

1573

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



NATIONAL
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Elsinore Theater
other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 170 High Street SE N/A not for publication
city, town Salem N/A vicinity
state Oregon code OR county Marion code 047 zip code 97301

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	_____ buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	_____	_____ sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	_____	_____ structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	_____	_____ objects
		<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: Architecture of Ellis F. Lawrence MPS
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 24

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.
James M. Jensen August 30, 1991
Signature of certifying official Date
Oregon State Historic Preservation Office
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.
Signature of commenting or other official _____ Date _____
State or Federal agency and bureau _____

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:
 entered in the National Register. See continuation sheet.
 determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.
 determined not eligible for the National Register.
 removed from the National Register.
 other, (explain:)

Edson H. Beall Entered in the National Register 6-17-94
Historicist of Lee DETERMINED ELIGIBLE
DATE / OWNER SUBMISSION 10/24/91

for Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Recreation and Culture: movie,

vaudeville theater

Commerce/Trade: specialty store

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Recreation and Culture: movie theater

Commerce/Trade: specialty store

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals:

Tudor Gothic

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete

walls stucco

roof asphalt, built-up

other decorative stained glass,

wrought iron - wood trim and

window sash

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

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The Elsinore Theatre fills lot 6 on the east side of High Street, between State and Ferry Streets SE. It is on block 7 of the original plat of Salem. It is in the middle of a commercial district, with restaurants and shops on either side. From the Ellis F. Lawrence Building Inventory in Marion County, researched and recorded by Kimberly Demuth and Kimberly Lakin, we learn the vital statistics of the Elsinore. It is a rectangular building, on a site of approximately 0.3 acres. The theater faces west on High Street.

Demuth and Lakin give the theatre a 'Primary' ranking in their inventory, meaning the building's original character is intact, and it is a good example of the architecture of Ellis F. Lawrence. "Compared to Lawrence's other surviving Oregon buildings, this design is among his best works, published, & of national significance."

David Powers' Salem's Elsinore Theater: A Concise History and Tour Guide, (1983,) describes the main line of the Oregon Electric Railway still running down High Street at the time of the Elsinore's construction. The station was in the Oregon Hotel building, across the street.

The Elsinore is two stories high and has a basement. It is of steel-reinforced concrete, and the flat roof is of layers of Bitumen, (an asphalt-like substance.) Powers tells us that the original exterior finish was of stucco inlaid with slivers of glass for sparkle. The current pale grey paint hides the effect. This paint job was done in 1984, along with darker grey paint on the fenestration to bring back original detailing.

EXTERIOR

The facade is dominated by a central parapeted 4-story tower over the entrance, with a shorter parapeted 2 1/2-story

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tower on either side, and 2-story corners. In back of the tower rises the parapeted auditorium wall, an extra buttress toward either end. A belt course marks the base of each parapet, and extends across the side towers. An additional belt course runs beneath the third story windows. On the central tower there is a deep Tudor arched recess, in which are set three narrow trefoil Gothic windows at the second or mezzanine story, and three shorter at the third, or balcony foyer level, each set being pyramidal in design. They are framed by two narrow pilasters, with a sill under the top windows. There are trefoil inset panels above the lower windows, and spandrels above the upper. On the second floor level in each side tower, there is a long, narrow trefoil window, and in the corners two shorter, plain Gothic windows. At the top of the tower are three small windows set in trefoil panels, with an extra panel above which there is now a wooden fence of vertical boards. This replaces the open parapet railing of trefoil Gothic design on top of the tower, which was apparently destroyed in the 1962 Columbus Day Storm.

There is space for a store on the north side of the entrance, which the owners of the theatre have leased to small businesses from the beginning, after the original purpose of a theatre office was never realized.

The entrance has three sets of double doors, restored to the original Flemish oak in 1984. The oak sills of the box office and the poster holders have also been restored to their original finish. There is a door leading to the store on the north side, and a door leading into the box office on the south side. At the back of the theater, there is a door leading out from the stage to the loading dock. There is also a side door. The theatre has 4 fire exit doors on the ground floor, and 2 each in the loge and balcony.

The theatre has seventeen windows on the facade, some of which have the ornate art glass panes. It has about three or four smaller windows in addition, on the upper level of the theatre by the projection booth, as well as one small window above the stage. Windows are wood fixed sash.

MARQUEE

The marquee, made by Carl Armpriest of Salem, was originally of copper. It was supported from eight chains, and decorated with gothic panels above a trefoil edging. Fluted light fixtures were installed along the base of the marquee. The center section extended to the edge of the sidewalk, and bore

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the name of the theatre in lights. In 1930, Warner Brothers erected a great vertical sign extending above the tower, out over the marquee, reading "Warner Brothers Elsinore." It was also ruined by the 1962 storm. There were flood lights concealed in the marquee, and soon after construction two mercury vapor street lights were installed to illuminate the windows.

In the following years, there was a more modern marquee, with a sign to advertise the attractions. In 1984, owner Tom Moyer of the Luxury Theater chain renovated the marquee to match the original Gothic design.

FACADE

The original wall surface was brown stucco with grey stone outlines. Later the theatre was painted white, but in 1984 it was painted grey. Fenestration was also added to the exterior to bring back original detailing.

The box office and poster holders in front of the theatre are of solid oak, and have been restored to their original finish after years of being covered by paint.

INTERIOR

The Capital Journal of May 27, 1926 provides a contemporary description of the lobby and auditorium:

"...Entrance is gained through low, modified Gothic arch doorways with Flemish weathered oak doors and casings into the spacious vaulted ceiling foyer...Directly opposite the entrance is a wall panel 17 feet wide and 25 feet high, flanked on either side by wrought iron candelabras is hung a Royal Kermanshah rug of luxuriant "Tree of Life" design in full bloom...the prevailing foundation colors...harmonize with the walls, which are done in a brownish stone texture of weather beaten stone effect throughout the entire interior of the building. Each of the wall stones are individually treated in glazed colors of deep brown, grey, yellow and red, giving a massive and pleasing masonry effect."

[Powers describes the interior finish this way: "...plaster on metal lath made to look like stone work. The walls, for example, look like stone blocks. Each of these was individually tinted and rubbed with burlap several times to achieve the right effect."]

Back to the Capitol Journal: "Twenty-four feet overhead as one first steps into the foyer is a rich-toned ceiling

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supported by four pairs of English hammerbeam trusses of antique oak. The trusses on the west, or entrance side of the foyer frame a group of three beautiful art windows interpreting that scene from the second act of Hamlet, where he greets and advises the wandering players as they arrive at Elsinore...Advancing into the main foyer the observer gets full benefit of the spacious and lofty architectural scheme, with its typical nave and aisle design. The aisles are 5 feet wide and 25 feet high to the peak of the arched ceilings, and are separated from the nave by eight free-standing columns, four on either side, with a series of connecting arches. The ceiling is fully groined and illuminated by concealed lights from the capitals in the wall opposite...The ceiling is done in polychrome, deep brown and blue prevailing, overglazed in a greenish cast.

At either end of the nave rise the grand staircases, with their graceful wrought iron railings of pure Gothic design, the craftsmanship of Henry Jaegler of Salem. These staircases lead in one direction to the mezzanine promenade extending across the entire west side of the foyer...On it one passes across and over the main entrance by means of a bridge having a number of open penetrations in true Gothic style through which is obtained a remarkable view of the foyer, mezzanine balcony and even the stage itself...Adjacent to the promenade, convenience rooms are arranged for men and women.

"Returning to the foyer from the promenade down the south staircase, one faces a fantastic painting filling a panel 12 feet wide and 21 feet high in the wall over the first landing on the north staircase. The picture is an unusual interpretation of Macbeth on the heath, where he has met the three weird sisters. The composition is the work of N. B. Zane, Assistant Professor of Fine Arts at the University of Oregon...At the opposite end of the foyer in a similar panel is another painting, also the work of Mr. Zane...the balcony scene between Romeo and the Maid of Verona...

"Mounting the grand staircases at either end toward the stage leads to the mezzanine balcony containing 147 choice, fully-upholstered seats in spacious arrangement along heavily carpeted aisles. An excellent view of the stage is obtained from these seats, and they give a removed air of semi-privacy. The balcony is, in effect, an enlarged loge section. The main balcony may be reached from the mezzanine promenade by a vaulted stairway, on the first landing of which is a Gothic arched opening into the foyer at the upper elevation of the aisle. Through it one looks down 25 feet

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to the floor of the main foyer on one side. On the opposite end of the landing the view is into the wall on the southerly side of the mezzanine promenade with its exterior art glass windows presenting the figure of Portia. The window in the north wall portrays Lady Macbeth, a reproduction of John Sargent's famous portrait of Ellen Terry in that role.

"Ascending from the landing one reaches the balcony lounge room to the rear of the main balcony. The room is lighted by a group of three art glass windows, picturing a landscape composition of the island and castle of Elsinore looking toward the sunset across the North Sea. A few steps from the east of the balcony lounge lead to the head of the main balcony and a sweeping view of the entire main auditorium and the magnificent proscenium arch surmounting the stage opening.

"Entrance into the main auditorium on the orchestra floor is through any one of four Gothic arched aisle heads. The aisles are all heavily carpeted in Wilton velvet of Heraldic design, red, black and blue being the predominating colors. On the orchestra floor are 718 fully-upholstered seats bringing the seating capacity of the house with the mezzanine and main balconies up to 1435. All of the main floor seats are full spring cushioned in blue Spanish leather/Fabrikoid, and the back panels are in gold velour. The wooden arms and backs are of antique Flemish oak...

"The full decorative scheme is seen from the main floor of the auditorium. The breasts of the main and mezzanine balconies are panelled in mosaic pattern carrying a heraldic design, including conventional coats of arms and Tudor roses. The balcony rails are surmounted by upholstering in blue velour.

"On either of the side walls of the auditorium are three massive arches...The ceiling is broken into three great panels extending from side to side, separated by ribs in run plaster richly decorated in polychrome, each panel being divided into 150 small panels of Heraldic design...Red, blue and black richly highlighted in varying shades and slightly over-glazed are the foundation colors for the panels.

"The great proscenium opening at the four-centered Gothic arch over the stage is elaborately modelled rising from the stage 28 feet to the crown of the arch. The arch itself splays from the proscenium opening to the side walls a distance of 25 feet, the outer arch springing to a crown of 40 feet from the floor of the auditorium. Approximately half

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of the width of the splay is in open grille Gothic design through which the big Wurlitzer organ, the second largest in the state, speaks. The lower portion of the splay passes fresh air into the auditorium as it is circulated by modern ventilating fans.

"The inside half of the splayed arch is broken into 37 panels in the Gothic scheme, richly decorated in the Heraldic pattern of the Tudor period of foundation colors of red, blue and black...the panels are glazed polychrome...glazed in subdued colors overlaid with lacy gold...Below these panels is a series of run mouldings having the greatest section of any ever run in the Northwest...

"The immediate proscenium opening is done in sienna marble texture, and adjacent on either side stand groups of four columns of blue and deep green overlaid in gold and copper bronze. Adjoining these column groups as the walls widen out to each side of the orchestra pit is a wonderful triptych, or triple panel done in black, blue, brown and gold German flock. These panels, perhaps, are the richest in the building.

"Carrying out faithfully the harmonious color treatment of the floor of the grand foyer, the mezzanine promenade and the treads of the staircase are laid in rubber tile of brown and antique coloring, and the wall bases are of fire-flashed red tile.

"Ornamental bracket lights of Gothic character add much to the appealing effect of the whole interior, but the powerfully striking lighting effects are secured mainly through the use of concealed globes. The ceiling of the main auditorium is illuminated by mirrorized reflectors concealed behind the cove cornice. These lights are carried in four colors and are controlled through a series of dimming rheostats making possible 17 variations of color to illuminate the gorgeous ceiling. The outer proscenium arch is the basis of more mirrorized reflecting illuminating of the entire stage opening and the Heraldic panels. These lights also are run in four banks of colors controlled by dimmers.

"At the stage opening itself a heavy curtain of cut velour is hung. The foundation color here is deep mulberry, shaded in bluish green and complimented with blue and gold. The border at the bottom of the curtain is plain blue velour with galloon [braid] and fringe in old gold..."

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BACKSTAGE

The stage area is fully equipped for theatrical productions, with a light board, curtains, lights, ropes and pipes for hanging scenery. The traveler curtain was repaired in 1983. The movie screen and sound equipment were inspected then as well, and rigged to be flown when the stage is used for theatrical events. At this time the electrical elements of the light board were inspected, and faulty fixtures were replaced. Stage lights were replaced, footlights cleaned, and rigging was checked. Pipes and battens were repaired. The stage surface was refinished in 1985.

Under the stage area is a basement with large and small dressing rooms, 17 in all, complete with sinks. A star room, room for musicians, and a green room are also provided. The basement has a heating and air conditioning system, and various stage equipment. There are also three toilets. This area was cleaned and repainted in 1983 by volunteer workers.

ORGAN

The original Wurlitzer organ was removed when motion pictures arrived with their own soundtracks, and when vaudeville productions stopped. In 1986, a Salem organ enthusiast, Clayton Parks, approached owner Tom Moyer of Luxury Theaters with a proposal to install a new organ in the Elsinore. It was necessary to do a structural engineering study of the organ chamber supports and trusses. Dry rot was found and repaired. Other equipment was rebuilt to accommodate organ equipment in 1989-90. Mr. Parks, his son Rick and other friends installed a 15-rank Wurlitzer organ from 1989-91. The Parks and the new Elsinore owners, Act III Communications, plan to install a larger organ console in the future, and to hold concerts.

FRONT BASEMENT

This space was intended to be a lobby/restaurant when the theatre was built, but it was never finished. In 1985, it was cleaned and painted by volunteers.

CONTROL ROOMS

At the top of the main balcony is a projection booth which has been modified with the introduction of new equipment. There are also rooms for the control of lighting effects.

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OTHER IMPROVEMENTS

There is now a large concession bar in the foyer, directly opposite the entrance. The iron bar from which the "Tree of Life" tapestry hung is still in place. Also, the 1676 Flemish tapestry is still in place to the left of the bar. Other original furniture pieces include a table, and four chairs of Tudor design. The tile floors were found to be slippery, and were soon replaced with carpet. The Gothic archways between the lobby and the auditorium were bricked up because they were found to be "unconducive to good sound for films." Much of the lighting fell into disuse because of the problems of upkeep, but it was repaired and relamped in 1983. In the auditorium, seating and carpeting has been replaced. Skirts were added to the tapestries on the walls, and acoustic tiles installed on the walls.

The Flemish oak doors mentioned in the above article were replaced with glass doors. Along with the other remodeling done in 1985, the glass doors were removed and reproductions of the oak doors were installed.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture
Entertainment/Recreation
Performing Arts/Vaudeville

Period of Significance

1926
1926-1941
1926-1936

Significant Dates

1926
1926-1932

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person N/A

Architect/Builder
Lawrence and Holford

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of property 0.28 acres Salem West, Oregon 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	0
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4	9	7	1	8	0
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4	9	7	5	9	7	0
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Zone Easting Northing

B

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Zone Easting Northing

C

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D

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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The eligible area occupied by the Elsinore Theater is legally described as Lot 6, Block 7, Original Plat of Salem, Marion County, Oregon.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The legally recorded lot lines (Lot 6) represent the full extent of property occupied by the Elsinore Theater from 1926 onward.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Allyson I. Barricklow, and David C. Duniway
organization Save the Elsinore Theatre Committee date March 1, 1991
street & number 2380 Emmett Drive NW telephone (503) 585-9381
city or town Salem state Oregon zip code 97304

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SUMMARY

Since its completion and opening by theater entrepreneur George B. Guthrie in 1926, the Tudor Gothic-style Elsinore has been a dominant feature near the busy intersection of High and State streets in downtown Salem, Oregon. It meets National Register Criterion C as an outstanding example of atmospheric motion picture theater architecture and decoration in the state. The late 1920s were years of transition from the heyday of silent films to the advent of sound tracks. In these years also, vaudeville had reached its pinnacle, and the Elsinore, like so many other theaters in towns and cities on the touring circuit, was equipped with performing facilities--an orchestra, stage, scenery flies, and dressing rooms. Though the Elsinore was not the only film and live performance theater in the capital city, it was unequivocally the leading site of motion picture entertainment in Salem through the Great Depression and Post-War period, and consequently, it meets National Register Criterion A. Not only is it the largest house in town, it is the second largest movie theater remaining in Oregon today, exceeded only by Portland's old Paramount, which has been converted to a performing arts center.

The principal designer of this first-class, first-run motion picture house was Ellis F. Lawrence of the Portland firm of Lawrence and Holford. Fred S. Allyn, associated with the firm and later to become a partner, is credited with coordinating the interior design. The general contractor was the local builder Cuyler Van Patten. Lawrence is well known in the annals of Oregon architecture as the founder and long-time dean of the University of Oregon School of Architecture and Allied Arts. The theater designed by his firm meets the registration requirements relating to commercial property types and quality and integrity of design set forth in the approved Architecture of Ellis F. Lawrence Multiple Property Submission of 1990. Lawrence and his client had been associated in the design of another project in Salem thirteen years earlier. The Hubbard Building, across High Street, housed Guthrie's Oregon Theater. In a Portland residence acquired by Guthrie and remodeled by Lawrence in the early 1920s, the two collaborated again in the design of a Gothic-style gallery space for Guthrie's art collection that is thought to have been the prototype for the technique of texturing and scoring plaster work to simulate stone construction blocks, a technique that subsequently was used to good effect in the Elsinore Theater.

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The Elsinore Theater is of reinforced concrete construction and presents a frontage of little over 70 feet on High Street. Its west-facing facade is dominated by a central four-story battlemented tower with flanking accessory towers and two-story retail volumes at the outer corners. The front is penetrated by wood-framed, cusped lancet windows and articulated with buttressing piers and string courses. Behind the street front rises the massive auditorium block with its straight parapet. The facade was refurbished and the marquee, with its electrically-lighted and arcaded fascia, was reconstructed in a comprehensive renovation completed in 1986.

The foyer, a space conveying medieval atmosphere and monumental proportions, is the centerpiece of the theater. It rises two and a half stories to a groin-vaulted ceiling, the ribs of which are supported on piers with engaged columns. At either end of the lobby, which extends the full width of the theater interior, are grand double staircases ascending to lounges and to the first and second balcony sections of the auditorium. It is in the lobby that the artificial stonework by master plasterer D. L. Hogan shows to greatest effect. All about are accents of custom woodwork and metal work, such as stair railings, wall sconces and tapestry rods, that carry out the Tudor Gothic theme. The lobby is the setting of other fine art and craft details, including stained window glass fabricated by the Povey Brothers Studio of Portland and the colossal murals based on Shakespearean plays painted by Nowland Zane, a member of Ellis Lawrence's fine arts faculty at the University of Oregon.

The auditorium is remarkable for its size (it has an overall seating capacity of 1,435) and acoustical quality. Its decorations combine colorful heraldic motifs and architectural enrichment into a coherent scheme that is appropriately other-worldly but substantial, neither flimsy nor gaudy. The focal point, naturally, is a magnificent proscenium that is a splayed Tudor, or four-centered arch much enriched and containing grillework for ventilation and the sound box for the organ that was an historic fixture.

The Elsinore Theater was a project in which Ellis Lawrence, as chief designer, was enabled to apply his principles of integrating architecture and the arts on a grand scale.

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The 1926 Elsinore Theatre in Salem was the fulfillment of the dream of George B. Guthrie to create the best and finest theatre in the city. The design is the work of the distinguished Portland firm of Lawrence and Holford. Ellis F. Lawrence designed the facade, and Fred S. Allyn the interior. The beautiful interior decorations, including the murals, are intact but in need of restoration.

From the *Ellis Lawrence Building Inventory* by Demuth and Lakin, we hear this Significance Statement:
"...The [Elsinore] theatre is significant as the most intact example of 1920's theatre design in Salem and the only example of a Gothic style theatre of this period within the state of Oregon. It is also significant as the only existing theatre design from the firm of Lawrence and Holford..."

Designed for both stage and motion pictures, the theatre in its early days was the heart of the dramatic and musical life of the city. Vaudeville regularly was combined with motion pictures, and many famous or aspiring actors and musicians played the Elsinore. A Saturday morning Mickey Mouse Club for talented youth, with Zollie Volchok as emcee, was held for many years. Many other amateur productions stimulated local residents to begin careers in drama, music, and public relations.

With the advent of the talkies, the building was equipped for sound in 1932, and stage shows no longer came to the theatre.

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Through changes in ownership and the motion picture business, the theatre has continued to operate.

On May 25, 1951, the 25th anniversary was celebrated. On October 22, 1981, there was a Mickey Mouse Club reunion. It was proposed that the Elsinore become the basis of a Performing and Visual Arts Center, and be considered a multipurpose municipal convention hall. A Statesman-Journal editorial in 1980 described the theatre this way: "The Elsinore is one of the finest theaters of its era on the West Coast. Its architecture, sculpture and its murals not only are worth preserving on their merits, but the theater has become part of Salem history."

The Elsinore Arts Center Committee was formed. In the General Election of November 3, 1981, a ballot measure to raise \$645,000 annually to cover the acquisition and restoration of the theatre was defeated at the polls, but the Save the Elsinore Committee has remained active. Volunteers have worked to restore the theatre, with the cooperation of the owners.

Currently, the Committee is negotiating with Act III Communications to buy the theatre. It would become a movie house for special features, art movies, as well as a performing arts center. The Committee is hoping to raise money in the community through fund raising projects, and to obtain a grant from the City of Salem.

SALEM THEATRE

In the 1850s, the first travelling theatre companies began to arrive. Shows were held at the Reed Opera House (1869,) later the Grand Opera House. Cinemas and nickelodeons opened in 1904, giving rise to many more cheap theatres, which often didn't survive very long. An entrepreneur named T. J. Bligh came to Salem in 1908, and established the Bligh theatre in 1911, which presented vaudeville programs and movies. The Globe theatre also offered programs by the Willamette Amusement Company, a Portland theatrical firm which provided vaudeville and movies. This thriving market convinced another man that a larger theatre would be successful.

GEORGE B. GUTHRIE

Born in 1882, he was an Iowa man who graduated from Harvard Law School, and then made his way to Portland in 1910. He worked as an attorney there until 1949. During this time, he also acquired theatres. He and his partners renamed the Globe theatre the "Oregon," and he also controlled the Grand

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theatre occasionally.

Prior to building his new theatre across the street from the Oregon, on a site that used to house a livery stable, Guthrie took a trip to England to study Shakespearean architecture. He was an avid art collector, and an art critic. He financed the entire project. He was inspired by the spiritual aspects of the Gothic style, with its lines pointing to the site of eventual repose and perfection.

The Elsinore served as an art gallery to exhibit paintings from his collection. Kimberly Demuth and Kimberly Lakin, in their National Register of Historic Places Registration Form for the Wells-Guthrie House, (1989) tell of a gallery designed by Ellis F. Lawrence in the home that "appears to have been something of a prototype for a simulated stone interior of notable grandeur in the Gothic-style Elsinore Theater..." 52 items were displayed during the 25th anniversary celebration mentioned above. The Oregonian said that "Guthrie possessed one of the finest private art collections in the state." (Oregonian, 11/29/55.) The only remaining item is the Flemish tapestry. The Guthries leased the theatre to Fox West Coast Theaters on October 30, 1929. Mr. Guthrie died in 1955.

ELLIS F. LAWRENCE

He was born in 1879. A graduate of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, he came to Portland in 1906. His art and architectural study took him to Europe, and he worked in a Paris studio for five months. He came back to the states and intended to establish an office in San Francisco, but settled in Portland. He worked as a draftsman and later as an architect.

Kimberly Demuth and Kimberly Lakin, in their National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form for the Architecture of Ellis F. Lawrence Multiple Property Submission, describe Lawrence as "an accomplished architect who was instrumental in the development of the architectural profession within the state of Oregon." In 1914, he was founder and first dean of the University of Oregon School of Architecture. He was active in several professional organizations, and was instrumental in extending the activities of the American Institute of Architects to the West coast. He founded the Builders Exchange of Portland in 1911 and the Oregon Building Congress in 1921. Demuth and Lakin claim that Lawrence has been called "The Father of City Planning in Oregon."

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As dean of the School of Architecture and Allied Arts, Lawrence spent two days a week in Eugene and served as university architect, though without salary. Demuth and Lakin say that "Lawrence adapted his architectural program from M.I.T.'s, but attempted from the beginning to make it 'a genuine experiment in art education.'" They speak of his "non-competitive design policies and...break from the Beaux Arts system" as the elements that made the U. of O.'s school very modern.

From Demuth and Lakin, more about Lawrence's contributions to the world of architecture:
"Lawrence integrated his academic program with the University's building program to a degree that he reported as unique among architecture schools. This relationship was especially evident during a period of active building from 1919 to 1923, during which the University acted as its own general contractor; the University's chief of construction and mechanical inspector were part-time faculty of the school, and classes in construction and working drawings paralleled the building program...Students made twice-weekly inspections of the buildings under construction, and together with the faculty, they produced works of art to ornament these buildings...

"...Lawrence decided to teach architecture in close collaboration with the teaching of the arts allied with it... Lawrence's early thinking about the scope of this art training included weaving, textiles, pottery, tile, terra cotta, modeling and carving, interior decoration, and landscape decoration..."

Demuth and Lakin count more than "500 buildings and unbuilt projects, including 200 houses. Approximately 260 buildings survive in Washington and Oregon, including about 120 houses." Buildings designed by Lawrence in Salem include the Oregon theater building, Mount Crest Abbey, Hope Mausoleum, the T. A. Livesley residence, (now the governor's mansion,) and the Masonic Temple.

When he designed the facade of the Elsinore, he was a senior member of Lawrence and Holford, a firm founded in 1913. The design is an outstanding example of Gothic architecture, and was referred to in advertising as "The Showplace of Willamette Valley." Mr. Lawrence died in 1946.

FRED S. ALLYN

Born in 1883 in South Dakota, he came to Portland in 1903.

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He was an architect in the office of Lawrence and Holford when he designed the interior of the Elsinore. He was eventually a partner in the firm, and then he served as architect for the army in World War II. He was involved in designing the buildings for the Oregon State University Medical School in Portland. He also designed Portland Air Base, Camp Adair, war housing projects, and the Multnomah County Juvenile Home.

ART

The lobby murals were executed by Nowland Britten Zane. Born in Pennsylvania in 1885, he studied at the Chicago Art Institute, the Pennsylvania Academy of Art, and the Drexel Institute in Philadelphia. In the academic year 1925-26, he came to the University of Oregon as Assistant Professor of Fine Art, and stayed through 1943-44. By then, he was Assistant Professor of Space Arts. Other mural by him are in the U. of O. Library. He also wrote articles on art appreciation.

The art glass was the work of Povey Brothers of Portland, a company established in 1888. They made glass for many churches and homes in the Pacific Northwest.

CONTRACTORS

General contractor was Culyer Van Patten. Lumber, moulding and trim came from the Charles K. Spaulding Logging Company of Salem. David L. Hogan was responsible for plaster and enriched moulding of the concrete. The sheet metal marquee, ducts and roofing were done by Carl B. Armpriest. Rubber tile flooring was done by Martin Viesko. The electrical contractor was Page-McKinney Company of Portland. Rushlight, Hastorf and Lord, Inc., also of Portland did the plumbing, heating and ventilation. Builder's hardware came from Ray L. Farmer Hardware Company, and electric lamps were supplied by Vibert and Todd of Salem. The plaster work in the lobby was by Herman Brothers of Portland. Ted Wannio was the foreman for the painting and decoration in the auditorium for Berger Brothers of Portland, who were also responsible for the design, color schemes and decor. The proscenium arch, ceiling and balcony breasts were designed and executed by Louis Gluck of Seattle. The stair railing iron work and other ornamental ironwork were the handicraft of Henry Jaegler of Salem. Lighting fixtures were designed and installed by Fred Baker of Baker-Harkness Company, Portland, while the imperial damask hanging were done by H. B. Scott of Portland.

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MUSIC

The Wurlitzer organ furnished the music for silent movies, beginning with Cecil B. DeMille's "The Volga Boatman," shown on opening night, May 26, 1926. A ten-piece orchestra from Portland played a half-hour concert at this event. In the early years, Percy Burraston was the Elsinore organist. Another organist, Mary Barton, played as well, notably during the weekly radio broadcasts held at the theatre, which ended when the organ was removed in 1962.

For the first anniversary celebration, the University Symphony Orchestra presented six numbers prior to the feature, "The Whirlwind of Youth." The Portland Symphony under Willem Van Hoogstraten came to Salem. He found the acoustics marvelous and felt the theatre should be a symphony hall. Sir Harry Lauder came on tour with his entertainers and sang at least 19 songs, including "Roamin' in the Gloamin'" and "Hate to Get Up in the Morning."

Other musical events for which programs have been saved include Argeneva Slaviansky and the Royal Russian Choir; Arthur Hammerstein's "Rose Marie;" Chick Sale's "Gay Paree;" and the operetta, "Golden Hair and the Three Bears," presented by students of Sacred Heart Academy, April 8, 1929. Another local production was the "Fifth Annual Dance Revue" by the Barbara Barnes School of Professional Dancing, which involved Mrs. Douglas McKay and other mothers in the production.

Now that the Parks have installed a new Wurlitzer in the Elsinore, concerts will again be held in the theatre.

SHOWS

For six years, plays came to the Elsinore on circuit. Vaudeville acts appearing at the Elsinore came from all over, including Fanchon and Marco's company from Los Angeles, which presented "Maytime" on June 4, 1926. Edgar Bergen came to the theatre.

Programs remain from Henry Duffy's presentation of Rain; Otis Skinner's The Honor of the Family; the Manhattan Players' In Love with Love; and for one week, The King of Kings. The Moroni Olsen Players performed Mr. Pim Passes By, and the Salem Drama League performed The Piper. Sacred Heart Academy and St. Vincent de Paul School gave a Washington Bicentennial Pageant, "In the Hearts of His Countrymen." It is said that Clark Gable had his debut on stage in a bit part for Henry

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Duffy at the Elsinore.

The Mickey Mouse Club talent shows were begun during the Depression, one of many projects designed to bring the public back to the theatre in difficult times. These shows lasted until 1936.

Events held at the Elsinore since 1983 include over 75 evenings of activities, attracting over 50,000 people. These include the City Council's Volunteer Awards, local theatrical productions, and touring musical programs, such as the Vienna Boys Choir, and P.D.Q. Bach.

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PHOTOGRAPHS

For all photographs listed:

Elsinore Theatre
Salem, Oregon. Marion County.
Gerry Lewin, photographer.
February 26, 1991.
Negative property of Save the Elsinore Committee, Inc.
170 High Street SE, Salem, OR 97301

32 photographs

1. Exterior of Elsinore, taken from west side of High Street shooting east at theatre.
2. The front doors of the theatre, reproductions of the original oak doors.
3. Plaque on exterior wall, commemorating theatre restoration in the mid-80s.
4. Plaque on sidewalk, commemorating same.
5. View of the outside box office. Restored to original wood finish.
6. View of the box office and a poster holder.
7. Interior of theatre, showing view of doors from inside and art glass windows above, depicting Hamlet and the players.
8. Concession stand in foyer.
9. Mural of scene from Romeo and Juliet. South end of lobby, with stairs leading to loges and balcony.
10. Mural of scene from Macbeth, on north end of lobby. Stairs leading to loges and balcony.

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11. Candelabrum in lobby. Close-up of masonry effect.
12. View of concession stand, taken from landing on stairs leading to mezzanine promenade.
13. View from back of house to stage, wide angle shot.
14. Identical view, conventional lens.
15. View of stage from loge, conventional lens.
16. View of stage from balcony, wide angle shot.
17. View of house from stage, wide angle shot.
18. Same view, conventional lens.
19. Orchestra pit, facing south.
20. Backstage. View of lights, curtains, some sound equipment.
21. Backstage. View of ropes and light board control booth.
22. Closer view of light board.
23. View of stage lights.
24. Back stage door. View east, to parking lot in back of theatre.
25. Staircase leading to dressing rooms in basement, taken from basement. Dressing room and toilet visible.
26. Dressing room, with sink.
27. Another dressing room.
28. Large dressing room. Sink visible on edge of photograph.
29. Closer view of dressing room visible in photograph of staircase. Water damage on wall, ceiling, floor.

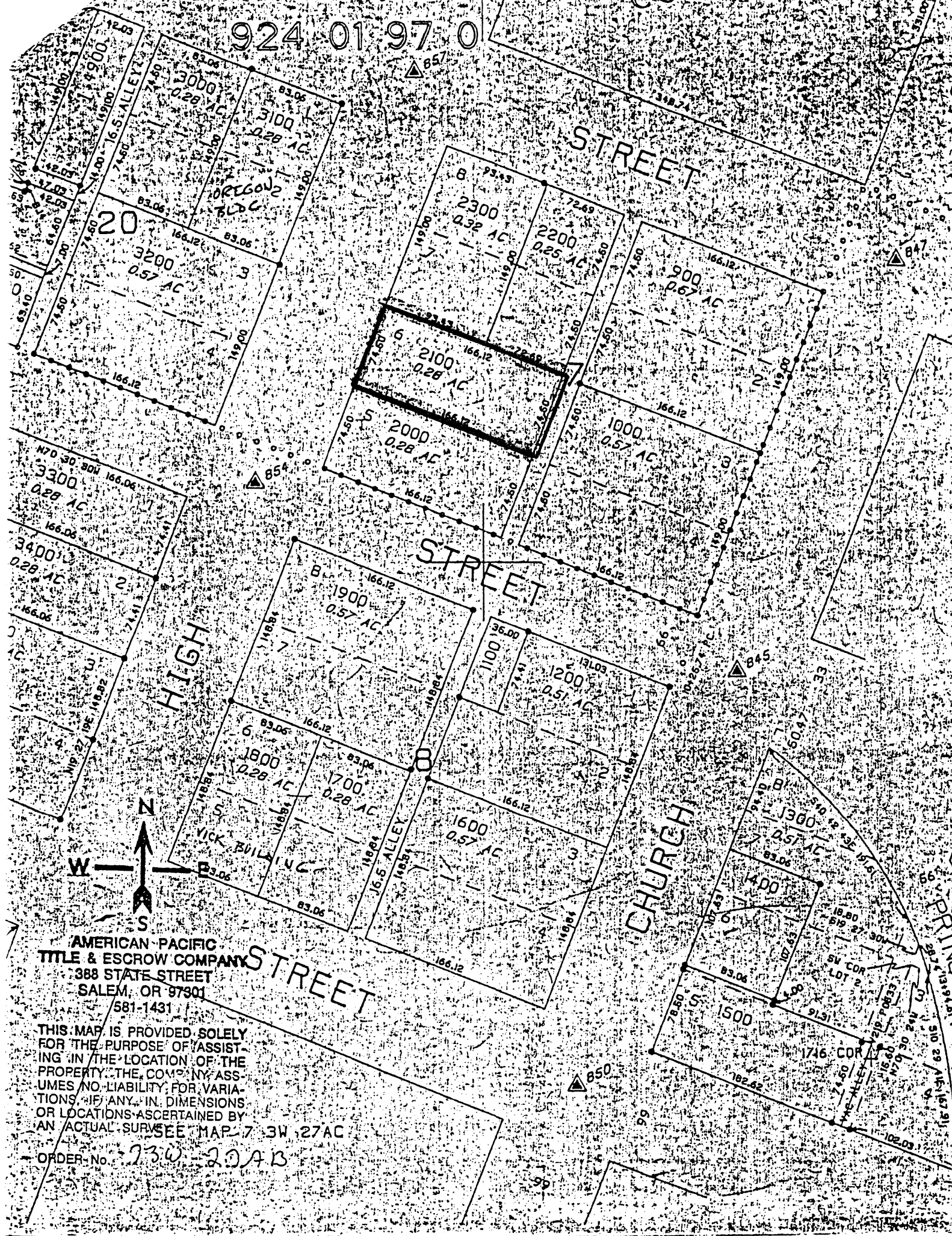
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- 30. Close-up of water damage, same room.
- 31. View of balcony, from north side.
- 32. Projection booth.

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AMERICAN-PACIFIC
 TITLE & ESCROW COMPANY
 388 STATE STREET
 SALEM, OR 97301
 581-1431

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ORDER No. 730-204B

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Elsinore Theater
NAME:

MULTIPLE Architecture of Ellis F. Lawrence MPS
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: OREGON, Marion

DATE RECEIVED: 5/20/94 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 6/01/94
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 6/17/94 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 7/04/94
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 91001575

NOMINATOR: STATE

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 6/17/94 DATE Entered in the
National Register

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

RECOM./CRITERIA _____
REVIEWER _____
DISCIPLINE _____
DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

May 12, 1994

Jerry L. Rogers
Associate Director for Cultural
Keeper of the National Register
National Park Service
PO Box 37127
Washington DC 20013-7127

Attention: Carol D. Shull, Chief of Registration

Dear Jerry:

This will confirm that the Oregon State Historic Preservation Officer believes the following property meets criteria of the National Register and concurs in the request of the property owner to have the property listed in the Register.

ELSINORE THEATER (1926)
170 High Street SE
Salem, Marion County, Oregon

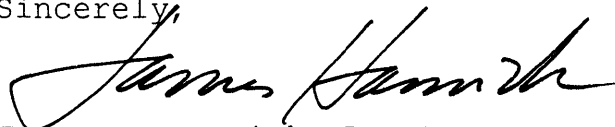
Advised Ellis F. Lawrence 11/21/91

In accordance with federal regulations relating to property owner objections to National Register listings, Salem's Elsinore Theater was officially determined **eligible** for listing on October 24, 1991.

Recently, the atmospheric motion picture house was acquired by STAGE, Inc. for adaptive use as a theater for the performing arts. We enclose herewith the owner's notarized statement to you indicating STAGE, Inc. seeks listing of the property as soon as possible.

We look forward to the addition of this distinguished property in the capital city to National Register listings. It relates to the Architecture of Ellis F. Lawrence Multiple Property Submission.

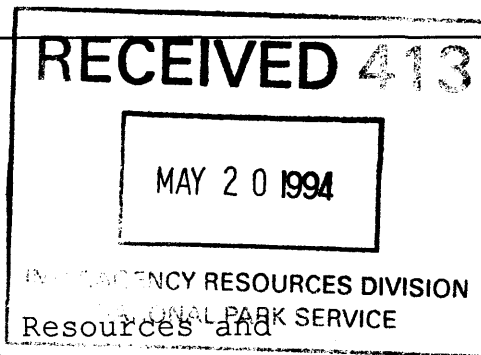
Sincerely,



James M. Hamrick, Deputy
State Historic Preservation Officer

JMH:EWP

cc: Todd Hutton
Salem Area Historic Landmarks Commission



Oregon

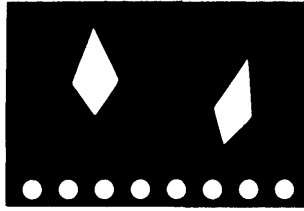
PARKS AND
RECREATION
DEPARTMENT

STATE HISTORIC
PRESERVATION OFFICE



1115 Commercial St. NE
Salem, OR 97310-1001
(503) 378-5001
FAX (503) 378-6447

STAGE, INC.



170 High Street S.E.
Salem, Oregon 97301

May 12, 1994

Mr. Jerry L. Rogers
Associate Director for Cultural Resources
and Keeper of the National Register
National Park Service
PO Box 37127
Washington DC 20013-7127

Dear Mr. Rogers:

STAGE, Inc., has held legal ownership of *The Elsinore Theatre*, Lot 6, Block 7, SALEM, in the City of Salem, County of Marion, State of Oregon, since July 27, 1993. As president and designated representative of this association since its purchase, I hereby waive the previous owner's, Act III, objection to the *Elsinore Theatre* being listed on the National Register of Historic Places. We would, in fact, be honored to receive this listing for our theatre.

Sincerely,

Todd Hutton
Chairman of the Board of Directors
STAGE, Inc.

