Name: The Showbox

Year Built: 1939 remodel

Central Market/Show Box/The Happening/Talmud Torah/The Improv/The Show Box Comedy Club/The Showbox Theater

Street and Number: 1412 First Avenue

Assessor’s File No.: 197570-0560

Legal Description: see below

Plat Name: A.A. Denny’s Third

Block: 25

Lot: 5 & 8

Lot 5 and 8 in Block 25 of Addition to the Town of Seattle, as laid out by A. A. Denny (commonly known as A.A. Denny’s Third Addition To the City of Seattle), as per plat recorded in Volume 1, of Plats, Page 33, Records of King County, Washington; except the westerly 9 feet thereof condemned for First Avenue, as provided by ordinance No. 1129 of the City of Seattle.

Present Owner: 1426 First Avenue, LLC

Present Use: music venue

Address: c/o R.M. Watson Co. 2107 Elliott Ave., Suite 206, Seattle, WA, 98121

Original Owner: C.H. Frye

Original Use: 1916-Market/1939 remodel to music venue and retail

Architect: 1916-unknown/1939- Bjarne Moe

Builder: 1916-unknown/1939-C.C. Cawsey
See attached.
# Table of Contents

1. **Introduction** ...................................................................................................................... 1
   1.1 Background .......................................................................................................................... 1
   1.2 Methodology ........................................................................................................................ 1

2. **Property Data** ..................................................................................................................... 1

3. **Architectural Description** ....................................................................................................... 1
   3.1 Location & Neighborhood Character .................................................................................. 1
   3.2 Site ....................................................................................................................................... 1
   3.3 Building Structure ............................................................................................................... 1
   3.4 Exterior Features .................................................................................................................. 1
   3.5 Building Plan & Interior Features ....................................................................................... 1
   3.6 Documented Building Alterations ....................................................................................... 1

4. **Significance** .......................................................................................................................... 1
   4.1 Historic Neighborhood Context: Central Business District, First Avenue ......................... 1
   4.2 Building History ................................................................................................................ 1
      4.2.1 Central Market ................................................................................................................. 1
      4.2.2 Early Years: Musical Revues, Dancing & Vaudeville ....................................................... 1
      4.2.3 "The Happening" and Talmud Torah ................................................................................ 1
      4.2.4 The Showbox (1979-1983) .............................................................................................. 1
      4.2.5 The 1980s ........................................................................................................................ 1
      4.2.6 Comedy in the 1990s: The Improv and the Showbox Comedy & Supper Club ............... 1
      4.2.7 The Showbox (1996-present) .......................................................................................... 1
   4.3 Additional Selected Building Tenant: Kerns Music Co. ...................................................... 1
   4.4 Building & Business Owners .............................................................................................. 1
      4.4.1 Estelle D. Green, Building Owner .................................................................................... 1
      4.4.2 Mike Lyons, Show Box Owner ....................................................................................... 1
      4.4.3 Tarry Inn, Inc, Nate Lyons ............................................................................................. 1
   4.5 Historic Context: Live Music Venues in Seattle .................................................................... 1
      4.5.1 Performing in the Pioneer Days ...................................................................................... 1
      4.5.2 Early Theaters ............................................................................................................... 1
      4.5.3 Vaudeville and the Gold Rush ....................................................................................... 1
      4.5.4 Popular Dance, Dancehalls, and Ballrooms .................................................................... 1
      4.5.5 Seattle’s Jazz Scene, 1937-1951 ...................................................................................... 1
      4.5.6 Rock, Punk, and Grunge in Seattle ................................................................................. 1
   4.6 Historic Architectural Context: Postwar Streamline Moderne Style .................................... 1
   4.7 Building Designers ............................................................................................................. 1
      4.7.1 Bjarne H. Moe, 1937-39 ................................................................................................. 1
      4.7.2 Palmer Axel Nelson, 1941 ............................................................................................. 1
      4.7.3 Donald N. McDonald, Sr., 1941 .................................................................................... 1
      4.7.4 William J. Jones, 1942 .................................................................................................. 1
      4.7.5 Carlson, Eley, Grevstad & Peterson, 1946 .................................................................... 1
      4.7.6 Merrill S. Rich, 1951 .................................................................................................... 1
      4.7.7 Carlson-Eley-Grevstad, 1959 ....................................................................................... 1
      4.7.8 EHA, 1985-1986 ........................................................................................................... 1
      4.7.9 Barnett Schorr Architects, 1986 .................................................................................... 1
      4.7.10 Bryce P. Thomas, 1999 .............................................................................................. 1
      4.7.11 David Hasson Architects, 2009 ................................................................................... 1
   4.8 Building Contractor, 1937-39: C. C. Cawsey ........................................................................ 1

5. **Bibliography** .......................................................................................................................... 1

**Appendix 1—Figures** ................................................................................................................. 21

**Appendix 2—Architectural Drawings** ...................................................................................... 22
LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1 • Location Maps ................................................................. A-1
Figure 2 • Aerial View, City of Seattle Landmarks indicated with letters, identified below ............. A-2
Figure 3 • View A - viewing south on First Avenue ..................................... A-3
Figure 4 • View B - viewing north on First Avenue ..................................... A-3
Figure 5 • Site Plan, ALTA survey & exterior photo key .................................. A-4
Figure 6 • Interior photo key, overlaid on original 1937 plans ......................... A-5
Figure 7 • The Showbox, First Avenue façade ......................................... A-6
Figure 8 • The Showbox, northern façade ................................................ A-6
Figure 9 • The Showbox, eastern (alley) façade ......................................... A-7
Figure 10 • The Showbox, eastern (alley) façade ........................................ A-7
Figure 11 • The Showbox, northern end of First Avenue façade .................... A-8
Figure 12 • The Showbox, detail at venue entry, First Avenue façade ............ A-8
Figure 13 • The Showbox, detail at venue entry, First Avenue façade ............ A-9
Figure 14 • The Showbox, marquee ........................................................ A-10
Figure 15 • The Showbox, southern end of First Avenue façade .................. A-11
Figure 16 • The Showbox, detail at First Avenue façade ................................ A-11
Figure 17 • The Showbox, storefront at First Avenue façade ........................ A-12
Figure 18 • The Showbox, storefront at First Avenue façade ........................ A-12
Figure 19 • The Showbox, interior at entry ............................................... A-13
Figure 20 • The Showbox, interior, Kerns Music Shop bar .......................... A-13
Figure 21 • The Showbox, interior, Kerns Music Shop bar .......................... A-14
Figure 22 • The Showbox, interior, Kerns Music Shop bar .......................... A-14
Figure 23 • The Showbox, viewing north from venue toward ticket booth ....... A-15
Figure 24 • The Showbox, viewing south toward stage ................................ A-15
Figure 25 • The Showbox, viewing north from stage toward nightclub entry .... A-16
Figure 26 • The Showbox, viewing north at northwestern bar ...................... A-16
Figure 27 • The Showbox, detail of column ............................................. A-17
Figure 28 • The Showbox, viewing toward southeastern bar ........................ A-18
Figure 29 • Palace Jewelry & Loan (1420 First Avenue), interior .................. A-18
Figure 30 • The Blarney Stone Pub & Restaurant (1416 First Avenue), interior A-19
Figure 31 • The Blarney Stone Pub & restaurant (1416 First Avenue), interior A-19
Figure 32 • Front Street from Frye’s Opera House, ca. 1885 ....................... A-20
Figure 33 • Building at corner of First and Pike, ca. 1903 .......................... A-20
Figure 34 • Sanitary Public Market, ca. 1910 ............................................ A-21
Figure 35 • A scene at the Public Market, ca. 1910 .................................... A-21
Figure 36 • Corner Market at Pike Place, ca. 1915 ................................... A-22
Figure 37 • Traffic at First Avenue and Pike Street, 1919 ........................... A-22
Figure 38 • J. C. Penney at Second Avenue and Pike Street, 1937 ................. A-23
Figure 39 • First Avenue, between Union and Pike streets, 1972 .................. A-23
Figure 40 • Central Market Building (later the Showbox), 1937 ................... A-24
Figure 41 • Central Market Building, lower left of photo, next to Harold Poll Building, 1937 ...... A-24
Figure 42 • Subject building, King County Tax Assessor photo, 1940 ................ A-25
Figure 43 • Dancing at the Show Box, 1940 ............................................ A-25
Figure 44 • The Show Box, advertisement in Seattle Times, 1946 .................. A-26
Figure 45 • The Show Box, marquee advertising Duke Ellington, 1940 .......... A-27
Figure 46 • Viewing south on First Avenue, 1956 ..................................... A-27
Figure 47 • Amusement Center Arcade and Unique Grill, 1975 ..................... A-28
Figure 48 • Modern Productions: Carlo Scanduzzi, Jim Lightfoot & Terry Morgan........................................... A-29
Figure 49 • Iggy Pop performing at the Showbox, 1981.......................................................... A-30
Figure 50 • Showbox concert poster, 1980............................................................................. A-30
Figure 51 • James Brown at the Showbox, 1980 ............................................................................ A-30
Figure 52 • Viewing south on First Avenue, 1981................................................................. A-31
Figure 53 • King County Tax Assessor photo, ca. 1986.......................................................... A-31
Figure 54 • Showbox concert poster, 1997............................................................................. A-32
Figure 55 • Showbox concert poster, 2013............................................................................. A-32
Figure 56 • Mike Lyons with Dorothy Olson, n.d................................................................. A-32
Figure 57 • The Standard Theater (formerly the Alhambra Theater, 1884) on Second Avenue .... A-33
Figure 58 • Pantages Vaudeville Theater, northeastern corner Second Ave and Seneca, 1904 ..... A-33
Figure 59 • Seattle Pantages Theater, 1300 Third Avenue, ca. 1936 ........................................ A-34
Figure 60 • Luna Park Dance Pavilion, West Seattle ca. 1910............................................... A-34
Figure 61 • Dreamland, Seattle, ca. 1908................................................................................ A-35
Figure 62 • Trianon Ballroom, 2505 Third Avenue, Seattle, ca. 1935........................................ A-35
Figure 63 • Encore Ballroom, 1214 E Pike Street, Seattle ..................................................... A-36
Figure 64 • The Spanish Castle, Kent Des Moines Road, n.d.................................................. A-36
Figure 65 • Dick Parker’s Pavilion, 17001 Aurora Avenue N, ca. 1937.................................. A-37
Figure 66 • The Black & Tan Club, 1937 .................................................................................. A-37
Figure 67 • Moore Theater (1907, E. W. Houghton, City of Seattle Landmark)...................... A-38
Figure 68 • Fifth Avenue Theater (1296 5th Ave, Robert Reamer w/ J. Skoog)..................... A-38
Figure 69 • The Orpheum Theater (1927, B. Marcus Priteca, demolished 1967)..................... A-39
Figure 70 • Seattle Theater (1928, renamed Paramount in 1930, Rapp & Rapp w/ Priteca) .... A-39
Figure 71 • Sicks’ Stadium, Seattle ...................................................................................... A-40
Figure 72 • Century 21 Exposition fairgrounds, 1962............................................................. A-40
Figure 73 • The A-Go-Go, later the Off-Ramp ..................................................................... A-41
Figure 74 • The O.K. Hotel ................................................................................................. A-41
Figure 75 • 1925 Exposition Internationale des Arts Decoratifs et Industriels Modernes, Pavilion des Galleries Lafayette, Paris (1925, Joseph Hiriart, Georges Tribout, & Georges Beau)........ A-42
Figure 76 • Empire State Building (1931, Shreve, Lamb & Harmon).................................. A-42
Figure 77 • Top of Rockefeller Center (1940, Raymond Hood)........................................... A-43
Figure 78 • Art Deco historic district, Miami Beach .............................................................. A-43
Figure 79 • Coulter’s Dept. Store, Los Angeles (1938-39, Stiles O. Clements, demolished)..... A-44
Figure 80 • Greyhound Bus Terminal, Cleveland, OH (1948, William Strudwick Arrasmith, National Register)................................................................. A-44
Figure 81 • Blue Plate Building, New Orleans (1942-43, August Perez Jr., National Register)..... A-45
Figure 82 • Coca-Cola Bottling Plant, Los Angeles (1939, Robert V. Derrah, National Register) A-45
Figure 83 • Normal Theater, Normal, IL (1937, Arthur F. Moratz, National Register)............. A-46
Figure 84 • Pan-Pacfic Auditorium, Los Angeles (1935, Welton & Becket)............................. A-46
Figure 85 • Futurama & World of Tomorrow, Norman Bel Geddes, 1939 World’s Fair, NY..... A-47
Figure 86 • San Francisco Bathers’ Building (1936, William A. Mooser II, National Register)..... A-47
Figure 87 • San Pedro Municipal Ferry Building (1941, Derwood Lydell Irvin)....................... A-48
Figure 88 • Bellingham High School (1938, Floyd Naramore).............................................. A-48
Figure 89 • Ivar’s (Pier 54 location, now demolished)............................................................. A-49
Figure 90 • SPUD Fish & Chips (Alki Location, now demolished)........................................ A-49
Figure 91 • Paramount Pictures Building (1937, demolished)................................................ A-50
Figure 92 • Fire station #17, 101 NE 50th St (1930, City of Seattle Landmark)...................... A-50
Figure 93 • Fire station #6, 101 23rd Ave S (1931, George Stewart, City of Seattle Landmark) A-51
Figure 94 • Fire station #41, 2416 34th Ave W (1932, CWA, City of Seattle Landmark)........ A-51
Figure 95 • Seattle Art Museum at Volunteer Park/Seattle Asian Art Museum ............................................. A-52
Figure 96 • Seattle Center House, 305 Harrison Street (1939, Naramore & Young, City of Seattle Landmark) ................................................................................................................................. A-52
Figure 97 • Coca-Cola Bottling Plant, 1313 E Columbia Street (1939, Graham [Sr.] & Painter with Jesse M. Shelton, City of Seattle Landmark) ........................................................................ A-53
Figure 98 • Admiral Theater, 2343 California Avenue SW (1942, B. Marcus Priteca, City of Seattle Landmark) ............................................................................................................................. A-53
Figure 99 • Bjarne Moe, n.d. .......................................................................................................................... A-54
Figure 100 • Residential rendering by Bjarne Moe, published in the Seattle Times, 1932 ......................... A-54
Figure 101 • Robin Welts House, Mount Vernon, WA (Bjarne Moe, 1934) .................................................. A-55
Figure 102 • Huff Theater, Coeur d’Alene, ID (Bjarne Moe, 1936, altered) ............................................. A-55
Figure 103 • Green Lake Theater & Market building (Bjarne Moe, 1937, altered) ................................. A-55
Figure 104 • Varsity Theater, 4329 University Way NE (Bjarne Moe, 1940, O. A. Carlson, contractor, remodeled) .................................................................................................................... A-56
Figure 105 • Empire Theater, Tekoa, WA (Bjarne Moe, 1940) ............................................................... A-57
Figure 106 • Crest Theater (Bjarne Moe, 1949, altered) .......................................................................... A-57
Figure 107 • Ridgemont Theater remodel (1967, demolished), Greenwood Ave N ............................. A-58
Showbox Theater
Landmark Nomination Report

AUGUST 2018

1. INTRODUCTION

This Landmark Nomination Report provides information regarding the architectural design and historical significance of a building located at 1412 First Avenue in the Central Business District of Seattle, Washington. The building was originally constructed in 1916, and was significantly remodeled in 1939 by Bjarne Moe. The building was documented on the Seattle Historic Resources survey in 2002. The Johnson Partnership prepared this report at the request of Onni Group.

1.1 Background

The City of Seattle’s Department of Construction and Development (SDCI)—formerly the Department of Planning and Development—through a 1995 agreement with the Department of Neighborhoods, requires a review of “potentially eligible landmarks” for commercial projects over 4,000 square feet in area. As any proposed alterations or demolition of the subject building described within this report will require a permit from SDCI, the owner is providing the following report to the staff of the Seattle Landmarks Preservation Board (LPB) to resolve the property’s status.

To be eligible for nomination as a City of Seattle Landmark, a building, object, or structure must be at least 25 years old, have significant character, interest, or value, the integrity or ability to convey its significance, and it must meet one or more of the following six criteria (SMC 25.12.350):

A. It is the location of or is associated in a significant way with an historic event with a significant effect upon the community, city, state, or nation.
B. It is associated in a significant way with the life of a person important in the history of the city, state, or nation.
C. It is associated in a significant way with a significant aspect of the cultural, political, or economic heritage of the community, city, state, or nation.
D. It embodies the distinctive visible characteristics of an architectural style, period, or method of construction.
E. It is an outstanding work of a designer or builder.
F. Because of its prominence of spatial location, contrast of siting, age, or scale, it is an easily identifiable feature of its neighborhood or the city and contributes to the distinctive quality or identity of such neighborhood or city.

1.2 Methodology

Larry E. Johnson, AIA, Principal, Ellen F. C. Mirro, AIA, Katherine V. Jaeger, and Audrey N. Reda of The Johnson Partnership, 1212 NE 65th Street, Seattle, WA, completed research on this report between June and August 2018. Research was undertaken at the Puget Sound Regional Archives, Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections, Seattle Public Library, the Museum of History and Industry, and the University of Washington Special Collections Library. Research also included review of Internet resources, including HistoryLink.com, and the Seattle Times digital archive, available through the Seattle Public Library. The buildings and site were inspected and photographed on July 31 and August 24, 2018 to document existing conditions.
2. PROPERTY DATA

**Historic Building Names:** Central Market/Show Box/The Happening/Talmud Torah/The Improv/The Show Box Comedy Club

**Current Building Name:** Showbox Theater

**Address:** 1412 First Avenue

**Location:** Central Business District

**Assessor's File Number:** 197570-0560

**Legal Description:**
Lot 5 and 8 in Block 25 of Addition to the Town of Seattle, as laid out by A. A. Denny (commonly known as A.A. Denny’s Third Addition To the City of Seattle), as per plat recorded in Volume 1, of Plats, Page 33, Records of King County, Washington; except the westerly 9 feet thereof condemned for First Avenue, as provided by ordinance No. 1129 of the City of Seattle.

**Dates of Construction:** 1916, 1939 remodel

**Original/Present Use:** Market/Theater

**Original/Present Owner:** C. H. Frye/1426 First Avenue, LLC

**Original Designer and Builder:** Unknown

**Subsequent Designer:** Bjarne Moe

**Zoning:** DMC 240/290-440

**Property Size:** 13,320 s.f.

**Building Size:** 25,920 s.f. (gross)
3. Architectural Description

3.1 Location & Neighborhood Character

The subject building is located in Seattle’s Central Business District, at mid-block between Pike and Union streets on the eastern side of First Avenue. The city’s major commercial and financial business buildings, its governmental buildings (city, county, and federal), and some cultural institutions (Seattle Art Museum and Benaroya Hall) are located to the south of the site. Major retail stores (Macy’s, Nordstrom, and Banana Republic) are located to the northeast of the site. The Pike Place Public Market Historic District is located across First Avenue to the north and west of the site. The immediate area has experienced re-development, with three tower developments within one block of the site, including the 24-story residential Newmark Tower condominiums located directly across the rear alley to the northeast.

Nearby City of Seattle Landmarks include 84 Union Building/U.S. Immigration Building (84 Union Street), the Eitel Building (1501 Second Avenue), the J. S. Graham Store/Doyle Building (119 Pine Street), the Colonnade Hotel/Gatewood Apartments (107 Pine Street), the Mann Building (1411 Third Avenue), the Olympic Tower (217 Pine Street), and the Fischer Studio Building (1519 Third Avenue). See figures 1-4.

3.2 Site

The subject site measures 120 feet along First Avenue (north-south) and 111 feet from First Avenue to the rear alley (east-west). The subject building occupies the entire site. The grade slopes approximately seven feet down from north-to-south along First Avenue and is relatively flat west-to-east. A parking lot is located to the north, an alley is located to the east, and the five-story Harold Poll Building (1910, Myers & Graham) abuts the southern side of the building. The First Avenue right-of-way has a paved sidewalk with mature street trees and light standards. See figures 5-6.

3.3 Building Structure

The subject building has unreinforced brick masonry walls on its eastern and southern sides, and a reinforced concrete block wall dating from 1959 on its northern side. The First Avenue exterior wall appears to be a composite of reinforced concrete and brick masonry with a large steel “I” beam spanning the northern entrance to the theater space. The interior structure is heavy-timber mill construction supporting the first and second floors. The basement and first floor have four brick masonry demising walls separating the first-floor retail spaces, each with three structural pilasters creating four north-south structural bays. The second floor has five structural column lines running north-south along the easternmost and westernmost structural bays, creating six east-west structural bays. The northern two bays and the southernmost bay, as well as the eastern- and westernmost bays have a roof composed of structural wood beams and purlins. The central portion of the roof is raised with wooden and steel flat Howe truss spanning east-west between the easternmost and westernmost column lines. The roof structure was repaired and reinforced between 1985 and 1986. The roof has standard membrane roofing. See figures 7-8.

---

1 The site was incorporated into the Pike Place Historic District on August 13th, 2018 by vote of the City Council.
2 The building has been categorized as “High-Risk” for unreinforced masonry construction. See entry for “1426 1st Ave” p. 13 “List of URM s Identified By Seattle DCI — April 2016”
https://www.seattle.gov/dpd/cs/groups/pan/@pan/documents/web_informational/p2422247.pdf
3.4 Exterior Features

The northern exterior wall is blank masonry of Concrete Masonry Units (CMU). The eastern, or alley, wall is double-wythe brick masonry with two double egress doorways at either end of the alley elevation, and a single exit for the retail spaces in the center. This façade has perforations for ventilation grilles at the alley level along with exposed pipes and ducts on the façade. There are four window openings at the upper-floor level: the northernmost contains an older six-light steel sash window, and the remaining three are boarded up. Two larger openings on the southern end of the upper-floor level have been infilled with terra cotta masonry units, and another opening adjacent to the southern egress door has been infilled with CMU. The southern exterior wall abuts the building to the south. Only the western, First Avenue-facing exterior façade is primary. See figures 9-10.

The building takes advantage of the south-sloping site with the four southern storefronts stepping down to the south, and the northern entrance to the theater located at a higher elevation, allowing for a mid-level entry to the second-floor theater. The four storefronts on the southern street-level side of the western façade have been modified several times since the building was rebuilt in 1939. The storefronts are currently paired into two slightly recessed tiled alcoves with upper fabric awnings. The northern two storefronts—a restaurant and a pawn shop—and the southernmost storefront each have a recessed doorway with a single sidelight flanked by glazed store windows. The storefront to the north of the southernmost storefront is not recessed, having a flush aluminum glazed door with an adjacent roll-up metal door. The southern two retail spaces are presently combined into one business space, namely a pub. See figures 11-18.

The façade is largely painted stucco with the parapet stepping down in line with the southern side of the cabaret entrance. The parapet has a simple rectangular capstone, and the lower parapet has a short return at the break line and an intermediate returned faux capstone at the break. The recessed entrance to the cabaret is approximately 36 feet wide, with a soffit height of approximately seven feet at its northern side. The entry floor slopes up slightly from the sidewalk to the entry doors. The entrance doorways are recessed eastward approximately ten feet, with a centrally-placed pair of entrance doors, flanked on the northern side by a blank panel and on the southern side by another door leading into an associated bar area. The northern wall of the recessed entrance has a wide, vertically-ribbed plaster finish, and the southern wall consists of a curved glazed wall. Above the entrance is a large, slightly recessed blank stucco panel with a triangular-plan sheet metal reader-board marquee mounted at its northern side with an upper vertical marquee sign with the name of the cabaret, “SHOWBOX,” written vertically. On the second level above the storefront awnings is a large horizontal band framing three windows separated by solid spandrels of horizontal ribbed metal cladding. This window feature spans the length of the building from the line of the northern storefront to the southern end of the building. The frame around the window feature consists of a pair of raised bands. The window openings are currently filled with black spandrel glass. Both the recessed panel above the entry and the horizontal window frame with its ribbing are painted a dark, contrasting color.

3.5 Building Plan & Interior Features

The subject building has two floors, with a basement under the venue entry. The street level has four retail store spaces (the southern two are now combined) separated by masonry demising walls. The storefront floor levels step down as the street slopes to the south. The storefront spaces do not have basements underneath them.
The northernmost portion of the storefront has a recessed entry with a vestibule. An approximately four-foot-wide non-original ramp on the northern side leads up to the lower lobby level, while stairs on the south lead up five risers to that level. On the southern side of the entry vestibule is a non-original glazed wall and a roll-up screen leading the associated bar (now called Kern’s Music Shop). This bar area has a back bar on the south and stairs leading down to a lower-level bar area on the east. All finishes in the bar are non-original. At the lower lobby area, a non-original curved bar on the northern wall directs show-goers to the south and to a western ramp and additional stairs up six risers to the cabaret dance floor level, which is oriented north-south, with the main stage at the southern end. See figures 19-31.

Original interior features remain, including the structural column spacing with raised tiers on either side of the central dance floor, the location of the stage at the southern end, and a large central raised dome-like plaster ceiling with a light cove. The northern portion of the cabaret is tiered up eight risers above the dance floor, with a large lounge with a bar located on the western side and a commercial kitchen on the eastern side. Additional dining areas are located to the south of the lounge and kitchen and down a couple of steps. To the south and on either side of the central dance floor are the raised seating areas. These are accessed from the dance floor level by stair with four risers on the northern end near the upper vestibule; the western raised seating area is also accessed by a curved ramp. Additional curved stairs are located near the center of the dance floor. Small satellite bars are located at the southern end of the raised seating areas. The projecting non-original stage has a curved wing, but does not have a backstage area. Toilets are located at the southern end of the building: the men’s toilets on the western side and running partially behind the stage, and the women’s toilets at the building’s southeastern corner adjacent to exit stairs leading down under the restrooms to the eastern alley. A green room with private restrooms is located near the southwestern corner. The entertainer must reach the stage by passing downstairs past the men’s toilet room door.

3.6 Documented Building Alterations

The alley elevation is still substantially intact from the original 1916 construction, except for the various masonry infill and other typical alley usages such as additions of ducts, pipes and vents described above.

The northern CMU wall was constructed after a fire destroyed the next-door building in 1959. The design of the First Avenue façade dates to the 1939 remodel, although most of the materials do not. The stucco has been replaced, the marquee removed and replaced, and the storefronts altered. The replacement stucco is incised with modern control joints. The window glazing on the second floor along with the spandrel cladding has been replaced, although the original spandrels may exist underneath the metal cladding that is visible today. The existing marquee sign was installed in 1995.3 The existing storefronts date from a 1990 remodel designed by David Hasson Architects, and the 2013 tenant improvement for the Blarney Stone pub. Other altered exterior features include the entry doors to the theater lobby, and the recessed lighting at the entry.

The cabaret floor and tiered seating has been modified several times since its original remodel construction in 1939, the essential layout remains the same. Much of the decorative applique at

---

3 Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections, sign permit S-17990.
the entry and ticket booth was added after 2010, based on photographic evidence. Although not illustrated in Bjarne Moe’s original design drawings, and although they do not show up on the various interior drawings until around 1990, photographic evidence from the 1940s suggests that the round, flared columns on either side of the dance floor are original to the interior. Not original are the green room and other support spaces, which were added to the interior in 1999. The four bars in the space are not original; originally a bar was at the entry, and two bars flanked the stage. The ramp at the main floor lobby may well date from 2009, as it does not appear on any of the earlier floor plans.

In all there are more than 90 recorded permits on file at the City of Seattle for construction, land use and signage.

**Recorded Permits:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Permit #</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Owner or lessee</th>
<th>Architect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1937</td>
<td>325912</td>
<td>Alterations to building: convert to cabaret-dance</td>
<td>Lyons (lessee) and W. K. Greene (owner)</td>
<td>Bjarne Moe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1938</td>
<td>327275</td>
<td>Alter restaurant building for Jerry De Wilde</td>
<td>Otis E. Hancock</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1939</td>
<td>335696</td>
<td>Alterations for theater: change floor levels and seating layouts</td>
<td>M. M. Lyons</td>
<td>Bjarne Moe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>340623</td>
<td>Alterations to the Show Box theater</td>
<td>Palmer Axel Nelson</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>347397</td>
<td>Alterations to building</td>
<td>M. M. Lyons</td>
<td>Donald McDonald</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1942</td>
<td>354460</td>
<td>Alterations to stores</td>
<td>Rose Walcher Co</td>
<td>William J. Jones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1944</td>
<td>362667</td>
<td>Rebuild orchestra stand</td>
<td>Lyons/Showbox</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1947</td>
<td>376054</td>
<td>Café Dance alteration to building</td>
<td>Northwest Amusement Enterprises Inc.</td>
<td>Carlson, Eley, Grevstad &amp; Peterson architects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>40725?</td>
<td>Alter building - mill construction cabaret</td>
<td>Lyons/Showbox</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>407685</td>
<td>Install kitchen &amp; range hood</td>
<td>Show Box restaurant</td>
<td>Merrill S. Rich</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>407685</td>
<td>Cabaret kitchen</td>
<td>Show Box restaurant</td>
<td>Merrill S. Rich</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1952</td>
<td>416262</td>
<td>Alter ex. building per plan</td>
<td>Show Box restaurant</td>
<td>Merrill S. Rich</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1958</td>
<td>465586</td>
<td>Alter store front of building</td>
<td>Show Box restaurant</td>
<td>Merrill S. Rich</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4 Google street view documented the space in 2010: [https://www.google.com/maps/@47.6084447,-122.3392332,2a,75y,233.31h,91.49t/data=!3m8!1e1!3m6!1sPuUkJS8APF7wM1U8eBeZdg%26output%3Dthumbnail%26cb_client%3Dmaps_sv.tactile.gps%26thumbfov%3D100%26w%3D203%26h%3D100%26yaw%3D130.95839%26pitch%3D0%26v%3D Dortmund](https://www.google.com/maps/@47.6084447,-122.3392332,2a,75y,233.31h,91.49t/data=!3m8!1e1!3m6!1sPuUkJS8APF7wM1U8eBeZdg%26output%3Dthumbnail%26cb_client%3Dmaps_sv.tactile.gps%26thumbfov%3D100%26w%3D203%26h%3D100%26yaw%3D130.95839%26pitch%3D0%26v%3D Dortmund)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Permit #</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Owner or lessee</th>
<th>Architect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1959</td>
<td>475201</td>
<td>Construct a lot line wall</td>
<td>M. M. Lyons</td>
<td>Carlson-Eley-Grevstad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>407825</td>
<td>Change occupancy to F-2 store</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>b21386 [?]</td>
<td>Minor alterations, change occupancy Cabaret, Assembly</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>586083</td>
<td>Erect &amp; maint. d/f elec. Sign</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>539653</td>
<td>Repair fire damaged café</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>540774</td>
<td>Install range hood and duct</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>541829</td>
<td>Repair fire damage</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>544418</td>
<td>Erect &amp; maint. Sign</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>553229</td>
<td>Construct partitions alter portion First floor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>554287</td>
<td>Alter portion first floor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>30486</td>
<td>The Showbox storefront</td>
<td>The Showbox</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>627581</td>
<td>Install furnaces</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>627383</td>
<td>Alter first floor of building for HDC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>624013</td>
<td>Renovation for nightclub</td>
<td>John N. Mayer for EHA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>626796</td>
<td>Renovation of unoccupied space for retail purpose</td>
<td>Barnett Schorr Architects</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>624013</td>
<td>Establish use as retail/restaurant/cabaret/assembly</td>
<td>Harbor Properties</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>632811</td>
<td>Temporary use occupancy</td>
<td>Harbor Development Co.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>631821</td>
<td>Alter retail space for Harbor Development Co</td>
<td>David Mattsen (lessee)</td>
<td>John N. Mayer for EHA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>633992</td>
<td>Install lateral at roof level</td>
<td>Harbor Development Co.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>630463</td>
<td>Alter initial tenant improvement</td>
<td>Harbor Development Co.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>629219</td>
<td>Install type 1 rangehood</td>
<td>Wayne Leu/ Genghis Khan Co.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>628995</td>
<td>Install 7.5 ton splice A/C Unit with ductwork</td>
<td>Genghis Khan Co.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Permit #</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Owner or lessee</td>
<td>Architect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>628203</td>
<td>Change use from retail to restaurant</td>
<td>Genghis Khan Co.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>633992</td>
<td>New roof sheathing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>634080</td>
<td>Temporary use for one night benefit dinner dance 12-5-87</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>639480</td>
<td>Temporary use permit, one-night charity benefit 9-24-88</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>636053</td>
<td>Establish temporary use occupancy for 1-night benefit for Center for Contemporary Arts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>S-12435</td>
<td>Erect neon sign</td>
<td>Showbox</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>S-12565</td>
<td>Erect neon sign</td>
<td>INSINC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>S-12749</td>
<td>Erect neon sign</td>
<td>Leslie's</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>642504</td>
<td>Temporary use permit for Seattle Art Museum benefit, 4-1-89</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>66273</td>
<td>Temporary use permit for Seattle Art Museum benefit, 4-1-90</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>643971</td>
<td>Plumbing remodel &quot;Konstantin Pub Remodel&quot;</td>
<td>Thomas Kolytiris</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>15097</td>
<td>Neon sign</td>
<td>Improv</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>650727</td>
<td>Install kitchen</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>652788</td>
<td>Exhaust hood</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>684466</td>
<td>Temporary use B occupancy for &quot;Got Live at the Showbox&quot; from February 9 to February 12 1990, per plans</td>
<td>Harbor Properties</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>650727</td>
<td>Alterations to restaurant performing arts area</td>
<td>Harbor Properties Mgmt. for the Improv</td>
<td>Romein, Jones, Cone Inc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>S-15039</td>
<td>Erect sign</td>
<td>Improv</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>659918</td>
<td>Change of use from restaurant to retail chair salon remodel at first floor</td>
<td>Salon de Orfila</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>654453</td>
<td>Install sprinkler system in portion of First Floor</td>
<td>Harbor Properties</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>654453</td>
<td>Install sprinkler system in portion of first floor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>S-16470</td>
<td>Awning</td>
<td>Salon de Orfila</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>S-15560</td>
<td>Awning &amp; signage</td>
<td>Genghis Khan restaurant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Permit #</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Owner or lessee</td>
<td>Architect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>679376</td>
<td>Alter interior tenant space, establish use as restaurant - Diego’s restaurant</td>
<td>Michael Magnanti</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>679379</td>
<td>Install class 1 kitchen exhaust</td>
<td>Michael Magnanti</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>S-17990</td>
<td>Erect sign and marquee</td>
<td>Showbox Comedy and Supper Club/STS Sign</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td></td>
<td>Midnight Café</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>694016</td>
<td>Interior alteration 2nd floor of existing nightclub and retail sales</td>
<td>Gemini property owners</td>
<td>David Hasson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>699344</td>
<td>Change occupant load</td>
<td>Showbox</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>705180</td>
<td>Alter, demo walls, new green room, re-configure stairs</td>
<td>Jeff Steichen</td>
<td>Bryce B. Thomas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>S-17990</td>
<td>Theater sign support</td>
<td>Showbox</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>718219</td>
<td>Partition walls to ADA bathroom, no structural</td>
<td>99 cent store</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>S-990827-001</td>
<td>Electric sign</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>001115-024</td>
<td>Signs</td>
<td>Payday Loans</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>718996</td>
<td>Alter tenant improvements restaurant to retail</td>
<td>Ferry Bloch</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>S-010411-012</td>
<td>Sign</td>
<td>Palace Loans</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>920710</td>
<td>Alt. tenant remodel existing retail space to accommodate new bar</td>
<td>Jeff Steichen</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>6071000-CN</td>
<td>Emergency repair to repair failing roof beam at Showbox Theater</td>
<td>David Hasson</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>6211758-CN</td>
<td>Exterior façade repair per plan</td>
<td>David Hasson</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>6221443-SB</td>
<td>Installing (2) new awnings for the Showbox building</td>
<td>Fourteen TwentySix LLC/ CDI Custom Design Inc</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>6221960-SB</td>
<td>Install double-face illuminated projecting sign</td>
<td>Genghis Khan Chinese Rest./ Berry Neon Co. Inc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>6299498-CN</td>
<td>Change use from retail to restaurant, alter interior and occupy per plans.</td>
<td>Ron Owen/ Constructive Energy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>6301586-CN</td>
<td>Permit to complete work under permit #705180 (9901754 - alter interior to improve exiting STFI)</td>
<td>Brian McFadin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>6366145-CN</td>
<td>Change use from retail to restaurant and bar. Interior alterations and occupy per plan.</td>
<td>Joe Luckey, Blarney Stone Bar &amp; Restaurant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Permit #</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Owner or lessee</td>
<td>Architect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>6397471-SB</td>
<td>Install (1) illuminated under canopy sign</td>
<td>Blarney Stone First Ave. Pub/ Western Neon Inc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>641518-CN</td>
<td>Interior non-structural alterations for new tenant in existing restaurant space, per floor plan, subject to field inspection (STFI).</td>
<td>Frank Bocchetti</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>6416441-SB</td>
<td>Install (1) illuminated under canopy sign</td>
<td>Jersey Mike’s Subs-JMEmerald Inc./ Advanced Signs LLC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>6423154-SB</td>
<td>The Showbox: Painted wall mural on north exterior wall of Showbox to celebrate the venue’s 75th anniversary.</td>
<td>Brian McFadin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>6465008-CN</td>
<td>Interior alterations to restaurant (NW corner, first floor), per floor plans, subject to field inspection (STFI)</td>
<td>Cynthia J. Kirkham/ Greg P. Maxwell</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>6559402-CN</td>
<td>Construct tenant improvements to combine two restaurants spaces into one in an existing commercial building, per plan</td>
<td>Eric Forbes/ Cameron M. Fultz</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. SIGNIFICANCE

4.1 Historic Neighborhood Context: Development of Seattle’s Early Northern Commercial District

The early twentieth century saw a gradual expansion of the business community northward from its origins in Pioneer Square to major focal points along Second Avenue. Spurred by the economic boom resulting from the 1897 Alaska Gold Rush, Seattle’s population rose dramatically—growing from 43,000 in 1890, to 80,000 in 1900, to over 240,000 by 1910. Economic and population growth stimulated building development at the end of Seattle’s commercial spine along Second Avenue. See figure 32.

Before 1904, downtown commercial expansion had essentially stopped just north of Pike Street due to the abrupt grade change as Second Avenue ran into Denny Hill, essentially making Pike Street the “end of town.” The buildings essentially marking the terminus of the city were the Bon Marché department store (1901, Charles W. Saunders), at the southwestern corner of Second Avenue and Pike Street, the six-story Eitel Building (1904, W. D. Van Siclen, City of Seattle Landmark) on the northwestern corner of Second Avenue and Pike Street, and the Masonic Temple (ca. 1890, possibly W. E. Boone) on the northeastern corner of Second Avenue and Pike Street. As the bluff overlooking Elliott Bay prohibited development west of First Avenue and southward development was limited by the Duwamish tidal estuary, commercial development generally moved eastward to Third Avenue and then to Fourth Avenue.

When faced with the shortage of land for new development, Seattle’s leaders turned to engineers to remake the landscape. Denny Hill with its crowning Victorian edifice, the Denny Hotel, was shoveled and sluiced away beginning in 1905 under the direction of City Engineer R. H. Thompson, and beginning in 1907 the Duwamish tidal areas to the south of town were systematically filled with soil from the Jackson Street Regrade and the Dearborn Cut, increasing available land for industrial development.

The first phase of the Denny Regrade, from Second Avenue to Fourth Avenue, was completed in 1910; over three million cubic yards of soil were removed. Land values in the area rose dramatically: for example, lots valued at $2,500 before the regrade subsequently rose to $15,000.6

As regrade work progressed, buildings were built on Second Avenue north of Pike Street, including Peoples Bank (1906, Bebb and Mendel), which replaced the Masonic Temple on the northeastern corner of Second Avenue and Pike Street; the nine-story Standard Furniture Building (1905-07, A. Warren Gould) at Second Avenue and Pine Street; the seven-story Moore Theater and Hotel (1908, E.W. Houghton) at Virginia Street; and the New Hotel Washington (1906-1908, Eames & Young, now Josephinum), at Second Avenue and Stewart Street. Stirrat & Goetz pushed the commercial district eastward with their (initially) six-story Northern Bank and Trust Building (1906, W. D. Van Siclen, now Seaboard Building) at Fourth Avenue and Pine Street.

The opening of the Pike Place Market in 1907 stimulated development around the intersection of First Avenue and Pike Street. Shortly thereafter, architect Harlan Thomas executed his design for the Corner Market Building (1911-12). See figures 33-37.

---

5 This text is adapted from the Landmark Nomination Report for the Hahn Building by Larry E. Johnson, August 2014.
The promise of developing the area north of Virginia Street, however, would go largely unfulfilled, with major development through the late 1920s focusing on what was considered the new commercial core, extending eastward from Second Avenue to Sixth Avenue. MacDougall & Southwick located their new department store on the southeastern corner of Second Avenue and Pike Street in 1914. Architect John Graham’s Joshua Green Building (1912) at Fourth Avenue and Pike Street, his new Bon Marché building (City of Seattle Landmark) at Third Avenue and Pine Street, and Bebb & Gould’s Times Square Building (1913-15, City of Seattle Landmark) at Fourth Avenue and Stewart Street were among the first major north downtown developments as development shifted eastward. Henry Bittman’s Terminal Sales Building (1923, City of Seattle Landmark) at First Avenue and Virginia Street, his Northwestern Mutual Building (1928-31, now known as the Olympic Tower, City of Seattle Landmark) at Third Avenue and Pine Street, Victor W. Voorhees’ Joseph Vance Building (1927) at Third Avenue and Union Street, and the eleven-story Republic Building (1927) at Third Ave and Pike Street were some of the last projects built in the area before the Depression. See figure 38.

The Pike Place Market thrived in the 1920s, becoming associated with a “lively mix of Japanese and Italian American farmers, struggling artists, political radicals, and eccentrics.”7

Beginning in the late 1930s, the area around First Avenue and Pike Street generally declined and became the home of marginal businesses with shady reputations. Major urban renewal proposals of the late 1960s were eventually defeated with a public vote in 1971 that created the City of Seattle Pike Place Market Historic District. During the 1970s, First Avenue between Union and Pine streets was known for theaters featuring adult entertainment (both live and recorded varieties) theaters and bookstores, and generally had a seedy reputation.

During the 1980s a push was made to develop First Avenue and rid the district of its disreputable reputation. In 1986 a 76-unit condominium building known as 98 Union Street was constructed at First Avenue and Union Street, replacing the Green Parrot Theater and other businesses on First Avenue south of the Economy Market building (1900, within the Pike Place Historic District).8 See figure 39.

More recent major commercial redevelopment patterns are in some ways similar to historical growth, with new projects replacing older buildings at the northern end of town, although in 1996 the area remained somewhat blighted with semi-derelict buildings and marginal retail stores.9 The recent redevelopment of the former Rhodes Building at Second Avenue and University Street with the Washington Mutual Tower (2005, NBBJ) and 1521 Second Avenue (2009, Weber + Thompson) represents the current trend for taller buildings in the vicinity.

4.2 Building History

The subject building has had two separate phases of history: the first as a market building, the second as a nightclub and performance venue.

4.2.1 Central Market (1916-1937)

Between 1916 and 1937, the subject building served as a market, housing several different groceries and markets. The building’s name at the time, the Central Market, was painted on its

8 King County Tax Assessor, Puget Sound Regional Archives.
parapet. Before the invention of the modern supermarket, these types of public market buildings were common, conveniently locating several different businesses selling various food products under one roof. The term "groceries" generally comprised only dry and canned goods, whereas produce, meats, and dairy were all sold from separate businesses, and all supplies were ordered at a counter instead of being self-service.10


4.2.2 Early Years: Musical Revues, Dancing, & Vaudeville

In 1939 the building was remodeled. The Showbox space has been used as a ballroom, a variety show theater, a bingo parlor, a comedy club, and, with a variety of names and incarnations, a live music venue. Music and performance businesses have occupied the building between periodical vacancies, as described below. See figures 42-43.

Club owner Mike Lyons signed a ten-year lease for the subject building in 1937, with plans for making major alterations and establishing a cabaret in the building, and also dividing most of the ground floor into separate retail spaces.12 In preparation for establishing a new music and entertainment venue, which he planned to style as the "Palace of the Pacific," Lyons toured music halls on the east coast and was inspired by the Riviera nightclub in Fort Lee, New Jersey, established by Ben Marden.13 The architect for the remodel was well known theater designer Bjarne Moe. He began design with drawings in 1937, and finalized the design in 1939 with a permit application to revise the seating plan. See appendix 2 for drawings.

The first iteration of the Show Box (at the time known as the two-word "Show Box" rather than the subsequent "Showbox") was as a dancing and music hall that featured variety acts. The Show Box opened its doors on July 24, 1939, described by the Seattle Times as "Seattle's newest dine and dance rendezvous."14 The cost of creating the new club came to approximately $100,000, and had a seating capacity of 1,500. The club was open for dancing thirteen hours a day, from 12 p.m. to 1 a.m. with several floor shows each afternoon and evening. The revues tended to have a headliner with supporting acts, an emcee, and band leader with orchestra/band. The entertainment roster for the grand opening was described as follows:

The opening program includes George Lyons, swing harpist, direct from the Sherman Hotel in Chicago; Warner and Margie, featuring their dancing dog Mona; Ray and Bee Gorman, a comedy act; Earl, Fortune and Pope, ballroom artists; Lucille Hughes, a study in silk, and Miss Virginia Pope, dancer.15

10 The self-service grocery store model was invented by the Piggly Wiggly franchise in 1916.
A week after the Show Box opened, plans were announced to establish a Chinese restaurant, which would be known as the Tao Yen Café, to be run by restaurateur Lee Mon.16

The burlesque dancer Sally Rand performed at the Show Box for more than three weeks in late 1939.17 Rand was renowned for her provocative ostrich-feather fan dances, made famous by her performance at the 1933 World's Fair in Chicago. Rand owned a burlesque hall in San Francisco and performed at the World's Fair in San Francisco in 1939-1940. Her revue at the Show Box included her fan dance.

On April 1, 1940, Duke Ellington—renowned African American composer and band leader—began a limited engagement at the show Box.18

Notable performers in 1941 include Sophie Tucker, Jimmy Durante, jazz bandleader Paul Whiteman and his orchestra, jazz singer Belle Baker, jazz guitarist Nick Lucas, and Indonesian dancer Devi Dja.19

Seattle's all-girl orchestra Helen Hart and her Melo-Dears played there frequently throughout the decade. Julie Ballew was a frequent and popular "Mistress of Ceremonies."

On August 26, 1944 a fire broke out in the basement of the building, resulting in the evacuation of the club. Authorities were not able to agree whether the fire was ignited by a carelessly-discarded cigarette or by an arsonist. No one was injured.20

By May 1946 the venue was closed for renovations. It reopened in late June 1946 with Seattle-born Gypsy Rose Lee as the headliner.21 Lee was a famous author, actress, and striptease dancer who had starred in at least 6 movies by the time she headlined the Show Box, an engagement which lasted several weeks.

The Seattle Times described her show thus:

Gypsy Rose Lee, author, playwright, actress and stripteuse, continues to attract bumper audiences at The Show Box, where she is in her second week. She provides the floor show, assisted by a group of attractive girls and other entertainers. It is sophisticate fare relished by the Show Boat [sic] clientele.22

In September 1946 it was announced that the Show Box had been leased to Northwest Amusement Enterprises, Inc., with plans to have it remodeled as a ballroom that would also feature band and orchestras.23 The venue reopened on October 3, 1946, now known as the Show Box Ballroom. The Seattle Times says: "Special lighting effects and comfortable lounging accommodations help to make the Show Box Ballroom one of the outstanding dance halls on the Pacific Coast."24 See figures 44-45.

In spite of this endorsement, by 1948 the building was described in a letter to the Seattle Times editors as "long-vacant."

16 Seattle Times, "Chinese Cafe To Be Opened At 'Show Box,'" July 30, 1939, p. 11.
18 Seattle Times, "Duke Ellington Arrives With His Orchestra," April 1, 1940, p. 18.
19 Seattle Times, passing, 1941.
22 Ibid.
23 Seattle Times, "Name Bands to Visit Show Box," September 6, 1946, p. 12.
On July 4, 1951, the venue was advertised as the Show Box Theatre Restaurant, featuring Norm Hoagy's Orchestra. However, the Seattle City Directory listed the space as "vacant" from 1948 to 1953. The space is listed as "Show Box" and "The Show Box dance hall" in 1954 and 1955, respectively. The directory then lists the space as "vacant" from 1956 to 1964.

In 1954 an actor named Arthur Isenberg—stage name Art West—who was appearing at the Show Box died after being beaten by a man in front of the building.

Between 1939 and 1942 the retail storefront addresses only hosted a few tenants listed in the directories: Kern's Music Co. & James Vaskey watch repair at 1418 (1939), Gordon Radio & Electric at 1416 (1940), and Russell's Restaurant at 1420-1424 (1941-1942). The address adjacent to the music venue, the Amusement Center Arcade, at 1416 First Avenue, began tenancy in 1943. It was billed as a penny arcade, but actually had adult movies, peep shows and other "amusements." The arcade was in place until 1972, and the movie theater portion continued on until 1983. The Unique Grill was also a tenant of 1420 First Avenue from 1951 until 1983. Of interest is the December 1952 arrest of the manager of the Amusement Center, Valeri V. Trambitas, on charges of possession of pornographic films. The proprietors of three other penny arcades on First Avenue were arrested at the same time.

By 1960 the theater and concert venue had been converted to a furniture store, Show Box Furniture, which existed until at least 1962 and probably until 1967.

### 4.2.3 "The Happening" and Talmud Torah

By December 1966 theater proprietors Kenneth Legg and Blaise le Wark were attempting to acquire a cabaret license for the former Show Box venue, referred to in preliminary negotiations as The Happening. The Class A license, which allowed unlimited number of performers, was granted in January 1967.

By March of 1967 the Happening Teen Age Night Club opened, billed as "Rock music for young adults." Performers at the opening of the Happening in 1967-1968 included Buffalo Springfield with three local bands: West Coast Natural Gas, the Daily Flash, and Magic Fern; bandleader Harry James and his orchestra; rock & roll duo the Everly Brothers; and nationally-renowned local band Merilee Rush and the Turnabouts. Events also included a performance of interpretive dances based on signs of the zodiac and a "Support Your Local Bands" promotion.

By late 1969 the Happening had closed.

On February 6, 1971 a fire started in the Unique Grill at 1420 First Avenue and adjacent to the music venue to the south. Both the restaurant and the music hall filled with smoke; the damages

---

27 R. L. Polk & Co.
32 Buffalo Springfield was a folk-rock band active from 1966 to 1968. Members included Stephen Stills and Neil Young, later of Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young fame.
33 Seattle Times, "The Happening," December 20, 1966, p. 61. Merilee Rush grew up in North Seattle. Merilee and the Turnabouts' big hit was 1968's "Angel of the Morning," for which Rush was nominated for a Grammy Award in the category of Contemporary Pop Female Vocalist of the Year.
toted $15,500.$34 On August 14, 1971, the erstwhile teen night club was extensively damaged by a fire that was apparent arson. The dance floor area was severely damaged by heat and smoke.$35

From at least 1974 to at least 1977 the theater space was occupied by Talmud Torah Hebrew Academy Bingo Hall. The owners would rent out the space for outside events, including movie showings, the occasional concert, and several professional wrestling bouts.$36, $37 See figure 47.

4.2.4 The Showbox (1979-1983)

In September 1979 the venue, now renamed “The Showbox” (as one word), reopened with a ticket that included Canadian all-woman punk band the Dishrags, and Seattle bands the Enemy and Macs Band.$38 The event was a benefit for the launch of the nascent music newspaper The Rocket.

At this point the Showbox was operated by concert company Modern Productions, which took out a five-year lease on the space and turned it into what Mike Vraney, one of Modern Productions' members, described as "[a] progressive music venue."$39 See figure 48.

On November 24, 1979, Iggy Pop played a concert at the Showbox, with a band comprising members of the Sex Pistols, Patti Smith Group, and Tangerine Dream. Seattle Times rock critic Patrick MacDonald described the concert thus: "One of the prime figures of the punk movement, Iggy Pop, played a late one at the Showbox Saturday night and again took rock to the edge of insanity."$40 See figure 49.

This was the beginning the first phase of the Showbox featuring major national and international artists. Between November 1979 and October 1981 notable acts included the Police, Muddy Waters, XTC, Devo, Sun Ra, James Brown, Taj Mahal, Joan Jett & the Blackhearts, and Siouxsie & the Banshees.$41 See figures 50-51.

In 1980 Patrick MacDonald wrote:

"The main outlets for new music in Seattle—besides record stores, both majors and independents—are the Showbox Theater and KZAM-AM…. The Showbox is a wonderfully tacky nightclub near First Avenue and Pike Street that was opened in 1939. The interior is a cross between 1930s modern and Egyptian. It is decorated with fluted, pseudo-Egyptian pillars, has a dance floor surrounded by two tiers of seating areas and is just the right size for excellent sound and a sense of intimacy between audience and performers…. Rock fans who have grown up with shows in the Coliseum, Paramount, and Arena never have experienced such intimacy, and the change is profound.$42

In February 24, 1983, Paul DeBarros wrote about the last Seattle Times-listed performance at the Showbox:

---

$34 Seattle Times, "Fire Causes $15,500 Damage," February 6. 1971, p. 4
$37 Seattle Times, "Pro Wrestling at Showbox Theater," October 26, 1975, p. 64.
$38 For more on Macs Band, see: http://flavorwire.com/411518/unraveling-the-mystery-of-forgotten-seattle-pre-grunge-band-the-macs/3
$39 Modern Productions were Jim Lightfoot, Mike Vraney, Carlo Scanduzzi, and Terry Morgan.
$41 Seattle Times, event listings, passim, 1979-1981.
There was an important turning point last night at the Showbox during the stunning first concert here by Sunny Ade, Nigerian pop star, and his 17-piece band…. It was going to be one of those rare nights when a concert turns into a resonant cultural transmission.  

By November 1983 this iteration of the Showbox had folded.  

4.2.5 The 1980s  

Throughout the 1970s and into the early 1980s, First Avenue had a seedy reputation, especially between Union and Pike streets. The street was lined with adult entertainments of all kinds including adult movies, bookstores, and live performances. In the mid-1980s developers pushed to clear First Avenue of the sex workers, panhandlers, and "peep show" arcades, including the Amusement Center Arcade that had been occupying the space at 1414 First Avenue since 1943. Harbor Development (the developer that created the Harbor Steps) had acquired the lease on the Showbox by 1985. In 1987 the company had plans to convert the theater to a ballroom dancing venue. See figure 52.  

"For now, the 1400 block of First Avenue never sleeps. But the fun and games appear to be running out. The new scheme of things already has whittled away at downtown Seattle's naughtiest block."  

The Showbox, having been remodeled, was apparently back in (temporary) business by March 27, 1987, when punk band Big Black, local band The U-Men, and performance artist Alan Lande performed there. Modern Productions was again running occasional events at the Showbox by 1988, with a show by prog-rockers Pere Ube and John Cale.  

In the late 1980s the venue primarily served as a hall for hire, hosting the occasional benefit concerts and galas for arts organizations. In April 1988 the London-based performance art ensemble Psychic TV performed there as part of Center On Contemporary Art's spring season, with an event that included seven cassette players, two large screens, and seventeen television monitors. The following year the Seattle Art Museum held a masked ball at the Showbox to raise funds for its contemporary art programs.  

In June 1989 plans were announced that Empty Space Theater, formerly located in Pioneer Square, would make the Showbox space its new headquarters. The theater was raising the funds that Harbor Development required as part of the lease to renovate the building and bring it up to city codes. However, that fall it was discovered that the building contained an untenable amount of asbestos, and the deal was scuttled. See figure 53.  

In 1987 the retail storefronts were remodeled, and tenants included INSINC jewelry, Dover Aggregates, and the Genghis Khan Restaurant.  

---

52 R. L. Polk & Co.
4.2.6 Comedy in the 1990s: The Improv and the Showbox Comedy & Supper Club

Right as Seattle's music scene was about to careen into the national and international spotlight and be exported around the world, the Showbox was turning into a comedy club. In October 1990 the Showbox was reincarnated as the Improv, the fourteenth of a chain of comedy clubs established by actor and producer Budd Friedman, and run by franchisee Larry Harris.\(^{53}\)

Patrick MacDonald writes:

> Those who remember the Showbox as a seedy rock hall in the 1970s will hardly recognize the place. The foyer is red-carpeted, with cartoonish murals on the walls (cartoon caricatures of comedians, and of the club’s investors, line the restaurant walls)… The Egyptian-influenced columns have been painted to bring out their original lotus design. The bathrooms, once moldy hellholes, are new, clean and spacious.\(^{54}\)

Ellen DeGeneres and Paul Reiser performed at the club’s grand opening. Comedians who performed at the Improv between 1990 and 1994 included Paula Poundstone, Gary Shandling, Kevin Nealon, Jon Stewart, and Bobcat Goldthwaite.

By November 1994 the club had new owners, Barry Block and Tony Riviera, who renamed the venue the Showbox Comedy & Supper Club.\(^{55}\) Between 1994 and 1995, performers included Judy Tenuta, Rita Rudner, Margaret Cho, Dana Carvey, Janeane Garofolo, Julia Sweeney, and Cedric the Entertainer. At the same time, the venue hosted the occasional benefit concert, and ran a film series called "Desperate Cinema."

By late 1995, in an effort to bolster business in a sagging comedy market, the Showbox began introducing more live music and DJ sets.\(^{56}\)

4.2.7 The Showbox (1996-present)

By February 1996, around the time that the term "post-Grunge" was being used to describe the era, the venue's name was again (slightly) changed—this time to the Showbox Music Club—and, by May of that same year, it was known as the Showbox Lounge. At this point the Showbox was presenting up-and-coming and established bands, and also hosting dance. The venue was described as "the newly refurbished club [is] about the spiffiest spot in town," and "a sign that Seattle music is turning another corner."

Grunge was no longer the white-hot sound of the zeitgeist. Dance music, techno, trance, trip-hop, house, and jungle were on the rise. The Showbox hosted house/techno and trip-hop dance nights, with DJs.\(^{58}\) However, the core of the business was once again live music, with a focus on "alternative" rock, R&B, and in increasingly, hip-hop.

The venue also hosted several comedy acts during this iteration, including performances by Robin Williams in 2004 and 2007, the Canadian ensemble Kids in the Hall, also in 2007, and David Cross in 1999.

---


\(^{54}\) Patrick MacDonald, " Laughing Matters—Comedy Battle Heats up the Entrance of a Heavyweight," \textit{Seattle Times}, October 19, 1990, p. 3.


On September 20, 1997, sixteen months after the Showbox opened in that form, an altercation (described after the fact as a riot) broke out in front of the Showbox, resulting in several stores being ransacked and looted. The venue was hosting an event called "DJ Kun Luv's Virgo Birthday Party." While a crowd lined up outside the Showbox, a rumor began that the rock star Prince would be making an appearance at the event. Another rumor spread that the rapper Busta Rhymes would appear.\(^{59}\) Once the venue was filled to a capacity crowd of 600, the crowd of people hoping to attend the party grew and grew until it was blocking traffic on First Avenue. At midnight the management of the Showbox called the police, who tried to disperse the crowd of approximately 300. The crowd, although not rowdy or violent, lingered for more than 90 minutes beyond the arrival of the police, heckling the officers. When the crowd eventually began to disperse, a group broke away from the main group and broke windows at several businesses on Pike Street between First and Second avenue, and robbed the equipment and inventory from a shoe store.\(^{60}\)

In 2007 longtime owner Jeff Steichen sold the Showbox to Los Angeles-based entertainment group AEG Live. Steichen remained general manager.\(^{61}\)

Between 1996 and 2018 many notable Pacific Northwest, national, and international acts played at the Showbox. These included the Grunge titans that had already established their reputations at progenitors of the "Seattle Sound," as well as up-and-coming alternative and folk musicians from Seattle, and bands and artists from the Seattle hip-hop scene. \textit{See figures 54-55.}\(^{\_}\)

Of the nationally and internationally known acts, Iggy Pop stands out as having performed at the Showbox many times, if not more than any other out-of-town artist or band. Famous acts spanned the spectrum of popular genres, including rock, pop, hip-hop, R&B, and punk.

\textbf{4.3 Additional selected building tenant: Kern's Music Co.}

The first advertised tenant in the newly-remodeled "Lyon's Building" (later known as The Showbox) was John Kerns, later known as “Jumpin' Johnny.”\(^{62}\)

John K. Kerns was born in Nebraska in 1908. He married Florence Goldberg in 1928 in King County, and in 1932 they had a daughter, Charlene. He worked in sales at various offices, and ended up as the manager of the Empire Musical Exchange between 1935 and 1938.\(^{63}\) By 1939 he had started his own business selling musical instruments. In 1939 the Kerns Music & Jewelry Company was said to be occupying the Lyons Building, and that the storefront would be remodeled to their specifications.\(^{64}\) Kerns Music Company first shared the storefront addressed at 1418 First Avenue with James J. Vaskey watch repair in 1939.\(^{65}\) However, by 1940 the Seattle Street Directory indicates that the storefront at 1418 First Avenue was vacant. The 1940 census lists Kerns as a “Salesman: Musical Instruments.”\(^{66}\)


\(^{65}\) R. L. Polk & Co.

\(^{66}\) United States Census Bureau, 1940 United States Census, Seattle, King County, Washington; Roll: m-t0627-04378; Page: 13A; Enumeration District: 40-164.
By 1942 John Kerns was again working at the Empire Music Exchange at 1204 First Avenue, collecting musical instruments for the U. S. Army. Soon thereafter he joined the Army as a Warrant Officer and director of the Seattle’s Home Defense Ministry Regiment Band, directing performances at armories and other venues around Seattle.67

Between 1946 and 1951, Kerns Music Center was located at 1903 Third Avenue.68 However, Kerns’ association with the Showbox did not end when his shop moved to Third Avenue. According the Peter Blecha, a well-known local music historian:

In 1946 that [sic] a local trombone player named "Jumpin' Johny" Kerns (1907-2006) opened Kerns Music Shop at the site [and later on Third Avenue] and it soon became a gathering spot for musicians and music fans. In addition to his instrument-rental biz with school-kids, private lessons, and general instrument sales, for a period he even provided the Show Box with a shiny new Steinway grand piano.

Kerns also sold records, and this facet of his business created a keen awareness about which artists were popular with the younger set. As a result, Kerns managed to arrange for noontime in-store appearances -- broadcast on the city's top radio station, KJR -- by various stars in town to perform either upstairs at the Show Box or uptown at the magnificent Palomar (formerly Pantages) Theater. Thus it was that young music fans were able to witness unique live performances at Kerns Music by such stars as Frank Sinatra, Harry James, Sarah Vaughan, and Nat King Cole, who each performed a song or two in the shop. Meanwhile Kerns Music Shop served musicians from the region's top ensembles, including members of the house bands at the area's two biggest dancehalls, the Spanish Castle Ballroom and Parker's Ballroom. One of Kerns' proudest memories involved the time a young music student named Quincy Jones (b. 1933) came in to get his "first" horn there.69

Kerns also volunteered as the director of the Seattle Associated Boys' Band in 1949.70 In 1956 Kerns was working at Accordion City, and between 1958 and 1960 Kerns was the manager of Lake City Bar of Music.71 Included in the new business licenses issued by Washington State in 1992 was "Kerns Music & Loan, John Kerns, P.O. Box 66176, Seattle."72 Kerns died on June 7, 2006 in Enumclaw, King County.

4.4 Building and Business Owners

4.4.1 Harriet Estelle Delbridge Greene (1873-1948), Building Owner

Estelle D. Greene owned the subject property between 1939 and 1946. She was the widow of Frederick Remington Greene, and inherited his entire estate upon his death in 1937.73 They had married in 1893, and he was involved in real estate and timberlands in Seattle and Washington State, and had business interests in his hometown of Amsterdam, New York. They had lived in

---

70 Blecha, “The Showbox (Seattle).”
the gated community the Highlands, and Estelle also inherited the home she shared with her
husband there, along with various other properties, including a one-story warehouse adjacent to
the Eyres Transfer Company Warehouse on First Avenue S. Estelle was known as a "socialite"
and was a member of the National Society of the Colonial Dames of America.

William K. Greene was Frederick Remington Green's brother, and is listed as the owner of the
building on both a 1937 permit and the architect's drawings for the 1939 building remodel. He
may have transferred ownership to his sister-in-law sometime in 1939. William K. Greene also
left his estate to Estelle when he died in 1940.\textsuperscript{74} Although Estelle Greene died in Ohio in 1948,
she is interred in the Acacia Cemetery in Seattle.\textsuperscript{75}

4.4.2 Michael Lyons, Show Box owner

The original owner of the Showbox (when it was still known as the two-word "Show Box") was
Mike Lyons. Michael Mendle Lyons, the son of Russian Jewish immigrants, was born in New
York City in 1891. He came to Seattle in 1911.\textsuperscript{76} In 1914 he married Alice M. Boutin, and their
son Nathan was born in 1917.\textsuperscript{77} In 1924 Lyons married Vern Fontaine.\textsuperscript{78} In 1934 Lyons
established Lyons Music Hall at 1409 First Avenue, across the street from the subject building.
In 1936 he married Dorothy L. Olsen. He opened the Show Box Theater in 1939. He retired in
1942 and moved to Sultan, WA. In 1944 Dorothy Lyons filed for divorce on the grounds of
neglect, explaining to the judge that her husband "wanted to live in the mountains. I didn't."\textsuperscript{79}
Lyons passed away in Sultan in 1965.\textsuperscript{80}

Lyons Music Hall operated from November 1934 until at least 1949. The hall offered dancing,
live music, and variety shows. In 1936 the hall became one of the first music venues on the West
Coast to install a complete pipe organ.\textsuperscript{81} The hall had a somewhat seedy reputation: in 1935
Lyons was arrested for selling "near-beer"—a beverage with less than one-half of one-percent
alcohol—on a Sunday, in violation of a city ordinance prohibiting beer sales on that day of the
week.\textsuperscript{82} Vicky Grayson, in an oral history of Seattle's reaction to the bombing of Pearl Harbor,
described the venue thus: "There were a lot of service people there and, in 1941, for some
reason people didn't have a real good opinion of the Navy boys. Lyons wasn't a real fancy
place."\textsuperscript{83} See figure 56.

4.4.3 Tarry Inn Incorporated, Nate Lyons, president (until 1946)

Tarry Inn Incorporated owned the building starting in 1946.

The first record of Tarry Inn Incorporated is in 1934, when their application for a license to sell
beer was rejected by the mayor of Seattle.\textsuperscript{84} Tarry Inn Incorporated appears to have been an

\textsuperscript{74} Seattle Times, "Greene Estate to Kin," August 29, 1940, p. 16.
\textsuperscript{77} Washington State Marriage Records, 1854-2013.
\textsuperscript{78} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{79} Seattle Times, "Proprietor of Night Clubs in Divorced," March 11, 1944, p. 4.
\textsuperscript{84} Prohibition ended in December 1933. The denial was for an application to sell beer at 1012 Terry Avenue, in the heart of First
Hill across from the Sorrento Hotel, written in the Seattle Times of March 5, 1934, "Women Cheer as Mayor Bans Beer in Home
Areas," a front-page article continued on p 16.
enterprise involved in real estate and development of entertainment venues such as ballrooms, pool rooms, and hotels.85

4.5 Historic Context: Live Music Venues in Seattle

Live music in has traditionally been performed in every type of venue from residential living rooms to small clubs and restaurants, to ballrooms and large theaters and arenas. There is no one building typology that represents public music performance space in Seattle. Music performances in the 1850 took place in Henry Yesler’s sawmill cookhouse and later in opera houses and vaudeville theaters. In the first part of the twentieth century, performances spaces ranged from small venues like clubs and lounges to armories and dance halls. In the mid- to late-twentieth century, large performances would take place in arenas and coliseums, such as the Aqua theater at Green Lake, (George W. Stoddard) the Washington State Coliseum (Paul Thiry), and Memorial Stadium (George W. Stoddard).

4.5.1 Performing in the Pioneer Days86

Henry Yesler’s mill kitchen, a small log structure built in between 1852 and 1853, was probably the site of the first indoor public performance of any kind in Seattle. The cookhouse, near the intersection of Commercial Street (First Avenue S) and Mill Street (Yesler Street), was the largest interior space in the small settlement for several years and was pressed into service for meetings, court proceedings, and other functions, including public readings or amateur entertainment. The first professional entertainments, usually readings and impersonations, were held at Plummer’s Hall, located on the second floor of Charles Plummer’s store at the corner of Commercial Street (First Avenue S) and Main Street, constructed in 1859. The following year, Yesler built a comparable facility, a two-story building near the original cookhouse. Yesler’s Hall was the venue for traveling minstrel shows and other itinerant variety acts. Yesler’s Pavilion was built at the corner of Front Street and Cherry Street in 1866, in 1870 received a proscenium arch, and a drop curtain in 1875. The Pavilion staged popular dramas, such as “Uncle Tom’s Cabin.”87

“Box-theaters” were the prominent type of popular theater in Seattle beginning in 1876, with the Theater Comique (renamed the Eclipse in 1882) in the basement of a Saloon on Washington Street. Others included Maison Dore Garden (1883) in the Yesler Block at Commercial Street and James Street, and the Alhambra Theater (1884, later the Standard Theater) on Second Avenue between Washington Street and Main Street. Box theaters usually had a small stage at one end and central auditorium with a row of boxes around the sides connected by a bar in the rear. They presented variety entertainment, but their association with saloons limited the clientele to what would be considered less than respectable citizens. All were located south of Yesler Way in what became known as the “restricted area.”88 See figure 57.

86 “Newport Hotel, 1st Ave. Theater Sold,” September 5, 1943, p. 23.
4.5.2 Early Theaters

As far as “legitimate” theaters in Pioneer Seattle, Squire’s Opera House, built in 1879 by Watson C. Squire on Commercial Street (First Avenue S) between Washington Street and Main Street, was the first to present a New York City-based production in 1882. Also in 1882, James Smith’s Bijou Theater opened at the northwestern corner of Washington Street and Second Avenue. In 1884, when George Frye built Frye’s Opera House at the northeastern corner of First Avenue and Marion Street, Seattle had its first large venue with 1,300 seats.

In the 1886, John Cort (1868-1929), a former actor turned "legitimate" theater manager, moved to Seattle from Chicago and purchased the Standard Theater in Pioneer Square. In order to secure better bookings, Cort organized one of the first variety circuits in the United States, extending from Butte, MT to San Francisco and including Seattle, Olympia, Spokane, Tacoma, and smaller towns. Reliable theater bookings in Seattle itself were facilitated by the arrival of railroad service to nearby Tacoma in 1883, and the arrival of the Northern Pacific to Seattle in 1884. Under Cort’s management the Standard became the most popular entertainment venue in Seattle, allowing Cort to build a new, 800-seat Standard Theater (1888, destroyed 1889) at the southeastern corner of Occidental Avenue and Washington Street. The theater was steam-heated, had 19 individual boxes on the upper balcony, and was the first venue in the city to have electric lighting. The Great Fire of June 1889 destroyed virtually all of Seattle’s theaters, including the Standard, Yesler’s Hall, Squire’s Opera House, and Frye’s Opera House. Within two weeks of the fire, Cort was operating a tent theater, before rebuilding the Standard (1889, altered), by November of that year.

Cordray’s Theater (ca. 1890, destroyed ca. 1907), located at the northeastern corner of Third Avenue and Madison Street, served a slightly more respectable crowd with seven-night-a-week shows. Originally a former dry-goods store, the theater opened as the Madison Street Theater, although it was soon renamed for its first owner, John Cordray. Cordray is credited with introducing “polite vaudeville” to Seattle between 1890 and 1896. Cordray brought Sarah Bernhardt to Seattle in 1891 where she played to a sold-out, standing-room-only, 1,500-person audience. The theater was later renamed the Third Avenue Theater and became the first venue for theater booking agents William M. Russell (1849-?) and Edward L. Drew (1871-1949).

John Considine (1868-1943), another former actor turned showman (who would later become a friendly rival of John Cort) became manager of the People’s Theater (ca. 1890, altered) another box theater located at 172 Main Street, in 1891.

The 1,500-seat Seattle Theater (1892-93, destroyed 1915, for the construction of the Arctic Club) attracted and upper-class clientele, being adjacent to the original Rainier Club. Architect Charles Saunders (1858-1935) designed both buildings after his return to Seattle in 1891.

---

89 Text adapted from "Neptune Theater Landmark Nomination Report" by Larry E. Johnson, 2010.
90 Seattle Historical Society, pp. 84-85. Flom, Silent Film Stars on the Stages of Seattle, p. 16.
4.5.3 Vaudeville and the Gold Rush

Although variety shows had reached Seattle in the 1870s, the term "vaudeville" came into common use after 1884. "Variety" and "vaudeville" both referred to a group of specialized performance with individuals or groups performing discrete acts. "Burlesque" was a type of variety show with risqué entertainment. Although the terms “variety” and “vaudeville” were often used interchangeably, vaudeville generally consisted of higher-quality entertainment, including nationally- and internationally-known talent, usually had seven acts, each with a star. The stars' attendant musicians, stagehands, electricians, and management personnel created an aggregate community that cost a considerable weekly fee to support. In order to assure a regular audience, vaudeville troops were moved regionally or nationally from city to city along a regularly-assigned route.

Early variety shows tended to be on the vulgar side until New York’s Tony Pastor began offering “a straight, clean variety show” suitable for family viewing. The concept of operating a chain of variety theaters originated in New York around 1880, but after 1885, B. F. Keith and E. F. Albee began building a syndicate that began in Boston, but grew quickly to include theaters in Providence, Philadelphia, and New York. During the 1890s, Keith and Albee absorbed several small vaudeville circuits throughout the country. A few successful regional circuits were established, however, including: Sylvester Z. Poli's in New England, Marc Klaw and Abraham L. Erlanger’s, also on the Eastern Seaboard, and the Orpheum circuit in San Francisco.

The financial depression of 1893-1896 heavily hit Seattle theaters and their owners, and only the Third Avenue and Seattle theaters survived. Many box theater owners left town, among them John Cort, who unsuccessfully attempted to establish a chain of theaters along the Northern Pacific Railroad route. John Considine moved to Spokane, where his new box house was shut down by an "anti-vice” movement.

The Klondike Gold Rush, beginning in 1897, turned Seattle into a boom town, attracting thousands of new people to the town. Seattle’s population grew from 80,000 in 1900 to 237,000 in 1910. The new prosperity, coupled with a rough-and-tumble populace eager for entertainment, turned Seattle into a theatre center. Both Cort and Considine returned to Seattle during this period, seeking renewed fortune and respectability. By the end of the 1890s, renewed financial confidence allowed the creation of vast theatre circuits that spanned the country and comprehensive networks of booking offices handled promotion and production, and Seattle played a major role in this development.

John Cort continued to purchase, or form business relations, with several theaters along the West Coast, controlling 37 outright by 1903. Around 1900, Cort formed an alliance with Klaw and Erlanger to bring additional dramatic talent to his Western circuit, establishing Cort as the top theatrical manager in the Pacific Northwest.

Flush with growing success and with the great optimism following the Gold Rush, Cort hired architect Edwin W. Houghton (1856-1927) to design his 2,278-seat Grand Opera House (1898-1900, theater destroyed by fire in 1917, now a parking garage) in Pioneer Square at 217 Cherry Street, two blocks north of what was known as the “restricted zone.” The theater was completed.

---

96 Text adapted from Larry E. Johnson’s Neptune Theater Landmark Nomination Report, 2010.
97 Elliott, p. 45.
100 Flom, "Cort, John (1861-1929)."
in two stages and was originally called the Palm Garden. Until James Moore opened the Moore Theater 1907, the Grand was the premier venue in Seattle.  

The Moore Theater (1932 Second Avenue, 1907) in the new Moore Hotel on newly re-graded land north of the central business district, was also designed by Houghton. John Cort was appointed manager of the new 2,400-seat theater. The opening night crowd on December 28, 1907, swelled to 3,000 with standing room to watch Joseph Blethen’s play “The Alaskan.”

While Cort continued to consolidate his syndicate, his friendly rival John Considine formed an alliance with New York politician and financier Tim Sullivan to form the Sullivan-Considine circuit, which eventually grew to control 21 theaters in the Pacific Northwest, and was affiliated with another 20 in California, as well as booking theaters in the Midwest. In Seattle, Considine owned both the Star Theater (later State Theater, destroyed) at 920 First Avenue and the Orpheum Theater (originally a skating rink, remodeled 1907, destroyed 1908) at 1010 Second Avenue. In 1907, Considine leased the original Coliseum Theater (destroyed 1913 for the King County Courthouse) located at the southeastern corner of Third Avenue and James Street from the Orpheum Circuit and renamed it the Orpheum. Considine soon formed the Northwest Orpheum Circuit and by linking it with the Orpheum Circuit, formed a nationwide popular-priced vaudeville circuit. He opened the Majestic Theater (destroyed) at the corner of Second Avenue and Spring Street in 1909.

The Klaw and Erlanger syndicate attempted to expand into Seattle by commissioning architects Howells & Stokes to design the 1,650-seat Metropolitan Theater (1910-11), destroyed in 1956 for the Olympic Hotel’s northern porte-cochere) at 415 University Street in the University Tract, styled after the Doge’s Palace in Venice. Cort and many other theater owners, dissatisfied with the quality of Klaw and Erlanger’s bookings, organized the Independent National Theater Owner’s Association, which grew to include 1,200 theaters nationwide. Bowing to financial pressure, the syndicate allowed theaters to negotiate both independent and syndicate attractions. Cort relocated to New York in 1912, where he became a producer and manager.

A latecomer to the Northwest theater scene, but one who would eclipse all others, was Alexander Pantages. Pantages’ initial experience in vaudeville was during the Gold Rush in Dawson City, Yukon Territory, where he ran a theater. After relocating to Seattle, he opened the Crystal Theater in a storefront on the northeastern corner of Second Avenue and Seneca Street, playing vaudeville interspersed with motion pictures. Pantages was manager, ticket taker, booking agent, projectionist, janitor, and sometime-performer. By keeping his ticket prices at 10 cents a head, Pantages prospered and in 1904 opened the Pantages Vaudeville Theater on the northeastern corner of Second Avenue and Seneca Street. In 1907 he opened the Lois Theater, named after his wife, which played only stock theater. See figure 58. Pantages began expanding his circuit regionally by buying theaters in Tacoma, Spokane, and Vancouver. After the 1906 earthquake and fire in San Francisco, Pantages acquired a small chain of six theaters there. In 1911, he opened a theater in Portland, Oregon, and in 1912, expanded

---


102 Berner, p. 88.

103 Flom, “Cort, John (1861-1929),”

northward to Canada, building, buying, or leasing theaters in Edmonton, Winnipeg, Victoria, Calgary, and Vancouver. In 1917 Pantages and his family relocated to Los Angeles. By 1926, he owned approximately 30 vaudeville theaters and had management contracts on another 42 theaters in the United States and Canada, together forming the “Pantages Circuit.” Pantages stressed elegance, cleanliness, and good taste in his venues, and presented a mixture of live vaudeville acts coupled with the latest films. In 1928 he sold his West Coast theaters to the Orpheum circuit, and the remainder to RKO in 1929.  

In 1910 Pantages met 21-year-old architect B. Marcus Priteca (1899-1971) and was impressed by his ability to solve challenging design problems. Priteca would go on to design all of Pantages’ new theaters, beginning with the San Francisco Pantages Theater (1911, destroyed), until Pantages broke up and sold his circuit in 1928 and 1929. In 1913 Priteca designed the Seattle Pantages (a.k.a. Rex Theater, later Palomar Theater ca. 1936, destroyed 1967) at 1300 Third Avenue. Priteca’s theaters were primarily motion picture theaters and demonstrated Priteca’s early preference for fantastically-expressed Classical-style themes. Working in collaboration with decorative painter A.B. Heinsbergen, Priteca designed Pantages theaters throughout the United States and Canada as far away as Kansas City, Memphis, and Edmonton.  

4.5.4 Popular Dance, Dancehalls, and Ballrooms  

In early Seattle frontier days social dancing occurred in private ballrooms inside residential mansions with live music. Public dancing occurred in taverns and saloons, usually with “dancehall girls” who often were sex workers employed by the establishment. These saloons and taverns also had live music for the dancing. As with most western towns, this form of entertainment was restricted to certain seedier sections of town. In Seattle this area was located south of Yesler Street, and was known as the “restricted area” or the “Tenderloin.” Seattle’s first dance hall ordinance, passed in 1902, attempted to regulate the location of dance halls through licensing.

By the 1890s, for-profit ballrooms or dance halls, which would host dances for anyone to attend that could pay the cover charge, sprang up. Seattle’s large public dancehalls were attached to other entertainment centers, such as the casinos in Leschi and the C.C. Calkins Hotel (demolished) on Mercer Island, the Dance Palace at Luna Park in West Seattle (1907, demolished), the Woodland Park Amusement Park Dance Pavilion (demolished), or the Dreamland (1916 Fourth Avenue, demolished), converted to a dancehall from a roller rink. See figures 60-61.

Dances were very much tied to the popular music of the time, often influenced by African American Jazz development. Halls often had their own bands and some bands toured nationally. In the early 1900s "animal dances" like the Bunny Hop and Turkey Trot were popular, with the
Tango and Foxtrot gaining popularity after 1910. In the 1920s, dance marathons were popular tests of endurance with cash prizes awarded to the winners.

Unlike scheduled balls and dances, dancehalls often employed women, sometimes sex workers, to sell tickets for individual dances. In 1917 a group of ministers headed by Dr. E. M. Randall pushed the City Council into a short-lived amendment to the dance hall ordinance that prohibited women from soliciting partners at dance halls.¹¹⁰ Dancehalls also sold alcoholic beverages; legally before Prohibition, and “under the table” between 1920 and 1933, when Prohibition was in force, further inviting the ire of the religious and conservative elements.

Bertha K. Landes campaigned against corruption associated with dancehalls and introduced additional regulations. These new regulations prohibited "moonlight" or "shadow" dancing, set a minimum age of 18, eliminated “jitney dances” where women charged a fee for dancing, required direct supervision by the police department, and required the supervision of a matron chosen from a list approved by the Women’s Civic League.¹¹¹ Landes would continue an anti-corruption campaign, serving as mayor between 1926 and 1928. Under her leadership the City of Seattle passed an ordinance prohibiting dance marathons in 1928.¹¹²

After Prohibition was repealed in 1933, public ballrooms increased in popularity and numbers. In the 1930s and 1940s, Big Band swing largely replaced Jazz as the music of choice for popular dancing. Dances like the Rumba, Conga, Jitterbug and Lindy Hop were the hallmarks of this time. Some of the most famous ballrooms of this period were the Trianon (1922) in Chicago, Palomar Ballroom (1925) in Los Angeles, the Savoy Ballroom (1926) in New York City, and the Avalon Ballroom (1929) on Catalina Island. Live radio broadcasts from the halls were highlights of the pre-television period. The Lindy Hop originated at the Savoy in 1935, and Benny Goodman ushered in the beginning of the swing era when he performed at the Palomar on August 21, 1935.¹¹³ Vancouver’s Commodore Ballroom is one of the most famous still extant buildings of the era (1929, H.H. Gillingham).¹¹⁴

In the Northwest the Big Band era’s larger ballrooms included the Seattle Trianon (1927, 2505 Third Avenue, now offices) in Belltown, and the Encore Ballroom (1214 E Pike Street, now storage), and the old Dreamland, all in Seattle. The Avalon Ballroom (1931, 1017 Stewart Street) was a smaller venue in Seattle in the Denny Triangle. Outside of town along Highway 99 (also known as the Pacific Highway, and Aurora Avenue) were the Century Ballroom (1934, 1406 54th Avenue E, demolished) in Fife, the Spanish Castle (1930, Pacific Highway S and the Kent-Des Moines Road, demolished 1968) and Dick Parker’s Pavilion (1929, 17001 Aurora Avenue N). Other ballrooms were associated with resorts and amusement centers including Gaffney’s Ballroom (demolished) on Lake Wilderness and the Playland Ballroom (demolished). Other venues included social clubs that occasionally booked dances like the Eagles Hall (now ACT Theater), or the I.O.O.F. Hall (now Century Ballroom); or hotels with associated ballrooms,

¹¹² Becker, “Dance Marathons of the 1920s and 1930s.”
including the Spanish Ballroom in the Olympic Hotel (1924, George B. Post & Sons and Bebb and Gould, altered) or the Wilsonian Ballroom in the Wilsonian Hotel (ballroom demolished) in the University District. See figures 62-65.

After the mid-1950s, some ballrooms closed and many fell into disrepair. The explosion in popularity of rhythm and blues and rock and roll in the late 1950s, and the dominance of those styles throughout the 1960s and early 1970s, revitalized many dance venues, with the Northwest developing its own nationally recognized bands such as Paul Revere and the Raiders, Merrilee Rush & the Turnabouts, It’s a Beautiful Day, and the Jimi Hendrix Experience. Some ballrooms and dancehalls never adapted to the new music and continued to offer venues for dance forms other than rock and roll, including ballroom dancing, square dancing, or folk dancing.

4.5.5 Seattle’s Jazz Scene, 1937-1951

The first recorded jazz performance in Seattle was in 1918, when Lillian Smith’s Jazz Band played at Washington Hall to raise money for the NAACP.\(^\text{115}\) Although Washington Hall may have hosted the first jazz performance in Seattle, it was the Jackson Street nightclubs where jazz was most prominent. Jackson Street, on the eastern side of what is now the International Special Review District, was home to 34 nightclubs between 1937 and 1951.\(^\text{116}\) Geographically, Jackson Street connected King Street Station to the International District and the Central District, areas where residency was not restricted on basis of race, and which therefore had diversity in racial and cultural populations. The city had two musicians’ unions, which were racially segregated until 1958: whites-only American Federation of Musicians (AFM) Local 76 and the largely black AFM Local 493.\(^\text{117}\) Quoting Amy Rolf of the Seattle Post-Intelligencer:

The Jackson Street jazz scene may sound romantic today, but it’s important to remember that racial attitudes of the time influenced the public’s perception of the music then. Like rock ‘n roll in the 1950’s, jazz was considered by many to be immoral. The abundance of vice and questionable activities in and around the clubs of Jackson Street caused many Seattleites consider the area unsafe.\(^\text{118}\)

The other cultural factor enabling the rise of the jazz scene and the Jackson Street nightclubs was the entrenched police corruption in Seattle at the time, so that the police would look the other way when nightclubs served alcohol when Prohibition ended in 1933.\(^\text{119}\)

The corner of 12\(^{\text{th}}\) Avenue and Jackson Street was famous for E. Russell “Noodles” Smith’s nightclubs, including Seattle’s longest-running jazz club the Entertainer’s Club, and the Alhambra which was eventually renamed the Black and Tan.\(^\text{120}\) The term “Black and Tan” was shorthand for a location serving all races. The Black and Tan may have been Seattle’s most well-known jazz nightclub, being instrumental in the early career of Ray Charles (who originally played at the Back and Tan under the name R. C. Robinson), and hosting jazz greats like Duke

---


\(^{117}\) Blecha, “The Showbox (Seattle).”


\(^{119}\) Ibid.

Ellington, Charlie Parker, Quincy Jones, and Patti Brown. Duke Ellington also played at the Showbox in April of 1940. See figure 66.

Other famous nightclubs included the Savoy Ballroom at 21st Avenue and E Madison Street which opened in 1941 and was later renamed Birdland in honor of legendary saxophonist Charlie "Bird" Parker; 411 Club at 411 Maynard Avenue S; the Washington Educational & Social Club at 23rd Avenue and E Madison Street; The black Elks Club on Jackson Street; the Blues-oriented Green Dot, later renamed the Rocking Chair Club, on 14th Avenue just off Yesler; the Ubangi at 710 Seventh Avenue South; the Two Pals; and the Congo Club.

One of Seattle's most famous jazz greats was Oscar Holden, who arrived in Seattle in 1919 with Jelly Roll Morton's band and stayed, playing in clubs around Seattle until his death in 1969. Other famous performers to come to Seattle included Count Basie and Louis Armstrong, who also played at the Showbox. Again quoting Amy Rolf:

Ironically, as the popularity of jazz grew, and talented performers like Oscar Holden established themselves in Seattle’s smaller venues, Jackson Street clubs drew increasingly large and more diverse audiences. Yet, even during their heyday, when hosting big name acts like Duke Ellington, Count Basie, and Louis Armstrong, Seattle's jazz scene continued to maintain a low-light ambience, allowing their patrons – no matter how high profile – freedom from scrutiny.

Because of various racial restriction covenants around the city, jazz clubs were centered in the International District and the Central District, and in North Seattle outside the city limits. By the time the Fair Housing Act was passed in 1968, enabling minority populations to live and work in areas of Seattle outside the International District and Central District, rock 'n roll had supplanted jazz in popularity. Dimitriou’s Jazz Alley opened in 1979 in the University District, in 1985 moved to its present location at Sixth Avenue and Lenora. Jazz Alley is generally considered Seattle’s premier jazz club.

4.5.6 Rock, Punk & Grunge in Seattle

Although it was the Grunge phenomenon that catapulted the Pacific Northwest music scene into the international spotlight in the early 1990s, Seattle had a robust rock 'n roll scene from the mid-1950s through the 1980s.

During the 1950s and 1960s, existing theaters were converted to accommodate both live theater and live music. Although the 1920s were the greatest years for downtown theater palaces in Seattle, most were dual venues that offered motion pictures and vaudeville performances. These converted theaters included the Moore Theater (1907, E. W. Houghton, City of Seattle Landmark), Robert C. Reamer’s elaborate Fifth Avenue Theater (1926, Joseph L. Skoog, associate architect; closed 1972, restored and altered for live productions) in the Skinner Building (City of Seattle Landmark) located at 1308 Fifth Avenue; the 2,700-seat Orpheum Theater and six-story office building (1927, B. Marcus Priteca, destroyed 1967 for Westin Hotel)

---

122 Tate, "Rhythm & Roots: Birth of Seattle's First Sound."
123 Faltys-Burr.
125 Rolph.
126 Ibid.
127 Ibid.
at 1900 Fifth Avenue, the 3,000-seat Seattle Theater (1928, Rapp & Rapp with B. Marcus Priteca, renamed the Paramount Theater in 1930, City of Seattle landmark) at 911 Pine Street. See figures 67-70.

In the early- to mid-1950s, the Northwest produced a clutch of Rockabilly artists, including Sherree Scott and Seattle’s Bonnie Guitar, whose song “Dark Moon” hit the national top 10 in 1957. Doo-wop bands active in this decade included the Barons, the Five Cheers, The Gallahads, and The Fleetwoods, a trio from Olympia (Bonnie Guitar was their producer), who had two international number one hits in 1959: “Come Softly to Me,” and “Mr. Blue.” Venues to see popular music included many mentioned previously—the Avalon Ballroom, Eagles Auditorium, Parker’s Ballroom—and newer venues like the Last Frontier in Ballard and the Dog House in Belltown.

On September 1, 1957 Elvis Presley played a concert at Sick’s Stadium on Rainier Avenue. 15,000 fans attended the concert; urban legend claims that among the crowd was fourteen-year-old Jimi Hendrix. This concert was seen as a watershed moment, signaling the “beginning of rock & roll” in the Pacific Northwest. See figure 71.

The 1960s saw a surge in the number of local bands and their popularity. The Wailers (later The Fabulous Wailers) recorded the Richard Berry song “Louie Louie.” The song quickly became a regional hit and then evolved into standard for local bands, recorded also by Portland bands the Kingsman and Paul Revere & the Raiders, among others. The Sonics, from Lakewood-Tacoma, were active from 1962-1967, are considered pioneers of punk rock, with a distorted sound and edgy subject matter.

The 1962 World’s Fair meant many new concert and music venues were built: the Seattle Opera House, the International Bandstand, Mural Amphitheater (where, nearly thirty years later, an ascendant Pearl Jam would famously play), the Arena (later the Mercer Arena), the Playhouse Theater, and more. Apart from the formal, fair-associated concert halls, popular music halls during this decade included rockabilly club the Golden Apple (906 First Avenue) the House of Entertainment (1213 First Avenue), the Tradewinds (2505 First Avenue), the Four-10 (410 University Plaza), the Magic Inn (602½ Union Street), and Dave’s Fifth Avenue (112 Fifth Avenue), and the A-Go-Go Tavern (101 Eastlake Avenue E). See figure 72.

The 1970s began with Jimi Hendrix playing his last concert in Seattle on July 26, 1970, at the same Sick’s Stadium where Elvis had played thirteen years previously. Hendrix died less than two months after this concert. In 1971, more than 125,000 attendees came to the Seattle Center for Festival ’71, later known as Bumbershoot. Whereas the World’s Fair festivities more or less ignored local musicians and bands, Festival ’71 featured almost exclusively local acts. Notable local artists active in the 1970s included queer glam rockers Ze Whiz Kids, hard rock band Heart, and punk band the Enemy. Popular music venues at this time included Whisk-A-Go-Go (formerly the A-Go-Go Tavern) and the Vault at Second Avenue and Union Street. The area’s first punk-specific venue was the Bird (107 Spring Street) which made an inordinately large splash considering it was only open for two months—from March to May 1978—at its original location, and then an additional six weeks in the Odd Fellows Hall on Capitol Hill later that same year. See figure 73.

The alternative music publication The Rocket was founded in 1979 with a mandate to cover the local music scene. It was in the Rocket’s classified section of May 1, 1988, that Kurt Cobain advertised for a drummer needed for a band he and Krist Novoselic were forming.
Local bands from the 1980s included the Young Fresh Fellows, the Fastbacks, Girl Trouble, the U-Men, Gorilla Gardens, and the Vogue. The Off-Ramp Café & Lounge (109 Eastlake Avenue E) was an important venue during this time for hosting bands from the budding grunge scene. The 1,400-seat Moore Theatre at 936 Second Avenue was an important venue for many theatrical musicals and concerts ever since. Perhaps the most legendary concert at the Moore was Sub Pop Records' sold-out "Lame Fest" on June 9, 1989, which spotlighted rising grunge stars Mudhoney, TAD, and Nirvana. See figure 67.

During the years that the erstwhile Showbox was hosting stand-up comedy routines, the Seattle music scene skyrocketed to international fame. Soundgarden and Alice in Chains had released their first albums in 1988 and 1990, and the Screaming Trees, Mudhoney, and Mother Love Bone were already established bands. Pearl Jam's debut album Ten was released in August 1991; less than a month later Nirvana released their sophomore album, Nevermind. In addition to—and in some ways in opposition to—the dude-heavy grunge pantheon, the riot grrrl movement was ascendant, producing bands like Bikini Kill, Bratmobile, and Sleater-Kinney.

Important venues during the 1980s and 1990s included the O.K. Hotel, the Crocodile Café, all-ages club Velvet Elvis, club-cum-laundromat Sit & Spin, Doc Maynard's in Pioneer Square, the Fenix & the Fenix Underground, RKCNDY. See figure 74.

4.6 Historical Architectural Context: Postwar Streamline Moderne Style

The subject building has been classified stylistically as being in the Streamline Moderne style, owing to its massing, scale, and both interior and exterior detailing.

The Streamline Moderne or Art Moderne Style is an outgrowth of modern architecture, and a later derivation of the Art Deco style generally used between 1930 and 1945, and is often identified by the following features:

- Smooth, rounded wall surfaces and rounded edges
- One-story buildings with flat roofs with a small ledge or string course at parapet or wall coping
- A horizontal, ground-oriented emphasis in composition, unlike the vertical trend of Art Deco
- Asymmetrical façades
- Smooth wall finishes, often stucco with a predominantly white color palette
- Horizontal grooves or lines in walls (sometimes fluted or pressed metal)
- Casement, corner, or ribbon windows arranged horizontally with metal frames
- Utilitarian, functional metals, such as aluminum, chrome, and stainless steel used for metal balustrades and trim
- Glass-block windows and walls, often curved and built into a curved wall
- Mirrored panels


• Curved canopies
• Occasional circular porthole, oculus, round windows on main or secondary elevations
• References to the sea/the ocean, such as curves, horizontal vectors and lines, and light blue finishes like aquamarine, azure, baby blue, cyan, teal, and turquoise.

The Modern movement had its origins in Europe after World War I, with an underlying belief that advances in science and technology would generate a new form of architecture, free from the pervasive eclecticism based on revival forms. Modern architecture lent itself well to the use of modern materials, including glass, steel, aluminum, and concrete, as well as to new methods of construction. The possibilities of curtain wall construction utilizing steel frames and the freeform massing using ferro-concrete were explored by continental architects, as well as American modernist pioneers including Frank Lloyd Wright. By the 1920s, these experimentations produced two distinct branches of modern architecture: the steel and glass classicism, “International Style,” of the Bauhaus architects Walter Gropius and Mies van der Rohe, and the Béton Brut of Charles Edouard Jeanneret (Le Corbusier) and the “New Brutalism.”

The Art Deco style was born out of the 1925 *Exposition Internationale des Arts Decoratifs et Industriels Modernes* held in Paris in 1925. Literature promoting the expo prohibited imitations, reproductions and counterfeits of ancient styles. The new style strove to meld artistic expression and the machine age in a complementary, forward-looking manner. Polychromy and the celebration of decoration were the chief tenets of the Art Deco style. The decoration often emphasized craft and decorative materials were often more expensive stone or metal, and new manufactured materials such as enameled steel products, glass products and aluminum. Innovations in glass technologies produced materials such as pigmented structural glass products with proprietary brand names of Vitrolux, Thermolux, and Vitrolite. New tempered and laminated glass products along with glass tiles and structural glass block became popular. After 1920, Aluminum production became cheaper, making it more popular for architectural applications, and in 1931 the construction of the Empire State Building (Shreve, Lamb & Harmon) using aluminum for both structural members and interior finishes demonstrated the potential of the metal for Art Deco and Art Moderne style buildings.

Art Deco is also a style of ornamentation with motifs found on cars, trains, kitchen appliances as well as buildings. These motifs were low-relief geometrical designs in straight lines, chevrons, zigzags and stylized floral or fountain shapes. The inspiration for these shapes came from Native art in the Americas and Cubism in Europe.

Some of the most famous examples of Art Deco Buildings in the United States are the Rockefeller Center (1940, Raymond Hood) and the Chrysler Building (1930, William Van Alen) in New York City. There are significant Art Deco historic districts in Miami Beach, Florida, Tulsa, Oklahoma, and a significant collection Art Deco buildings Los Angeles, including the

---

133 The term “art deco” did not come into widespread use in the architectural community until the 1960s.
134 Hernández-Navarro.

Starting in the 1930s designers were interpreting popular styles that illustrated Futurism and technological advancement in areas of industrial design, interior design, and theater design. The Streamline Moderne style grew out of the Art Deco, but moved away from Art Deco's surface ornamentation and color toward a more "machine age" aesthetic. Streamline Moderne related more to the International Style than to the stylized forms of the earlier Art Deco. Culturally, the shift can be explained by an economic decline, from the wealth of the 1920s to the austerity of the Great Depression, in which architectural high style was rejected in favor of the popular forms of industrial design. Designers such as Raymond Loewy and Norman Bel Geddes favored simpler, aerodynamic lines and forms in the modeling of automobiles, trains, and airlines, and translated the smooth surfaces, curved corners and horizontal emphasis to industrial products such as home appliances, clocks, and scales. The style's functional ethos is described in Bel Geddes’s’ treatise *Horizons*, published in 1932. Other well-known designers of the Streamline style include Walter Dorwin Teague and Henry Dreyfuss.

The style was a more popular form of Modernism and was often applied to buildings such as gas stations, diners, movie theaters, factories, and all kinds of transportation buildings. More than 60 Greyhound bus stations were designed by William Arrasmith between 1937 and 1948, including the Cleveland station (1948, National Register). Other buildings exhibiting the popular style include the Blue Plate Building in New Orleans (1942-43, August Perez Jr., National Register), the Coca-Cola Bottling plant in Los Angeles (1939, Robert V. Derrah, National Register), the Normal Theater, Normal IL (1937, Arthur F. Moratz, National Register) and the Pan-Pacific Auditorium in Los Angeles (1935, Welton & Becket, demolished). See figures 80-84.

The style was exhibited at several world’s fairs, including the Chicago’s Century of Progress World’s Fair of 1933-34, the Dallas Centennial Exhibition of 1936 and the San Francisco Golden Gate International Exposition of 1939. However, it may have been best exhibited in the 1939 New York Futurama World’s Fair and General Motors’ “World of Tomorrow” exhibit, designed by Norman Bel Geddes. See figure 85.

Both the Great Depression of the 1930s and World War II stalled the widespread acceptance of the stricter and more intellectual International Modern architectural movement in the United States. Most Modern examples built during the pre-war Depression era were designed in the Art Deco or Streamline Moderne styles, which served as a transition from eclectic architectural styles to those devoid of ornamental motif. A particular subset of these were constructed by the Works Public Administration (WPA), such as the San Francisco Bathers Building (1936, William A. Mooser II, National Register) and the San Pedro Ferry terminal (1941, Derwood Lydell Irvin). An example of PWA Moderne in Washington State is Bellingham High School (1938, Floyd Naramore, National Register). See figures 86-88.

Following the war, however, Modern architecture gained popularity and became the dominant style of architecture throughout the United States, until the postmodern period took over in the 1960s and 1970s. Although the International Style, primarily championed by Mies van der Rohe

---

137 Los Angeles Conservancy, "Coulter's Department Store (Demolished)," https://www.laconservancy.org/locations/coulters-department-store-demolished.
140 Hernández-Navarro.
after his emigration to the United States, produced a number of buildings that became period icons, most Modern architecture was less strict and was adapted for various building types, while still emphasizing simplicity and clarity of form. Residential architecture, schools, churches, public buildings, hospitals, industrial complexes, social and fraternal lodges and halls, and other building types all experienced a shift from traditional architectural styles to Modern architecture, although in some cases (such as with some religious architecture) traditional styles were simply stripped down so that traditional elements were still present but in a sleeker, modernized way. In Seattle, the Streamline Moderne style was not as prevalent as in some other cities, although it was applied to many small buildings such as Richfield gas stations, restaurants like Ivar’s and SPUD Fish & Chips, and with the now-demolished Paramount Pictures Building of 1937. Some Seattle architects, such as Floyd Naramore, J. Lester Holmes, and R. C. Reamer, transitioned from revival and eclectic styles to designing Art Deco and Moderne buildings. See figures 89-91.

Of the currently listed 435 Landmarked buildings in Seattle in 2018, 17 of those are classified as Art Deco, Art Moderne, or Streamline Moderne styles, and half of those could be classified in the later Art Moderne or Streamline Moderne subset of the style. These include:

- Fire Station #17, 101 NE 50th St (1930, unknown architect) See figure 92.
- Fire Station #6, 101 23rd Ave S (1931, George Stewart) See figure 93.
- Fire Station #41, 2416 34th Ave W (1932, Civil Works Administration for City of Seattle Department of Buildings) See figure 94.
- Seattle Art Museum at Volunteer Park/Seattle Asian Art Museum, 1400 Prospect Street (1933, Carl Gould) See figure 95.
- Seattle Center House, 305 Harrison Street (1939, Naramore & Young) See figure 96.
- Coca-Cola Bottling Plant, 1313 E Columbia Street (1939, Graham & Painter (John Graham Sr) with Jesse M. Shelton) See figure 97.
- Admiral Theater, 2343 California Avenue SW (1942, Marcus Priteca) See figure 98.

4.7 Building Designers

4.7.1 Bjarne Holten Moe (1904-1980)

Bjarne H. Moe was the architect of record for the 1939 major remodel of the subject building. Bjarne H. Moe was born in Norway in 1904. He arrived in the United States in 1907 with his parents, Ole B. Moe, a carpenter, and Martha Moe. The family—parents and four children—lived in various places in the Pacific Northwest, including Vancouver, B.C., where two the two youngest Moe children were born. The Moe family was in Everett in 1920, where Bjarne, known as Barney, graduated from high school. Barney was naturalized April 17 1924. He entered the University of Washington in 1925 and was a member of the Washington Atelier Club for architecture students from at least 1926 to 1928 (contemporary with Paul Thiry). In...
1928 he was a member of the Alpha Delta Chapter of the Pi Kappa Phi fraternity at the University of Washington, listed under the class of 1929.\textsuperscript{148} He only completed three years at the University, and after leaving in 1928 became a draftsman for Schack, Young & Meyers.\textsuperscript{149} Around this time he was also known to be working as a draftsman for Frederick Anhalt and Robert Reamer of the Metropolitan Building Company. He is also known to have worked for architect Ludwig Solberg in Wenatchee, and Seattle architects Sherwood Ford, Charles Stanley, and Shack, Young & Meyers.\textsuperscript{150} Moe obtained his state license to practice architecture in 1930, #L126. \textit{See figure 99.}

Reamer and the Metropolitan Building Company were working on eight different projects during the period associated with Moe. These included two theater projects: the Majestic Fox Theater (1931, w/ Harold Whitehorse and Ernest Price, restored 2007, National Historic Register) in Spokane, Washington; and the Fox Theater in Billings, Montana (1931, altered).\textsuperscript{151} Working on these projects may have been where Moe began to be known as a theater architect. Moe opened his own practice in 1932.\textsuperscript{152} In 1934 he designed a French eclectic-style house for Robin Welts in Mount Vernon, WA at 1301 S. 10th Street.\textsuperscript{153} At least by 1936, “Barney” Moe was a member of the Northwest Film Club and served as the architect for the remodel of their clubroom.\textsuperscript{154} One year later he changed the spelling of his first name to “Bjarne.” He remained a well-known member of the Northwest Film Club until sometime after 1946. His earliest known theater projects include the 1935 remodel of the Roman Theater in Red Lodge, MT, and the Huff Theater in Coeur d’Alene, ID in 1936.\textsuperscript{155} \textit{See figures 100-102.}

By 1937, Moe was known as “a leading theater architect in the Northwest.”\textsuperscript{156} At that time, Moe employed Paul Gordon Carlson (1912-1987) as a designer/draftsman. Carlson was born in Seattle, the son of Swedish immigrants. He received a Bachelor of Architecture from the University of Washington in 1935.\textsuperscript{157} His association with Moe lasted from 1935 to 1941.\textsuperscript{158} He obtained his architectural license in 1938.\textsuperscript{159}

Moe garnered commissions for the Green Lake Theater and market building (now La Escuelita). The same year he designed the Ritz Theater in Ritzville, WA, and the Liberty Theater in Ellensburg.\textsuperscript{160} He also had a commission by John Wilson for a market building in Green Lake.\textsuperscript{161} In 1938 he was associated with the remodel of the Capitol Theater in Walla Walla and was the architect for a new Liberty Theater for Charles Laidlaw in Dayton, WA. In 1939 he oversaw construction of the remodel of the Liberty Theater in Walla Walla and was the architect for the Bungalow Theater in St. Maries, ID, the Renton Theater, and the Lake City Theater.\textsuperscript{162} Moe was also involved in the Norwegian Commercial Club in 1938-39. He is listed as the architect for the

\begin{footnotes}
\item[149] Ancestry.com, U.S. City Directories, Seattle, 1928
\item[150] Houser.
\item[152] Houser. \textit{Seattle Times}, “Modernizing home becomes work of merit,” April 11, 1946, p. 9
\item[153] Houser.
\item[155] Houser.
\item[156] \textit{Seattle Times}, “Theatre for Green Lake is assured: $100,000 cost of undertaking,” January 10, 1937, p. 42.
\item[158] Rash.
\item[159] \textit{Seattle Times}, “Along Film Row,” September 23, 1938, p. 25.
\item[160] Houser.
\item[161] Houser.
\end{footnotes}
1939 Lutheran Church at Eighth Avenue N and John Street, just north of Denny Park. See figure 103.

1940 was a busy year for Moe. He was the architect for the remodeled New Richmond Hotel Coffee Shop, the Empire Theater in Tekoa, WA, the Varsity Theater in the University District (O. A. Carlson contractor), and the Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Church in Seattle. That same year he purchased a house at 2650 W Dravus Street in Magnolia. In 1941 he designed the Roxy Theater in Bremerton, WA. See figure 104-105.

In 1945 he was the architect for an unbuilt theater project in South Bend, WA, and for the remodel of the Rainier Theater in Seattle. In 1946-47, he was the architect for the new Liberty Theater in Lynden, WA, and Coy’s Highline Theater in Highline, south of Seattle. In 1949 Moe was the architect of the Crest Theater in Shoreline. Moe is thought to have designed auditorium seating for the B.F. Shearer Co., a part of the National Theater Supply Company in Seattle.

Little else about his theater work in known until 1967, when he was the architect for the remodel of the Ridgemont Theater (demolished) at Greenwood Avenue N and N 78th Street. See figures 106-107.

4.7.2 Palmer Axel Nelson (1897-1961)

In 1941, draftsman Palmer A. Nelson drew up modifications to the cabaret entry, including adding bar seating, and alterations to the western tier lounge seating and the addition of more stairs leading down to the dance floor.

Palmer A. Nelson was born in St. Louis, Minnesota on March 21, 1897. His family moved to Portland, Oregon around 1905. By 1930 Nelson had relocated to Seattle and was working as a hardware salesman. In the 1940 federal census, he lists his occupation as “draftsman” for a “local architect.” In the 1950s, he listed his occupation as an engineer. Nelson passed away on July 10, 1961, in Seattle.

4.7.3 Donald Neil McDonald, Sr. (1906-1964)

In 1941, Donald N. McDonald, Sr., architect drew a seating plan for the cabaret. McDonald studied architecture at the University of Washington between 1924 and 1929. While studying he worked as a draftsman for several architects and was a senior architectural draftsman for the City

---

165 Seattle Times, “Residential Sales,” September 8, 1940, p. 45
166 Houser.
170 Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections, Permit #340623. This plan was probably used for determining exiting, and was not a redesign of Moe’s original tiered seating.
172 United States Census Bureau, Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Seattle, King, WA.
173 United States Census Bureau, Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Seattle, King, WA.
175 United States Social Security Death Index, SSN 539-03-3032.
176 Drawing on file at SDCI.
of Seattle between 1927 and 1929. McDonald’s son, Donald Neil McDonald, Jr. was born in 1930. After leaving the university, he partnered with Vas Stimson until around 1938. In 1939 McDonald also worked on the Hotel Baranof in Juneau, Alaska and Tall’s Travel Shop in downtown Seattle. By the 1950s, McDonald began to specialize in designing apartment buildings. His apartment projects include: Married Student Housing for Washington State University in Pullman, WA in 1957, eight known apartment buildings in Seattle between 1958 and 1960, and Lakewood Park, a public housing project in White Center, in 1963. Other known projects by McDonald include the Tropic Motel in 1958 and the Proctor & Associates Office Building in 1962 in Bellevue, and a single-family home in Woodridge Glen. Donald N. McDonald, Sr. died in 1964.

4.7.4 William J. Jones (1888-1974)

William J. Jones designed minor modifications to the cabaret entrance and store interiors in 1942.

William J. Jones was born in New York in July 1888. He moved to Seattle around 1910. Jones is known to have designed the Kenworth Motor Truck Company building (1928, 1275 Mercer Street) and the Warrington & Car sdkDen Desoto-Plymouth showroom (1928, 7601-7613 Greenwood Avenue N). He formed a partnership with Roy Chester Stanley around 1938. The partnership eventually evolved into the firm of Jones, Stanley & Steinhart in 1951. Jones withdrew from the firm in 1952, and was largely retired after that, although he occasionally undertook small design projects. Jones passed away in 1974.

4.7.5 Carlson, Eley, Grevstad and Peterson (firm: ca. 1946 - ca. 1949)

The Seattle architectural firm of Carlson, Eley, Grevstad & Peterson designed alterations to the cabaret in 1946, including simplifying the seating to three tiers with the highest at the north and redesigning the stage. Paul G. Carlson signed the construction documents.

Carlson, Eley, Grevstad & Peterson operated as a partnership between 1946 and 1949, when it was succeeded by the firm of Carlson-Eley-Grevstad. The firm consisted of a partnership of Paul G. Carlson (see previous section on Bjørne H. Moe), Frederick Richard Eley (1914-2001), Barney E. Grevstad (1913-1982), and probably Leslie H. Peterson (1911-2000).
4.7.6 Merrill S. Rich (1917-1998)

Merrill S. Rich designed alterations to the cabaret’s kitchen in 1951. Merrill Shackleton Rich was born in Tacoma on June 8, 1916. He graduated from the University of Pennsylvania with a Bachelor of Architecture in 1941 and obtained his Master’s degree from the same institution in 1942. He worked for Seattle architect Victor Noble Jones between 1947 and 1951, before practicing independently between 1951 and 1954. During that period, he designed the Yakima Convalescent Home in Yakima (1954). He worked in partnership with William A. Trimble between 1954 and 1960, before being employed by the University of Washington’s Facilities Planning and Construction Department between 1960 and 1980. Rich passed away on May 30th, 1998.186

4.7.7 Carlson-Eley-Grevstad (firm: 1949-1972)

The Seattle architectural firm of Carlson-Eley-Grevstad designed alterations to the cabaret in 1959 including replacement of the northern common wall with a new reinforced concrete block (CMU) wall and required adjustments to interior facilities. Paul G. Carlson signed the construction documents. Carlson-Eley-Grevstad operated as a partnership between 1949 and 1972 (see previous entry on Carlson, Eley, Grevstad & Peterson). The firm designed the Everett Motor Theater, Everett (1950); renovations to the Fox Theater, Seattle (1950, demolished); Physics Building addition, University of Washington (1954-55, demolished), Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Church addition, Seattle (1956, Now Denny Park Lutheran); Carlson-Eley-Grevstad office building, Seattle (1959, now Retail Lock Box), Mechanical Engineering Building, University of Washington (1955-59), Whitworth Elementary School addition, Seattle (1957-58), First Church of Christ, Scientist, Bellevue (1959-60), Fairmont Park Elementary School, Seattle (1962-64), Bagley Hall addition, University of Washington (1962-63), Electrical Engineering Building addition, University of Washington (1971-72, demolished).187

4.7.8 EHA (Firm: 1977-2015)


The Seattle architectural firm known as EHA (Emick and Howard Design, Incorporated) was founded by Jack Emick and Mindy Howard. The firm was originally a space planning and interior design firm, but with the 1992 merger with Paul Seibert & Associates, the firm evolved into a full-service architectural company.188

4.7.9 Barnett Schorr Architects (firm: ca. 1986-?)

The Seattle architectural firm of Barnett Schorr Architects designed renovation improvements to the four retail store fronts of the subject building in 1986.

Barnett Schorr Architects was led by Barnett Schorr (1929-2016). Shorr was born in Pennsylvania in 1929 and graduated from Uniontown High School, Uniontown, Pennsylvania in 1947. After living in Sacramento in the 1950s, he moved to Seattle to attend the University of Washington, graduating with a Bachelor of Architecture in 1963 at the age of 34. Schorr's firms did a significant amount of historic preservation work, beginning in the 1970s. An early adaptive reuse project was the Ainsworth-Dunn Tuna Cannery at Pier 70 rehabilitation in Seattle, completed between 1970 and 1972.\(^{189}\)

4.7.10 Bryce P. Thomas

Bryce B. Thomas designed recent alterations to the second-floor cabaret including the addition of new stairs on the western side of the upper-tier section, alterations to the northeastern exit doors and new circular stairs leading down to the dance floor from the western seating area, and the addition of a greenroom in 1999.

Bryce B. Thomas received a Bachelor of Architecture at the University of Cincinnati in 1988. He presently heads BPT Architecture in Seattle.

4.7.11 David Hasson Architects

David Hasson Architects designed the current configuration of the four retail storefronts in 2009, obtained a permit to alter the second-floor nightclub in 1997, and obtained an emergency permit to repair a falling beam in 2005.\(^{190}\)

David Hasson (1939-) was a partner of Bittman, Sanders, Hasson & Associates between 1969 and 1979. Hasson later specialized in the design of adult entertainment venues including Fantasy Unlimited (2007).

4.8 Building Contractor, 1937-39 remodel: C. C. Cawsey (1865-1939)

Born in Canada in 1865, Charles C. Causey arrived in Washington State in 1887 and was working as a bricklayer in Seattle by 1899.\(^{191}\) He was a member of the Master Builders Association and Associated General Contractors, for which he served as vice president in 1925.\(^{192}\) By 1912 he was well-regarded in the Republican party and being considered as a candidate for State Senate.\(^{193}\) He served as vice president of the Builders Exchange in 1907.\(^{194}\) He assisted with negotiations during the General Strike of both 1909 and 1919.\(^{195}\) By 1909 he was responsible for the construction of the Seattle Library, the Lowman Building, Broadway High School, and the


\(^{190}\) Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections, permits 694016, 6071000-CN, 6211758-CN.


Lincoln Hotel. His known work also includes the construction of Campbell Block, The Pantorium Building, and 4536 University Way (now known as the Geld Building, 1927, Schack Young & Meyers), the interior of the Chauncey Wright Restaurant in 1919.

He was a member of the Arctic Club, and became a Shriner in 1913. Cawsey died on May 30, 1939.

Prepared by:
Katherine V. Jaeger
Ellen F. C. Mirro, AIA
Larry E. Johnson, AIA
The Johnson Partnership
1212 NE 65th Street
Seattle, WA 98115
www.tjp.us

196 Seattle Times, advertisement, February 14, 1909, p. 143.
200 Seattle Times, advertisement, March 16, 1919, p. 20.
201 Seattle Times, “Meeting Called for Tuesday to Increase Capitol Stock to $250,000—Cheaper Labor and Material Considered,” August 27, 1908, p. 5. “Novices will cross hot sands tomorrow,” June 6, 1913, p. 4.
5. Bibliography


Flom, Eric L. “Cort, John (1861-1929),” HistoryLink.org Essay 3296, posted August 9, 2001,


King County Tax Assessor. Puget Sound Regional Archives.

Los Angeles Conservancy. "Coulter's Department Store (Demolished)."


—. "Laughing Matters—Comedy Battle Heats up the Entrance of a Heavyweight." Seattle Times. October 19, 1990, p. 3.

Showbox
Theater
Landmark Nomination Report
August 2018, page 43


National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). Indexes to Naturalization Records of the U.S. District Court for Western Washington, Northern Division (Seattle), 1890-1952 (M1232), Microfilm Serial: M1232, Microfilm Roll: 1.


—. Email communication with Michael Houser, July 1, 2015.
Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections. “List of URMs Identified By Seattle DCI — April 2016.”
https://www.seattle.gov/dpd/cs/groups/pan/@pan/documents/web_informational/p2422247.pdf
—. Permit # 376054.
—. Permit #340623.
—. Permit #6071000-CN.
—. Permit #6211758-CN.
—. Permit #6211406-CN.
—. Sign permit #S-17990.
—. "Actor, 73, Dies After Beating in First Avenue." September 21, 1954, p. 25.
—. "Chinese Cafe To Be Opened At 'Show Box.'" July 30, 1939, p. 11.
—. "Demand Dance Vote." January 3, 1923, p. 7.
—. "Duke Ellington Arrives With His Orchestra." April 1, 1940, p. 18.
—. "Fire Causes $15,500 Damage." February 6, 1971, p. 4
—. "Name Bands to Visit Show Box." September 6, 1946, p. 12.
—. "Night Club Fire Quickly Put Out." August 27, 1944, p. 4.
— "Pro Wrestling at Showbox Theater." October 26, 1975, p. 64.
— "Proprietor of Night Clubs in Divorced." March 11, 1944, p. 4.
— "Sally Rand Goes Into Third Week." November 7, 1939, p. 4.
— "Show Box Ballroom Makes Bow Tonight." October 3, 1946, p. 16.
— "Theatres and their players." May 21, 1946, p. 11.
— "$1,650 fee allowed Seattle Attorneys." March 11, 1939, p. 7.
— “Along Film Row.” January 27, 1939, p. 16;
— “Along Film Row.” July 31, 1939, p. 4;
— “Along Film Row.” September 23, 1938, p. 25.
— “Army Balloon Unit Wants to Organize Band.” April 2, 1942, p. 2.
— “Building Permits.” August 19, 1943, p. 27.
— “Contract is let for New Cleaning Plant.” January 2, 1927, p. 66.
— “Greene Estate to Kin.” August 29, 1940, p. 16.
— “Meeting Called for Tuesday to Increase Capitol Stock to $250,000—Cheaper Labor and Material Considered.” August 27, 1908, p. 5.
— “Modernizing home becomes work of merit.” April 11, 1946, p. 9
— “New Richmond Hotel Opens Coffee Shop: Modernization costs $50,000.” June 27, 1940, p. 10.
— “Novices will cross hot sands tomorrow.” June 6, 1913, p. 4.
—. “Purpose is to Promote Adequate Service for Seattle Home Builders.” March 8, 1925, p. 25.
—. “Remodeling of Theater.” August 20, 1967, p. 115.
—. “Republican Solons May Be Nominated.” September 8, 1912, p. 13.
—. “Residential Sales.” September 8, 1940, p. 45
—. “Theatre for Green Lake is assured: $100,000 cost of undertaking.” January 10, 1937, p. 42.
—. “Wage Cut is Planned.” January 5, 1921, p. 13.
—. “Women Cheer as Mayor Bans Beer in Home Areas.” March 5, 1934, p. 1.
—. “Work Begins on ‘Movie’ Theater.” July 19, 1940, p. 3.
—. Advertisement. February 14, 1909, p. 143.
—. Advertisement. March 16, 1919, p. 20.
United States Census Bureau. 1940 United States Census, Seattle, King County, Washington; Roll: m-t0627-04378; Page: 13A; Enumeration District: 40-164.
United States Census Bureau. Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930. Seattle, King County, WA.
United States Census Bureau. Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940. Seattle, King County, WA.
Washington State Marriage Records, 1854-2013.
Appendix 1

Figures
Figure 1 • Location Maps

The Showbox
City of Seattle Landmark Nomination Report

August 2018
Figure 2 • Aerial View, City of Seattle Landmarks indicated with letters, identified below

A. 84 Union Building/U.S. Immigration Building (84 Union Street)
B. The Eitel Building (1501 Second Avenue)
C. J. S. Graham Store/Doyle Building (119 Pine Street), D. Colonnade Hotel/Gatewood Apartments (107 Pine Street)
E. The Mann Building (1411 Third Avenue)
F. The Olympic Tower (217 Pine Street)
G. The Fischer Studio Building (1519 Third Avenue)
H. Josephinium /New Washington Hotel (1902 Second Ave)
I. The Bon Marche (300 Pine St)
J. The Joshua Green Building (1425 Fourth Avenue)
K. 1411 Fourth Avenue Building (1411 Fourth Avenue)
L. Brooklyn Building (1222 Second Avenue)
M. Liggett Building/Fourth & Pike Building (1424 Fourth Avenue)
N. The Great Northern Building (1404 Fourth Avenue)
Figure 3 • View A - viewing south on First Avenue

Figure 4 • View B - viewing north on First Avenue
Figure 5 • Site Plan, ALTA survey & exterior photo key
The Showbox
City of Seattle Landmark Nomination Report
August 2018

Figure 6 • Interior photo key, overlaid on original 1937 plans
The Showbox
City of Seattle Landmark Nomination Report
August 2018

Figure 7 • The Showbox, First Avenue façade

Figure 8 • The Showbox, northern façade
Figure 9 • The Showbox, eastern (alley) façade

Figure 10 • The Showbox, eastern (alley) façade
The Showbox
City of Seattle Landmark Nomination Report

Figure 11 • The Showbox, northern end of First Avenue façade

Figure 12 • The Showbox, detail at venue entry, First Avenue façade
Figure 13 • The Showbox. detail at venue entry, First Avenue façade
The Showbox
City of Seattle Landmark Nomination Report

August 2018
Figure 15 • The Showbox, southern end of First Avenue façade

Figure 16 • The Showbox, detail at First Avenue façade
Figure 17 • The Showbox, storefront at First Avenue façade

Figure 18 • The Showbox, storefront at First Avenue façade
Figure 19 • The Showbox, interior at entry

Figure 20 • The Showbox, interior, Kerns Music Shop bar

The Showbox
City of Seattle Landmark Nomination Report
August 2018
Figure 21 • The Showbox, interior, Kerns Music Shop bar

Figure 22 • The Showbox, interior, Kerns Music Shop bar
Figure 23 • The Showbox, viewing north from venue toward ticket booth

Figure 24 • The Showbox, viewing south toward stage
Figure 25 • The Showbox, viewing north from stage toward nightclub entry

Figure 26 • The Showbox, viewing north at northwestern bar
Figure 27 • The Showbox, detail of column
Figure 28 • The Showbox, viewing toward southeastern bar

Figure 29 • Palace Jewelry & Loan (1420 First Avenue), interior
Figure 30 • The Blarney Stone Pub & Restaurant (1416 First Avenue), interior

Figure 31 • The Blarney Stone Pub & restaurant (1416 First Avenue), interior
The Showbox
City of Seattle Landmark Nomination Report
August 2018

Figure 32 • Front Street from Frye’s Opera House, ca. 1885

Figure 33 • Building at corner of First and Pike, ca. 1903
Figure 36 • Corner Market at Pike Place, ca. 1915

Figure 37 • Traffic at First Avenue and Pike Street, 1919
Figure 38 • J. C. Penney at Second Avenue and Pike Street, 1937

Figure 39 • First Avenue, between Union and Pike streets, 1972
Figure 40 • Central Market Building (later the Showbox), lower right of photo next to Regent Hotel (demolished), 1937

Figure 41 • Central Market Building, lower left of photo, next to Harold Poll Building, 1937

The Showbox
City of Seattle Landmark Nomination Report
August 2018
Figure 42 • Subject building, King County Tax Assessor photo, 1940

Figure 43 • Dancing at the Show Box, 1940

The Showbox
City of Seattle Landmark Nomination Report
August 2018
Figure 44 • The Show Box, advertisement in Seattle Times, 1946
Figure 45 • The Show Box, marquee advertising Duke Ellington, 1940

Figure 46 • Viewing south on First Avenue, 1956
Figure 47 • Amusement Center Arcade and Unique Grill, 1975

The Showbox
City of Seattle Landmark Nomination Report
A-28 August 2018
Figure 48 • Modern Productions: Carlo Scanduzzi, Jim Lightfoot, and Terry Morgan, three of the four partners
Figure 52 • Viewing south on First Avenue, 1981

Figure 53 • King County Tax Assessor photo, ca. 1986
The Showbox
City of Seattle Landmark Nomination Report
August 2018
Figure 57 • The Standard Theater (formerly the Alhambra Theater, 1884) on Second Street between Washington and Main streets

Figure 58 • Pantages Vaudeville Theater, northeastern corner Second Avenue and Seneca Street, 1904
Figure 59 • Seattle Pantages Theater, 1300 Third Avenue (1913-15, Marcus Priteca, later the Rex and the Palomar theaters, destroyed 1967), ca. 1936

Figure 60 • Luna Park Dance Pavilion, West Seattle ca. 1910
Figure 61 • Dreamland, Seattle, ca. 1908

Figure 62 • Trianon Ballroom, 2505 Third Avenue, Seattle, ca. 1935

The Showbox
City of Seattle Landmark Nomination Report
August 2018
The Showbox
City of Seattle Landmark Nomination Report
August 2018

Figure 63 • Encore Ballroom, 1214 E Pike Street, Seattle

Figure 64 • The Spanish Castle, Kent Des Moines Road, n.d.
Figure 65 • Dick Parker’s Pavilion, 17001 Aurora Avenue N, ca. 1937

Figure 66 • The Black & Tan Club, 1937
Figure 67 • Moore Theater (1907, E. W. Houghton, City of Seattle Landmark)

Figure 68 • Fifth Avenue Theater (1296, Robert Reamer with Joseph Skoog for the Metropolitan Building Company)
Figure 69 • The Orpheum Theater (1927, B. Marcus Priteca, demolished 1967)

Figure 70 • Seattle Theater (1928, renamed Paramount Theater in 1930, Rapp & Rapp with B. Marcus Priteca)
Figure 71 • Sicks’ Stadium, Seattle

Figure 72 • Century 21 Exposition fairgrounds, 1962
Figure 73 • The A-Go-Go, later the Off-Ramp

Figure 74 • The O.K. Hotel
Figure 75 • 1925 Exposition Internationale des Arts Decoratifs et Industriels Modernes, Pavillon des Galeries Lafayette, Paris, France (1925, Joseph Hiriart, Georges Tribout, & Georges Beau)

Figure 76 • Empire State Building (1931, Shreve, Lamb & Harmon)
Figure 77 • Top of Rockefeller Center (1940, Raymond Hood)

Figure 78 • Art Deco historic district, Miami Beach
Figure 79 • Coulter’s Department Store, Los Angeles (1938-39, Stiles O. Clements, demolished)

Figure 80 • Greyhound Bus Terminal, Cleveland, OH (1948, William Strudwick Arrasmith, National Register)
The Showbox
City of Seattle Landmark Nomination Report
August 2018

Figure 81 • Blue Plate Building, New Orleans (1942-43, August Perez Jr., National Register, now Blue Plate Artists Lofts)

Figure 82 • Coca-Cola Bottling Plant, Los Angeles (1939, Robert V. Derrah, National Register)
Figure 83 • Normal Theater, Normal, IL (1937, Arthur F. Moratz, National Register)

Figure 84 • Pan-Pacific Auditorium, Los Angeles (1935, Welton & Becket, former National Register, demolished)
Figure 85 • Futurama and the World of Tomorrow exhibit, designed by Norman Bel Geddes, 1939 World’s Fair, New York

San Francisco Chronicle, 1948

Figure 86 • San Francisco Bathers’ Building (1936, William A. Mooser II, National Register, now National Maritime Museum)
Figure 87 • San Pedro Municipal Ferry Building (1941, Derwood Lydell Irvin)

Figure 88 • Bellingham High School (1938, Floyd Naramore)
Figure 89 • Ivar’s (Pier 54 location, now demolished)

Figure 90 • SPUD Fish ‘n’ Chips (Alki Location, now demolished)

The Showbox
City of Seattle Landmark Nomination Report
August 2018
Figure 91 • Paramount Pictures Building (1937, demolished)

Figure 92 • Fire station #17, 101 NE 50th St (1930, architect unknown, City of Seattle Landmark)
Figure 93 • Fire station #6, 101 23rd Ave S (1931, George Stewart, City of Seattle Landmark)

Figure 94 • Fire station #41, 2416 34th Ave W (1932, Civil Works Administration for City of Seattle Department of Buildings, City of Seattle Landmark)
Figure 95 • Seattle Art Museum at Volunteer Park/Seattle Asian Art Museum, 1400 Prospect Street (1933, Carl Gould, City of Seattle Landmark)

Figure 96 • Seattle Center House, 305 Harrison Street (1939, Naramore & Young, City of Seattle Landmark)
Figure 97 • Coca-Cola Bottling Plant, 1313 E Columbia Street (1939, Graham & Painter [John Graham, Sr] with Jesse M. Shelton, City of Seattle Landmark)

Figure 98 • Admiral Theater, 2343 California Avenue SW (1942, B. Marcus Priteca, City of Seattle Landmark)
Figure 99 • Bjarne Moe, n.d.

Figure 100 • Residential rendering by Bjarne Moe, published in the Seattle Times, 1932

The Showbox
City of Seattle Landmark Nomination Report
August 2018
Figure 101 • Robin Welts House, Mount Vernon, WA (Bjarne Moe, 1934)

Figure 102 • Huff Theater, Coeur d'Alene, ID (Bjarne Moe, 1936, altered)
Figure 103 • Green Lake Theater & Market building (Bjarne Moe, 1937, altered)

Figure 104 • Varsity Theater, 4329 University Way NE (Bjarne Moe, 1940, O. A. Carlson, contractor, remodeled)
The Showbox
City of Seattle Landmark Nomination Report
August 2018
Figure 107 • Ridgemont Theater remodel design (1967, demolished), Greenwood Avenue N & N 78th Street