

Landmarks Preservation Commission  
December 15, 1987; Designation List 198  
LP-1373

ROYALE 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; 242-250 West 45th Street, Manhattan. Built 1926-27; architect Herbert J. Krapp.

Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 1016, Lot 55.

On June 14 and 15, 1982, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation as a Landmark of the Royale 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, 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. 69). The hearing was continued to October 19, 1982. Both hearings had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of law. Eighty-two 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 speaking in opposition to designation. The Commission has received many letters and other expressions of support in favor of this designation.

#### DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

The Royale Theater Interior survives today as one of the historic theater interiors that symbolize American theater for both New York and the nation. Built in 1926-27, the Royale was among the half-dozen theaters constructed by the Chanin Organization in the mid-1920s, to the designs of Herbert J. Krapp, that typified the development of the Times Square/Broadway theater district.

Founded by Irwin S. Chanin, the Chanin organization was a major construction company in New York. During the 1920s, Chanin branched out into the building of theaters, and helped create much of the ambience of the heart of the theater district. Chanin built the Royale as part of a complex on Shubert Alley including three theaters--the Theatre Masque (now the Golden), Royale and Majestic--and a hotel, the Lincoln (now the Milford Plaza). The theaters were of varying sizes, and the Royale was intended to be a musical comedy theater of 1200 seats.

Herbert J. Krapp, who designed all the Chanins' 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 Royale represents a typical and important aspect of the nation's theatrical history. Beyond its historical importance, its interior is a handsome design, one of a group of Chanin theaters which depart from the traditional neo-Classical style for a more romantic, eclectic style which Chanin and Krapp called "modern Spanish." Designed by Russian emigre Roman Melzer, the Royale's interior features an unusual groin-vaulted ceiling, and large murals entitled "Lovers of Spain" by Willy Pogany.

For half a century the Royale Theater interior 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 after 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.<sup>1</sup>

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.<sup>2</sup> 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 running 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.<sup>3</sup> By 1904 there were some 420 combination companies touring through thousands of theaters in cities and towns across the country.<sup>4</sup>

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.<sup>5</sup>

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."<sup>6</sup> 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."<sup>7</sup> 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 just west of Eighth Avenue to Sixth Avenue, and from 39th Street to Columbus Circle.<sup>8</sup>

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.<sup>9</sup> 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.<sup>10</sup>

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### 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, while 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.<sup>11</sup>

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

(MMK)

#### 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 Chanins

During the middle of the 1920s, the Chanin organization became the second major entrepreneurial builder of Broadway theaters, joining the Shuberts who had been established in the field for two decades. Unlike the Shuberts, however, the Chanins were builders rather than producers, and their six theaters represent a three-year chapter in a long and distinguished career in the building of New York.

The firm was founded by Irwin Salmon Chanin (b.1892), a native of Bensonhurst, Brooklyn. Soon after his birth the family returned to its native Ukraine, remaining there until 1907 when they moved back to Bensonhurst. Chanin graduated from Cooper Union in 1915 having studied engineering and architecture. His earliest employment was as an engineer working on subway construction in New York and Philadelphia. During World War I he participated in the construction of a poison gas factory for the U.S. Army. In 1919, upon leaving the army, Chanin began his building activities by constructing two houses in Bensonhurst. The success of this modest venture led to the construction of other one- and two-family houses in Bensonhurst as well as the formation of the Chanin Construction Company, in which he was joined by his brother Henry I. Chanin (1893-1973). The firm branched out into apartment buildings in Brooklyn, and erected an office building in downtown Brooklyn. Extending their activities to Manhattan in 1924, they constructed the Fur Center Building.<sup>1</sup> That same year the Chanins expanded into the theater business.

In a 1928 interview with Mary Mullett, Irwin Chanin recalled always having been interested in the theater. As a student at Cooper Union,

that was my one diversion. But I was so poor that all I could afford was an occasional fifty-cent seat in the top gallery. To reach this, I had to go to a separate door. I wasn't allowed to use the main entrance, and this always humiliated me.<sup>2</sup>

In 1924, with the Broadway theater industry booming, Chanin took the opportunity to enter the theater building field. He had no theater organization, but he had a number of friends in the theater and had secured the services of the Shuberts' theater architect, Herbert J. Krapp. Mindful of his early experience, Chanin resolved to develop a new type of plan in which "the girl from the five-and-ten and the richest aristocrat in town enter by the same door."<sup>3</sup> He envisioned an orchestra level with a steep slope towards the rear; the single entrance lobby would be below the slope of the rear orchestra. There would be one large balcony instead of the traditional two smaller ones, thus eliminating the distant second balcony. Krapp told Chanin that the Shuberts wouldn't like such a theater, but Chanin said he did not care what the Shuberts would like. He also insisted on wider seats, more space between rows, and more comfortable dressing rooms.<sup>4</sup>

Chanin's first theater was called Chanin's Forty-Sixth Street Theater (now the Forty-Sixty Street Theater),<sup>5</sup> and in it he and Krapp incorporated Chanin's novel interior arrangement. It was a large theater, especially designed to accommodate musicals. The Forty-Sixth Street was followed by



the construction of the Biltmore and the Mansfield (now the Brooks Atkinson) in 1925. In 1926, Chanin undertook a major mixed-use multiple building project which doubled the number of his Broadway theaters and gave final form to what was to become the theater district's traditional heart. On the block bounded by West 45th and West 46th Streets, between Seventh and Eighth Avenues, the Shuberts had already built the paired Shubert and Booth Theaters behind the Astor Hotel, along the narrow lane which became known as "Shubert Alley" (1911-12), and the similar adjoining pair of the Broadhurst and Plymouth (1916-18). Chanin completed the redevelopment of the block by building the Majestic Theater on West 44th Street, the Theater Masque (today the John Golden) and the adjoining Royale Theater on 45th Street, and the Hotel Lincoln (now the Milford Plaza Hotel) along the Eighth Avenue frontage, all as one interconnecting development. By completing the block's complement of theaters, and by using Herbert J. Krapp, who had already designed the Plymouth and Broadhurst theaters for the Shuberts, Chanin contributed greatly to the cohesiveness of Shubert Alley.

In addition to their six legitimate Broadway playhouses, the Chanins also built three movie palaces, the Loew's Coney Island (1925), the fabulous 6,000-seat Roxy (1927; popularly known as the "Cathedral of the Motion Picture; demolished), and the Beacon Theater, on Broadway between 74th and 75th Streets (1927-28; a designated New York City Interior Landmark). The Beacon, like the Shubert Alley group, was also an unusual mixed-use development, incorporating a movie palace with a hotel.

Chanin's interest in the theater was such that when, in 1927-29, he built the Chanin Building (a designated New York City Landmark), the company's 56-story headquarters located at the corner of Lexington Avenue and East 42nd Street, he included within it a 192-seat theater on the 50th floor (the theater no longer exists). Yet, despite Chanin's interest in theaters, and his construction of some of the city's most notable examples, his company left the theater construction field barely four years after entering it. Chanin's last involvement with the New York theater world was in 1930, when, in exchange for his interest in the Theater Masque and the Royale and Majestic theaters, he acquired from the Shuberts the Century (formerly New) Theater on Central Park West at 62nd Street and replaced it with the twin-towered, Art Deco style Century Apartments.<sup>6</sup>

After leaving the field of Broadway theaters, Chanin's firm moved into the building of luxury apartment houses on Central Park West, including the Century (a designated New York City Landmark) and the Majestic. Extensive suburban building activity, such as Green Acres in Valley Stream, Long Island, occupied much of the firm's time during the 1930s and 1940s. During World War II the firm built 2000 pre-fabricated dwellings in Newport News, Virginia, five hangars at National Airport in Washington, D.C., the Naval Ordnance Laboratory in White Oak, Maryland, and five Navy powder magazine buildings in Indian Head, Maryland. The firm has also built numerous manufacturing buildings in the New York City area and the impressive Coney Island Pumping Station for the City of New York. By 1952, when Irwin S. Chanin was profiled in the National Cyclopaedia of American Biography, the Chanin Organization was composed of approximately 25 firms and corporations engaged in architecture, engineering, and construction, and in the ownership and operation of real estate.<sup>7</sup> Yet despite the relatively brief span of time spent by the firm in the construction of

Broadway theaters, its importance to Broadway's development was disproportionately great. In his Broadway theaters, all of which survive to date, Chanin championed a democratic approach to theater design, created theaters considered among the best today for theatrical performances, and helped complete the development of "Shubert Alley," the heart of the theater district.

(FD, ASD)

#### Notes

1. Landmarks Preservation Commission, Chanin Building Designation Report (LP-0993), November 14, 1978, report prepared by Marjorie Pearson, p. 1. Also, Diana Agrest, ed., A Romance with the City: Irwin S. Chanin (New York: Cooper Union Press, 1982), pp. 16-17.
2. Mary B. Mullett, "The Chanins of Broadway," American Magazine 106 (August 1928), 126.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. For the Chanin theaters see Agrest, pp.13, 22-45; The Chanin Theaters: A Renaissance in Theatre Craft (New York: Chanin Theatres Corporation, n.d.).
6. Interview with Irwin Chanin by Andrew Dolkart, June 26, 1985.
7. "Chanin, Irwin Salmon," National Cyclopedia of American Biography, vol. H, pp. 254-255. For the later projects see also Agrest, pp. 86-94.

#### 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),<sup>1</sup> fourteen of which are in active theatrical use, as well as five that have been demolished.<sup>2</sup> 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.<sup>3</sup> 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.<sup>4</sup>

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 enframing 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;<sup>5</sup> 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 been 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,<sup>6</sup> the Brooks Atkinson is a brick building articulated by three Palladian openings supported by twisted columns. Roundel panels and a Spanish-tiled sloping roof are additional Spanish forms on the facade. Krapp's largest commission from the Chanins was a trio of theaters, the Theatre Masque (now 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."<sup>7</sup> All three were constructed of yellow brick and adorned with areas of decorative terra-cotta pilasters, twisted columns, arches, parapets, and columned loggias.<sup>8</sup>

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.<sup>9</sup>

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.<sup>10</sup> 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 Forty-Sixth 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, Forty-Sixth 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. Brooks Atkinson Theater, Souvenir Program of the dedication (as Mansfield Theater), February 15, 1926, n.p. Billy Rose Theater Collection, Lincoln Center branch, New York Public Library.
7. Royale Theater, Souvenir Program of the dedication, January 11, 1927, n.p. Billy Rose Theater Collection.
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 Royale Theater

The Royale Theater is one of three theaters (the other two being the Majestic and the Theatre Masque, today known as the Golden) built together with the Lincoln Hotel as a single project by the Chanin Organization.<sup>1</sup> The theaters and hotel occupied the western end of the block bounded by Broadway and Eighth Avenue and West 44th and 45th Streets. The eastern edge of this block was already occupied by the Astor Hotel, facing Broadway; to its west were the Shubert and Booth Theaters built by the Shuberts in 1911-12. The alley separating the hotel from the theaters became popularly known as "Shubert Alley." The Shuberts expanded to the west with the construction of the Plymouth and Broadhurst theaters, adjoining the Shubert and Booth, in 1916-17. With the construction of the Theatre Masque, Royale, and Majestic, and the Hotel Lincoln on Eighth Avenue, the Chanins completed the development of the block which has remained the densest concentration of legitimate theaters in New York. The block of West 45th Street between Broadway and Eighth Avenue eventually became known as "the street of hits."

The completion of the complex was marked by the Chanins in a gold rivet ceremony:

Yesterday, [Irwin] Chanin, in company with his brother, Henry I. Chanin, climbed to the top of their new thirty-story Lincoln Hotel at Eighth Avenue, Manhattan. There they pushed home the two golden rivets which completed the steel frame of the hotel, the fourth and last unit in their \$12,000,000 west side building operations, which, in addition to the hotel, includes three theatres, the Royale, Theatre Masque, and the Majestic, all opened this year.<sup>2</sup>

The three new Chanin theaters were intended from the first to serve different functions. According to a Chanin publicity brochure,

the Theatre Masque in West Forty-fifth Street, with 800 seats, is intended to be the home of fine plays of the 'artistic' or 'intimate' type....

while the Royale,

with 1200 seats, is a musical comedy theatre. The 1800-seat Majestic in West Forty-fourth Street, the largest legitimate theatre in the Times Square district, is expressly a house for revues and light operas. Thus there is an entente cordiale between players and audiences, even before the rise of the curtain, as each Chanin theatre is designed for a particular purpose....<sup>3</sup>

The rationale for building three theaters of varying size and intent was economic. The larger Majestic and Royale Theaters made possible the operation of the Theatre Masque as a small theater specifically to house "intimate" productions. Small, intimate houses were rare on Broadway because of land costs, but the Chanins were able to circumvent such problems by making the theater part of a large complex:

The only solution was to find a way to build a theatre as good as the best and as well located, and to build it so that expenses chargeable to land value, interest and so on would be less than usual, also taking care to equip it so that actual operating costs were below the average.

The way out chosen was to build a theatre not as an isolated playhouse but as a part of a much greater building development where unit costs could be lowered through mass production.<sup>4</sup>

All three theaters benefited from the "mass architecture" of the project, the economies of mass purchase of furnishings, and ultimately of mass administration.

Following the precedent of their Mansfield (now Brooks Atkinson) Theater, the Chanins had Herbert Krapp design the theater-hotel complex in what they called the "modern Spanish" manner. Although not identical designs, the facades of the three theaters are interrelated through the use of a rusticated terra-cotta base with a Roman-brick wall above, adorned with round-arched windows and terra-cotta Spanish Renaissance-inspired ornament.

Each of the interiors of the theaters, while continuing the motif of "Spanish modern" to some degree, was designed individually. The Chanins claimed to make each of their theater interiors "a worthy setting for the display of the richest jewel of the Seven Arts."<sup>5</sup> They apparently believed that the legitimate theater could survive the competition of motion picture theaters, opera houses and concert halls only so long as it kept pace in beauty, comfort and attractiveness with the houses of its

rivals. The souvenir program published for the opening of the Royale Theater proudly listed the designers and craftsmen who contributed to its interior: Roman Melzer for the overall interior design, Willy Pogany for the murals, and Joseph Dujat for the plasterwork.

Roman Melzer, who acted as consultant and advisor to Chanin on the interior decoration of the Royale Theater, had formerly been architect and decorator to Czar Nicholas II of Russia.<sup>6</sup> Prior to his immigration to America in 1918, Melzer had been known in Russia as one of the steadiest followers of the "modern" Russian style. As architect of the Imperial Court, Melzer designed a palace at Tsarkoye-Selo, and an imposing ornamental fence around the garden of the Winter Palace in St. Petersburg. Apart from a number of private residences in St. Petersburg, he also designed a palace for the Grand Duke Michael, a bridge across the Neva River, and airplanes for the Russian army during World War I. Fleeing the Russian revolution, Melzer arrived in America and continued his design profession. Among his other American works, besides the Chanins' Mansfield (now Brooks Atkinson) and Royale theater interiors, are several Russian Orthodox churches in Brooklyn.

Willy Pogany (1882-1955), born in Hungary, studied in Budapest, Munich and Paris before coming to America in 1915 at age 33. In the words of his obituary:

One of the most facile and gifted artists of his time, Mr. Pogany had a creative range that encompassed murals, book and magazine illustration, caricature, scenic designing and the opera, stage and motion pictures, architecture, etching, sculpture, portraiture and costume designing. He was also the author of several widely translated books on art and art instruction, and was regarded as one of the leading authorities on color effects by lighting.<sup>7</sup>

Pogany designed scenery and costumes for at least three operas at the Metropolitan Opera House, two ballet companies, and seventeen Broadway productions. He was best known, however, for his murals in numerous theaters, industrial buildings, hotels and estates. Pogany's works adorned the Ritz Tower and Park-Sheraton hotels, Wynton (the estate of Mrs. William Randolph Hearst), the Glen Cove Children's Hospital on Long Island, and the John Ringling residence in Sarasota, Florida. His theater murals included "a forest and floral motif that covers both walls of the Ziegfeld Theatre -- with yellow, red and white flowers on a rich background of green"<sup>8</sup> (the Ziegfeld Theater on Sixth Avenue, designed by Joseph Urban; demolished); children's fables at the Children's Theater upstairs at the New (later Century) Theater on Central Park West and 62nd Street (demolished);<sup>9</sup> and the murals on the side walls of the Chanins' Royale Theater.

The Royale's interior is quite distinct from the design of either the Golden or the Majestic. A medium-sized one-balcony house, its most unusual architectural feature is its groin-vault ceiling, supported at either side of the balcony by arches forming the lunettes adorned with Willy Pogany's murals entitled "Lovers of Spain."<sup>10</sup> The very handsome Dujat-designed plasterwork includes moldings outlining the proscenium arch and also the



sounding board and arched openings over the boxes, as well as plaster reliefs adorning the boxes.

Covering the opening of the Royale in January 1927, theater critic Burns Mantle wrote:

I am positive that no longer ago than the day before yesterday I looked in upon what is now the Royale theatre and there was nothing there but a hole in the ground. And now there is a handsome auditorium with a Willy Pogany interior, well proportioned stage and the established atmosphere of a hospitable and well-run theater. The Chanins are comparative newcomers, but it can be said for them that the things they have learned about conducting a theatre they have learned exceedingly well.<sup>11</sup>

On completion of the Royale, Theatre Masque and Majestic, the Chanins intended to launch themselves into the national theater scene. In October 1926, they announced

...that they have completed plans for "the maintenance and operation of a chain of theatres in New York and half a dozen other large cities in the United States." ...it is planned to build houses in Philadelphia, Boston, Chicago, Detroit, Cleveland and Pittsburgh. Also, the two brothers have organized the Chanin Producing Company, and will immediately enter the field of play production on a large scale. The announcement by the Chanins is taken by theatrical men to mean the definite arrival, at an early date, of the so-called "third circuit" as a competitor of the Shubert and Erlanger Circuits.<sup>12</sup>

These plans never came to fruition, however, and the multi-theater and hotel project was the Chanins' last venture in theater building.

The Chanins, as a real-estate firm rather than a theatrical organization, never intended to manage the theaters themselves. Their theater policy was to "achieve success through the success of the other party to the contract,"<sup>13</sup> and from the beginning the three new theaters were leased to and managed by the Shubert organization. In 1930 the Chanins turned control of the theaters completely over to the Shuberts, in exchange for an interest in the New Theater (later the Century Theater) on Central Park West,<sup>14</sup> whose site they proceeded to develop with a twin-towered apartment house, the Century Apartments.

During the Depression, the Shuberts went into receivership. Although they managed to retain a hold on some of their theaters, including the Majestic and the Theatre Masque, they lost the Royale, which was awarded by the courts to actor, playwright and producer John Golden, a co-receiver, to manage for two years beginning in 1932.<sup>15</sup> Golden left his first theater, the Golden, on West 58th Street, to do so. When Golden's lease was renewed in 1934, he renamed the Royale for himself.<sup>16</sup>

John Golden (1874-1955) was an "actor, playwright, song writer, producer and successful businessman," as well as a philanthropist, whose shows catered to what Golden perceived as the public's desire for clean, unsophisticated theater:

To the theater-going public, John Golden's plays were distinguished chiefly by their folksy quality, homey humor and immaculate cleanliness. He was suspicious of the stark realism and "arty" quality of the theater in recent years: an onion, he said, could make people cry, but "name the vegetable that can make them laugh."

In his early hits he made the public laugh and did so without recourse to sex and cynicism. When the "sophistication" of the twenties, the stark realism of the thirties, the cynicism of the forties and the what-have-you of the fifties brought fortunes to other producers, he stuck by his original motto: "CHAP" -- "clean, humorous American plays."<sup>17</sup>

Golden was a major figure in American theater for four decades, from his first production in 1916, in collaboration with Winchell Smith, of Turn to the Right, to his last in 1953, a revival of The Male Animal, with some 150 productions in between. Golden was also an early backer of ASCAP (the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers), the founder of the Stage Relief Fund in 1932, and an organizer of Stage Door Canteens during World War II.

The Shuberts eventually regained control of the Royale (renamed the Golden), and in 1937 they leased it to Columbia Broadcasting Systems as a live broadcast studio. Golden moved his operations to the Theatre Masque, which was in turn renamed the Golden (making it the third of that name), while the name of the second Golden Theater was changed back to the Royale Theater.<sup>18</sup> CBS had taken control of a chain of Times Square area theaters including the Hudson, the Avon, the Manhattan, and special studios at the Little and later also the Ambassador Theaters.<sup>19</sup> The Royale was known as CBS Theater No. 1 from January 1937 to May 1940 when CBS officials decided they did not have enough programs requiring studio audiences to justify retaining the house. The Royale reopened in 1940 as a legitimate playhouse under Shubert management, and it remains a Shubert theater today.<sup>20</sup>

(EH, AR)

#### Notes

1. "Masque Opens Tonight," New York Times, February 24, 1927, p. 27.
2. "Made Fortune in 8 Years," New York Times, April 28, 1927, p. 40.
3. The Chanin Theatres: A Renaissance in Theatre Craft (New York: Chanin Organization, 1927).
4. "The Chanins to Try Art for Art's Sake in Newest Theatre, the Masque," New York Post, February 18, 1927.

5. "Chanin's Royale Theatre," souvenir program, January 11, 1927.
6. Roman Melzer, obituary, The Architectural Forum, June 1943, p. 126.
7. Willy Pogany, obituary, New York Times, July 31, 1955, p. 69.
8. Ibid.
9. Rose Henderson, "Willy Pogany Paints Youth," American Magazine of Art, 19 (1928), 447-8.
10. "Opening a New Theatre," New York Times, January 12, 1927, p. 22.
11. Burns Mantle, "Piggy," Daily News, Jan. 13, 1927.
12. "Chanins to Build Chain of Theatres," New York Times, October 24, 1926, p. 23.
13. "Chanin's Royale Theatre."
14. See above, p. 9.
15. "Golden Gets Theatre," New York Times, July 21, 1932, p. 15; "Lease on Royale Theatre Awarded to John Golden," New York Herald Tribune, July 21, 1932.
16. "Theatrical Notes," New York Times, August 27, 1934, p. 18; "Royale Theatre Changing Name," New York Herald Tribune, September 19, 1934.
17. John Golden, obituary, New York Herald Tribune, June 18, 1955.
18. "Redecorating the New John Golden Theatre," New York Post, January 26, 1937.
19. "News of the Stage," New York Times December 8, 1936, p. 31.
20. "News of the Stage," New York Times, May 18, 1940, p. 11.

### The Royale as a Playhouse<sup>1</sup>

The Royale opened on January 11, 1927, with Piggy, a musical comedy soon renamed I Told You So. Later that same year the Royale presented producer Winthrop Ames's last productions, revivals of Gilbert and Sullivan's The Mikado, Iolanthe, and Pirates of Penzance. The theater's first popular success came the following year with Mae West's bawdy comedy of the "gay nineties," Diamond Lil. Kibitzer, a comedy co-authored by Jo Swerling and Edward G. Robinson, had some success in 1929 with 127 performances.

Ethel Waters and Buck and Bubbles starred in Lew Leslie's Blackbirds of 1930, with songs by Eubie Blake that included "Memories of You." A number of unsuccessful productions followed, until John Golden's production of the comedy When Ladies Meet opened in 1932. The Theatre Guild produced two

shows at the Royale in 1933-34: Maxwell Anderson's Both Your Houses, a satire about the United States Congress, which won the Pulitzer Prize in 1933, despite lukewarm reviews, and John Wexley's drama They Shall Not Die, based on the Scottsboro case, with Claude Rains and Ruth Gordon.

Renamed the "John Golden," the theater offered a melodrama, Small Miracle, and a comedy of ideas, Rain from Heaven, in 1934. A Touch of Brimstone ran almost one hundred performances in 1935, succeeded by the delightful The Bishop Misbehaves with Walter Connolly.

The Shuberts regained control of the theater in 1936, and leased it to CBS for use as a radio studio. The theater did not return to legitimate use until 1940, when, again known as the Royale, it housed the Cole Porter musical DuBarry Was A Lady, which transferred from another theater. In 1941, Ethel Barrymore moved to the Royale for the last four months of The Corn is Green. A John Golden revival of Counsellor-at-Law played 227 performances with Paul Muni in 1943. Two successes in 1944 were Ramshackle Inn, with Zazu Pitts, which played 216 performances, and Catherine Was Great with Mae West, which played 191 performances. Arthur Hopkins presented his memorable production of The Magnificent Yankee in 1946, with Louis Calhern as Mr. Justice Holmes and Dorothy Gish as his wife. Fatal Weakness, a comedy written and staged by George Kelly, opened at the end of 1946. John Gielgud brought a revival of The Importance of Being Earnest to the Royale in March 1947, then returned with Judith Anderson in Medea in December. Moss Hart's comedy about theater, Light Up The Sky, opened in 1948 and played 214 performances.

In 1950, Maurice Evans appeared in a revival of George Bernard Shaw's The Devil's Disciple, and Richard Burton made his Broadway debut in Christopher Fry's verse play The Lady's Not for Burning with John Gielgud. The following year Claude Rains won a Tony Award for his performance in Darkness at Noon, a transfer from the Alvin. After a number of unsuccessful productions, the revue New Faces of 1952 opened in 1952 and played 365 performances. Other major productions of the 1950s included The Boyfriend, which introduced Julie Andrews to American audiences, and Thornton Wilder's The Matchmaker, with Ruth Gordon as Dolly Levi.

In 1958, Laurence Olivier starred as a seedy vaudevillian in John Osborne's The Entertainer. When the show closed, M.G.M. contracted for two days at the Royale to hold the opening premiere of the new film Gigi.<sup>2</sup> The theater returned immediately to legitimate stage productions, presenting two New York Drama Critics' Circle Award-winners, the revue La Plume de Ma Tante in 1959, which played 835 performances, and Tennessee Williams's The Night of the Iguana in 1962, with Bette Davis, James Farentino, Patrick O'Neal and Margaret Leighton, which ran 316 performances. Another award winner, The Subject Was Roses, received the Pulitzer Prize, the Drama Critics' Circle Award, and the Tony Award for actor Jack Albertson in 1965. That same year Lauren Bacall and Barry Nelson opened in The Cactus Flower, which ran for 1,234 performances. One of the longest running shows in Broadway history, Grease, moved to the Royale in November of 1972 and played through January 1980.

Recent notable productions at the Royale include Whose Life is it Anyway?, a return engagement which opened in 1980 rewritten to allow a woman, Mary Tyler Moore, to play the leading role; Joseph and the Amazing

Technicolor Dreamcoat (1982); Pack of Lies with Rosemary Harris and Patrick McGoochan (1985); and the Andrew Lloyd Webber musical Song and Dance with Bernadette Peters and Christopher d'Amboise (1985).

(EH, GH)

### Notes

1. This production history of the Royale 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).
2. Unidentified clipping in the Royale Theater Clippings File, Billy Rose Theater Collection, Lincoln Center Branch, New York Public Library.

### Description<sup>1</sup>

#### Auditorium:

1) Configuration: The configuration of the auditorium consists of a rectangular space, wider than it is deep, with a single balcony; an orchestra; a proscenium flanked by boxes; a sounding board; an orchestra pit in front of the stage; a ceiling; an orchestra promenade; the stage opening behind the proscenium arch; and the sloping floor extending towards the proscenium arch.

Proscenium: The proscenium is elliptically arched.

Sounding board: The sounding board is curved, and rises from coved ceiling sections over the boxes.

Balcony: There is a single balcony, divided into two sections by a crossover aisle. An enclosed technical booth section intersects the groin vault over the rear of the balcony.

Boxes: The wall surfaces extending from the proscenium are curved and contain two stepped curved boxes on each side.

Staircases: Two staircases lead from the orchestra to the balcony level.

Ceiling: The major section of the ceiling above the balcony takes the form of a modified groin vault.

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.<sup>2</sup>

Orchestra Pit: The orchestra pit is placed in front of and below the level of the stage.

Orchestra Promenade: A promenade is placed at the rear of the orchestra. Two piers, marking the area of the promenade, support the balcony above.

## 2) Ornament:

The decorative ornament is plasterwork in relief, 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 is composed of a rope molding and a wide band with guilloche motif enclosing quadripartite stylized leaf panels.

Sounding board: The sounding board is outlined by moldings. (The surface of the sounding board was originally painted with Spanish decorative motifs.<sup>3</sup>) A decorative latticework panel is in the center. A rib molding of overlapping leaf forms further articulates the sounding board and differentiates it from the main portion of the ceiling.

Orchestra: The side walls are rough stucco above a paneled baseboard. Panels with console brackets enclose the exit signs above the doors.

Orchestra promenade: The rear wall is rough stucco above a paneled baseboard.

Boxes: An elliptical arch with a rope molding frames a single box opening. The box fronts are composed of a central panel with griffins flanking a shield and side panels with shields. The underside of each box is outlined by an acanthus leaf molding and contains a central medallion from which is suspended a light fixture. Above each box opening is a coved ceiling section with latticework panel (from which is suspended a brass candelabra chandelier, see below under fixtures).

Balcony: At balcony level the rough stucco side walls are paneled and surmounted by a cornice with rosette-adorned frieze. Decorative shields are placed above the lower pair of exit doors. Above the cornice and set in reveals are two large segmental wall panels containing irreplaceable murals (see below under fixtures). A band of stylized shells and acanthus

leaves outlines each panel. The reveals contain square panels with rosettes. The rear balcony wall is rough stucco.

Balcony front: The balcony front is adorned with swags flanking rosettes, but is now largely obscured by a modern light box (see below under alterations).

Balcony soffit: The soffit of the balcony is articulated by square panels with arabesques (and light fixtures, see below under fixtures) closest to the front edge. In the center section beyond is a large intricately-worked plasterwork medallion with acanthus leaves (and a light fixture, see below under fixtures). Side sections contain inset diamond panels with arabesques and perforated latticework grilles. Rope and acanthus leaf borders outline each panel.

Ceiling: The groin vault of the ceiling has an outer laurel leaf molding; its ribs are articulated by talon moldings and laurel leaves flanking collars. The ribs intersect in an intricate arabesque-adorned centerpiece with latticework grille.

3) Attached fixtures:

Orchestra: At the rear of the orchestra is a standing rail.

Balcony: Above the cornice and set in reveals are two large segmental wall panels containing irreplaceable murals entitled "Lovers of Spain" by Willy Pogany, depicting processions: on the north is a lady in a horse-drawn cart being entertained by musicians; on the south is a lady being carried in a palanquin, also accompanied by musicians.

Staircases: The two staircases leading from the orchestra to the balcony have metal railings incorporating stylized balusters. Decorative metal railings shield the staircase openings that provide balcony access at the level of the crossover aisle.

Light fixtures: An original brass candelabra chandelier of Spanish inspired design<sup>4</sup> is suspended from a latticework panel in a coved ceiling section above each box opening. An original ornate candelabra chandelier is suspended from the center of the ceiling.<sup>5</sup> Other existing non-original light fixtures throughout the auditorium are stylistically compatible with the design of the space.

4) Known alterations: Air conditioning duct covers have been added to the ceiling and soffit of the balcony. A modern light box has been placed on the balcony front, and some of the original light fixtures have been replaced. The current color scheme is sympathetic to the interior detail and complements the original, irreplaceable murals.

(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.
3. For photographs of the auditorium at the time of the theater's opening see, Agrest, ed., A Romance with the City: Irwin S. Chanin, p. 35.
4. As of January 1984, as recorded in photographs in the collection of the Landmarks Preservation Commission, these chandeliers were in place.
5. See footnote 4 above.

## Conclusion

The Royale Theater Interior survives today as one of the historic theater interiors that symbolize American theater for both New York and the nation. One of the group of theaters constructed for the Chanin Organization during the 1920s, it helped shape the character of the Broadway theater district. Designed for the Chanins by Herbert J. Krapp, the most prolific architect of the Broadway theater district, the Royale represents a typical and important aspect of the nation's theatrical history.

The Royale was built as part of the Chanins' mixed-use project of three theaters and a hotel on "Shubert Alley," the heart of the theater district. A medium size theater, seating 1200, it was intended to house musicals. Its interior, in the "modern Spanish" style Krapp developed for the Chanins' later theaters, is a handsome design, reflecting not only Krapp's expertise, but is also the work of designer Roman Melzer and the murals of painter Willy Pogany.

For half a century the Royale Theater interior 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), Felicia Dryden (FD), Andrew S. Dolkart (ASD), and Eugenie Hoffmeyer (EH). Gale Harris (GH) of the Research Department expanded 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, Susan Strauss, and Jay Shockley.

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## 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 Royale 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 Royale 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 1926-27, it was among the group of theaters constructed for the Chanin Organization during the early decades of this century which helped shape the character of the Broadway theater district; that it was designed for the Chanins by Herbert J. Krapp, the most prolific architect of the Broadway theater district; that as a Chanin theater designed by Herbert Krapp it represents a typical and important aspect of the nation's theatrical history; that it was part of an unusual multi-use project including a hotel and three theaters of varying size, of which the 1200-seat Royale was intended to be a musical comedy theater; that its interior is a fine example of the romantic "modern Spanish" style with which Herbert Krapp adorned the Chanins' later theaters; that its interior design by Roman Melzer includes an unusual groin-vault ceiling, and murals by artist Willy Pogany entitled "Lovers of Spain," continuing the "Spanish" motif of the theatrical complex; that for half a century the Royale Theater 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 Article 25, Chapter 3, of the Administrative Code of the City of New York, the Landmarks Preservation Commission designates as an Interior Landmark the Royale 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; 242-250 West 45th Street, Borough of Manhattan and designates Tax Map Block 1016, Lot 55, Borough of Manhattan, as its Landmark Site.

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## APPENDIX

The following production history of the Royale 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); Play Statistics File, Billy Rose Theater Collection, Lincoln Center Branch, New York Public Library; Programmes, Billy Rose Theater Collection, Lincoln Center Branch, New York Public Library.

### 1927

PIGGY 1/11/27 (79 perfs.) by Daniel Kusell and Alfred Jackson from a play by Harry B. Smith and Ludwig Englander; with Harry McNaughton and Sam Bernard.

JUDY 2/7/27 (104 perfs.) by Mark Swan; with Queenie Smith and Charles Purcell.

OH, ERNEST! 5/9/27 (56 perfs.) by Francis DeWill, music by Robert Hood Bowers; with Harry McNaughton, Phyllis Austin, Vivian Marlowe and Ralph Riggs.

RANG TANG 7/12/27 (119 perfs.) by Kaj Gynt, lyrics by Jo Trent.

THE MIKADO 9/17/27 (110 perfs.) by W.S. Gilbert and Arthur Sullivan; with John Barclay, William Williams and Vera Ross.

IOLANTHE 11/14/27 (12 perfs.) by W.S. Gilbert and Arthur Sullivan.

PIRATES OF PENZANCE 11/24/27 (9 perfs.) by W.S. Gilbert and Arthur Sullivan.

### 1928

THE MADCAP 1/31/28 (103 perfs.) by Gertrude Purcell and Gladys Unger from the French of Regis Gignoux and Jacques Thery, lyrics by Clifford Grey, music by Maurice Rubens; with Sidney Greenstreet; Ethel Morrison and Arthur Treacher.

SH! THE OCTOPUS 2/21/28 (103 perfs.) by Ralph Murphy and Donald Gallaher; with Beatrice Allen, Clifford Dempsey and Harry Kelly.

DIAMOND LIL 4/9/28 (323 perfs.) by Mae West; with Mae West.

1929

PRECIOUS 1/14/29 (24 perfs.) by James Forbes; with Cora Witherspoon, Dorothy Hall, Hale Hamilton and John Cumberland.

KIBITZER 2/18/29 (127 perfs.) by Jo Swerling and Edward G. Robinson; with Edward G. Robinson, George Spelvin Sr. and Jr., Hobart Cavanaugh and Jeanne Green.

BAMBOOLA 6/26/29 (27 perfs.) by D. Frank Marcus, music by Marcus and Bernard Maltin.

NIGGER RICH (THE BIG SHOT) 9/20/29 (11 perfs.) by John McGowan; with Spencer Tracy, Eric Dressler and Richard Taber.

FIRST MORTGAGE 10/10/29 (4 perfs.) by Louis Weitzenkorn; with Walter Abel, Leona Maricle and Beatrice Hendricks.

WOOF, WOOF 12/25/29 (46 perfs.) by Estelle Hunt, Sam Summers and Cyrus Wood, music and lyrics by Edward Polz and Eddie Brandt; with Louise Brown, Jack Squires and Al Sexton.

1930

TOP SPEED 3/10/30 (104 perfs.) by Guy Bolton, Bert Kalmar and Harry Ruby; with Lester Allen, Irene Delroy and Ginger Rogers. (Originally opened at the 46th Street Theater 12/25/29.)

KILPATRICK'S MINSTRELS 4/19/30 (8 perfs.).

MYSTERY MOON 6/23/30 (1 perf.); by Carlo and Sanders.

THE SECOND LITTLE SHOW 9/2/30 (63 perfs.) by Dwight Deere Wiman, music by Arthur Schwartz, lyrics by Howard Dietz; with Al Trahan, Jay C. Flippen Ruth Tester and Gloria Grafton.

LEW LESLIE'S BLACKBIRDS OF 1930 10/22/30 (61 perfs.) by Flourney Miller music by Eubie Blake, lyrics by Andy Razaf; with Ethel Waters, Flourney Miller, Buck and Bubbles.

STEPPING SISTERS 12/22/30 (327 total perfs.) by Howard Warren Comstock; with Theresa Maxwell Conover, Helen Raymond and Claire Devine. (First opened at the Waldorf Theater 4/22/30.)

1931

ROCK ME, JULIE 2/3/31 (7 perfs.) by Kenneth Raisbeck; with Paul Muni and Helen Menken.

DRACULA 4/13/31 (8 perfs.) by Hamilton Deane and John L. Balderstone, based on a novel by Bram Stoker; with Arnold Daly and Courtney White.



OLD MAN MURPHY 5/16/31 (64 perfs.) by Patrick Kearney and Harry Wagstaffe Gribble; with Peggy Conklin and Arthur Sinclair.

THE CONSTANT SINNER 9/14/31 (64 perfs.) by Mae West; with Mae West.

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE 11/16/31 (6 perfs.) by William Shakespeare; with Tyrone Power, Viola Roache, Helen Menken, Fritz Leiber, William Faversham and Pedro de Cordoba.

FATA MORGANA 12/25/31 (29 perfs.) by Ernest Vajda; with Douglas Montgomery and Ara Gerald.

#### 1932

THE DECOY 4/1/32 (8 perfs.) by Harrison King; with Charles Brokaw.

CHRISTOPHER COMES ACROSS 5/31/32 (15 perfs.) by Hawthorne Hurst.

WHEN LADIES MEET 10/6/32 (203 total perfs.) by Rachel Crothers; with Walter Abel, Frieda Inescort, Spring Byington and Selena Royle.

#### 1933

BOTH YOUR HOUSES 3/6/33 (72 perfs.) by Maxwell Anderson; with Morris Carnovsky, John Butler, Jerome Cowan, Shepperd Strudwick, Walter C. Kelly, Mary Philips, Oscar Polk and Russel Collins.

A DIVINE DRUDGE 10/26/33 (12 perfs.) by Vicki Baum and John Golden; with Walter Abel.

#### 1934

HOTEL ALIMONY 1/29/34 (16 perfs.) by A.W. Pezet from a farce by Adolf Philipp and Max Simon; with James Shelburne and Nancy Evans.

THEY SHALL NOT DIE 2/21/34 (62 perfs.) by John Wexley; with Ruth Gordon, Tom Ewell, Dean Jagger, Claude Rains, Linda Watkins, Robert Thomsen, Helen Westley, Robert Porterfield, Hugh Rennie, Thurston Hall and Ben Smith.

EVERY THURSDAY 5/10/34 (60 perfs.) by Doty Hobart; with Quennie Smith, Ann Dere and Frederick Forrester.

#### RENAMED THE GOLDEN THEATER 1934

SMALL MIRACLE 9/26/34 (117 perfs.) by Norman Krasna; with Eva Condon, Edward Crandall, Joseph Spurin-Calleia, Myron McCormick, Elspeth Eric and Ilka Chase.

ABBEY THEATER PLAYERS IN REPERTORY 1/12/34 (14 perfs.) with Barry Fitzgerald.

RAIN FROM HEAVEN 12/24/34 (99 perfs.) by S.N. Behrman; with Jane Cowl, Thurston Hall, Ben Smith and John Halliday.

1935

THE BISHOP MISBEHAVES 3/25/35 (120 total perfs.) by Frederick Jackson; with Walter Connolly. (Originally opened at the Cort Theater 2/20/35.)

A TOUCH OF BRIMSTONE 9/22/35 (98 perfs.) by Leonora Kaghan and Anita Philips; with Mary Philips, Roland Young, Cora Witherspoon, Reed Brown, Jr. and William Post, Jr.

TOMORROW'S A HOLIDAY 12/30/35 (8 perfs.) by Ronney Brent from the German of Leo Derutz and Hans Adler; with Curt Bois and Joseph Schildkraut.

1936

ALICE TAKAT 2/10/36 (8 perfs.) by Dezso Szomory; with Mady Christians, Russell Herdie.

THREE WISE FOOLS 3/1/36 (9 perfs.) by Austin Strong; with William Gillette.

STAR SPANGLED 3/10/36 (23 perfs.) by Robert Ardrey; with Natasha Boleslavsky, George Tobias, Millard Mitchell and Garson Kanin.

GHOSTS 5/11/36 (32 perfs.) by Henrik Ibsen; with Alla Nazimova.

THE LAUGHING WOMAN 10/13/36 (23 perfs.) by Gordon Daviot; with Tonio Selwart, Helen Menken and Beverly Sitgreaves.

DOUBLE DUMMY 11/11/36 (21 perfs.) by Doty Hobart and Tom McKnight; with Martha Sleeper, Charles D. Brown and Dudley Clements.

CLOSED 12/10/36 AND LEASED BY CBS

RENAMED THE ROYALE THEATER 1940.

1940

CUE FOR PASSION 12/19/40 (12 perfs.) by Edward Chodorov and H.S. Kraft; with Gale Sondergaard, George Coulouris and Claire Neisen.

DU BARRY WAS A LADY 10/19/40 (408 total perfs.); by B.G. DeSylva and Herbert Fields; with Gypsy Rose Lee, Bert Lahr and Betty Grable. (Originally opened at the 46th Street Theater 12/6/39).

1941

BROOKLYN BIARRITZ 2/27/41 (4 perfs.) by Beatrice Alliot and Howard Newman.

FLIGHT TO THE WEST 3/3/41 (136 total perfs.) by Elmer Rice; with Paul Henried, Betty Field and Hugh Marlowe. (Originally opened at the Guild Theater 12/30/40).

THE CORN IS GREEN 9/2/41 (477 total perfs.) by Emlyn Williams; with Ethel Barrymore. (Originally opened at the National Theater 11/26/40.)

1942

THE FLOWERS OF VIRTURE 2/5/42 (4 perfs.) by Marc Connelly; with Isobel Elsom, Samson Gordon and Virginia Lederer.

THE STRINGS, MY LORD, ARE FALSE 5/19/42 (15 perfs.) by Paul Vincent Carroll; with Ruth Gordon, Tom Tully, Will Lee, Hurd Hatfield.

COUNSELLOR-AT-LAW 11/24/42 (258 perfs.) by Elmer Rice; with Paul Muni.

1943

CHAUVE-SOURIS 1943 8/12/43 (12 perfs.) by M. Nikita Balieff.

A NEW LIFE 9/15/43 (69 perfs.) by Elmer Rice; with Betty Field, John Ireland and Ann Driscoll.

THE WORLD'S FULL OF GIRLS 12/6/43 (9 perfs.) by Nunnally Johnson; with Virginia Gilmore and Cora Smith.

1944

RAMSHACKLE INN 1/5/44 (216 perfs.) by George Batson;with Zasu Pitts and Ruth Holden.

SCHOOL FOR BRIDES 8/1/44 (375 perfs.) by Frank Gill, Jr. and George Carleton Brown; with Roscoe Karns, Mary Best and Darby Moore. (Moved to the Ambassador Theater 10/3/44.)

CATHERINE WAS GREAT 10/3/44 (191 total perfs.) by Mae West; with Mae West. (Originally opened at the Shubert Theater 8/2/44.)

1945

GOOD NIGHT, LADIES 1/17/45 (78 perfs.) by Cyrus Wood.

A PLACE OF OUR OWN 4/2/45 (8 perfs.) by Elliott Nugent; with Jeanne Cagney, Seth Arnold and Mercedes McCambridge.

OH, BROTHER 6/19/45 (23 perfs.) by Jacques Deval; with Lyle Bettger, Hugh Herbert and Eva Condon.

DEVILS GALORE 9/12/45 (5 perfs.) by Eugene Vale.

THE SECRET ROOM 11/7/45 (21 perfs.) by Robert Turney; with Frances Dee, Juanita Hall and Fuzzy McQuade.

STRANGE FRUIT 11/29/45 (60 perfs.) by Lillian and Esther Smith; with Murray Hamilton, Jane White, Ralph Meeker and Mel Ferrer.

1946

THE MAGNIFICENT YANKEE 1/22/46 (160 perfs.) by Emmet Lavery; with Louis Calhern and Dorothy Gish.

THE GLASS MENAGERIE 7/8/46 (561 total perfs.) by Tennessee Williams; with Lurette Taylor, Julie Haydon and Anthony Ross. (First opened at the Playhouse Theater 3/31/45.)

THE FRONT PAGE 9/4/46 (79 perfs.) by Ben Hecht and Charles MacArthur; with Pat Harrington, Lew Parker, Ray Walston and Cora Witherspoon.

THE FATAL WEAKNESS 11/19/46 (119 perfs.) by George Kelly; with Ina Claire and Howard St. John.

1947

THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST 3/3/47 (81 perfs.) by Oscar Wilde; with John Gielgud, Margaret Rutherford, Pamela Brown, Robert Flemyng and Jean Cadell.

LOVE FOR LOVE 5/26/47 (48 perfs.) by William Congreve; with John Gielgud, Cyril Ritchard and Sebastian Cabot.

OUR LAN' 9/27/47 (41 perfs.) by Theodore Ward; with Muriel Smith and William Veasey.

TRIAL HONEYMOON 11/3/47 (8 perfs.) by Conrad S. Smith; with Eileen Heckart.

EASTWARD-IN EDEN 11/18/47 (15 perfs.) by Dorothy Gardner; with Beatrice Straight and Onslow Stevens.

MEDEA 12/15/47 (214 total perfs.) by Robinson Jeffers, adapted from Medea by Euripedes; with Judith Anderson, Florence Ree and John Gielgud. (First opened at the National Theater 10/20/47.)

1948

THE VIGIL 5/21/48 (11 perfs.) by Ladislav Fodor; with King Donovan, Maria Palmer and Ann Pearce.

A STORY FOR STRANGERS 9/21/48 (7 perfs.) by Marc Connelly.

LIGHT UP THE SKY 11/18/48 (214 perfs.) by Moss Hart; with Audrey Christie, Sam Levene, Phyllis Povah and Glenn Anders.

1949

MR. ADAM 5/25/49 (5 perfs.) by Jack Kirkland; with James Dobson.

THE MADWOMAN OF CHAILLOT 8/21/49 (368 total perfs.) by Jean Giraudoux; with Clarence Derwent, John Carradine and Martita Hunt. (Originally opened at the Belasco Theater 12/27/48).

1950

DANCE ME A SONG 1/20/50 (35 perfs.) with Bob Fosse, Lee Goodman, Marion Lorne and Wally Cox.

THE DEVIL'S DISCIPLE 2/21/50 (111 total perfs.) by George Bernard Shaw; with Dennis King and Maurice Evans. (Originally opened at the City Center 1/25/50.)

AFFAIRS OF STATE 9/25/50 (610 perfs.) by Louis Verneuil; with Reginald Owen, Shepperd Strudwick and Celeste Holm. (Moved to Music Box 11/6/50).

THE LADY'S NOT FOR BURNING 11/8/50 (151 perfs.) by Christopher Fry; with John Gielgud, Pamela Brown and Richard Burton.

1951

DARKNESS AT NOON 3/26/51 (186 total perfs.) by Sidney Kingsley, based on a novel by Arthur Koestler; with Claude Rains, Alexander Scourby and Kim Hunter. (Originally opened at the Alvin Theater 1/13/51.)

BORSCHT CAPADES 9/17/51 (90 perfs.); with Phil Foster.

NINA 12/5/51 (45 perfs.) by Andre Roussin; with David Niven and Gloria Swanson.

COURTIN' TIME 7/2/51 (37 perfs.) by William Roos, lyrics and music by Jack Lawrence and Don Walker; with Joe E. Brown. (Originally opened at the National Theater.)

1952

FANCY MEETING YOU AGAIN 1/14/52 (8 perfs.) by George S. Kaufman and Leueen MacGrath; with Margaret Hamilton, Walter Matthau and Ruth McDevitt.

DEAR BARBARIANS 2/21/52 (4 perfs.) by Lexford Richards; with Gloris Leachman and Betsy von Furstenberg.

ONE BRIGHT DAY 3/19/52 (29 perfs.) by Sigmund Miller; with Walter Matthau.

HOOK 'N' LADDER 4/29/52 (1 perf.) by Charles Horner and Henry Miles; with Vicki Cummings and Allan Hale.

NEW FACES OF 1952 5/16/52 (365 perfs.) with Robert Clary, Alice Ghostley, Ronny Graham, Eartha Kitt, Carol Lawrence and Paul Lynde.

1953

HORSES IN MIDSTREAM 4/2/53 (4 perfs.) by Andrew Rosenthal; with Cedric Hardwicke.

A DATE WITH APRIL 4/15/53 (13 perfs.) by George Batson; with Constance Bennett.

A RED RAINBOW 9/14/53 (16 perfs.) by Myron C. Fagan.

A GIRL CAN TELL 10/29/53 (60 perfs.) by F. Hugh Herbert; with Janet Blair and Barry McGuire.

SING TILL TOMORROW 12/28/53 (8 perfs.) by Jean Lowenthal; with Eileen Ryan and John Marley.

1954

THE STARCROSS STORY 1/13/54 (1 perf.) by Diane Morgan; with Eva Le Gallienne, Mary Astor, and Christopher Plummer.

THE IMMORALIST 2/8/54 (104 perfs.) by Andre Gide; with Geraldine Page, Louis Jordan and James Dean.

THE BOY FRIEND 9/30/54 (485 perfs.) book, music and lyrics by Sandy Wilson; with Julie Andrews.

1955

THE MATCHMAKER 12/5/55 (486 perfs.) by Thornton Wilder; with Ruth Gordon, Eileen Herlie, Loring Smith and Arthur Hill.

1956

CHILD OF FORTUNE 11/13/56 (23 perfs.) by Guy Bolton; with Betsy von Furstenberg, Mildred Dunnock and Martyn Green.

SPEAKING OF MURDER 12/19/56 (37 perfs.) by Audrey and William Roos; with Lorne Greene.

1957

THE TUNNEL OF LOVE 2/13/57 (417 perfs.) by Joseph Fields and Peter DeVries based on novel by Peter Devries; with Darren McGavin and Tom Ewell.

MISS ISOBEL 12/26/57 (53 perfs.) by Michael Plant and Denis Webb; with Shirley Booth and Nancy Marchand.

1958

THE ENTERTAINER 2/12/58 (97 perfs.) by John Osborne music by John Addison; with Joan Plowright, Laurence Olivier and Brenda de Banzie.

LA PLUME DE MA TANTE 11/11/58 (835 perfs.) by Robert Dhery, music by Gerard Calvi; with Dhery and Colette Brosette.

1961

THE BILLIE BARNES PEOPLE 6/13/61 (7 perfs.) by Bob Rodgers; with Joyce Jameson, Dick Patterson, Ken Berry and Jo Anne Worley.

FROM THE SECOND CITY 9/26/61 (87 perfs.) created by the company; with Barbara Harris, Paul Sand and Alan Arkin.

THE NIGHT OF THE IGUANA 12/28/61 (316 perfs.) by Tennessee Williams; with Bette Davis, James Fraentino, Patrick O'Neal and Margaret Leighton.

1962

LORD PENGUIN 11/19/62 (175 perfs.) by S.N. Behrman; with Brian Bedford, Charles Boyer, Ruth White and Agnes Moorehead.

1963

THE REHEARSAL 9/23/63 (110 perfs.) by Jean Anouilh; with Coral Browne and Keith Michell.

1964

THE CHINESE PRIME MINISTER 1/2/64 (108 perfs.) by Enid Bagnold; with Peter Donat, Margaret Leighton, Joanna Pettet and Douglas Watson.

THE SUBJECT WAS ROSES 5/25/64 (834 total perfs.) by Frank D. Gilroy; with Jack Albertson, Irene Dailey and Martin Sheen. (Moved to the Henry Miller Theater 12/21/65 and to the Belasco Theater 3/1/66).

A SEVERED HEAD 10/28/64 (29 perfs.) by Eugene O'Neill; with Jack Dodson and Jason Robards.

1965

ALL IN GOOD TIME 2/18/65 (44 perfs.) by Bill Naughton; with Brian Murray, Donald Wolfitt, John Sharp and Hazel Douglas.

AND THINGS THAT GO BUMP IN THE NIGHT 4/26/65 (16 perfs.) by Terrence McNally; with Clifton James, Robert Drivas, Susans Anspach and Eileen Heckart.

CACTUS FLOWER 12/8/65 (1,234 perfs.) by Abe Burrows; with Brenda Vaccaro, Burt Brinckerhoff, Lauren Bacall and Barry Nelson.

1968

THE MAN IN THE GLASS BOOTH 9/26/68 (268 perfs.) by Robert Shaw; with Donald Pleasence, Lawrence Pressman and Abe Vigoda.

1969

THE PENNY WARS 10/15/69 (5 perfs.) by Elliott Baker; with Kristoffer Tabori, Kim Hunter, George Voskovec and Dolph Sweet.

THE MUNDY SCHEME 12/11/69 (4 perfs.) by Brian Friel; with Dorothy Stickney, Jack Cassidy and Ann Sweeny.

1970

CHILD'S PLAY 2/17/70 (343 perfs.) by Robert Marasco; with Ken Howard, David Rounds, Fritz Weaver and Pat Hingle.

1971

HOW THE OTHER HALF LOVES 3/29/71 (104 perfs.) by Alan Ayckbourn; with Bernice Massi, Sandy Dennis, Phil Silvers, Richard Mulligan, Tom Aldredge and Jeanne Hepple.

THE IMCOMPARABLE MAX 10/19/71 (23 perfs.) by Jerome Lawrence & Robert E. Lee; with Clive Revill.

1972

THERE'S ONE IN EVERY MARRIAGE 1/3/72 (16 perfs.) adapted by Suzanne Grossman & Paxton Whitehead from a play by Georges Feydeau; with Peter Dorat and Roberta Maxwell.

MOONCHILDREN 2/21/72 (16 perfs.) by Michael Weller; with Kevin Conway, Edward Herrmann and Jill Eikenberry.

TOUGH TO GET HELP 5/4/72 (1 perf.) by Steve Gordon; with Abe Vigoda.



JACQUES BREL IS ALIVE AND WELL AND LIVING IN PARIS 9/15/72 (51 perfs.) by Jacques Brel; with Joe Masiell and Elly Stone.

GREASE 11/21/72 (3,388 total perfs.); by Jim Jacobs and Warren Casey; with Barry Bostwick, Illene Kristen, Tom Harris and Dorothy Leon. (Originally opened at the Eden Theater 2/14/72.)

#### 1980

WHOSE LIFE IS IT ANYWAY? 2/24/80 (96 perfs.) by Brian Clark; with Mary Tyler Moore and James Naughton.

A DAY IN HOLLYWOOD/A NIGHT IN THE UKRAINE 6/17/80 (588 total perfs.) book and lyrics by Dick Vosburgh, music by Frank Lazarus; with Priscilla Lopez, David Garrison and Stephen James. (First opened at the Golden Theater 5/1/80).

#### 1981

DUET FOR ONE 12/17/81 (20 prfs.) by Tom Kempinski; with Anne Bancroft and Max von Sydow.

#### 1982

JOSEPH AND THE AMAZING TECHNICOLOR DREAMCOAT 1/27/82 (747 total perfs.) music by Andrew Lloyd Webber, lyrics by Tim Rice; with Bill Hutton and Laurie Beechman. (Originally opened at the Entermedia Theater 11/18/81).

#### 1984

THE HUMAN COMEDY 4/5/84 (13 perfs.) music by Galt MacDermot, libretto by William Dumas; with Stephen Geoffreys.

KIPLING 10/10/84 (12 perfs.) by Brian Clark; with Alec McCowen.

#### 1985

HOME FRONT 1/12/85 (13 perfs.) by James Duff; with Carroll O'Connor and Frances Sternhagen.

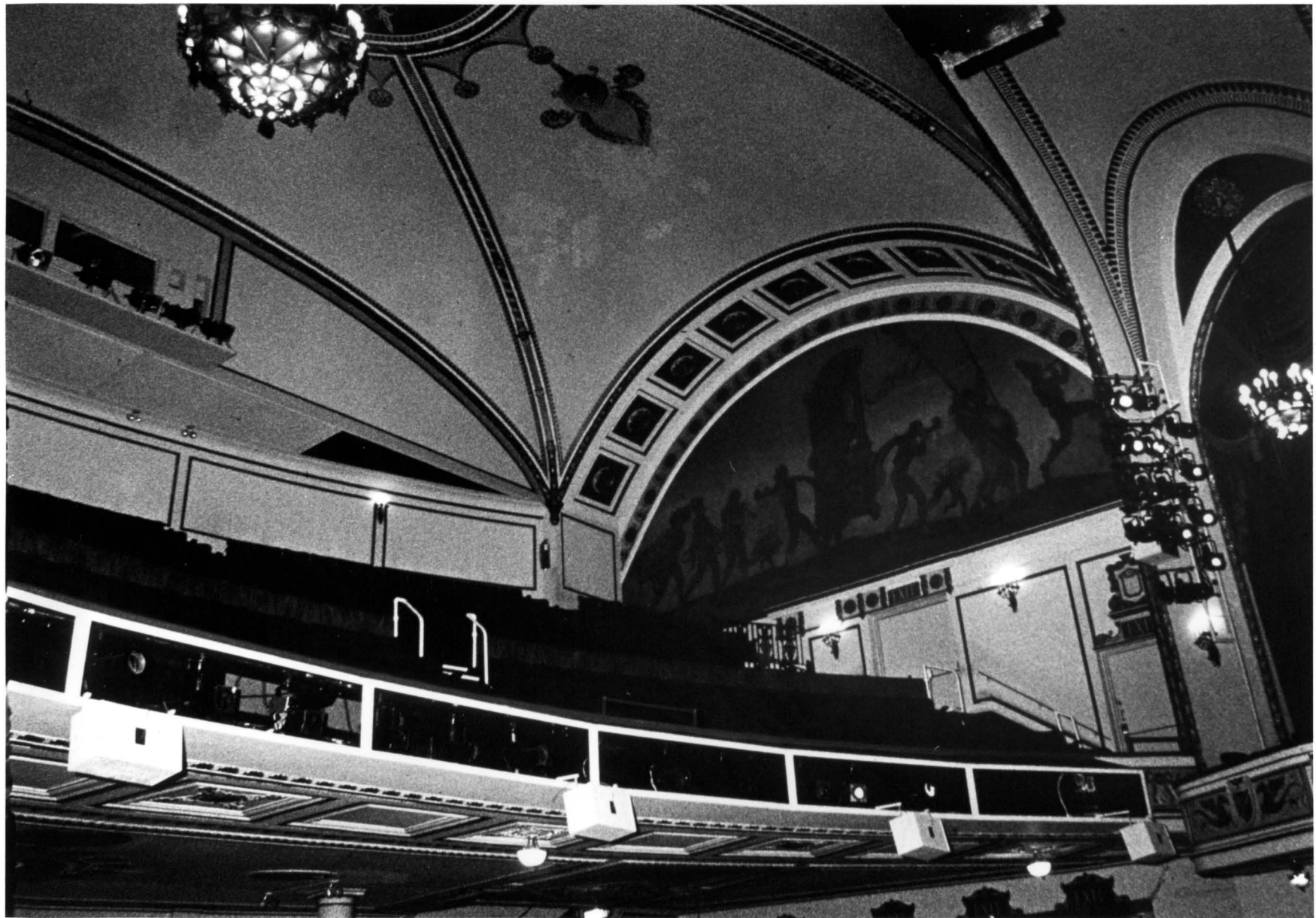
PACK OF LIES 2/11/85 (120 perfs.) by Hugh Whitmore; with Rosemary Harris and Patrick McGoohan.

SONG AND DANCE 9/18/85 (474 perfs.) by Richard Maltby, Jr., lyrics by Don Black, music by Andrew Lloyd Webber; with Bernadette Peters and Christopher d'Amboise.



Royale Theater Interior  
242-250 West 45th Street  
Manhattan

Built: 1926-27  
Architect: Herbert J. Krapp



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