking addition to the list of Broadway houses."[3]

Opening night, with Ethel Barrymore starring at the new theater in The Kingdom of God, was a great social event. The audience included such notables as producers Arthur Hopkins and Adolph Zukor, financier and art patron Otto Kahn, such legendary figures as George Gershwin, Florenz Ziegfeld, Fannie Hurst, and Billie Burke, critic Deems Taylor, and a host of New York's closely watched socialites.[4] According to the Times,

> When Miss Barrymore made her first entrance on the stage she was warmly received and was compelled to bow several times before she was allowed to speak her lines. At the conclusion of the performance... the star received seven curtain calls. After acknowledging them, she made a short speech. 'I want to thank Lee Shubert,' she said, 'for the courage of his convictions in building this theater. Also for allowing me to act the play as I wanted to.'[5]

On the night Ethel Barrymore died in 1959, the Barrymore Theater marquee was darkened in her honor.[6]

(EH, AR)

Notes

1. Robert Downing, "Ethel Barrymore, 1879-1959," Films in Review, 10(August-September 1959), 388.

2. Ibid, p. 385.

3. "Ethel Barrymore Opens New Theater," New York Times, December 21, 1928, p. 30.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid.

6. Downing, p.386.

The Barrymore as a Playhouse

On December 20, 1928, Ethel Barrymore opened the Shubert theater named in her honor, starring in G. Martinez Sierra's The Kingdom of God.[1] This was followed by Miss Barrymore and Louis Calhern in Zoe Akins' adaptation of The Love Duel by Baroness Lili Hatuany. Barrymore continued to star in productions in her theater in the 1930-31 season, when she appeared in Scarlet Sister Mary, in which her daughter, Ethel Barrymore Colt, made her own stage debut. Even the novelty of seeing the famous actress in blackface, however, did not save the play from closing in three weeks. It was followed by Ivor Novello appearing in his play The Truth Game, made popular in part by its cast which included Billie Burke, Viola Tree and Phoebe Foster. 1931 also saw Melo by Henry Bernstein open at the Barrymore, with Edna Best, Earle Larrimore, and Basil Rathbone. An extremely hot summer in the days before air-conditioning forced the closing of this popular play. Ethel Barrymore made her last appearance in the theater named for her in the fall of 1931, starring as Lady Teazle in Sheridan's The School for Scandal. She was joined on the stage by her son John Drew Colt.

The Barrymore Theater saw a number of hits in the 1930s. Cole Porter's Gay Divorce featured Claire Luce and Fred Astaire, as well as the song "Night and Day." The show closed long before the public had tired of it to make way for another success, Design for Living, written by and starring Noel Coward, with Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontanne. Lunt and Fontanne returned to the Barrymore in 1935 in another Coward play, Point Valaine, whose cast also included Broderick Crawford, and English actor Louis Hayward in his New York debut.

The 1936-37 season opened with Emlyn Williams Night Must Fall. Despite its popularity in London it did not prove a hit in New York, despite performances by Dame May Whitty, Angela Baddeley and the author. It was followed, however, by an enormously popular production of Claire Booth Luce's The Women. That long-running play was followed by Maxwell Anderson's Knickerbocker Holiday, with music by Kurt Weill and featuring Walter Huston singing "September Song." No Time for Comedy opened in the spring of 1939 with Katharine Cornell, Laurence Olivier, Margalo Gillmore

and Robert Flemyng. The 1939-40 season opened with another play by Maxwell Anderson, Key Largo, a popular production featuring Paul Muni, Uta Hagen, and Jose Ferrer.

The 1940s saw a production of the long-running musical Pal Joey by John O'Hara, with score and lyrics by Rodgers and Hart, and starring Gene Kelly and Vivienne Segal. John Cecil Holm's Best Foot Forward opened in October 1941 and played 326 performances. It was followed by Katharine Cornell and Judith Anderson in a production of Chekhov's The Three Sisters (123 performances). In the spring of 1943, a powerful anti-Nazi drama opened at the Barrymore, Tomorrow the World by James Gow and Arnold D'Usseau; it ran for 500 performances.

Katharine Cornell returned to the Barrymore in 1945 with a revival of the long-touring play The Barretts of Wimpole Street. In November 1946, Jose Ferrer opened in a production of Cyrano de Bergerac that played 195 performances. Gian-Carlo Menotti's The Medium and The Telephone played over 200 performances in 1947. The most popular play at the Barrymore during the 1940s, however, was without doubt Tennessee Williams' Pulitzer Prize winner, A Streetcar Named Desire. The play ran for 885 performances and was awarded the New York Drama Critics Circle Award; it starred Marlon Brando, Kim Hunter, Karl Malden, and Jessica Tandy, whose performance won her the 1948 Tony Award for best actress.

Robert Anderson's big hit Tea and Sympathy opened the 1953-54 season, starring Deborah Kerr and John Kerr, and later Joan Fontaine and Anthony Perkins. A number of award-winning plays followed in the 1950s, including Ketti Frings' adaptation of Thomas Wolfe's Look Homeward Angel with Anthony Perkins and Jo Van Fleet. The next season the winner of the 1959 New York Drama Critics Circle Award played the Barrymore: Raisin in the Sun, with Sidney Poitier, Claudia McNeil and Ruby Dee.

During the 1960s the Barrymore housed a number of performances by outstanding actors and actresses. Henry Fonda appeared twice, first in 1960 in Critics Choice, and again in 1962, with Olivia de Havilland, in Garson Kanin's A Gift of Time. Michael Redgrave and Sandy Dennis appeared in a successful run of Graham Greene's The Complaisant Lover in 1961. Rod Steiger starred in a short-lived production of Orson Welles' adaptation of Melville's Moby Dick. Claudette Colbert starred in The Irregular Verb to Love in 1963 and Lee Remick and Robert Duvall starred in Frederick Knott's Wait Until Dark in 1966. In 1969 the Barrymore housed a revival of Ben Hecht and Charles MacArthur's The Front Page, with Bert Convy, Conrad Janis, and Robert Ryan.

Among the successful and award-winning productions at the Barrymore in the 1970s were Ain't Supposed to Die a Natural Death, I Love My Wife; and Romantic Comedy. John Wood won a Tony in 1976 for his performance in Tom Stoppard's Travesties. In the 1976-77 season, American Buffalo received the Drama Critics Circle Citation for Best American Play. Hume Cronyn, Jessica Tandy and Anne Baxter played the Barrymore in Noel Coward in Two Keys. Gilda Radner starred in Lunch Hour, which opened in November 1980 and ran for 263 performances. Katharine Hepburn starred in the 1981 production of West Side Waltz (128 performances).

From Ethel Barrymore's opening night at her theater, the Barrymore has seen some of America's finest actors and actresses, playwrights, and producers creating American theater.

(EH)

Notes

1. This production history of the Barrymore Theater, condensed from the fuller version in the Appendix, is based on listings compiled by Actors Equity and submitted as testimony at the Landmarks Preservation Commission's public hearings of June and October, 1982. Their submission has been checked by Landmarks Commission staff against George Freedley, "Broadway Playhouses," bound typescript of the "Stage Today," 1941-43, Billy Rose Theater Collection, Lincoln Center Branch, New York Public Library; The Best Plays of....[annual] (New York: Dodd Mead and Co., 1899-present); Theatre World [annual] Daniel Blum, editor (New York: Theatre World, 1946-present), The Biographical Encyclopedia & Who's Who of the American Theater, Walter Rigdon, editor (New York: James H. Heinman, Inc.,1966); Edwin Bronner, The Encyclopedia of American Theater, 1900-1975 (New York: A.S. Barnes & Co., Inc., 1980); Gerald Bordman, Oxford Companion to American Theatre (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984).

Description[1]

Auditorium:

1) Configuration: The configuration of the auditorium, roughly square in plan, consists of a space with a single balcony, a proscenium flanked by boxes, the stage opening behind the proscenium arch, a promenade at the rear of the orchestra, a ceiling, and a sloping floor extending towards the proscenium arch.

Proscenium: The proscenium has a three-center arch.

Balcony: The balcony is cantilevered; it is divided into two tiers by a cross-over aisle which leads from the middle exit door on each side.

Boxes: The boxes curve towards the side walls.

Promenade: A promenade is located at the rear of the orchestra.

Staircases: At the rear corners, staircases lead up to the balcony.

Ceiling: An outstanding feature of the auditorium is the coved ceiling. At its center is a dome, 36 feet in diameter. These elements help unify the space into a single volume.

Floor: The floor is raked.

Stage: The stage extends behind the proscenium arch and forms a stage picture (visible from the audience) framed by the proscenium arch.[2]

2) Ornament:

The decorative ornament is primarily low-relief plasterwork, which is integrated into the surfaces which define the configuration of the auditorium. Decorative ornament includes, but is not limited to, the following:

Proscenium arch: The proscenium arch has a wide band of raised plaster decoration in a strapwork pattern. On each side of this band are narrow bands in a leafy design. Decorative plasterwork fills the spandrels of the arch.

Orchestra: A paneled wainscoting extends along the side walls at orchestra level.

Promenade: The rear wall terminates in a decorative frieze and curved ceiling adorned with Elizabethan strapwork designs.

Boxes: At each side of the proscenium is a set of boxes framed by concentric arches. At orchestra level three segmental-arched openings, flanked by a paneled wainscoting, are set below each box. The boxes are curved and adorned by three bands of raised Elizabethan-style plasterwork. The first band has puttis' faces on shields in a strapwork design, the second is a narrow band of rosettes, and the uppermost band has rectangular panels of Elizabethan strapwork around a center shield. The underside of each box is outlined by moldings and has three plasterwork medallions from which are suspended crystal light fixtures (see below, under fixtures). The entrance to each box is through a portico composed of six fluted Ionic pilasters, with fluted Ionic half-columns in front of the pilasters on either side of the center entrance. The pilasters support an architrave adorned with plaster reliefs of Elizabethan strapwork and a narrow band with a water leaf design. The architrave is topped by a balustrade with vase-shaped balusters. On the wall behind the balustrade is a series of arches. At the center of these arches is a lunette with an open grille decorated with Elizabethan and classical design motifs. In the center of the lunette is a square shield flanked by sphinxes; the two motifs are linked by a latticework design. The lunette is encircled by a band of strapwork set off by the concentric arches adorned with Ionic half columns, Renaissance-inspired shells, Elizabethan shields, and modified anthemia. A square-headed plaster frame encompasses the boxes, the balustrade, and the arches.

Balcony: At balcony level the side and rear walls are simply smooth plaster, punctuated by exit doors on the sides (see below, under fixtures). Above the segmental arched middle exit door in either side is a rectangular opening with a projecting balcony supported by consoles (see below, under fixtures). The main balcony front has a high-relief Elizabethan strapwork design, most of which has been covered over by an enclosed lighting box (see below, under alterations). The underside of the balcony has plasterwork panels outlined by moldings; it also curves downward following the slope of the auditorium floor. There are plaster medallions underneath the balcony from which hang crystal lights (see below, under fixtures).

Ceiling: The centerpiece of the dome is composed of several circles outlined in Elizabethan moldings. Surrounding the centerpiece is a circular band of wedge-shaped panels. Four circular medallions are evenly spaced around the dome. Latticework panels fill the ceiling to the coved portion which is decorated in a strapwork design in high relief. Below the cove a water leaf molding runs around the entire ceiling.

3) Attached fixtures:

Orchestra: Exit doors are located on the side walls.

Promenade: At the rear of auditorium behind the last row of seats is the original wrought-iron standing rail, worked in a handsome Elizabethan strapwork design. One enters the auditorium through three sets of doors from the rear.

Balcony: The small balcony front over the middle exit door in either side wall of the balcony is an open lattice with shields. Exit doors are located on the side walls.

Staircases: At the rear corners, staircases with decorative wrought-iron railings with shields and strapwork lead up to the balcony.

Light fixtures: Existing non-original light fixtures throughout the auditorium are stylistically compatible with its Elizabethan style. A large glass chandelier is suspended from the center of the dome. Brass wall sconces are placed on the side walls and the rear wall at the back of the auditorium. Crystal lights are set in the plaster medallions underneath the balcony and the boxes.

4) Known alterations: Air conditioning grilles and vents have been inserted on the underside of the balcony and at the rear of the balcony. A modern technical booth has been installed at the rear of the balcony. An enclosed lighting box has been installed on the front of the balcony. The current color scheme, which is not original, tends to obscure the perception of the ornamental detail.

(MP)

Notes

1. This description identifies the spaces that are included in this designation. Specific elements are listed and architecturally significant features are underlined as explained in the "Guidelines for Treatment of Theater Interiors" as adopted by the Landmarks Preservation Commission on December 10, 1985.

2. For the purposes of this description, the stage shall include the enclosing walls and roof of the stage house and a floor area behind the proscenium arch, but not any fixture or feature of or within that space.

Conclusion

The Barrymore Theater interior survives today as one of the historic theater interiors that symbolize American theater for both New York and the nation. Among the last theaters constructed for the Shubert Organization during the early decades of this century, the Barrymore was built in honor of and named for Ethel Barrymore, among the country's most famous actresses.

Designed for the Shuberts by Herbert J. Krapp, the most prolific architect of the Broadway theater district, the tour-de-force Barrymore is among his finest designs. As a Shubert theater designed by Krapp, with its special associations with Ethel Barrymore, the Barrymore represents a special aspect of the nation's theatrical history.

For half a century, beginning with Barrymore's own performances, the Barrymore Theater has served as home to countless numbers of the plays through which the Broadway theater has come to personify American theater. As such, it continues to help define the Broadway theater district, the largest and most famous concentration of legitimate stage theaters in the world.

The preparation of this report has involved the work of a number of consultants supervised and edited by Anthony W. Robins (AR), Deputy Director of Research. Individual authors are noted by initials at the ends of their sections. The consultants were Margaret Knapp (MMK), Andrew S. Dolkart (ASD), and Eugenie Hoffmeyer (EH). Gale Harris of the Research Department supplemented the research, verified the citations and sources, and provided editorial assistance. Marjorie Pearson (MP), Director of Research, wrote the description. Research Department staff who contributed to the report include Marion Cleaver, Virginia Kurshan, Charles Savage, Susan Strauss, and Jay Shockley.

The New York LandmarksPreservation Commission gratefully acknowledges the assistance rendered by many concerned citizens in studying the Broadway theaters. Special thanks are due the New York City Planning Commission; Community Planning Board 5, Manhattan; the New York Landmarks Conservancy; the Actors Equity Committee to Save the Theaters; and the individual theater owners.

FINDINGS AND DESIGNATIONS

On the basis of a careful consideration of the history, the architecture and other features of this Interior, the Landmarks Preservation Commission finds that the Barrymore Theater, first floor interior consisting of the auditorium, the stage, the staircases leading from the first floor to the balcony floor; the balcony floor interior consisting of the balcony, the upper part of the auditorium and ceiling; and the fixtures and interior components of these spaces, including but not limited to, wall and ceiling surfaces, doors, stair railings and attached decorative elements; has a special character, special historical and aesthetic interest and value as part of the development, heritage and cultural characteristics of New York City, New York State, and the nation, and the Interior or parts thereof are thirty years old or more, and that the Interior is one which is customarily open and accessible to the public, and to which the public is customarily invited.

The Commission further finds that, among its important qualities, the Barrymore Theater Interior survives today as one of the historic theater interiors that symbolize American theater for both New York and the nation; that, built in 1928, it was among the group of theaters constructed for the Shubert Organization during the early decades of this century which helped shaped the character of the Broadway theater district; that it was designed for the Shuberts by Herbert J. Krapp, the most prolific architect of the Broadway theater district; that it was built in honor of and named for Ethel Barrymore, one of the nation's most famous actresses; that its interior is an exceptionally handsome and harmonious design reflecting Elizabethan influences; that among its outstanding characteristics are plasterwork ornament in a strapwork pattern, unusual box treatment, and a coved ceiling with a dome; that as a Shubert theater designed by Herbert Krapp in honor of Ethel Barrymore it represents a special aspect of the nation's theatrical history; that for half a century the Barrymore Theater Interior has served as home to countless numbers of the plays through which the Broadway theater has come to personify American theater; and that as such it continues to help define the Broadway theater district, the largest and most famous concentration of legitimate stage theaters in the world.

Accordingly, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 21, Section 534, of the Charter of the City of New York and Chapter 8-A of the Administrative Code of the City of New York, the Landmarks Preservation Commission designates as an Interior Landmark the Barrymore Theater, first floor interior consisting of the auditorium, the stage, the staircases leading from the first floor to the balcony floor; the balcony floor interior consisting of the balcony, the upper part of the auditorium and ceiling; and the fixtures and interior components of these spaces, including but not limited to, wall and ceiling surfaces, doors, stair railings and attached decorative elements; 243-251 West 47th Street, Borough of Manhattan and designates Tax Map Block 1019, Lot 12, Borough of Manhattan, as its Landmark Site.

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APPENDIX

The following production history of the Barrymore Theater is based on listings compiled by Actors Equity and submitted as testimony at the Landmarks Preservation Commission's public hearings of June and October, 1982. Their submission has been checked by Gale Harris and Susan Strauss of the Research Department staff against George Freedley, "Broadway Playhouses," bound typescript of the "Stage Today," 1941-43, Billy Rose Theater Collection, Lincoln Center Branch, New York Public Library; The Best Plays of....[annual] (New York: Dodd Mead and Co., 1899-present); Theatre World [annual] Daniel Blum, editor (New York: Theatre World 1946-present), The Biographical Encyclopedia & Who's Who of the American Theater, Walter Rigdon, editor (New York: James H. Heinman, Inc. 1966); Edwin Bronner, The Encyclopedia of American Theater, 1900-1975 (New York: A.S. Barnes & Co., Inc., 1980); Gerald Bordman, Oxford Companion to American Theatre (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984.

1928

THE KINGDOM OF GOD 12/20/28 (93 perfs.) by G. Martinez Sierra; with Ethel Barrymore.

1929-30

THE LOVE DUEL 4/15/29 (88 perfs.) by Baroness Lili Hatvany, adapted by Zoe Akins; with Ethel Barrymore and Louis Calhern.

DEATH TAKES A HOLIDAY 12/26/29 (181 perfs.) by Walter Ferris; with Philip Merivale, Rose Hobart & Martin Burton.

1930

TOPAZE 8/18/30 (56 perfs.) adapted by Ben Levy from Marcel Pagnol's "Topaze"; with Frank Morgan.

HIS MAJESTY'S CAR 10/23/30 (12 perfs.) by Fanny & Frederick Horton, based on a play by Attila Von Orbok; with Miriam Hopkins.

SCARLET SISTER MARY 11/25/30 (23 perf.) by Daniel Reed, based on a novel by Julia Peterkins; with Ethel Barrymore, Beatrice Terry, Estelle Winwood, Marjorie Main and Elthel Barrymore Colt.

1931

THE TRUTH GAME 12/29/30 (105 perfs.) by Ivor Novello; with Billie Burke, Viola Tree, Phoebe Foster and Ivor Novello.

MELO 4/16/31 (68 perfs.) by Henry Bernstein, translated by Arthur Pollock; with Edna Best, Earle Larrimore and Basil Rathbone.

THE SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL 11/10/31 (23 perfs.) by Richard Brinsley Sheridan; with Ethel Barrymore and John Drew Colt.

1932

WHISTLING IN THE DARK 1/19/32 (144 perfs.) by Edward Childs Carpenter; with Ernest Truex, Edward Arnold and Claire Trevor.

HERE TODAY 9/6/32 (39 perfs.) by George Oppenheimer; with Ruth Gordon.

GAY DIVORCE 11/29/32 (248 total perfs.), by Dwight Taylor, music by Cole Porter; with Fred Astaire and Claire Luce.

1933

DESIGN FOR LIVING 1/24/33 (135 perfs.) by Noel Coward; with Alfred Lunt Lynn Fontanne, Noel Coward.

TEN MINUTE ALIBI 10/17/33 (87 perfs.) by Anthony Armstrong; with Bramwell Fletcher.

1934

JOHN BROWN 1/22/34 (2 perfs.) by Ronald Gow; with George Abbot

JIGSAW 4/30/34 (49 perfs.) by Dawn Powell; with Ernest Truex, Spring Byington and Cora Witherspoon.

1935

POINT VALAINE 1/16/35 (56 perfs.) by Noel Coward; with Louis Hayward; Alfred Lunt, Lynn Fontanne and Broderick Crawford.

OTHELLO 9/27/35 (11 perfs.) by William Shakespeare; with Philip Merivale, Kenneth MacKenna and Gladys Cooper.

MACBETH 10/7/35 (8 perfs.) with Philip Merivale, and Gladys Cooper.

SUBSTITUTE FOR MURDER 10/22/35 (15 perfs.) by Irwin Shaw; with Jessie Royce Landis.

PARNELL 11/11/35 (98 perfs.) by Elsie Schauffler; with Margaret Rawlings, George Curzon, Effie Shannon and John Emery.

1936-1938

BURY THE DEAD/PRELUDE 4/18/36 (97 perfs.) by Irwin Shaw; with Will Geer and Robert Porterfield.

NIGHT MUST FALL 9/28/36 (64 perfs.) by Emlyn Williams; with Dame May Whitty, Angela Baddeley and Emlyn Williams.

THE WOMEN 12/26/36 (657 perfs.) by Claire Booth Luce; with Margalo Gillmore, Ilka Chase, Arlene Francis, Audrey Christie and Margaret Douglass.

1938

KNICKERBOCKER HOLIDAY 10/19/38 (168 perfs.) book and lyrics by Maxwell Anderson, music by Kurt Weill; with Walter Huston, Ray Middleton and Richard Kollmar.

1939

OFF TO BUFFALO 2/21/39 (7 perfs.) by Max Liebman and Allen Boretz; with Joe Cook and Hume Cronyn.

NO TIME FOR COMEDY 4/17/39 (185 perfs.) by S.N. Behrman; with Katharine Cornell, Lawrence Olivier, Margalo Gilmore and Robert Flemyng.

KEY LARGO 11/27/39 (105 perfs.) by Maxwell Anderson; with Paul Muni, Uta Hagen and Jose Ferrer.

1940

A PASSENGER TO BALI 3/14/40 (4 perfs.) by Ellis St. Joseph; with Walter Huston.

AN INTERNATIONAL INCIDENT 4/2/40 (15 perfs.) by Vincent Sheean; with Ethel Barrymore and Kent Smith.

WALK WITH MUSIC 6/4/40 (55 perfs.) by Guy Bolton, Parke Levy and Alan Lipscott, lyrics by Johnny Mercer, music by Hoagy Carmichael; with Kitty Carlisle, Stepin Fetchit and Jack Whiting.

PAL JOEY 12/25/40 (270 perfs.) by John O'Hara, music by Richard Rogers, lyrics by Lorenz Hart; with Gene Kelly, Vivienne Segal and Van Johnson.

1941

BEST FOOT FORWARD 10/1/41 (326 perfs.) by John Cecil Holm, music and lyrics by Hugh Martin and Ralph Blane; with Gil Stratton, Jr., and Rosemary Lane.

1942

COUNT ME IN 10/8/42 (61 perfs.) by Walter Kerr, Leo Brady and Nancy Hamilton, music and lyrics by Ann Ronell and Will Irwin; with Jean Arthur, Charles Butterworth and June Preisser.

R.U.R. 12/3/42 (4 perfs.) by Karel Capek.

THE THREE SISTERS 12/21/42 (123 perfs.) by Anton Chekhov; with Katharine Cornell, Gertrude Musgrove, Judith Anderson, Alexander Knox and Edmund Gwen.

1943

TOMORROW THE WORLD 4/14/43 (499 perfs.) by James Gow and Arnold D'Usseau; with Ralph Bellamy, Dorothy Sands and Shirley Booth.

1944

LAST STOP 9/5/44 (23 perfs.) by Irving Davis, with Enid Markey.

THE PERFECT MARRIAGE 10/26/44 (92 perfs.) by Samson Raphaelson; with Victor Jory and Miriam Hopkins.

1945

REBECCA 1/18/45 (20 perfs.) by Daphne Du Maurier; with Diana Barrymore, Florence Reed and Bramwell Fletcher.

ONE MAN SHOW 2/8/45 (36 perfs.) By Ruth Goodman and Augustus Goetz; with Frank Conroy and Constance Cummings.

THE BARRETTS OF WIMPOLE STREET 3/26/45 (87 perfs.) by Rudolph Besier; with Katharine Cornell, Brian Aherne and Brenda Forbes.

FOXHOLE IN THE PARLOR 5/23/45 (45 perfs.) by Elsa Shelley; with Montgomery Clift and Grace Coppin.

MAKE YOURSELF AT HOME 9/13/45 (4 perfs.) by Vera Mathews; with Donald Mc Clelland, Philip Huston and Bernadine Hayes.

MARINKA 10/1/45 (165 total perfs.) by George Marion, Jr. and Karl Farkas, music by George Marion and Emmerich Kalman; with Joan Roberts and Harry Stockwell. (First opened at the Winter Garden 7/18/45.)

1946

SECOND BEST BED 6/3/46 (8 perfs.) by N. Richard Nash; with Ruth Chatterton.

THE DUTCHESS OF MALFI 10/15/46 (39 perfs.) by John Webster, adapted by W.H. Auden; with Elisabeth Bergner, John Carradine and Canada Lee.

CYRANO DE BERGERAC 11/18/46 (195 total perfs.) by Edmond Rostand; with Jose Ferrer and Frances Reid. (First opened at the Alvin 10/8/46.)

1947

BATHSHEBA 3/26/47 (29 perfs.) by Jacques Deval; with James Mason and Pamela Kellins.

THE MEDIUM/THE TELEPHONE 5/1/47 (212 perfs.) by Gian-Carlo Menotti; with Marie Powers and Leo Coleman.

THIS TIME TOMORROW 11/3/47 (32 perfs.) by Jan de Hartog; with John Archer, Ruth Ford and Sam Jaffe.

A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE 12/3/47 (855 perfs.) by Tennessee Williams; with Jessica Tandy, Marlon Brando, Kim Hunter and Karl Malden.

1949

THE RAT RACE 12/22/49 (84 perfs.) by Garson Kanin; with Barry Nelson and Betty Field.

1950

THE CONSUL 3/15/50 (269 perfs.) by Gian-Carlo Menotti; with Cornell Mac Neil, Patricia Neway, Marie Powers and Gloria Lane.

BELL BOOK AND CANDLE 11/14/50 (233 perfs.) by John Van Druten; with Rex Harrison, Lilli Palmer, Jean Adair and Scott McKay.

1951

OUT WEST OF EIGHTH 9/20/51 (4 perfs.) by Kenyon Nicholson; with Robert Keith, Jr.

THE FOURPOSTER 10/24/51 (632 perfs.) by Jan de Hertog; with Jessica Tandy and Hume Cronyn.

1952

I'VE GOT SIXPENCE 12/2/52 (23 perfs.) by John Van Druten; with Viveca Lindfors and Edmond O'Brien.

1953

THE EMPEROR'S CLOTHES 2/9/53 (16 perfs.) by George Tabori; with Lee J. Cobb, Maureen Stapleton and Brandon De Wilde.

MISALLIANCE 3/6/53 (146 total perfs.) by George Bernard Shaw; with Barry Jones, Dorothy Sands, Roddy McDowall, William Redfield and Richard Kiley. (First opened at City Center 2/18/53.)

TEA AND SYMPATHY 9/30/53 (712 total perfs.) by Robert Anderson; with Deborah Kerr and John Kerr. (Moved to the Longacre 2/7/55.)

1955

THE DESPERATE HOURS 2/10/55 (212 perfs.) by Joseph Hayes; with Paul Newman, George Grizzard and Karl Malden.

MARCEL MARCEAU 10/4/55 (16 perfs.).

THE CHALK GARDEN 10/26/55 (182 perfs.) by Enid Bagnold; with Gladys Cooper, Siobhan McKenna and Fritz Weaver.

1956

AFFAIR OF HONOR 4/6/56 (27 perfs.) by Bill Hoffman; with James Hickman, Daryl Grimes, Betsy Palmer and William Prince.

WAKE UP DARLING 5/2/56 (5 perfs.) by Alex Gottlieb; with Barry Nelson and Barbara Britton.

NEW FACES OF '56 6/14/56 (221 perfs.); with Tiger Haynes, Jane Connell and John Reardon.

1957

SMALL WAR ON MURRAY HILL 1/3/57 (12 perfs.) by Robert E. Sherwood, with Daniel Massey, Leo Genn and Patricia Bosworth.

WAITING FOR GODOT 1/21/57 (7 perfs.) by Samuel Beckett; with Manton Moreland and Earle Hyman.

HIDE AND SEEK 4/2/57 (7 perfs.) by Stanley Mann and Roger MacDougall; with Geraldine Fitzgerald and Basil Rathbone.

THE GREATEST MAN ALIVE 5/8/57 (5 perfs.) by Tony Webster; with Dennis King and Kathleen Maguire.

THE EGGHEAD 10/9/57 (21 perfs.) by Molly Kazan; with Karl Malden.

1957

LOOK HOMEWARD, ANGEL 11/28/57 (564 perfs.) by Ketti Frings, adapted from a novel by Thomas Wolfe; with Anthony Perkins and Jo Van Fleet.

1959

RAISIN IN THE SUN 3/11/59 (530 total perfs.) by Lorraine Hansberry; with Sidney Poitier, Claudia McNeil and Ruby Dee. (Moved to the Belasco 10/19/59.)

1960

LAUGHS AND OTHER EVENTS 10/10/60 (8 perfs.); songs and monologues written and performed by Stanley Holloway.

CRITIC'S CHOICE 12/14/60 (189 perfs.) by Ira Levin; with Henry Fonda and Mildred Natwick.

1961

THE COMPLAISANT LOVER 11/1/61 (101 perfs.) by Graham Greene; with Michael Redgrave and Sandy Dennis.

1962

A GIFT OF TIME 2/22/62 (92 perfs.) by Garson Kanin; with Henry Fonda and Olivia de Havilland.

STEP ON A CRACK 10/17/62 (1 perf.) by Bernard Evslin; with Gary Merrill and Pauline Flanagan.

MOBY DICK 11/28/62 (13 perfs.) by Orson Welles adapted from a novel by Herman Melville; with Rod Steiger.

1963

THE IRREGULAR VERB TO LOVE 9/18/63 (115 perfs.) by Hugh and Margaret Williams; with Claudette Colbert, Cyril Richard, and Robert Drivas.

1964

THE PASSION OF JOSEF D 2/11/64 (15 perfs.) by Paddy Chayefsky; with Peter Falk, Elizabeth Hubbard and Luther Adler.

BEYOND THE FRINGE '65 3/15/64 (30 perfs.) by Alexander H. Cohen

1965

THE AMEN CORNER 4/15/65 (52 perfs.) by James Baldwin; with Bea Richards and Frank Silvera.

XMAS IN LAS VEGAS 11/4/65 (4 perfs.) by Jack Richardson; with Tom Ewell.

1966

WAIT UNTIL DARK 2/2/66 (374 total perfs.) by Frederick Knott; with Robert Duvall and Lee Remick.

WE HAVE ALWAYS LIVED IN THE CASTLE 10/19/66 (9 perfs.) by Hugh Wheeler, adapted a novel by Shirley Jackson; with Shirley Knight and William Sims.

LES BALLETS AFRICANS 11/16/66 (85 perfs.); staged by David H. McIlwraith.

1967

BLACK COMEDY 2/12/67 (388 perfs.) by Peter Schaffer; with Geraldine Page, Lynn Redgrave and Michael Crawford.

1968

THE SEVEN DESCENTS OF MYRTLE 3/27/68 (29 perfs.) by Tennessee Williams; with Harry Guardino and Estelle Parsons.

HAPPINESS IS JUST A LITTLE THING CALLED A ROLLS-ROYCE 5/11/68 (1 perf.), by Arthur Alsberg and Robert Fisher; with Hildy Brooks, Pat Harrington and John McGiver.

NOEL COWARD'S SWEET POTATO 9/28/68 (17 perfs.) by Noel Coward; with George Grizzard, Carole Sheley and Dorothy Loudon.

ROCKEFELLER AND THE RED INDIANS 10/14/68 (4 perfs.) by Ray Galton and Alan Simpson; with Frankie Howerd and Jennie Woodford.

THE GOODBYE PEOPLE 12/3/68 (7 perfs.) by Herb Gardner; with Bob Dishy, Milton Berle and Brenda Vacarro.

1969

ZELDA 3/5/69 5 (perfs.) by Sylvia Regan; with Robby Benson, Ed Begley, Nita Talbot and Lilia Skala.

THE FRONT PAGE 5/10/69 (64 perfs.) by Ben Hecht and Charles MacArthur; with Bert Convy, Conrad Janis and Robert Ryan.

THE FRONT PAGE 10/18/69 (159 perfs.). Return engagement of the revival which opened at the Barrymore 5/10/69.

1970

THE CHINESE AND DR. FISH (3/10/70) (15 perfs.) by Murray Schisgal; with Louise Lasser and William Devane.

A PLACE FOR POLLY 4/18/70 (1 perf.) by Lonnie Coleman; with Marion Mercer.

CONDUCT UNBECOMING 10/12/70 (144 perfs.) by Barry England; with Jeremy Clyde, Paul Jones and Michael Bradshaw.

1971

THE PHILANTHROPIST 3/15/71 (64 perfs.) by Christopher Hampton; with Alec McCowen.

AIN'T SUPPOSED TO DIE A NATURAL DEATH 10/20/71 (325 perfs.) by Melvin Van Peebles; with Madge Wells, Carl Gordon and Barbara Alston.

INNER CITY 12/19/71 (97 perfs.) by Tom O'Horgan, music by Helen Miller, lyrics by Eve Merriman; with Larry Marshall, Delores Hall and Linda Hopkins.

1972

VOICES 4/4/72 (8 perfs.) by Richard Lortz; with Richard Kiley and Julie Harris.

CAPTAIN BRASSBOUND'S CONVERSION 4/17/72 (16 perfs.) by George Bernard Shaw; with Ingrid Bergman, Pernell Roberts.

DON'T PLAY US CHEAP 5/16/72 (164 perfs.) by Melvin Van Peebles; with Esther Rolle, Joe Keyes, Jr. and Mabel King.

1973

EMPEROR HENRY IV 3/28/73 (37 perfs.) by Luigi Pirandello; with Rex Harrison and Paul Hecht.

THE VISIT 11/25/75 (32 perfs.) by Friedrich Duerrenmatt, adapted by Maurice Valency; with Rachel Roberts and John McMartin.

CHEMIN DE FER 11/26/73 (42 perfs.) by George Feydeau; with Rachel Roberts and John McMartin.

HOLIDAY 12/26/73 (118 perfs.) by Phillip Barry; with John Glover and Charlotte Moore

1974

NOEL COWARD IN TWO KEYS 2/17/74 (140 perfs.). Two plays by Noel Coward; with Hume Cronyn, Jessica Tandy and Anne Baxter.

DREYFUS IN REHEARSAL 11/17/74 (12 perfs.) by Jean Claude Grumberg; with Ruth Gordon, Sam Levine and Avery Schreiber.

1975

THE NIGHT THAT MADE AMERICA FAMOUS 2/26/75 (75 perfs.) by Harry Chapin; with Harry Chapin, Delores Hall and Gilbert Price.

TRAVESTIES 10/30/75 (155 perfs.) by Tom Stoppard; with John Wood and Tim Curry.

1976

LEGEND 5/13/76 (5 perfs.) by Samuel Taylor; with Elizabeth Ashley.

POOR MURDERER 10/20/76 (87 perfs.) by Pavel Kohout; with Laurence Luckenbill, Kevin McCarthy, Maria Schell and Ruth Ford.

1977-1978

AMERICAN BUFFALO 2/16/77 (total of 122 perfs.) by David Mamet; with Kenneth McMillan, John Savage and Robert Duvall. (Moved to the Belasco Theater, 4/12/77.)

I LOVE MY WIFE 4/17/77 (864 perfs.) by Michael Stewart, music by Cy Coleman; with Ilene Graff, Lenny Baker, James Naughton and Joanna Gleason.

1979

ROMANTIC COMEDY 11/8/79 (396 perfs.) by Bernard Slade; with Mia Farrow, Carole Cook, Greg Mullavey and Anthony Perkins.

1980

LUNCH HOUR 11/11/80 (263 perfs.) by Jean Kerr; with Sam Waterson and Gilda Radner.

1981

WEST SIDE WALTZ 11/19/81 (128 perfs.) by Ernest Thompson; with Katharine Hepburn and Dorothy Loudon.

1982

IS THERE LIFE AFTER HIGH SCHOOL 5/3/82 (12 perfs.) by Jeffrey Kindley, music and lyrics by Craig Carnelia; with David Patrick Kelly and James Widdoes.

FOXFIRE 11/11/82 (213 perfs.) by Susan Cooper and Hume Cronyn; with Hume Cronyn and Jessica Tandy.

BABY 12/4/83 (241 perfs.) by Sybille Pearson, based on a story by Susan Yankowitz. Music by David Shire, lyrics by Richard Maltby, Jr.; with Liz Callaway, Todd Graff, James Congdon and Beth Fowler.

Barrymore Theater Interior

Photo: Forster, LPC

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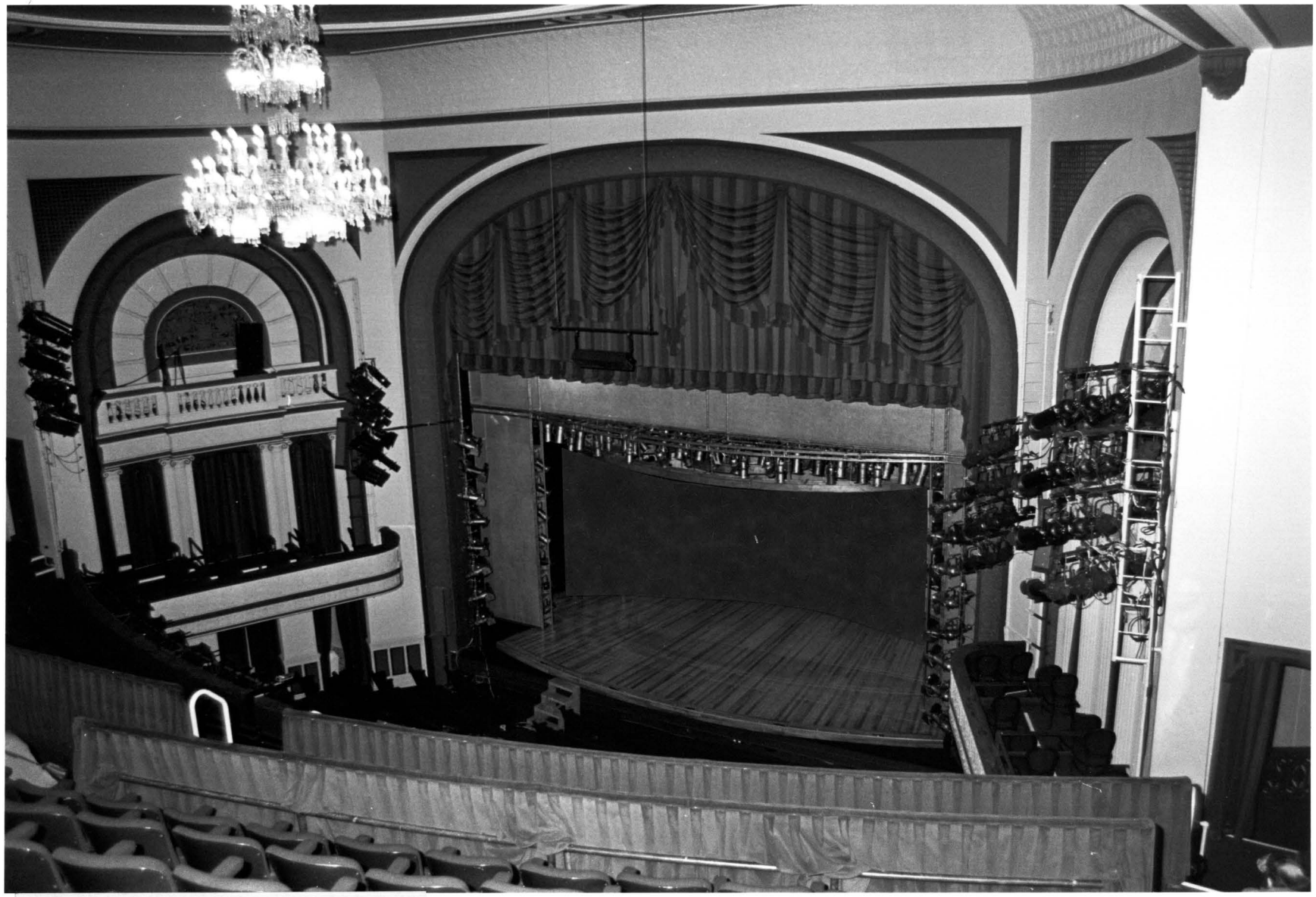

Barrymore Theater Interior
243-251 West 47th Street
Manhattan

Built: 1928
Architect: Herbert Krapp

Photo: Forster, LPC