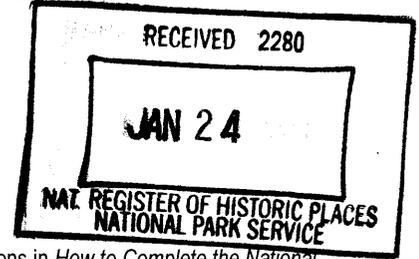


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service



### National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A) Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-9000a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

#### 1. Name of Property

Historic name Dream Theater  
Other name/site number 167-4820-0015

#### 2. Location

Street & number 629 N. Main St.  not for publication  
City or town Russell  vicinity  
State Kansas Code KS County Russell Code 167 Zip code 67665

#### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature] 1/23/06  
Signature of certifying official/Title Kansas State Historical Society Date  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See continuation sheet for additional Comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting official /Title Date  
\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

#### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the 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  
Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action 3/8/06

Dream Theater  
Name of Property

Russell Co., Kansas  
County and State

### 8. Statement of Significance

#### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "X" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

#### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years

#### Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

#### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Entertainment/Recreation

Architecture

#### Period of Significance

1948-1955

#### Significant Dates

1948

#### Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

#### Cultural Affiliation

N/A

#### Architect/Builder

Boller, Robert O. and Lusk, Dietz, Jr.

### 9. Major Bibliographical References

#### Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

#### 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 # \_\_\_\_\_

#### Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

\_\_\_\_\_

Dream Theater  
Name of Property

Russell Co., Kansas  
County and State

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** Less than one.

**UTM References**  
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1

1	4	5	1	2	2	1	0	4	3	0	4	5	6	0
Zone		Easting						Northing						

2

Zone		Easting						Northing						

3

Zone		Easting						Northing						

4

Zone		Easting						Northing						

See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**  
(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

**Boundary Justification**  
(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

**11. Form Prepared By**

Name/title Kay Homewood & Aldean Banker  
Organization Russell Arts Council Date April 21, 2004  
Street & number P.O. Box 176 Telephone 785-483-4796  
City or town Russell State KS Zip code 67665

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets**

**Maps**

- A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- A **sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs**

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

**Additional items**

(Check with SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

**Property Owner**

Name Russell Arts Council  
Street & number P.O. Box 176 Telephone N/A  
City or town Russell State KS Zip code 67665

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503

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National Register of Historic Places  
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Dream Theater  
Russell Co., Kansas

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**Summary**

The Dream Theater (c. 1948-49) is located at 629 North Main Street in Russell, Russell County, Kansas, (population 4,497). Standing in the heart of Russell's Main Street, the theater was constructed on the same location as the first Dream Theater. Originally named the Mainstreet Theater (c. 1926), this building was destroyed by a fire November 19, 1947. Parts of the burned building's three walls were incorporated into the new construction by running a bond beam around the top, bonding the three walls together.

**Exterior:** The Dream Theater is an example of late Art Deco architecture. The building has a western façade orientation, measuring fifty-two feet and eight inches from north to south. The building measures one hundred fifteen feet and six inches from east to west. The height of the building is thirty-four feet and seven and one half inches. The roof is a bowstring design covered with urethane foam.

Inlaid in the sidewalk in front of the theater is the word "Dream" in white cement outlined in brass and embedded in man-made marble (carborundum). The scrip area is bordered with maroon cement. Large poster cases are mounted on each side of the angled theater entrance.

Four-inch square ceramic tiles in tan, yellow and blue extend from the sidewalk to the bottom of the marquee and include the bottom of the box office. The protruding box office draws attention to its centered position as it is flanked on both sides with double wooden doors with full-length glass panes that give entrance to the foyer.

The box office has five-panes of glass with a ticket window in each of the two side panes. Neon lighting hidden in recessed aluminum attaches the box office ceiling to the marquee. The box office maintains the original intercom to reach other areas of the theater.

Buff brick faces the building front from the marquee to the top of the building. In this area a cast stone geometric design block is inset on either side of the tall metal panels. The blocks are approximately two feet wide and four feet long. A row of cast stone coping edges the building front at the roofline. A cast stone geometric panel,

Approximately four feet wide and seven and one-half feet long is centered and inset above the office window area.

Twenty feet on the north front of the building houses the office and the remaining thirty-two feet incorporates the entrance to the theater. The transom above the office door and two of the five opaque corrugated glass windows remain in the office. On the north side of these windows hangs a poster case to advertise coming attractions. The street entrance to the office is on the south side of the windows.

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Dream Theater  
Russell Co., Kansas

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The V-shaped marquee measures eleven feet long and four and one-half feet high on each side of the V. On the marquee four divided panels accept letters announcing the featured films and events. At the top of each side V-panel are recessed metal script letters spelling out "Dream." Neon tube lights the word from within the recessed area. The word is set in front of blue and white clouds.

At the center of the marquee roof a slender blue and white metal panel draws attention eight-feet upward adding height to the building structure. Giving width to the panel are three buff colored (painted) corrugated metal vertical panels on each side of the center. The panels are set in stair-step fashion giving an Art Deco appearance. A slender metal pivoted pole set directly back from the top of the center panel. The pole presents a futuristic look with its incandescent beacon and metal fins. The stair step detail of the front roofline is repeated on the back wall. This wall is red brick covered with cement and finished in buff colored stucco. Stucco and cement have fallen from the wall in several places.

**Interior:** The interior décor of the Dream blends curves and angles with free-hand painted panels. A large shadow-box poster case hangs on the north wall of the theater foyer, facing the concession stand on the south. The foyer has a polished terrazzo floor with sand finished plaster walls and ceiling. The double shadow boxed ceiling provides extra height to the area. Sand finished plaster is used throughout the theater as a wall finish.

Five wooden framed doors with full-length glass panels separate the foyer from the blue-carpeted lobby. Carpeted stairs to the north of the doors lead to the balcony and projection room. Ramps at the far south and the far north of the lobby provide access to the auditorium. In the center of the lobby between the ramps is a lower lobby lounge. The blue-carpeted sunken lounge is one of the very unique features of the interior arrangement. It is situated directly below the center balcony seating section.

Ornate iron grill railings and five carpeted steps lead down to the sunken lounge area. Large shadow box poster cases promoting future attractions are on the south and north walls of the lounge. Straight ahead of the stairs blue ceramic tiles form a cove for water fountains. The fountains are two different heights to accommodate adults and small children. A basic men's restroom is to the north and the ladies restroom is to the south of the fountain area. The ladies restroom is divided between a powder room and toilet area. In the powder room floor to ceiling mirrors are mounted on three walls. A chest-high lipstick shelf is installed over the mirrors on the two sidewalls. An open double door across from the mirrors leads to a room with two enclosed stalls and wash sinks.

Five painted panels that grace each sidewall of the auditorium. The paintings are original and were all painted freehand from preliminary sketches prepared in the Hanns-Teichert Studios in Chicago. Each panel contains a unique design that is different from all of the other panels. These panels are water stained but restorable and at this time are covered with temporary drapes. The lower lobby lounge

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Dream Theater  
Russell Co., Kansas

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contains Hanns-Teichert Studios produced painted panels on each side of the water fountains, although they have been painted over. Quad-tiered futuristic stainless steel scones bring a glow to the area between the panel designs.

The lights of the auditorium enhance the furred soffit ceiling. A reactor panel-lighting system with possible 15,000 shadings of light is still in the theater. The light system was called mood lighting and changed with the tempo of the film being shown. When the theater was built it was the only theater in the world with a light control panel. The theater's arc stage spotlight was an early example of its technology.

The wide screen is on a raised platform stage and has the original deep navy and rose-silk-brocade velour grand curtain and sheer shadow curtain. They are remotely controlled travel curtains. Alternating navy and rose silk-velour cascades stretch across the width of the curtain. The emergency exits are lit and located to the right and left of the stage. A cast plaster canopy in Art Deco fashion caps the exit doors. Curtains matching the brocaded stage curtain cover the exits. These navy curtains are topped with a long rose-silk valance and topped with a navy cascade.

Comfortable maroon seats are placed stadium style throughout the auditorium and balcony with a center section and two side sections. These are not the original seats. A cross-aisle behind the sections on the floor allows smooth traffic flow. Stadium steps lead to the balcony and projection room. Seating accommodates 200 patrons. Access stairs and aisles are carpeted in blue.

In the basement two concrete tunnels run from the front to the rear of the building and eight rooms house the air-conditioner, furnace, stage, and toilet. The basement was designated as an atomic bomb shelter during the 1950s. In the construction of the building eight carloads of cement and plaster were used. Over 7,000 feet of ½-inch electrical conduit was used to wire the Dream.

The theater retains its original floor plan. The only changes to the building have been seats, carpeting, painting, new roof, new air-conditioning unit and a new sound system.

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Dream Theater  
Russell Co., Kansas

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### Summary

The Dream Theater (c. 1948-1949) is being nominated to the National Register under Criterion A for Recreation/Culture and under Criterion C for as an example of Art Deco architecture as documented in the Multiple Property documentation Form (MPDF) "Historic Theaters and Opera Houses of Kansas." The Dream Theater has direct associations with the historic context "Historical Development of Public Entertainment in Kansas, 1854 – 1954," developed as part of the MPDF and meets the MPDF registration requirements.

### Elaboration

E. B. Danielson and his son, Dale Danielson, purchased the Main Street Theater in 1929, remodeled it in 1934, and changed the name to Dream Theater. Fire consumed the theater April 19, 1947, only leaving part of three walls standing. The father and son team set out to build the most up-to-date movie theater possible. Thus the Dream was born, a modern, futurist, up-to-date, fireproof theater that would rival theaters in large cities. The Danielsons wanted to provide Russell with the best possible place for movie entertainment.

The Dream Theater fused a futuristic blend of modern architecture in its design, artistic use of lighting, painting, and layout. Designed by Robert O. Boller and Dietz Lusk Jr. of Kansas City, Missouri, the Dream Theater represents a late example of the Art Deco style. From the 1930s until the early 1950s Boller and Lusk worked on new theater design and renovations throughout Kansas, Missouri, Iowa, Oklahoma and Nebraska. Before that time, Boller had partnered with his brother Carl in the regionally recognized theater design firm of Boller Brothers.

The Boller/Lusk team recruited H. S. Mossman, Eugene, Oregon as the construction superintendent for the project. Frank Lachner with Hanns-Teichert Studios in Chicago painted the original free-hand panels that grace each sidewall of the auditorium. Local resident H. Lothar created the iron grill railings for the staircase that leads from the lobby to the sunken lounge area.

Like many late era Art Deco theaters, the Dream featured a prominent façade with an asymmetrical emphasis. The linear, hard edge façade, integrate both horizontal and vertical elements into its composition, a defining characteristic of the Art Deco style.

The projecting marquee is arranged in a series of set backs emphasizing geometric form and verticality.

Popularized during the 1920s, Art Deco manifested itself as late as the 1950s. The decorative design style became popular for theaters, restaurants, hotels, ocean liners. Art Deco buildings constructed during and after the Great Depression assumed less ornamentation and were much flatter than the

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Dream Theater  
Russell Co., Kansas

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structures built in the 1920s. Geometrical designs utilizing stepped forms and rounded corners provided the quintessential expression for the Art Deco.

Designer Boller employed the Art Deco for the Dream Theater in an attempt to achieve a lavish, exciting design that cost less than it appeared. The neon lights both inside and outside the theater created an atmosphere that attracted and intrigued the theater going public. Creative use of plaster and mirrors illuminated and decorated the theater in visually exciting but economical ways.

Although somewhat of an anomaly, the Dream Theater is closely associated with a significant change in the film entertainment. The theaters built in the late 1940s and early 1950s represent the last theater types constructed in downtown corridors. The move to build both drive-in theaters and theaters at the edge of town took hold in the 1960s, and now has manifested itself in the mall theater genre.

The theater's first showing was the Midwest premiere of "My Dream Is Yours," starring Jack Carson, Doris Day and Lee Bowman. Special dedicatory ceremonies began at 7:15 p.m., with the doors opening at 6:43 p.m. – exactly 17 months to the minute from the time the fire siren blew which destroyed the other theater. W. W. Sherrill with representing Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Studios was the Master of Ceremonies and the Gene Fullen Big Band played music to entertain the crowd. In addition to the main feature, patrons enjoyed the World Premier of Walt Disney's "Winter Storage" – with Donald Duck and the Little Chipmunks. People stood for blocks in a light rain to attend the opening night. Admission was sixty-five cents for adults and fourteen cents for children.

The Danielson's published their hopes and dreams about the theater in a grand opening souvenir program entitled "Dream Ideology" (April 19, 1949):

To: Offer Russell and its surrounding community a permanent home for the best in motion pictures.

To: Offer imagination in recreation.

To: Offer recreation, relief and revivifying the facilities fagged by labor.

To: Fill time, not kill it – to make an afternoon or an evening pass like an instant and yet seem an eon of joy in retrospection.

To: Make this theatre an alluring mental adventure.

To these ideals the "Dream of Tomorrow" will ever aspire.

To fulfill the Danielsons' wish to provide Russell with the best and most modern theater facility, attention was paid to lighting and air conditioning. The "mood lighting" was controlled electronically; the technology was designed and engineered by General Electric. The remotely controlled, 5,000 pound thyrotron reactors could produce the full range of the color spectrum to the auditorium or stage.

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Dream Theater  
Russell Co., Kansas

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To offer a comfortable environment for Russell's theatergoers, a Carrier air conditioning system was installed in the building. Two compressors, powered by two 25 H.P. motors, ran in nine graduated steps of capacity to meet the load imposed. When run at full capacity they cooled at the rate of melting 41 tons of ice per day.

Dale Danielson purchased his father's interest in the theater in 1950. It was owned and operated by Dale until July 15, 1982, when it was sold to Booking and Buying Theater Company of Iola, Kansas. In exchange for the theater, Russell Arts Council paid for an appraisal of the theater and several years' back taxes. Booking and Buying Theater Company presented the Arts Council the deed to the property in 2000.

Many people are responsible for keeping the Dream alive. Over 170 Russell citizens and organizations help the arts council achieve their goal and they continue to do so today. Since that time it has been operated by the Arts Council and volunteers. First run movies

Are shown on Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Organizations and the Russell schools use the theater for programs that provide entertainment and culture for the Russell area.

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**Bibliography**

“Dream Ideology.” Souvenir Program, April 19, 1949.

Naylor, David. American Picture Palaces: The Architecture of Fantasy. (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1981).

Piladas, Ave. Movie Palaces. (New York: Potter, 1980).

Russell Record. November 20, 1947; April 18, 1949; April 28, 1949.

Valerio, Joseph M. and Daniel Friedman. Movie Palaces: Renaissance and Reuse. (New York: Educational Facilities, 1982).

Whiffen, Marcus. American Architecture Since 1780: A Guide to the Styles. (Cambridge: MIT, 1992).

**Verbal Boundary Description**

The Nominated property is located on Lots 8 and 9, Block 86, Original Town, Russell, Kansas. The property is bounded on the west by a bricked Main Street and on the east by a bricked alley. Adjacent properties bound the theater on the north and south sides.

**Boundary Justification**

The boundary includes all extant property historically associated with the theater.

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Dream Theater  
Russell Co., Kansas

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**Photographs**

The following information is consistent for all photographs:

1. Dream Theater
2. Russell Co., Kansas
3. Photograph by Martha Hagedorn-Krass
4. July, 2004
5. Negative on file at Kansas State Historical Society

The following information is specific to each photograph:

<u>Photo #</u>	<u>Description of View</u>
1.	View from the west.
2.	View from the northwest.
3.	View of marquee from the west.
4.	View of box office/ticket booth from the southwest.
5.	View of rear elevation from the northeast.
6.	View of concession stand in foyer from the north.
7.	View of auditorium from the balcony (west).
8.	View of balcony from the stage (east).
9.	Detail view of light fixture (sconce) on side walls.