Landmarks Preservation Commission
December 15, 1987; Designation List 198
LP-1378

SHUBERT THEATER, 221-233 West 44th Street, Manhattan. Built 1912-13; architect, Henry B. Herts.

Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 1016, Lot 15 in part consisting of the land on which the described building is situated.

On June 14 and 15, 1982, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation as a Landmark of the Shubert Theater and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site (Item No. 74). 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. One witness spoke in opposition to designation. The owner, with his representatives, appeared at the hearing, and indicated that he had not formulated an opinion regarding designation. The Commission has received many letters and other expressions of support in favor of this designation.

DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

The Shubert Theater survives today as one of the historic theaters that symbolize American theater for both New York and the nation. Built in 1912-13, shortly before World War I, to the designs of Henry B. Herts, the Shubert was one of a pair with the Booth, and was among the numerous theaters constructed by the Shuberts, one of the most active and influential families in American theater history. The Shubert was built as a memorial to Sam S. Shubert, leader of the family's theatrical enterprises until his untimely death in a train wreck.

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.

Henry B. Herts, the architect of the Shubert, earned a reputation as one of New York's most skilled theater architects, first in partnership with Hugh Tallant and later practicing alone. For the Shubert he designed a Venetian-inspired facade, adorned with sgrafitto ornament, which is linked to that of the adjacent Booth theater and helps to set the character of Shubert Alley.

As one of the pre-World War I theater buildings, the Shubert is among the oldest group of theaters surviving in New York. For three quarters of a century the Shubert 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. As one of the theaters in the Shubert Alley grouping (West 44th and 45th Streets, between Shubert Alley and Eighth Avenue), it contributes to the visual identity of the Broadway theater district's symbolic core.

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 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.[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.

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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]

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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 around Times Square 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 Times Square 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 Shubert 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 percent of all the plays in America,[2] and controlled 75 percent of the theater tickets sold in this country.

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.[3] Belasco was to remain Sam Shubert's idol throughout his career.

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 unlessthe 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 Plymouth 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 competition 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.

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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. Sam S. Shubert, obituary, New York Dramatic Mirror, May 20, 1905, p. 13.

6. Reviewed in The Theatre, January, 1902.

7. Sam S. Shubert obit., 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.

Henry Beaumont Herts

Many of Broadway's finest theaters owe their design in part or in whole to Henry Beaumont Herts (1871-1933). As both a technical innovator and an inventive designer, Herts earned a reputation as one of New York's (and America's) most skilled theater architects. Although his career in theater design was made in partnership with another theater specialist, Hugh Tallant (1869-1952), Herts continued to contribute to the stock of fine Broadway theaters even after the break-up of the partnership.

Herts, son of Henry B. Herts of the Herts Brothers firm of decorators, left college to work in the office of Bruce Price, a well-established New York architect with a national reputation. Price, impressed with his abilities, encouraged him to attend the Columbia School of Mines, forerunner of the Columbia School of Architecture. While a student, he entered and won a competition to design the Columbus Memorial Arch. From there he went on to the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris, where he met his future partner Hugh Tallant.[1] Tallant had come to Paris after graduating from Harvard College, where he had studied engineering.[2] The two worked on many student projects together in Paris, and in 1897, after returning to New York, joined in a partnership which lasted until 1911.[3]

Although Herts and Tallant accepted commissions for various building types, they became best known as specialists in theater design. Their career spanned the gradual change in the American theater from the 19th- to the 20th-century pattern. Consequently their theater commissions ranged from a repertory house for a 19th-century impresario (the Lyceum for Daniel Frohman, 1903, a designated New York City Landmark), and theaters for the infamous Klaw & Erlanger Theatrical Syndicate (the New Amsterdam, 1903, a designated New York City Landmark and Interior Landmark, and the Liberty, 1904), to houses for the Shubert organization, the classic embodiment of the 20th-century theatrical entrepreneur (the Shubert and the Booth theaters, 1912-13, Herts alone). Other New York theaters included the Gaiety (at Broadway and 46th Street, 1907-09, demolished), the remodeling of the old Lenox Lyceum into the German Theater (Madison Avenue at 59th Street, 1908, demolished), the Brooklyn Academy of Music (1908, in the Brooklyn Academy of Music Historic District), the Folies Bergere (later the Helen Hayes, 210 West 46th Street, 1911, demolished), and the Longacre (1912-13, Herts alone).

Practicing in a period of great theater expansion, Herts and Tallant were able to bring to their new theaters a propitious combination of design talent and technical expertise. Tallant became quite knowledgeable in the field of theater acoustics, and published on the subject, as well as on the history of theater design, in contemporary architectural periodicals.[4] Herts's understanding of structural techniques led him to invent the cantilever arch method of theater balcony construction (first used at the

New Amsterdam Theater, 1903), which eliminated the need for supporting pillars and thus improved auditorium sight lines.[5] Together Herts and Tallant brought back from Paris a familiarity with modern French design which they applied to great effect in all the theaters they built on Broadway.[6]

Herts & Tallant's earlier theaters (the Lyceum, New Amsterdam, Liberty, and German), in a theatrical version of the Beaux-Arts style, brought an elaborate, elegant and ornamental look to New York's stock of playhouses. The Lyceum is probably the finest surviving Beaux-Arts theater in the country.[7] Besides their Beaux-Arts training, Herts and Tallant brought to New York their firsthand knowledge of the Art Nouveau style current in Belgium and France, and in the New Amsterdam created an outstanding Art Nouveau interior.[8] Herts, although trained as an architect, was also a painter, and while in Paris had several works exhibited.[9] His interests may have been the source for the elaborate paintings and reliefs with which so many of the firm's theaters were adorned. Similarly elaborate and eminently theatrical were their designs for the German Theater,[10] and, though on a smaller scale, also the Liberty.

The firm's later theaters, including the Gaiety, Folies Bergere, Longacre, and the Shubert and Booth, were equally elaborate in detail, but tended to a more restrained classicism in keeping with changing architectural tastes. Interior ornament ranged from the intimate Jacobean paneling of the smaller Booth, to the grand cycle of paintings in the larger Shubert. The double exterior of the latter two was said to be based on Venetian precedents, and relied for its effect on contrasts between brick and terra-cotta adorned with a polychromatic sgraffito ornament.[11]

Non-theatrical commissions by the firm included a new facade at 232 West End Avenue for Abraham Erlanger's house (in 1903-04, the same years in which they designed Klaw & Erlanger's New Amsterdam and Liberty Theaters); the City Athletic Club (50 West 54th Street, 1909); a new grandstand for the Polo Grounds in Manhattan (1912, Herts alone, demolished); and a number of buildings for New York's Jewish community, including a remodeling of the old Harmonie Club (45 West 42nd Street, 1897-1898, demolished), the Aguilar Free Library (110th Street, 1898, and alterations 1904-05), the Guggenheim Mausoleum (1900) at Salem Fields Cemetery, Brooklyn, the cemetery of Temple Emanuel, the Isaac L. Rice Mansion (346 West 89th Street, 1901-03, a designated New York City Landmark) and the synagogue of Congregation B'nai Jeshurun (257 West 88th Street, 1917, Henry Herts and Walter S. Schneider).

After the partnership was dissolved in 1911, Tallant joined the firm of Lord & Hewlitt (which became Lord, Hewlitt & Tallant), while Herts continued on his own. Herts is not known to have designed any theaters after World War I, but he remained active as an architect. An expert in fireproofing (an important component of theater design), he aided New York's Fire Department in drafting the City's building code. He also served as architect for the Playground Commission of New York.[12]

Herts and Tallant designed theaters together for just over a decade, and Herts did only a few more in the years immediately following, but they produced the finest surviving theaters in New York. Moreover, they influenced the architecture of the theater district well beyond their own

few surviving structures by training Herbert J. Krapp, an architect in their office who went on to design numerous other Broadway theaters.

(EH, AWR)

Notes

1. Abbot Halstead Moore, "Individualism in Architecture: The Work of Herts & Tallant," Architectural Record, 15 (January 1904), 66. See also Henry B. Herts, obit., New York Times, March 28, 1933, p. 19.

2. Ibid.

3. The date of the establishment of the partnership has been ascertained through examination of Trow's Business Directories for the period. Because of an error in Herts's New York Times obituary, it often has been stated that the partnership was established in 1900.

4. Hugh Tallant, "Hints on Architectural Acoustics," The Brickbuilder, 19 (May 1910), 111-116; (July 1910), 155-158; (Aug. 1910), 177-180; (Sept. 1910), 199-203; (Oct. 1910), 221-225; (Nov. 1910), 243-247; (Dec. 1910), 265-270. Also, "Architectural Acoustics," The Brickbuilder, 22 (Oct. 1913), 225-228. On theater history: "The American Theater: Its Antecedents and Characteristics," The Brickbuilder, 23 (Dec. 1914), 285-290; 24 (Jan. 1915), 17-22.

5. Moore, p. 66, and Herts obituary.

6. It is not known which of the two partners was chiefly responsible for design, but only Herts is known to have continued designing theaters after the dissolution of the partnership.

7. Landmarks Preservation Commission, Lyceum Theatre Designation Report (LP-0803), prepared by Marjorie Pearson, November 26, 1974.

8. Landmarks Preservation Commission, New Amsterdam Theater Interior Designation Report (LP-1027), prepared by Marjorie Pearson, October 23, 1979.

9. Moore, p. 66.

10. See H.W. Frohne, "The German Theatre in New York," Architectural Record, 24 (December 1908), 408-416.

11. "Shubert Theater," The American Architect, 104 (November 19, 1913) n.p.

12. Herts obituary.

The Shubert Theater

The Shubert Theater was built in 1912-13[1] to be both the headquarters of the Shubert theatrical empire, and a memorial to Sam Shubert, leader of the family business until his accidental death. The Shubert (its full name was the Sam S. Shubert Memorial Theater) was one of five such memorial theaters undertaken by the family under Lee Shubert's direction.[2] Beyond its significance as a headquarters and a memorial, the Shubert Theater was also physically the most prominent of the family's Broadway theaters. That prominence derived both from the architectural treatment lavished on the building, and from its unusual siting as part of a grand double-theater project behind the Astor Hotel.

The Shubert, on West 44th Street, was built jointly with the Booth Theater, on West 45th Street, as one structure on one lot. Their stage areas backed on to each other in the middle of the block; the two houses are separated only by a two-foot brick wall.[3] Although each theater was a mid-block structure, it was possible to design them as a single entity by taking advantage of the alley, mandated by fire regulations, separating the theaters from the adjoining Astor Hotel.

The Shubert and Booth theaters were built for very different purposes; they are consequently different sizes, and their interiors are different in scale and design. The Booth, a joint venture with producer Winthrop Ames, was intended to be an intimate theater, with one balcony, seating about 800; its interior design, inspired by Tudor sources, reflected Ames's theatrical theories. The Shubert, with two balconies, could seat almost twice as many people, and was meant to house large musicals booked by the Shuberts; its much more flamboyant interior design included a series of painted mythological scenes and high-relief ornamental plaster panels. The Shubert, moreover, housed two floors of offices for the Shubert organization, making it a larger building than the Booth.[4]

Despite these differences in function and size, Henry Herts carefully integrated the exteriors of the two theaters into one design. The primary facade of each theater, on 44th and 45th Streets respectively, is linked by a curved corner pavilion to the Shubert Alley facade of each theater, and then joined by a plainer wall section behind which are located their respective stage houses. The corner pavilions of each have strongly articulated entrances which face east towards Broadway, making the theaters clearly visible from Broadway.

The style of the two theaters was described by contemporary sources as "Venetian Renaissance, with certain modern adaptations."[5] The Shubert's

> ...walls are of buff colored brick with oaked joints and the trimmings are of gray terra cotta.[6]

The central brick section on 44th Street is framed at either side by giant Corinthian piers; above them rises a story of office space with triple windows, and above that a mansard roof with dormers.[7] In the center of the brick wall is a heavily rusticated triple arcade with exit doors. The facade on Shubert Alley is almost identical, lacking only the triple arcaded entrance. The curving corner entrance pavilion is the most dramatic element of Herts's design; as described in a contemporary account:

> The doorways of terra cotta recall in their design the spirit of the Venetian Renaissance. The oval panel within the broken pediment above the entrance doorway is sgraffito work. A similar form of decoration is employed in the tympana above the triple exit.[8]

The "sgraffito" refered to is in fact the most unusual part of Herts's design for the Shubert and Booth. Again in the words of the contemporary architectural press:

> As the building laws prohibit the projection of any part of a structure beyond the building line, the use of sgraffito has been resorted to for decoration since it gives a very elaborate effect in relief.... The sgraffito panels have Renaissance ornament in light gray tone, executed on a background of purple gray. The trimmings, including the cornice, are of light terra cotta; the walls are buff-colored, and the bricks are laid in alternate courses of headers and stretchers.[9]

The sgraffito effect was achieved

> by carving through several layers of varied colored cements, producing the figured decoration of the panels which decorates both fronts.[10]

In America, the technique enjoyed a brief popularity during the first two decades of the 20th century. The sgraffito on the Booth and Shubert Theaters are among the few known surviving examples in New York City.[11]

The restrained elegance of the design prompted another contemporary writer to praise the Shubert and Booth as being "free from much of the gaudy trappings that has made some of the recent playhouses commonplace in appearance."[12]

To open the Sam S. Shubert Memorial Theater on a fitting note, the Shuberts arranged for its dedication to

> be marked by the appearance of [famed British actor] Forbes-Robertson in his farewell engagement. The management feels that using the stage for such a purpose as this at the very beginning will establish a dramatic precedent of the highest order.[13]

> Not until the end of the play did Forbes-Robertson come before the curtain and make a speech. Then, after frequent calls, he spoke to the standing audience very briefly, dwelling upon the beauties of the new theatre which he had opened and speaking of what a fitting monument it was to the late Sam Shubert.[14]

The Shubert Theater continues to serve as the flagship of the Shubert Organization, whose offices are still housed in its upper stories.

(AR, PD)

Notes

1. According to Building Department records, a single New Building Application was filed for the Shubert and Booth theaters in 1911. On June 4, 1912 this application was withdrawn and separate applications were filed for the two theaters. Construction was begun on the Shubert on August 7, 1912 and was completed on October 10, 1913; work began on the Booth on August 20, 1912 and was completed October 30, 1913. See New York City Department of Buildings, Manhattan, New Building Permits 333-1911 (joint project), 353-1912 (Shubert), 354-1912 (Booth).

2. Jerry Stagg, The Brothers Shubert (New York: Random House, 1968), p. 75.

3. "The Shubert Theater on 44th Street and the Booth Theater on 45th Street, New York," Architecture and Building, 45 (November 1913), 467.

4. "New Shubert Theatre: Description of Playhouse to Open with Forbes-Robertson," New York Tribune, September 28, 1913.

5. Ibid.

6. "Shubert theatre, West 44th Street, New York," American Architect 104 (Nov 19, 1913), pl.

7. The dormers were reduced in size, and the cornice beneath them altered, in the early 1980s.

8. "Shubert Theatre, West 44th Street," pl.

9. Ibid, pl.

10. "The Shubert Theater on 44th Street and the Booth," p. 467.

11. Maximilian F. Friederang, "Sgraffito," American Architect 114 (July 3, 1918), 1-8; idem., "An Ancient Art Revived, An Account of Sgraffito," Architectural Record 33 (January 1913), 22-33.

12. "Shubert Theater," New York World, October 3, 1913.

13. "New Shubert Theatre."

14. "A Memory of Booth," New York Times, Oct. 3, 1913, p. 16.

The Shubert as a Playhouse[1]

The Shubert opened on September 29, 1913 with distinguished British actor Johston Forbes-Robertson's farewell performance as Hamlet. Forbes-Robertson and his stock company remained at the new theater for a month, presenting a repertory of past hits that included Othello and Shaw's Caesar and Cleopatra. In January 1914, the theater had its first new production, Percy Mackaye's A Thousand Years Ago, which achieved a modest success playing 87 performances. The theater's first musical hit came in December with Paul Ruben's Tonight's The Night. Also successful was Jerome Kern's Love O' Mike which played 192 performances in January 1917 with Peggy Wood and Clifton Webb. Wood returned to the Shubert in August with Sigmund Romberg's romantic operetta Maytime, which was so popular that the Shuberts mounted a second company at the neighboring 44th Street Theater. After playing almost 500 performances Maytime was succeeded by Lionel Barrymore in August Thomas's Civil War drama, The Copperhead. The decade closed with another Romberg operetta, The Magic Melody with Charles Purcell.

The 'twenties began at the Shubert with a number of revues including the witty Greenwich Village Follies and the extravagant Artists and Models which featured comedians Frank Fay and Joe E. Brown and a host of scantily clad showgirls. "Play Gypsies Sing Gypsies" was the hit of Emmerich Kalman's operetta Countess Maritza in 1927. Texas Guinan, famed nightclub hostess credited with coining the phrase "Hello Suckers," appeared in Billy Rose's Padlocks of 1927 and Patsy Kelly and Bert Lahr contributed their excellent dancing and clowning to Harry Delmar's Revels of 1927-28.

Two future stars made their debuts at the Shubert in the early 'thirties: Walter Slezak in Meet My Sister of 1930 and Ann Sothern (then known as Harriet Lake) in Everybody's Welcome of 1931. The latter show introduced a song usually associated with the movie Casablanca, "As Time Goes By." What might be termed the theme song of the Depression, "Brother, Can You Spare a Dime," was also first heard at the Shubert in the revue Americana of 1933. In 1934, the Shubert once again housed a distinguished drama, Sinclair Lewis's Dodsworth with Walter Huston and Fay Bainter. Two years later Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontainne starred in Robert E. Sherwood's brilliant indictment of militarism, Idiot's Delight, which brought the Shubert its first Pulitzer Prize. The Lunts returned in 1937 in Jean Giradoux's delightful romp, Amphitryon 38. That year also marked the beginning of a remarkable series of Rodgers and Hart musicals at the Shubert. The first, Babes in Arms with Alfred Drake and Mitzi Green, had an extraordinary score that included "Where or When," "The Lady Is a Tramp," "My Funny Valentine," "I Wish I Were in Love Again," and "Johnny-One-Note." I Married An Angel with Vera Zorina dancing to Balanchine choreography opened in 1938, followed by Higher and Higher in 1940, Pal Joey in 1941, and By Jupiter in 1942. Amidst all this music the Shubert also managed to fit in a comedy, Philip Barry's sparkling Philadelphia Story with Katharine Hepburn which played 417 performances in 1941.

During the 'forties the Shubert also housed some notable productions of the classics. Katherine Cornell and Raymond Massey appeared in Shaw's The Doctor's Dilemma (1941) and Candida (1942); Mary Boland, Bobby Clark and Walter Hampden starred in Sheridan's The Rivals (1942); and Paul Robeson broke all Broadway records with his magnificent performance in Othello of 1943. The following year a different sort of classic played the

Shubert, Mae West in the bawdy Catherine Was Great. In the late 'forties musicals once again predominated, notably Harold Arlen's Bloomer Girl with Celeste Holm (1944), Ira Gershwin and Nunnally Johnson's Park Avenue (1946), and Sammy Cahn's High Button Shoes, which transferred to the Shubert from the Century in 1947. In addition, Rex Harrison won a Tony Award for his performance in Maxwell Anderson's history play Anne of a Thousand Days, and the Lunts celebrated their twenty-fifth anniversary "as America's foremost acting couple"[2] in S.N. Behrman's I Know My Love of 1949.

During the 'fifties the Shubert alternated between straight plays and musicals. Highlights of the period include Lerner and Loewe's Paint Your Wagon (1951-52), Shaw's The Millionairess with Katharine Hepburn (1952), Peter Ustinov's The Love of Four Colonels with Rex Harrison and Lili Palmer (1953), Cole Porter's Can-Can (1953-55), Betty Comden, Adolph Green and Jule Styne's The Bells Are Ringing (1956) with Judy Holliday, Gertrude Berg's Majority of One (1959), and Bob Merrill's Take Me Along with Jackie Gleason (1959).

The 'sixties began with another musical, the charming Bye Bye Birdie which had originaly opened at the Martin Beck Theater. In 1962 a little known actress from Brooklyn, Barbra Streisand, stopped the show in I Can Get It for You Wholesale, appearing with her future husband Elliott Gould. Anthony Newley wrote and starred in two shows during the 'sixties, Stop the World-I Want to Get Off (1962) and The Roar of the Greasepaint-The Smell of the Crowd (1965). Meredith Willson adapted Miracle On 34th Street in Here's Love of 1963 and Jerry Orbach starred in the Neil Simon-Burt Bacharach blockbuster Promises, Promises (1968-72).

Among the shows that played the Shubert in the 'seventies were Stephen Sondheim's A Little Night Music with Glynis Johns and Len Cariou (1973-74), the World War II musical Over Here! with Patty and Maxine Andrews (1974), and the Pulitzer Prize-winning Edward Albee play Seascape (1975). In 1975 Joseph Papp and the New York Shakespeare Festival moved their production of Michael Bennett's A Chorus Line to the Shubert; as of December 1987, the Pulitzer Prize-winning musical is still playing there.

(GH)

Notes

1. This production history of the Shubert 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. Botto, p. 63.

Description[1]

The Shubert by virtue of its location on 44th Street and Shubert Alley has two major designed facades joined in a projecting curved pavilion at the southeast corner of the building (the northwest corner of the intersection of 44th Street and Shubert Alley). The 44th Street facade rises from a stone base surmounted by rusticated terra-cotta blocks which is interrupted by three tall arches at the center and display boxes topped by stylized broken pediments at the sides. Exit doors, originally of paneled wood, but now covered with posters under plexiglass, are set below oblong display boxes in the location of the original transoms in the three arches. Across the arches with their rusticated voussoirs is suspended a modern marquee with signs from original standards and decorative iron plates. The three arches contain sgraffito panels with figures set in aedicules. The wall section surrounding the arches is faced in beige brick laid up in English cross bond and is flanked by pilasters of simulated terra-cotta quoins terminating in stylized Corinthian capitals with lions heads and rams rising from acanthus leaves. A stucco sgraffito band with stylized classical foliate ornament in bas relief surrounds the brick wall. This in turn is enframed by a wide stucco sgraffito band with panels containing such classical motifs as griffins and semi-nude draped female figures. These panels form stylized broken pediments with masks below the upper story. This floor contains three triple window groups, framed in terra cotta, with sgraffito panels between the windows, set on projecting sills carried on corbels with winged heads and flanked by octagonal sgraffito panels with figures. A dentiled cornice sets off the mansard roof, which is covered with standing seam sheetmetal and contains three dormer window groups. The sgraffito work on the 44th Street facade has lost its color and much of its relief.

The projecting curved corner pavilion contains a large central doorway flanked by painted stone pilasters with cartouches carrying a segmental arched broken pediment with a central scrolled panel containing a sgraffito figure holding a scroll inscribed "Henry B. Herts Architect 1913". This is surmounted by a scallop shell. Modern aluminum and glass doors are protected by a canvas canopy extending out over the sidewalk to the curb. Aluminum display boxes flank the doorway. Above the display boxes are sgraffito panels with foliation. The wall extending out and up from the doorway is of brick, like that on the 44th Street facade, and is flanked by pilasters of simulated quoins terminating in stylized Corinthian capitals like those on the 44th Street facade. The brick is framed by a stucco sgraffito band with stylized classical foliate ornament in bas relief; this is surmounted by a stylized broken pediment containing a theatrical mask above a shield. The upper story above the stylized pediment contains a double window framed in terra cotta, flanked by sgraffito panels, and

set on a projecting sill with corbels with winged heads. The cornice and mansard roof are continuations of those on the 44th Street facade. Much of the brick section of this pavilion is obscured by a sign armature and a running band sign. The sgraffito is better preserved than on the 44th Street facade.

The Shubert Alley facade is divided into two sections. The portion adjacent to the corner pavilion has two pairs of aluminum and glass doors leading from the auditorium and a pair of wood and glass doors leading to the Shubert offices at the ground floor. A modern marquee is suspended above the doors from original standards and wall plates. The wall above the marquee is of the same beige brick in English cross bond flanked by pilasters of simulated quoins and surrounded by a foliated bas-relief stucco sgraffito band. This in turn is framed by a wide stucco sgraffito band with panels containing classical motifs like those seen on the 44th Street facade. These panels form stylized broken pediments with masks below the upper story. A stylized Corinthian capital, like those on the 44th Street facade and the corner pavilion, caps the quoins adjacent to the corner. The upper story contains window groups flanked by sgraffito panels like those on the 44th Street facade, and the cornice and mansard roof continue from the corner pavilion. To the north of this portion is a large expanse of brick wall, also in English cross bond, flanked by simulated quoins indicating the presence of the auditorium and adjacent stages shared by the Shubert and Booth Theaters. Additional doors are at the ground floor. The remaining wall is covered with signboards and metal panels. Rows of windows with one-over-one kalamine sash are placed at the second, third, and fourth floors, and a large terra-cotta shield is centered on the wall. A brick wall section enclosing the upper part of the stage house and containing a sgraffito panel rises above the roof parapet.

(MP)

Notes

1. Significant architectural features are underlined.

Conclusion

The Shubert Theater survives today as one of the historic playhouses that symbolize American theater for both New York and the nation. Located on West 44th Street, constructed as part of a pair with the Booth Theater, it is one of the group of theaters forming "Shubert Alley," the physical and symbolic heart of the Broadway theater district. Built as Shubert headquarters, and as a memorial to Sam Shubert, it is a uniquely important building, designed by Henry B. Herts, that helps shape the character of the Broadway theater district. Its Venetian-inspired design with unusual sgraffito ornament is particularly distinguished and responsive to its prominent site.

For three quarters of a century the Shubert 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), Peter Donhauser (PD), 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.

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 building, the Landmarks Preservation Commission finds that the Shubert Theater 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.

The Commission further finds that, among its important qualities, the Shubert Theater survives as one of the historic playhouses that symbolize American theater for both New York and the nation; that located on West 44th Street, it is one of the group of theaters forming "Shubert Alley," the physical and symbolic heart of the Broadway theater district; that the Shubert was built both as a memorial to Sam S. Shubert, and as the headquarters and flagship of the entire Shubert chain; that during the early decades of this century the Shuberts and their theaters helped shape the character of the Broadway theater district; that it was designed for the Shuberts by Henry B. Herts, preeminent New York theater architect; that Herts's Venetian-inspired design is particularly distinguished and responsive to its prominent site; that its significant architectural features include heavy rusticated terra-cotta pilasters and arches, a curving corner entrance pavilion facing Broadway, an elaborate portal, and unusual panels of "sgraffito" ornament; that for three quarters of a century the Shubert Theater has served as home to countless numbers of 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 a Landmark the Shubert Theater, 221-233 West 44th Street, Borough of Manhattan, and designates Tax Map Block 1016, Lot 15 in part consisting of the land on which the described building is situated, Borough of Manhattan, as its Landmark Site.

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APPENDIX

The following production history of the Shubert 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.

1913

Johnston Forbes-Robertson Repertory Company and Gertrude Elliott 9/29/13

MICE & MEN by Lucette Ryley, THE LIGHT THAT FAILED by George Fleming,
CAESAR & CLEOPATRA by George Bernard Shaw
THE PASSING OF THE THIRD FLOOR BACK by Jerome K. Jerome
THE SACRAMENT OF JUDAS by Louis Tiercelin
HAMLET, THE MERCHANT OF VENICE, and OTHELLO by William Shakespeare.

1914

A THOUSAND YEARS AGO 1/16/14 (87 perfs.) by Percy MacKaye; with Rita Jolivet, Frederick Warde, Fania Marinoff, Jerome Patrick and Henry E. Dixey.

THE BELLE OF BOND STREET 3/30/14 (48 perfs.) by Owen Hall and Harold Atteridge; with Gaby Deslys.

MADAME MOSELLE 5/23/14 (9 perfs.) by Edward A. Paulton.

THE THIRD PARTY 8/10/14 (104 total perfs.) by Jocelyn Brandon and Frederick Arthur (First opened at 39th St. Theatre 8/3/14; returned there 9/7/14).

MISS DAISY 9/9/14 (29 perfs.) by Philip Bartholomae; with Mae Murray.

THE HAWK 9/28/14 (136 perfs.) by Francis De Croisset; with William Faversham, Wright Kramer and Conway Tearle.

TONIGHT'S THE NIGHT 12/24/14 (108 perfs.) by Fred Thompson; with Maurice Farkoa, Leslie Henson, George Grossmith and Fay Compton.

1915

TRILBY 4/3/15 (73 perfs.) by Paul M. Potter from a novel by George Du Maurier; with Wilton Lackaye and Phyllis Nielson-Terry.

THE ROAD TO HAPPINESS 8/30/15 (48 perfs.) by Lawrence Whitman.

ALONE AT LAST 10/14/15 (180 perfs.) by Franz Lehar; with Marguerite Namara, John Charles Thomas and Roy Atwell.

1916

THE GREAT PURSUIT 3/22/16 (29 perfs.) by C. Haddon Chambers; with Jeanne Eagels.

IF I WERE KING 4/29/16 (33 perfs.) by Justin Huntley McCarthy; with E. H. Sothern.

STEP THIS WAY 5/29/16 (88 perfs.) by Edgar Smith.

THE HAPPY ENDING 8/21/16 (16 perfs.) by the Macphersons.

MR. LAZARUS 9/5/16 (39 perfs.) by Harvey O'Higgins and Harriet Ford; with Eva Le Gallienne.

THE GIRL FROM BRAZIL 10/9/16 (61 total perfs.) by Edgar Smith. (Opened at the 44th Street Theater 8/30/16).

SO LONG, LETTY 10/23/16 (96 perfs.) by Oliver Morosco and Elmer Harris.

1917

LOVE O'MIKE 1/15/17 (192 perfs.) by Thomas Sydney, music by Jerome Kern; with Peggy Wood and Clifton Webb.

EILEEN 3/19/17 (64 perfs.) by Henry Blossom.

HER SOLDIER BOY 5/14/17 (198 total perfs.) by Leon Victor (first opened at the Astor Theater 12/6/16).

MAYTIME 8/16/17 (492 total perfs.) book & lyrics by Rida Johnson Young, music by Sigmund Romberg; with Peggy Wood.

1918

THE COPPERHEAD 2/18/18 (120 perfs.) by Augustus Thomas; with Lionel Barrymore.

GETTING TOGETHER 6/3/18 (112 total perfs.) by Ian Hay,J. Hartley Manners and Percival Knight. (First opened at the Lyric Theatre 3/18/18.)

SOMETIME 10/4/18 (283 perfs.) by Rida Johnson Young and Rudolf Friml; with Mae West, Ed Wynn and Francine Larrimore.

THE BETROTHAL 11/18/18 (120 perfs.) by Maurice Maeterlinck, with songs by George Gershwin.

1919

GOOD MORNING, JUDGE 2/6/19 (140 perfs.) by Fred Thompson.

A LONELY ROMEO 6/10/19 (87 perfs.) by Harry B. Smith and Lew Fields.

OH, WHAT A GIRL! 7/28/19 (68 perfs.) by Edgar Smith and Edward Clark; with Harry Kelly.

REPERTORY OF SHAKESPEARE PLAYS WITH E.H. SOTHERN and JULIA MARLOWE 10/6/19 (16 perfs.) HAMLET/TWELFTH NIGHT/TAMING OF THE SHREW.

THE MAGIC MELODY 11/11/19 (143 perfs.) by Fredric Arnold Kummer, music by Sigmund Romberg; with Charles Purcell, Julia Dean, Fay Marbe and Flavia Arcaro.

1920

THE BLUE FLAME 3/15/20 (48 perfs.) by George V. Hobart and John Willard; with Theda Bara.

PADDY THE NEXT BEST THING 8/27/20 (51 perfs.) by Gayer Mackay and Robert Ord.

1921

THE GREENWICH VILLAGE FOLLIES 1/3/21 (217 total perfs.) by John Murray Anderson, lyrics by Anderson and Arthur Swanstrom, music by A. Baldwin Sloane. (First opened Greenwich Village Theatre 8/30/20.)

THE TRIAL OF JOAN OF ARC 4/12/21 (31 perfs.) by Emile Moreau; with Margaret Anglin.

PHOEBE OF QUALITY STREET 5/9/21 (16 perfs.) by J.M. Barrie; with Dorothy Ward.

GREENWICH VILLAGE FOLLIES 8/31/21 (167 perfs.) lyrics by Arthur Swanstron and J.M. Anderson, music by Grey Morgan; with James Watts, Irene Franklin and Ted Lewis.

1922

PINS AND NEEDLES 2/1/22 (46 perfs.) musical revue.

THE HOTEL MOUSE 3/13/22 (88 perfs.) by Guy Bolton; with Frances White.

RED PEPPER 5/29/22 (22 perfs.) by Edgar Smith and Emily Young.

GREENWICH VILLAGE FOLLIES 9/12/22 (209 perfs.) by George V. Hobart, lyrics by John Murray Anderson and Irving Caesar, music by Louis Hirsch; with John Hazzard, Savoy and Brennan, Carl Randall, Marjorie Peterson and Yvonne George.

1923

PEER GYNT 3/12/23 (122 total perfs.) by Henrik Ibsen; with Joseph Schildkraut, Louise Closser Hale and Selena Royle. (First opened at the Garrick Theater 2/5/23.)

ARTISTS AND MODELS 8/20/23 (312 perfs.) with Frank Fay, John Adair, George Rosener, Rollo Wayne, Adele Klaer and Charlotte Woodruff.

1924

VOGUES OF 1924 3/27/24 (114 perfs.) by Fred Thompson and Clifford Grey, music by Herbert Stothart; with Irene Delroy, Jimmy Savo and Fred Allen.

MARJORIE 8/11/24 (144 perfs.) by Fred Thompson, Clifford Grey, Harold Atteridge, music by Sigmund Romberg, Herbert Stothart, Philip Kulkin, Stephen Jones; with Richard Gallagher, Ethel Shutta, Andrew Tombes, Elizabeth Hines and Roy Royston. (Moved to the 44th Street Theater 9/16/24.)

GREENWICH VILLAGE FOLLIES 9/16/24 (127 perfs.) music by Cole Porter, Irving Caesar and John Murray Anderson; with the Dolly Sisters, Bobbe Arnst, Roshanara and Vincent Lopez.

THE MAGNOLIA LADY 11/25/24 (49 perfs.) by Ann Caldwell, music by Harold Levey; with Ruth Chatterton and Richard Gallagher.

1925

OTHELLO 1/10/25 (51 perfs.) by William Shakespeare; with Walter Hampden, Baliol Holloway, Jeannette Sherwin and Mabel Moore.

SKY HIGH 3/2/25 (217 perfs.) by Harold Atteridge and Capt. Harry Graham, music by Robert Stolz, Alfred Goodman, Carlton Kelsey, Maurice Rubens; with Florenz Ames and Willie Howard.

BEGGAR ON HORSEBACK 3/23/25 (16 perfs.) by Marc Connelly and George S. Kaufman; with Spring Byington.

PRINCESS IDA 4/13/25 (40 perfs.) by W.S. Gilbert and Arthur Sullivan.

GAY PAREE 8/18/25 (181 perfs.) by Harold Atteridge, lyrics by Clifford Grey, music by Alfred Goodman, Maurice Rubens, J. Fred Coots; with Chick Sale, Jack Haley, Bartlett Simmons, Winnie Lightner.

1926

GREENWICH VILLAGE FOLLIES 3/15/26 (180 total perfs.) lyrics and music by Harold Levey and Owen Murphy; with Frank MacIntyre and Florence Moore. (First opened at the 46th Street Theater 12/24/25.)

THE SHANGHAI GESTURE 6/7/26 (210 total perfs.) by John Colton; with Florence Reed. (First opened at the Martin Beck Theater 2/1/26; moved to the 46th Street 9/6/26.)

COUNTESS MARITZA 9/18/26 (321 total perfs.) by Julius Brammer and Alfred Grunwald, music by Emmerich Kalman; with Walter Woolf, Yvonne d'Arle, Marjorie Peterson. (Moved to the 44th Street Theatre.)

1927

YOURSO TRULY 1/25/27 (127 perfs.) by Clyde North and Anne Caldwell, music by Raymond Hubbell; with Irene Dunne, Leon Errol, Marion Harris, Greek Evans, Jack Squires.

PADLOCKS OF 1927 7/5/27 (95 perfs.) by Paul Gerard Smith and Ballard MacDonald, lyrics by Billy Rose, music by Lee David, Jesse Greer, Henry Tobias; with Texas Guinan, Lillian Roth, Helen Shipman, Jay C. Flippen and George Raft.

MY PRINCESS 10/6/27 (20 perfs.) by Dorothy Donnelly based on a play by Edward Sheldon and Dorothy Donnelly, music by Sigmund Romberg; with Hope Hampton and Leonard Geeley.

AND SO TO BED 11/9/27 (189 perfs.) by James B. Fagan; with Yvonne Arnaud, Wallace Eddinger, Emyln Williams, Mary Gray and Charles Bryant. (Moved to the Sam H. Harris Theater 11/28/27.)

HARRY DELMAR'S REVELS 11/28/27 (112 perfs.) by William K. Wells, lyrics by Billy Rose and Ballard MacDonald, music by Jimmy Monaco, Jesse Greer, Lester Lee; with Patsy Kelly and Bert Lahr.

1928

THE FURIES 3/7/28 (45 perfs.) by Zoe Akins; with Estelle Winwood, Laurette Taylor, Ian Maclaren and John Cumberland.

WHITE LILACS 9/10/28 (136 perfs.) by Harry B. Smith, music by Karl Hajos from Chopin; with Guy Robertson, Charlotte Woodruff and DeWolf Hopper.

UPS-A-DAISY 10/8/28 (64 perfs.) by Clifford Grey and Robert Simon, music by Lewis E. Gensler; with Luella Gear, William Kent and Marie Saxon.

THE RED ROBE 12/25/28 (167 perfs.) by Stanley Weyman; with Helen Gilliland, Walter Woolf, Violet Carson and Barry Lupino.

1929

A NIGHT IN VENICE 5/21/29 (175 perfs.) by J. Keirn Brennan and Moe Jaffe, music by Lee David and Maurie Rubens; with Ted Healy, Anne Seymour and Stanley Rogers.

STREET SINGER 9/17/29 (189 perfs.) by Cyrus Wood and Edgar Smith, lyrics by Graham John, music by John Gilbert, Nicholas Kempner, S. Timberg; with Ceasar Romero, Guy Robertson adn Queenie Smith.

1930

REPERTORY OF SHAKESPEARE'S PLAYS 3/24/30 with the Chicago Civic Shakespeare Society: HAMLET (5 perfs.), MACBETH (4 perfs.), TWELFTH NIGHT (2 perfs.).

THREE LITTLE GIRLS 4/14/30 (104 perfs.) by Herman Feine and Bruno Hardt-Warden, music by Walter Kollo, lyrics by Harry B. Smith; with Natalie Hall, Bettina Hall, Chales Hedley and Martha Lorber.

SYMPHONY IN TWO FLATS 9/16/30 (47 perfs.) by Ivor Novello; with Ivor Novello and Lilian Braithwaite.

THE LAST ENEMY 10/30/30 (4 perfs.) by Frank Harvey; with Jessica Tandy.

HELLO, PARIS 11/15/30 (33 perfs.); with Chic Sale.

MEET MY SISTER 12/30/30 (165 perfs.) by Berr, Vernauill and Blum, adapted by Harry Wagstaffe Gribble, music and lyrics by Ralph Benalsky; with Walter Slezak, Bettina Hall and George Grossmith.

1931

PETER IBBETSON 4/8/31 (21 perfs.) by John Raphael and Constance Collier; with Dennis King and Jessie Royce Landis.

EVERYBODY'S WELCOME 10/13/31 (127 perfs.) by Harold Atteridge, music by Sammy Fain; with Oscar Shaw, Frances Williams and Ann Pennington.

1932

HEY NONNY NONNY! 6/6/32 (38 perfs.) by Mex and Nathaniel Lief and Michael H. Cleary.

SMILING FACES 8/30/32 (31 perfs.) by Harry Clarke, music by Harry Revel, lyrics by Mark Gordon; with Fred Stone, Roy Royston and Dorothy Stone.

AMERICANA 10/5/32 (76 perfs.) by J.P. McEvoy, music by Jay Gorney, Harold Arlen, Herman Hupfeld and Richard Meyers.

ANOTHER LANGUAGE (348 total perfs.) by Rose Franken, with Margaret Wyclarly, Dorothy Stickney, John Neal and Margaret Hamilton. (First opened at the Booth Theatre 4/25/32.

1933

GAY DIVORCE 1/16/33 (248 total perfs.) by Dwight Taylor, music & lyrics by Cole Porter, with Fred Astaire and Claire Luce. (First opened at Barrymore 11/29/32)

SHADY LADY 7/5/33 (30 perfs.) by Estelle Morango, music and lyrics by Sam H. Stept, Bud Green, Jesse Grear and Stanley Adams; with Charles Purcell.

HER MAN OF WAX 10/11/33 (14 perfs.) by Julian Thompson adapted from the German of Walter Hasenclever; with Lenore Ulrich and Lloyd Corrigan.

THE DRUMS BEGIN 11/24/33 (11 perfs.) by Howard Irving Young; with Judith Anderson and Walter Abel.

1934

ALL THE KINGS HORSES 1/30/34 (120 perfs.) by Frederick Herendeen, music by Edward A. Horan; with Andrew Tombes, Guy Robertson, Nancy McCord, Betty Starbuck. (Moved to Imperial 2/19/34.)

DODSWORTH 2/24/34 (147 perfs.) by Sidney Howard from the novel by Sinclair Lewis; with Walter Huston and Fay Bainter.

DODSWORTH Reopened 8/20/34 (170 perfs.)

1935

ESCAPE ME NEVER 1/21/35 (96 perfs.) by Margaret Kennedy; with Elisabeth Bergner, Leon Quartermaine and Hugh Sinclair.

A JOURNEY BY NIGHT 4/16/35 (7 perfs.) by Arthur Goodrich from the original by Leo Perutz; with James Stewart.

SWEET MYSTERY OF LIFE 10/11/35 (11 perfs.); with Broderick Crawford.

ROSMERSHOLM 12/2/35 (8 perfs.) by Henrik Ibsen; with Eva Le Gallienne.

CAMILLE 12/4/35 (7 perfs.) by Alexandre Dumas; with Hugh Buckler and Eva Le Gallienne.

A SUNNY MORNING/THE WOMEN HAVE THEIR WAY 12/7/35 (1 perf.) by Serafin and Joaquin Alvarez Quintero; with Eva Le Gallienne.

TAPESTRY IN GRAY 12/27/35 (24 perfs.) by Martin Flavin; with Melvyn Douglas.

1936

LOVE ON THE DOLE 2/24/36 (125 perfs.) by Ronald Gow and Walter Greenwood; with Wendy Hiller, Dodson Mitchell, Brandon Peters. (Moved to the Longacre Theater 3/24/36.)

IDIOT'S DELIGHT 3/24/36 (120 perfs.) by Robert E. Sherwood; with Sydney Greenstreet, Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontanne.

IDIOT'S DELIGHT Reopened 8/31/36 (179 perfs.).

1937

THE MASQUE OF KINGS 2/8/37 (89 perfs.) by Maxwell Anderson; with Dudley Digges, Henry Hull, Jr., Margo, and Glenn Anders.

BABES IN ARMS 4/14/37 (289 perfs.) book and lyrics by Lorenz Hart, music by Richard Rodgers; with Alfred Drake, Mitzi Green, and Ray Heatherton.

AMPHITRYON 38 11/1/37 (152 perfs.) by Jean Giraudoux; with Alfred Lunt, Sydney Greenstreet and Lynn Fontanne.

1938

THE SEA GULL 3/28/38 (40 perfs.) by Anton Chekhov; with Lynn Fontanne, Sydney Greenstreet, Uta Hagen, Alfred Lunt and Margaret Webster.

I MARRIED AN ANGEL 5/11/38 (338 perfs.) by Richard Rodgers and Lorenz Hart from a Hungarian play by John Vaszary, music by Rodgers, lyrics by Hart; with Vera Zorina, Vivienne Segal, Walters, Dennis King, Walter Slezak and Katherine Stewart.

1939

THE PHILADELPHIA STORY 3/28/39 (417 prefs.) by Philip Barry; with Katharine Hepburn, Shirley Booth, Van Heflin and Joseph Cotton.

1940

HIGHER & HIGHER 4/14/40 (84 perfs.) by Gladys Hurlbut and Joshus Logan, lyrics by Lorenz Hart, music by Richard Rodgers; with Eve Condon, Robert Chisholm, Jack Haley.

HIGHER & HIGHER 8/5/40 (24 perfs.) Return engagement.

HOLD ON TO YOUR HATS 9/11/40 (158 perfs.) by Guy Bolton, Matt Brooks and Eddie Davis, lyrics by E.Y. Harburg, music by Burton Lane; with Al Jolson, Martha Raye and Jinx Falkenburg.

1941

LIBERTY JONES 2/5/41 (22 perfs.) by Philip Barry; with John Beal and Nancy Coleman.

THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA 3/11/41 (112 perfs.) by George Bernard Shaw; with Katharine Cornell, Raymond Massey and Clarence Derwent.

PAL JOEY 9/1/41 (104 perfs.) by John O'Hara, music by Richard Rodgers, lyrics by Lorenz Hart; with Gene Kelly and Vivienne Segal. (Moved to the St. James Theater 10/21/41.)z

CANDLE IN THE WIND 10/22/41 (95 perfs.) by Maxwell Anderson; with Helen Hayes and Lotte Lenya.

1942

THE RIVALS 1/14/42 (54 perfs.) by Richard Brinsley Sheridan; with Mary Boland and Walter Hampden.

ARGENTITA 3/6/42 (3 perfs.) Spanish dance.

CANDIDA 4/27/42 (27 perfs.) by George Bernard Shaw; with Mildred Natwick, Raymond Massey, Dudley Digges, Katharine Cornell and Burgess Meredith.

BY JUPITER 6/3/42 (421 total perfs.) book and lyrics by Lorenz Hart, music by Richard Rodgers; with Ray Bolger and Constance Moore.

YOURS, A. LINCOLN 7/9/42 (2 special perfs.) by Paul Horgan; with Vincent Price.

1943

THE VAGABOND KING 6/29/43 (55 perfs.) by Brian Hooker and Russell Janney.

LAUGH TIME 9/8/43 (126 perfs.); with Ethel Waters.

OTHELLO 10/19/43 (280 perfs.) by William Shakespeare; with Jose Ferrer, Paul Robeson, Uta Hagen and Margaret Webster.

1944

WAR PRESIDENT 4/24/44 by Nat Sherman; with Joel Ashley and Morton Da Costa.

CATHERINE WAS GREAT 8/2/44 (191 perfs.) by Mae West; with Mae West.

BLOOMER GIRL 10/5/44 (657 perfs.) by Sig Herzig and Fred Saidy, music by Harold Arlen, lyrics by E.Y. Harburg; with Celeste Holm.

1946

YOURS IS MY HEART 9/5/46 (36 perfs.) by Ira Cobb & Karl Farkas.

ARE YOU WITH IT 4/30/46 (264 total perfs.) by Sam Perrin & George Balzer; with Dolores Gray, Lew Parker, June Richmonds, and Johnny Downs (First opened at the Century Theatre 11/10/45).

PARK AVENUE 11/4/46 (72 perfs.) by Nunnally Johnson and George S. Kaufman, lyrics by Ira Gershwin, music by Arthur Schwartz; with Raymond Walburn, Mary Wickes and Martha Errolle.

1947

SWEETHEARTS 1/21/47 (228 perfs.) by Harry B. Smith and Fred de Gresac, lyrics by Robert B. Smith, music by Russell Bennett; with Marjorie Gateson.

UNDER THE COUNTER 10/3/47 (27 perfs.) by Arthur Macrae; with Wilfred Hyde-White.

THE FIRST MRS. FRASER 11/5/47 (39 perfs.) by St. John Ervine; with Jane Cowl, Reginald Mason and Henry Daniell.

HIGH BUTTON SHOES 12/22/47 (727 total perfs.) book by Stephen Longstreet, music and lyrics by Jule Styne and Sammy Cahn; with Phil Silvers and Nanette Fabray. (First opened at the Century Theater 10/9/47.)

1948

MY ROMANCE 10/19/48 (95 perfs.) by Rowland Leigh; with Anne Jeffreys.

ANNE OF THE THOUSAND DAYS 12/8/48 (288 perfs.) by Maxwell Anderson; with Rex Harrison and Joyce Redman.

1949

I KNOW MY LOVE 11/2/49 (246 perfs.) by S.N. Behrman; with Alfred Lunt, Lynn Fontanne and Mary Fickett.

1950

KISS ME, KATE 7/31/50 (1,077 total perfs.); book by Bella and Samuel Spewack, music and lyrics by Cole Porter; with Alfred Drake, Patricia Morrison and Lisa Kirk. (First opened at the Century 12/30/48.)

1951

JOSE GRECO AND HIS SPANISH DANCERS 10/1/51 (65 perfs.).

PAINT YOUR WAGON 11/12/51 (289 perfs.) by Alan Jay Lerner and Frederick Loewe; with Kay Medford, James Mitchell, James Barton and Olga San Juan.

1952

THE MILLIONAIRESS 10/17/52 (84 perfs.) by George Bernard Shaw; with Katharine Hepburn, Cyril Ritchard and Robert Helpmann.

1953

THE LOVE OF FOUR COLONELS 1/15/53 (141 perfs.) by Peter Ustinov; with Larry Gates, Robert Coote, Rex Harrison and Lili Palmer.

CAN-CAN 5/7/53 (892 perfs.) book by Abe Burrows, music and lyrics by Cole Porter; with Peter Cookson, Lilo, Gwen Verdon and Hans Conried.

1955

THE D'OYLY CARTE OPERA COMPANY 10/3/55 (64 perfs.):
THE YEOMAN OF THE GUARD
THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE
IOLANTHE
THE MIKADO
H.M.S. PINAFORE
PRINCESS IDA
TRIAL BY JURY

PIPE DREAM 11/30/55 (246 perfs.) book and lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein II, music by Richard Rodgers, based on Sweet Thursday by John Steinbeck; with Helen Traubel, William Johnson and Judy Tyler.

1956

BELLS ARE RINGING 11/29/56 (924 perfs.) book and lyrics by Betty Comden and Adolph Green, music by Jule Styne; with Jean Stapleton, Judy Holliday, Peter Gennaro, Jack Weston, Sydney Chaplin and George S. Irving.

1958

WHOOP-UP 12/22/58 (56 perfs.) book by Cy Feuer, Ernest H. Martin and Dan Cushman; with Sylvia Sims and Paul Ford.

1959

A MAJORITY OF ONE 2/16/59 (556 perfs.) by Leonard Spigelgass; with Ina Balin, Gertrude Berg, Michael Tolan and Cedric Hardwicke.

TAKE ME ALONG 10/22/59 (448 perfs.) by Joseph Stein and Robert Russell based on Ah Wilderness by Eugene O'Neill, music & lyrics by Bob Merrill; with Walter Pidgeon, Una Merkel, Robert Morse, Jackie Gleason and Valerie Harper.

1961

BYE BYE BIRDIE 1/16/61 (607 total perfs.) book by Michael Stewart music by Charles Strouse, lyrics by Lee Adams; with Dick Van Dyke, Chita Rivera, Susan Watson, Paul Lynde, Kay Medford, Dick Gautier and Charles Nelson Reilly. (First opened at the Martin Beck Theater 4/14/60.)

THE GAY LIFE 11/18/61 (113 perfs.) by Fay and Michael Kanin; with Jules Munshin, Barbara Cook, Elizabeth Allen and Walter Chiari.

1962

I CAN GET IT FOR YOU WHOLESALE 3/22/62 (300 perfs.) by Jerome Weidman, music & lyrics by Harold Rome; with Elliot Gould, Lillian Roth, Sheree North, Bambi Linn, Barbra Streisand, and Jack Kruschen.

STOP THE WORLD - I WANT TO GET OFF 10/3/62 (556 perfs.) by Leslie Bricusse and Anthony Newley; with Anthony Newley, Anna Quale and Susan Baker.

1963

HERE'S LOVE 10/3/63 (271 perfs.) book, music and lyrics by Meredith Willson; with Craig Stevens, Fred Gwynne and Janis Paige.

1964

BAJOUR 11/23/64 (232 perfs.) by Ernest Kinoy based on the New Yorker stories by Joseph Mitchell; with Herschel Bernardi, Paul Sorvino, Nancy Dussault, Chita Rivera and Mae Questel.

1965

THE ROAR OF THE GREASEPAINT-THE SMELL OF THE CROWD 5/16/65 (232 perfs.) by Leslie Bricusse and Anthony Newley; with Anthony Newley, Cyril Ritchard, Sally Smith and Joyce Jillson.

1966

MALCOLM 1/11/66 (7 perfs.) by Edward Albee; with Estelle Parsons and Henderson Forsythe.

IVANOV 5/3/66 (47 perfs.) by Anton Chekhov; with John Gielgud and Vivian Leigh.

THE APPLE TREE 10/18/66 (463 perfs.) based on stories by Mark Twain, music by Jerry Bock, lyrics by Sheldon Harnick; with Alan Alda, Barbara Harris and Hal Holbrook.

1968

GOLDEN RAINBOW 2/4/68 (383 perfs.) by Ernest Kinoy; with Steve Lawrence and Eydie Gorme.

PROMISES, PROMISES 12/1/68 (1,281 perfs.) by Neil Simon, lyrics and music by Burt Bacharach; with Jerry Orbach, Jill O'Hara and Ken Howard.

1972

THE SELLING OF THE PRESIDENT 3/22/72 (5 perfs.) by Jack O'Brien and Stuart Hample; with Pat Hingle, Barbara Barrie, Karen Morrow and Delores Hall.

AN EVENING WITH RICHARD NIXON AND ... 4/30/72 (16 perfs.) by Gore Vidal; with George S. Irving and Susan Sarandon.

THE CREATION OF THE WORLD AND OTHER BUSINESS 11/30/72 (20 perfs.) by Arthur Miller; with Bob Dishy, Zoe Caldwell and George Grizzard.

1973

A LITTLE NIGHT MUSIC 2/25/73 (527 perfs.) by Hugh Wheeler, from a film by Ingmar Bergman, music and lyrics by Stephen Sondheim; with Hermione Gingold, Len Cariou, Glynis Johns, Patricia Elliott, Laurence Guittard and Victoria Mallory.

1974

OVER HERE! 3/6/74 (341 perfs.) by Will Holt; music and lyrics by Robert B. Sherman; with Douglass Watson, Ann Reinking, Janie Sell, John Travolta, Treat Williams, April Shawhan, Maxene Andrews and Patty Andrews.

1975

SEASCAPE 1/26/75 (63 perfs.) by Edward Albee; with Deborah Kerr, Barry Nelson, Frank Langella and Maureen Anderman.

THE CONSTANT WIFE 4/14/75 (32 perfs.) by W. Somerset Maugham; with Ingrid Bergman and Jack Gwillim.

A CHORUS LINE 10/19/75 (still playing 12/87) a musical conceived, choreographed and directed by Michael Bennett; book by James Kirkwood and Nicholas Dante; music by Marvin Hamlisch; lyrics by Edward Kleban; with Carole Bishop, Pamela Blair, Wayne Cilento, Priscilla Lopez and Donna McKechnie.

1976

GEORGE ABBOTT ... A CELEBRATION 5/2/76 (1 perf.)

1978

THE NEIGHBORHOOD PLAYHOUSE AT 50: A CELEBRATION 12/3/78 (1 perf.) by Kent Paul.

1979

V.I.P. NIGHT ON BROADWAY 4/22/79 (1 perf.) by Phyllis Newman.

Shubert Theater
221-233 West 44th Street
Manhattan

Built: 1912-13
Architect: Henry B. Herts

Photo: Shockley, LPC