

REF# 73001537

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:	Ohio
COUNTY:	Summit
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY DATE	7-16-43

1. NAME

COMMON:
Akron Civic Theatre

AND/OR HISTORIC:
Loew's Theatre

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
182 S. Main Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Akron

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:
14th John F. Seiberling, Jr.

STATE: Ohio CODE: 039 COUNTY: Summit CODE: 153

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) <input type="checkbox"/> Comments

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
Community Hall Foundation, Inc.

STREET AND NUMBER:
182 S. Main Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Akron

STATE: Ohio CODE: 039

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Summit County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:
209 S. High Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Akron

STATE: Ohio CODE: 039

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:

DATE OF SURVEY: Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: STATE: CODE:

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: Ohio
COUNTY: Summit
ENTRY NUMBER:
DATE:

FOR NPS USE ONLY

286-16

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The main entrance from Akron's principal north-south artery (S. Main street) consists of a ticket booth and entrances housed in a three story Italian renaissance stone facade capped with a projecting cornice and Mediterranean tile roof.

The highly ornate windows are supported by a polychromed band of griffins and heraldic devices. The deeply rusticated window surrounds likewise support fanciful polychromed carvings. Unfortunately, much of the scale of the entrance is hidden by a more recent marquee.

The entrance is connected to the main theatre block by an enclosed bridge over the Ohio Canal. The walls of the bridge are decorated with medieval armor, shields, pikes, halberds and swords.

Upon reaching the grand lobby one enters a fairyland of extraordinary and imaginative Italian renaissance decor. The room has enormous scale. The richly ornamented walls support a coffered, truncated, pyramidal ceiling. Flanking the entrance doors are lifesize Italian classical statues in decorative niches; and opposite the doors is the lobby's focal point, the grand stairway to the mezzanine.

The mezzanine is distinguished by its groin vaulted ceiling of heavily rendered plaster, supported by carved brackets, and by its furnishings -- massive antiques that are in keeping with the scale of the room.

The auditorium itself is an outstanding example of noted Architect John Eberson's "atmospheric" design: The amphitheatre walls seem to enclose the courtyard of a fanciful palace. Myriads of openings display classical statues and urns. Overhead, stars twinkle and clouds drift by.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

B. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 19th Century | |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) **1929**

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | _____ |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

The Akron Civic Theatre, opened April 20, 1929 as Loew's Theatre, is a product of the golden age of the American movie palace. Its like may never be seen again.

Its architect, John Ebersson, was one of the two foremost theatre designers of the period--the other being Thomas Lamb. Ebersson gained fame as creator of the "atmospheric" (stars-and-clouds) theatre, which borrowed from nature and the more flamboyant landscape gardeners of the past.

In an Ebersson atmospheric house, the auditorium was (to quote him) "a magnificent amphitheatre under a glorious moonlit sky . . . an Italian garden, a Persian court, a Spanish patio, or a mystic Egyptian temple yard . . . where friendly stars twinkled and wisps of clouds drifted." Ebersson was archeologist, weather man and landscape gardener rolled into one, and the combination made wonderful box office.

Other outstanding theatres that Ebersson designed were Loew's Valencia and Paradise in New York; the Avalon, the Paradise, and the Capitol in Chicago; the Tampa in Tampa; the Olympia in Miami; the Paramount in Omaha; the Grand Riviera in Detroit; the Uptown in Kansas City; the Paramount in Nashville; the Majestic theatres in Houston and San Antonio; and Loew's in Louisville and Richmond.

The Akron theatre, erected at a cost of more than \$1 million, has a seating capacity of 2,987. It is believed to be the last of the 11 theatres opened by Marcus Loew, founder of the Loew's chain, that is still standing. It was the first in America to be built with equipment for sound films originally installed. It was the first in Akron with an air cooling system. It had from the start one of the finest Wurlitzer theatre organs in existence.

During the 1930s, when stage shows had their heydays, the Akron theatre featured such big name entertainers as Joe Penner, Cab Calloway, Ted Lewis, Lionel Hampton, Ben Bernie, Kate Smith, Buddy Rogers, Sophie Tucker and Sally Rand. The golden days of show business faded, but the Civic Theatre is flourishing again as a community entertainment center and playing host to the top stage stars of another era.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

The Best Remaining Seats - The Story of the Golden Age of the Movie Palace. By Ben M. Hall. Bramhall House, New York, N.Y. 1961 p. 102

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES					
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		N	LATITUDE	W	LONGITUDE		
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	° ' "	° ' "		41°	04'	51"	81°	31'	13"
NE	° ' "	° ' "							
SE	° ' "	° ' "							
SW	° ' "	° ' "							

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: less than 1

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
William V. Wallace, Jr., Director

ORGANIZATION: **Summit County Historical Society** DATE: **4/9/73**

STREET AND NUMBER:
550 Copley Road

CITY OR TOWN: **Akron** STATE: **Ohio** CODE: **039**

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name _____

Title _____

Date _____

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date _____

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register

Date _____

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

PROPERTY MAP FORM

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

STATE	
Ohio	
COUNTY	
Summit	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME			
COMMON:		Akron Civic Theatre	
AND/OR HISTORIC:		Loew's Theatre	
2. LOCATION			
STREET AND NUMBER:			
182 S. Main Street			
CITY OR TOWN:			
Akron			
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
Ohio	039	Summit	153
3. MAP REFERENCE			
SOURCE:	U.S. Dept. of Interior Akron West Quadrangle Geological Survey Ohio - Summit Co. 7.5 min. series		
SCALE:	1:24,000		
DATE:	1967		
4. REQUIREMENTS			
TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS			
1. Property boundaries where required.			
2. North arrow.			
3. Latitude and longitude reference.			

FORM 10-301 A
(6/72)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

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

1. NAME		
COMMON	AND/OR HISTORIC	NUMERIC CODE (Assigned by NPS)
Akron Civic Theatre	Loew's Theatre	
2. LOCATION		
STATE	COUNTY	TOWN
Ohio	Summit	Akron
STREET AND NUMBER		
182 S. Main Street		
3. PHOTO REFERENCE		
PHOTO CREDIT	DATE	NEGATIVE FILED AT
Ted Walls	February 1965	Akron Beacon Journal 44 E. Exchange St., Akron, O.

4. IDENTIFICATION

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.

Detail of amphitheatre wall near stage

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

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

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

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FOR NPS USE ONLY	
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AND/OR HISTORIC:		Loew's Theatre	
2. LOCATION			
STREET AND NUMBER:			
182 S. Main Street			
CITY OR TOWN:			
Akron			
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
Ohio	039	Summit	153
3. PHOTO REFERENCE			
PHOTO CREDIT:		Charles Pongracz	
DATE OF PHOTO:		December 1972	
NEGATIVE FILED AT:		Charles Pongracz	
		283 S. Main Street Akron, Ohio	
4. IDENTIFICATION			
DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.			
Mezzanine			

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

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM**

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

STATE Ohio	
COUNTY Summit	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

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CITY OR TOWN:			
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Ohio	039	Summit	153
3. PHOTO REFERENCE			
PHOTO CREDIT:		Ted Walls	
DATE OF PHOTO:		February 1965	
NEGATIVE FILED AT:		Akron Beacon Journal	
44 E. Exchange Street		Akron, Ohio	
4. IDENTIFICATION			
DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.			
Auditorium from the stage			

INT: 154-72

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

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NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

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DATE OF PHOTO:	December 1972		
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4. IDENTIFICATION			
DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.			
Grand Lobby stairs to Mezzanine			

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

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NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM**

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DATE OF PHOTO:		December 1972	
NEGATIVE FILED AT:		Charles Pongracz	
283 S. Main Street		Akron, Ohio	
4. IDENTIFICATION			
DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.			
Grand Lobby from stairs to Mezzanine			

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

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2. LOCATION			
STREET AND NUMBER: 182 S. Main Street			
CITY OR TOWN: Akron			
STATE:	OHIO CODE 039	COUNTY: Summit	CODE 153
3. PHOTO REFERENCE			
PHOTO CREDIT:	Don Aldridge		
DATE OF PHOTO:	January 1973		
NEGATIVE FILED AT:	Don Aldridge 401 Grand Avenue Akron, Ohio 44302		
4. IDENTIFICATION			
DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. View from S. Main Street looking west at theatre's main entrance, marquee, stone facade, bridge to lobby, and roofs of lobby and auditorium.			

Akron Civic Theatre
Lat. 41° 04' 51"
Long. 81° 31' 13"



July 24, 1973

Community Hall Foundation, Inc.
182 S. Main Street
Akron, Ohio

Dear Sirs:

I am pleased to inform you that the Akron Civic Theatre, 182 S. Main Street, Akron, has been entered in the National Register of Historic Places by the National Park Service, United States Department of Interior.

The nomination was made in connection with a state plan to identify and document prehistoric and historic places in Ohio which qualify for National Register status under provisions of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. All nominations are approved by the Ohio Historic Site Preservation Advisory Board.

Enclosed is a brochure explaining the purposes and goals of the National Register of Historic Places.

Congratulations for recognizing the importance of, and the need for, the careful and sensible preservation of Ohio's landmarks. Your far-sightedness will surely serve as an example to other individuals and organizations in this state.

Sincerely,

Judith Kitchen
Architectural Historian

JK/rla
Enclosure

July 24, 1973

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182 S. Main Street
Akron, Ohio

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Enclosure

Ohio Historic Preservation Office

National Register of Historic Places File Checklist

The following materials are contained in this file of the National Register form for:

Name: Loew's Theatre

County: Summit

Original National Register of Historic Places nomination form

Multiple Property Nomination form

Photograph(s)

Photograph(s) (copies)

USGS map(s)

USGS map(s) (copies)

Sketch map(s)/figure(s)/exhibit(s)

Correspondence

Other newspaper
