

PH0660965

DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

~~NATIONAL PARK SERVICE~~

HCRS

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED JAN 24 1978

DATE ENTERED

MAY 24 1978

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

RIALTO THEATRE

AND/OR COMMON

RIALTO THEATRE

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

1019 - 1021 - 1023 Fair Oaks Avenue

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

South Pasadena

VICINITY OF

26th

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

California

CODE

06

COUNTY

Los Angeles

CODE

037

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

PRESENT USE

DISTRICT

PUBLIC

OCCUPIED

AGRICULTURE

MUSEUM

BUILDING(S)

PRIVATE

UNOCCUPIED

COMMERCIAL

PARK

STRUCTURE

BOTH

WORK IN PROGRESS

EDUCATIONAL

PRIVATE RESIDENCE

SITE

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

ACCESSIBLE

ENTERTAINMENT

RELIGIOUS

OBJECT

IN PROCESS

YES: RESTRICTED

GOVERNMENT

SCIENTIFIC

BEING CONSIDERED

YES: UNRESTRICTED

INDUSTRIAL

TRANSPORTATION

NO

MILITARY

OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

none? see cont. sheet

NAME

Bank of America National Trust and Savings Association

STREET & NUMBER

1335 South Grand Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Los Angeles

VICINITY OF

STATE

California

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Los Angeles Hall of Records

STREET & NUMBER

320 West Temple Street

CITY, TOWN

Los Angeles

STATE

California

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

State of California Historic Resources Inventory

DATE

July 1977

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

State of Calif., The Resources Agency, The Dept. of Parks & Recreation

CITY, TOWN

Sacramento

STATE

California

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The structure is a two-story reinforced concrete, brick and structural steel building with a painted stucco exterior and a terra cotta tile and composition roof. Originally designed to contain a theater, retail shops and apartments, there have been no substantial alterations to the design format from its original construction. While there have been minor modifications to the street level shop frontage, L. A. Smith's original Moorish motif is still clearly evident.

The original marquee, a two-line reader board featuring the white glass and tin changeable letters, was replaced sometime in the 30's by a larger, three-line three-face neon moderne/art deco marquee to provide a more effective space for the display requirements of the 30's.

The theatre interior presently seats 1143 people with 750 on the ground floor and the remainder in the balcony. The Southwest Builder & Contractor, 8/29/1924 said: "Theater, stores, apartments The West Coast Theaters, Inc. and C. L. Langley, associates have announced the erection of a \$350,000 theater, store and apartment building at Fair Oaks and Oxley St., South Pasadena 1600 seat theater." In all likelihood there were never more than 1300 seats. The interior is a lavish example of L. A. Smith's flamboyant eclecticism in expression of Moorish fantasy. The interior remains in good shape with no serious alterations. The stage, about 30 feet deep is adequately designed for legitimate theater with dressing rooms under and an orchestra pit out front. The scenery loft remains intact although there has been no stage performance since the early 30's.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW

<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1924
1925

BUILDER/ARCHITECT L. A. Smith, architect
Wm. G. Reed, builder

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Although L. A. Smith designed about 15 or more theatres in a very short time, the Rialto is now one of a dwindling handful remaining at this time. It is one of the best preserved examples of this prolific architect's work. It was designed in 1924 and built in 1925 by William G. Reed for West Coast Theatres. It is significant that they chose to build in South Pasadena and only leased theatres in Pasadena. When it opened in 1925, its policy was to run a feature length film and present vaudeville on Thursdays and Saturdays in addition to the Motion Picture. The Rialto was a try out stage for new vaudeville talent produced by Fanchon and Marco. Many performers entered the vaudeville circuit here, moving on to Fanchon and Marco's top house, the Paramount in Los Angeles. General admission was 30¢, loges were 40¢; children under 12 got in for a dime.

In a few years vaudeville was replaced by twice weekly matinee performances of the Charles Royal Players in such plays as "Charlie's Aunt", "Peg O My Heart" and "The Outcast", plus a feature film. In the early 30's the Rialto resumed vaudeville and succeeded in attracting the Orpheum Theater's musical conductor, a man named Frankenstein, to join the Rialto. Within a few months a backstage fire closed the theater for a few months and neither vaudeville nor live drama ever returned. For about ten years, beginning in the middle 30's, the Rialto had an interesting distinction: each year when the academy awards were announced for the best picture of the year, it was already playing at the time at the Rialto.

The original decorative art on the walls and ceilings is in remarkably good shape. The stage is still equipped with the original red and gold house curtains as well as the original asbestos curtain. The exterior vertical main sign appears to be the original.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Southwest Builder & Contractor
 August 1, 1924, p.56
 August 29, 1924, p.57
 October 24, 1924, p.57
 February 6, 1925,

(see continuation sheet)

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY .3364 acres

UTM REFERENCES

3 93-960 190
 A

1	1	3	7	1	7	5	3	6	0
ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING				ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING	

 C

ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING				ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING	

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

PARCEL 1: Lots 11 and 12 in Block "G" of Raymond Villa Tract No. 1, as per map recorded in Book 1 Page 91 of Maps, in the office of the county recorder of said county.

PARCEL 2: That portion of Lots 1, 2, and 3 in Block "G" of the Raymond Villa Tract No. 1, as per map recorded in Book 1 Page 91 of Maps, in the office of the county recorder of said county, described as follows: (see continuation sheet)

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Robert F. Shryock, Member of American Society of Landscape Architects

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Nov. 17, 1977

STREET & NUMBER

1545 Columbia Street

TELEPHONE

(213)-799-2655

CITY OR TOWN

South Pasadena California

STATE

91070

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL STATE LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

SIGNATURE

Knob M. Ellison

TITLE State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE 1/17/78

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST: *William Ellison*
 SUPERVISOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION
 DATE *5/24/78*
 KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE *5/24/78*
 KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER
 DATE *May 22, 1978*

see continuation sheets

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 4

PAGE

OWNER OF PROPERTY

- ✓ 1. Bank of America, TT & SA as trustees
Trust Real Estate Section #8010, 16th floor
555 S. Flower St.
Los Angeles 90071
Att. George Nesdale

2. Paul M. Jobbia, Pasadena (recently deceased) owns land.

- ✓ 3. Ed Lewis (an attorney)
1801 Century Park East, Suite 1212
Los Angeles 90067
Phone: 213-879-1801
Owns and controls the theatre. Has 99 year lease on building,
ending in year of 2002.

4. Kim Jorgenson, owner of
Parallax Theatre System,
11312 Santa Monica Blvd.
Los Angeles, 90025
Sub-leases theatre from Ed Lewis.

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MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

The Federated News (South Pasadena)

October 16, 1924
October 24, 1924
October 16, 1925

Pasadena Star News

October 14, 1925, p.16
October 16, 1925, p.9

Los Angeles Times

February 22, 1925, part v, p.1

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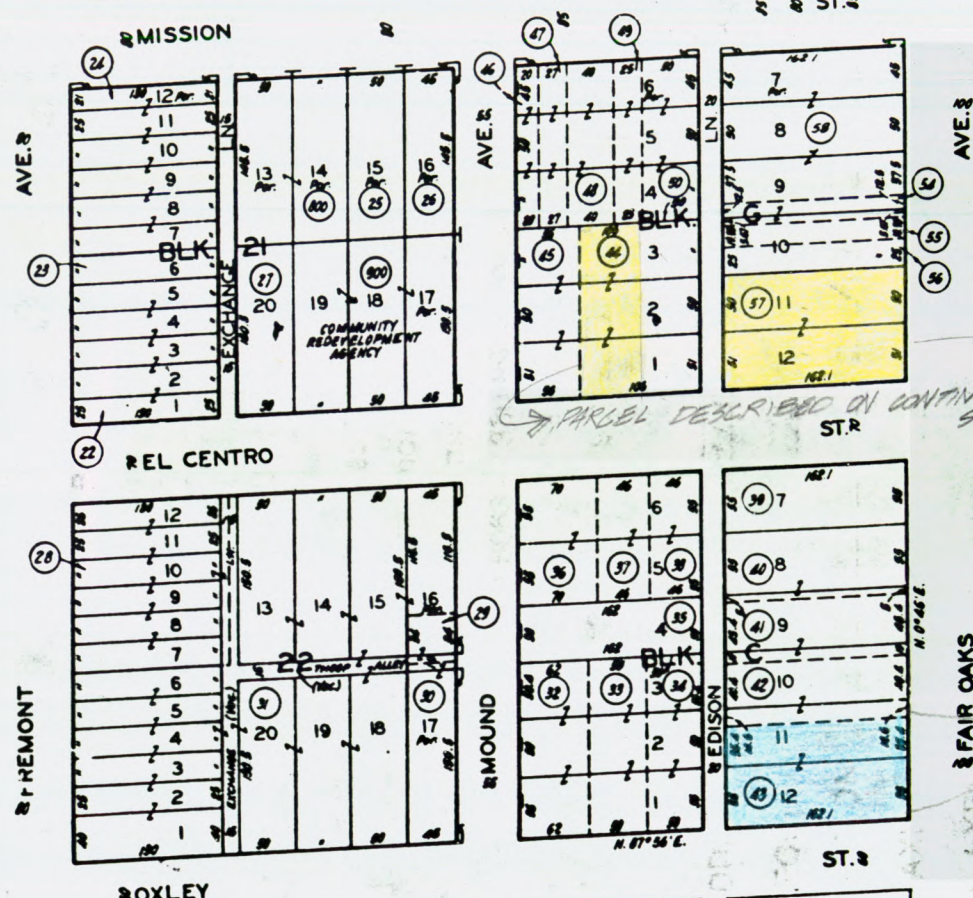
CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 10 PAGE

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Beginning at a point in the Northerly line of Center Street, now El Centro Street, at a point 56 feet Easterly from the intersection of the Northerly line of Center Street, now El Centro Street, with the Easterly line of Mound Avenue, as shown on said map; thence Northerly parallel with the said Easterly line of Mound Avenue to the Northerly line of said Lot 3; thence Easterly along said line 50 feet to a point distant 56 feet Westerly from the North-easterly corner of said Lot 3; thence Southerly on a line parallel with the Easterly lines of said Lots 1, 2, and 3 to the Northerly line of Center Street, now El Centro Street, 50 feet to the point of beginning.

5315 3
SCALE 1" = 100'



BK 5318



Right of Easement located in 4 Block area of CRA (downtown development)

CODE 9031

FOR PREV. ASSM'T SEE: 5318 - 30 & 39

SMITH & JACOB'S FOURTH SUB. M. R. 29-3
RAYMOND VILLA TRACT NO. 1 M.B. 1-91

ASSESSOR'S MAP COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES, CALIF.

MAY 24 1978