OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

| | Paramount Theatre |
|---|--|
| | Name of Property |
| Section number Page | King County, WA County and State |
| | Name of multiple property listing (if applicab |
| SUPPLEMENTARY L | ISTING RECORD |
| NRIS Reference Number: 74001959 | |
| Property Name: Paramount Theatre | |
| County: King County State: WA | |
| Multiple Name: | |
| Park Service certification included in the nomination de Company (1997) Signature of the Keeper Date of Company (1997) | of Action |
| Amended Item in Nomination | |
| This SLR is issued to make the following technical corr | rection: |
| Section 2 The address is corrected to 911 Pine Street, instead of 9 | 901 Pine Street. |
| | |
| The State Historic Preservation Office was notified of t | this amendment. |
| | |

Distribution

National Register property file Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment) Form 10-300 (Rev. 6-72) UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

| STATE: | | 118 |
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| | Washington | |
| COUNTY | | |
| | King | |
| | FOR NPS USE ONLY | |
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| Paramount Theatre AND/OR HISTORIC: OCATION STREET AND NUMBER: 901 Pine Street CITY OR TOWN: Seattle Washington CATEGORY (Check One) District Building Public Public Acquisition: CATEGORY | STATUS STATUS Occupied Unoccupied Preservation work in progress | ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLI Yes: |
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| A. H. Clise, Paramount Building Corp of Se | eattle Inc. | 1 177 - 3 |
| 300 Securities Building, 3rd at Stewart St | treet | |
| city or town: | Lieet | CODE 53 |
| Seattle | Washington | 53 |
| OCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION | | |
| COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC: | | |
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| 4th Avenue and James Street | (C. 10) | 43120 |
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The Paramount Theatre of Seattle, along with a sister structure in Portland, is a variation of the Paramount Theatre in New York City. Seattle's Paramount was designed by Northwest architects Marcus Pritteca and F. J. Peters. Financing was arranged through the W. S. Hammond Company (New York) by L. N. Rosenbaum of Seattle. Adolph Zukor, a well-known leader in the film industry at the time, assisted in the development.

Standing from five to eight stories high, this dominant rectilinear structure covers nearly half of a city block. Construction began in 1926, and little expense was spared. The theatre opened on the night of March 1, 1928.

The front of the building stands eight stories high whereas the remaining sections are five stories. The front facade borders Pine Street and the long side faces 9th Avenue. The main entrance has a central box office flanked on each side by three multipaned double doors. Another similar set of doors behind these form an entry lock. A triangular marquee projects over the front, and three large semi-circular windows rise above the entrance. The remainder of the first story facing Pine Street is occupied by a cafe and tavern.

Rows of windows are located on the higher stories on two sides of the building. Balustrades, cartouches, multipaned windows, decorative trefoil arches, frieze bands, fancy cornices and cresting distinguish the building and create a light textured appearance against the dark red brick.

The lower two stories on the 9th Avenue side are covered with stone tile, which is accentuated by cartouches, decorated frieze bands, ornamental cornices, and three large semi-circular archways. Wroughtiron fire escapes form a maze-like texture against the red brick on the rear portion of this side.

The back of the building has a faded advertisement painted on the upper portion which advertises the Paramount Theatre. While the majority of the theatre is well executed, the alley side is typical "alley," with various loading docks, fire escapes, and utility outlets.

The interior of the theatre is done in blues, golds, and browns creating a rich luxurious decor. Entering the foyer from the entry lock, stairs curve down from the first story balcony along beige and black panelled marble walls. Ironwork railings capped with wood complete the elegance of these stairways. A large crystal and gold chandelier is suspended from the ceiling of the three-story foyer and is eye level with the first story balcony.

The foyer extends into an area with a lowered ceiling where another chandelier hangs from the coffered roof. This area leads into the

Form 10-300a (July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

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| King | |
| FOR NPS USE C | NLY |
| ENTRY NUMBER | DATE |
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(Number all entries)

#7 - Description
Paramount Theatre

four-story grand foyer where two more crystal and gold chandeliers hang from the rose, green, and gold decorated ceiling.

The north or Pine Street wall consists of five mirrors separated by marble panels, and the opposing wall across the foyer is a series of arches leading under the first story balcony to the auditorium. More balconies occur for three more stories fronting on the grand foyer and reflected by the mirrors. Walls are generally gold and have panels defined by molding strips. Archways have hanging drapery which soften the interior. The auditorium's decorative inverted domes, balconies, curtainings, and deeply carved surfaces create distortion-free sound. Seating is increasingly steep the further away from the stage. Twin bronze and crystal chandeliers flank the stage and weigh 1,900 pounds each, contain thousands of crystals, and require a total of 3,600 watts. The whole aura of the interior is one of richness and extravagance, where believing in make-believe becomes possible.



| SIGNIFICANCE | | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| PERIOD (Check One or More as | Appropriate) | | |
| ☐ Pre-Columbian | ☐ 16th Century | ☐ 18th Century | X 20th Century |
| ☐ 15th Century | ☐ 17th Century | 19th Century | |
| SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicat | ole and Known) 1928 | | |
| AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Ch | eck One or More as Appropri | iate) | |
| Abor iginal | ☐ Education | Political | Urban Planning |
| ☐ Prehistoric | ☐ Engineering | Religion/Phi- | Other (Specify) |
| ☐ Historic | ☐ Industry | losophy | |
| ☐ Agriculture | ☐ Invention | ☐ Science | |
| X Architecture | ☐ Landscape | ☐ Sculpture | |
| ☐ Art | Architecture | Social/Human- | |
| ☐ Commerce | ☐ Literature | itarian | |
| ☐ Communications | ☐ Military | X Theater | |
| ☐ Conservation | Music | ☐ Transportation | |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Paramount Theatre is representative of an era in showmanship when the design and decoration of the movie house was an integral extension of the aura of make-believe that was produced on the stage and screen. No expense was spared to create this fantasy for the American public. Ben Hall, in his book The Best Remaining Seats (1961) has stated:

It was a brief era, as golden ages go, swept in on a floodtide of splendor, fantastic architecture, music, laughter and dreams. It began and ended in the decade that lay between Prohibition and Depression and it brought pleasure and escape from boredom to a whole generation of Americans who wanted desperately to believe in make-believe.

Marcus Pritteca, already known for his adroit construction of Pantages Theatres, adapted Seattle's Paramount design from a Paramount Theatre in New York City. Pritteca's design skillfully allowed the patron to observe increasingly more of the elaborate building as the patron proceeded through the showhouse. In effect, the visual architecture was intended to be no small part of the theatrical impact.

The Paramount opened March 1, 1928, just before the great "Crash" and depression. Thus, after the end of the 1920's, there was no money to continue backing this style of theatre construction. Over the years, theatres of this type have all but disappeared from most large American cities. Seattle, however, still has a number of these elaborate showhouses, among which the Paramount is one of the more outstanding. Furthermore, an original pipe organ, built by Wurlitzer expressly for the Paramount, is still intact and in excellent condition, largely due to the efforts of the American Pipe Organ Society.

In the field of entertainment, the Paramount has always drawn outstanding performers and productions. An example would be the elaborate Fanchon and Marco Revues of Vaudeville. Currently it is the center for modern rock concerts, although lately the Paramount has seen the return of symphonies, organ concerts, and road shows.

With excellent acoustics, an extravagant interior, and a well-executed exterior, the Paramount Theatre remains today as a fine example of bygone architecture and stands as a tribute to the talent of Marcus Pritteca.

| MAJOR | BIBLIOGRAPHICAL RI | EFERENCES | | | | | **** | | |
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| | Hall, Ben. The | Best Remain | ning Se | ea | ts. N | ew Yorl | c: C. | N. Potter, 19 | 961. |
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| | Seattle Times, F | ebruary 19, | , Febru | ıa | ry 21, | Febru | ary 23, | and February | y 29, |
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| 89-665 in the evaluation of the second of th | 5), I hereby nominate thin National Register and content according to the content to the content to the National Park Sent of significance of this re- | s property for in certify that it has teria and proced tyice. The recon | clusion s been lures set mmended | | 3 3 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 | ak | Archeolog | Deed ex | rvation |
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Form 10-300a (July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

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(Number all entries)

#8 - Significance Paramount Theatre

Although the Paramount Theatre is less than 50 years old, it represents a never-to-be forgotten era in the history of the theatre; structural evidence of this extension of fantasy from the stage and screen to surround the audience does not require the passage of additional time to determine its value and impact. As pointed out at the beginning of this statement, the period was brief but of unusual impact and as new theatres are marked by increasing austerity, existing theatres such as the Paramount which represent a more fanciful approach to entertainment become of greater value in appreciating an attitude now past.





Form No. 10-301a (7/72)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with photograph)

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| PHOTO CREDIT | : David M. Hansen | | |
| DATE OF PHOT | o: July 22, 1974 | | |
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| | View of northwest | corner | |
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Form No. 10-301a (7/72)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

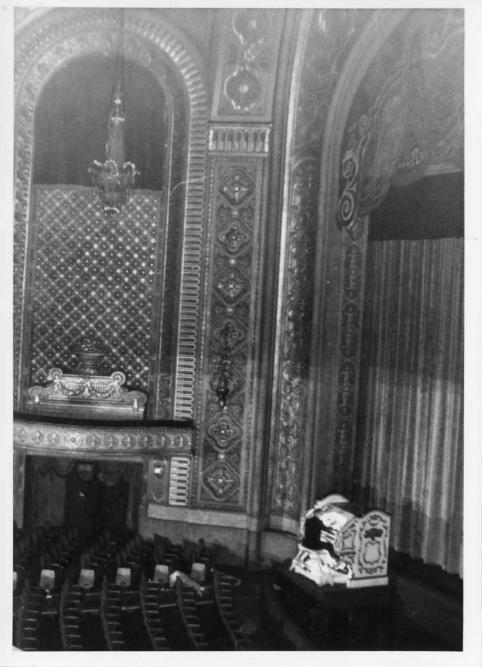
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

Washington COUNTY King FOR NPS USE ONLY ENTRY NUMBER (Type all entries - attach to or enclose with photograph)

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| 3. | PHOTO REFERENCE | | | | | |
| | PHOTO CREDIT: | Ed Zollman, Jr. | | | | |
| | DATE OF PHOTO: | 1970 | | | | |
| | NEGATIVE FILED AT: | | | | | |
| | 1 | Erma Gain, 4505 Lake Wash. Blvd. N.E., Kirkland, Wash | . 9803 | | | |
| 4. | IDENTIFICATION | | | | | |
| | DESCRIBE VIEW, DI | RECTION, ETC. | | | | |
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| | | Main entrance. View is looking south. | | | | |
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Form No. 10-301a (7/72)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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#344

Interior of auditorium of Paramount Theatre showing left end of stage and orchestra pit with organ elevated. Chandelier in front of organ grille is 16' high, took six months to build, cost \$5,000 in 1927. Smaller blue vase lamp is just visible on the panel to left of stage.



Form No. 10-301a (7/72)

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

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Chandelier of frosted crystal and gold, hanging in entrance lobby of Paramount Theatre. This hangs from a decorated dome ceiling and is eye level when standing on the first balcony or Peacock Promenade.

Form No. 10-301 Rev. 7-72

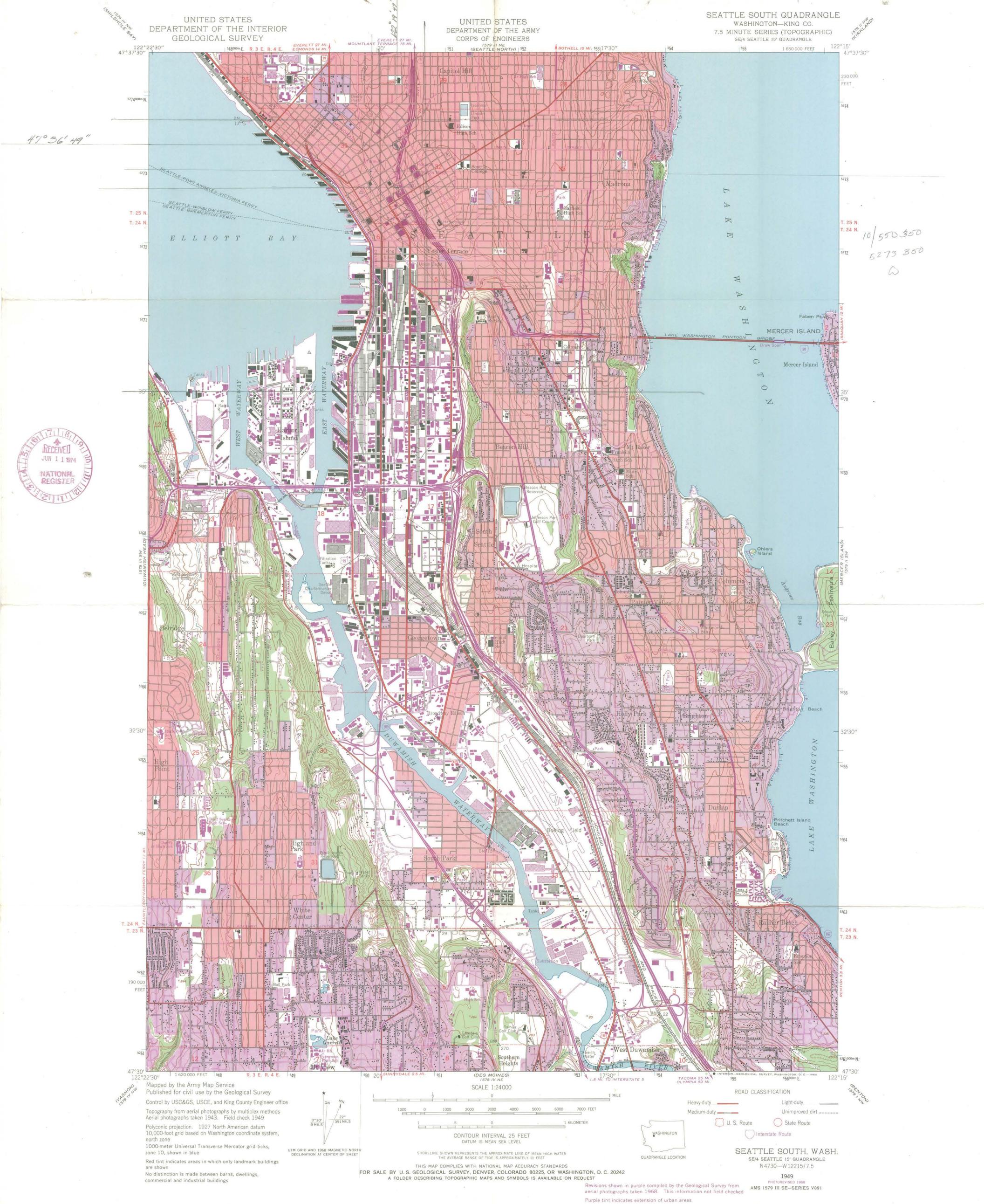
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE WASHINGTON

OCT 9 1974

Date Entered

Name

Location

Paramount Theatre

Seattle King County

Also Notified

Hon. Warren G. Magnuson Hon. Henry M. Jackson Hon. Brock Adams Regional Director, Pacific Northwest Region State Historic Preservation Officer Mr. Charles H. Odegaard Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission Post Office Box 1128 Olympia, Washington 98504

| PROPERTY Paramount Theatre | STATE Was | L. | |
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| WORKING NUMBER 6.11.74, 943 | | | |
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| ١. | Name. |
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| 2. | Location. |
| 3. | Classification. |
| | Owner of Property. |
| 5. | |
| 5. | |
| 7. | Description. What are top 5 floor used for > |
| | THE TOP FIVE FLOORS ARE USED FOR APARTMENTS. |
| в. | Statement of Significance. Please include a statement of Significance. Please include a statement of the sour feasons for requesting a waiving of the sour limit. |
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| | b. Acreage. |
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| Mar | p Coverage. Please use a map bearing an identified system of coordinat |
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Thank you for your attention to the above items checked. Thanks, lather use Cole

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WRITE-UP COMMENT SHEET (leave attached to nomination)

| PROPERTY: | axamount Theatre | Wash. |
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| T KOT DKITT | If there are comments (negative or positive) which will affect the write up, please indicate them below. | |
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WASHINGTON STATE

ADVISORY COUNCIL ON HISTORIC PRESERVATION

P. O. BOX 1128, OLYMPIA, WASHINGTON 98504

DANIEL J. EVANS, Governor

RALPH D. ANDERSON

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MRS. ERIC FEASEY, Chairman

CHARLES H. ODEGAARD, Executive Director

September 10, 1974



Dr. William J. Murtagh Keeper of the Register National Register of Historic Places National Park Service 18th & C Streets N.W. Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Dr. Murtagh:

We are returning the nomination for the Paramount Theatre which was sent to us for clarification and additions.

Sincerely,

tunen David M. Hansen, Chief Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation

cq Enclosure