NOMINATION OF HISTORIC BUILDING, STRUCTURE, SITE, OR OBJECT
PHILADELPHIA REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

SUBMIT ALL ATTACHED MATERIALS ON PAPER AND IN ELECTRONIC FORM (CD, EMAIL, FLASH DRIVE)
ELECTRONIC FILES MUST BE WORD OR WORD COMPATIBLE

1. ADDRESS OF HISTORIC RESOURCE *(must comply with an Office of Property Assessment address)*

Street address: 4732-42 N Broad St

Postal code: 19141-2106

2. NAME OF HISTORIC RESOURCE

Historic Name: Logan Theatre

Current/Common Name: Cicely Tyson Performing Arts Center

3. TYPE OF HISTORIC RESOURCE

☑ Building ☐ Structure ☐ Site ☐ Object

4. PROPERTY INFORMATION

Condition: ☐ excellent ☐ good ☑ fair ☐ poor ☐ ruins

Occupancy: ☐ occupied ☐ vacant ☑ under construction ☐ unknown

Current use:

5. BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Please attach a narrative description and site/plot plan of the resource's boundaries.

6. DESCRIPTION

Please attach a narrative description and photographs of the resource's physical appearance, site, setting, and surroundings.

7. SIGNIFICANCE

Please attach a narrative Statement of Significance citing the Criteria for Designation the resource satisfies.

Period of Significance (from year to year): from 1923 to 1973

Date(s) of construction and/or alteration: 1923-24

Architect, engineer, and/or designer: Hoffman and Henon

Builder, contractor, and/or artisan:

Original owner: Stanley Company of America

Other significant persons:

CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION:

The historic resource satisfies the following criteria for designation (check all that apply):

- ☐ (a) Has significant character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the City, Commonwealth or Nation or is associated with the life of a person significant in the past; or,
- ☐ (b) Is associated with an event of importance to the history of the City, Commonwealth or Nation; or,
- ☑ (c) Reflects the environment in an era characterized by a distinctive architectural style; or,
- ☐ (d) Embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or engineering specimen; or,
- ☑ (e) Is the work of a designer, architect, landscape architect or designer, or engineer whose work has significantly influenced the historical, architectural, economic, social, or cultural development of the City, Commonwealth or Nation; or,
- ☐ (f) Contains elements of design, detail, materials or craftsmanship which represent a significant innovation; or,
- ☐ (g) Is part of or related to a square, park or other distinctive area which should be preserved according to an historic, cultural or architectural motif; or,
- ☐ (h) Owing to its unique location or singular physical characteristic, represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community or City; or,
- ☐ (i) Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in pre-history or history; or
- ☑ (j) Exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social or historical heritage of the community.

8. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Please attach a bibliography.

9. NOMINATOR

Organization: Historical Commission Staff Date: 1/8/2025

Name with Title: Ted Maust, Preservation Planner Email: theodore.maust@phila.gov

Street Address: 1515 Arch St, 13th Floor Telephone: 215-686-9706

City, State, and Postal Code: Philadelphia, PA, 19102

Nominator ☐ is ☑ is not the property owner.

PHC USE ONLY

Date of Receipt: 1/8/2025

☑ Correct-Complete ☐ Incorrect-Incomplete Date: 1/10/2025

Date of Notice Issuance: 1/17/2025

Property Owner at Time of Notice:

Name: Mr. Owen Williamson

Address: 710 LANTERN LN

City: BLUE BELL State: PA Postal Code: 19422

Date(s) Reviewed by the Committee on Historic Designation:

Date(s) Reviewed by the Historical Commission:

Date of Final Action:

☐ Designated ☐ Rejected

Figure 1. The primary elevation, along the west side of North Broad Street.

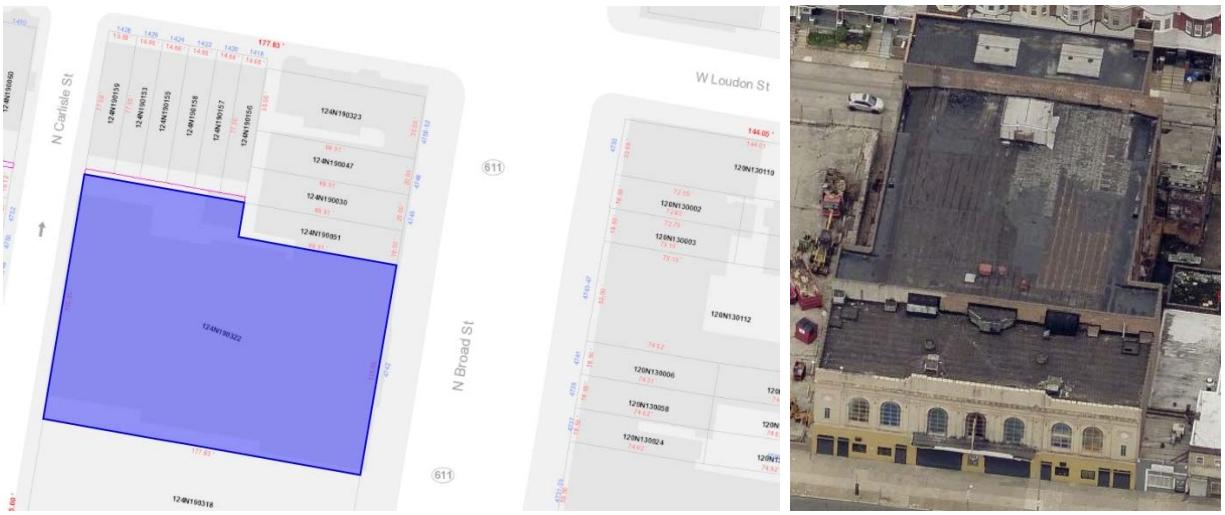
Nomination to the

Philadelphia Register of Historic Places

The Logan Theatre

4732-42 North Broad Street

Built 1923



Figures 2, Figure 3. Left: The boundary for the proposed designation is delineated in blue. Atlas.phila.gov; Right: Aerial view looking west at the subject building. Pictometry.phila.gov, image from May 2023.

5. BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundary for the proposed designation is as:

> Beginning at a point on the West side of Broad Street at the distance of ninety-nine feet Southward from the South side of Louden Street fifty feet wide and extending; thence Southward along the West side of the said Broad Street one hundred and sixteen feet to a point; thence extending Westward at right angles to Broad Street one hundred and seventy-seven feet ten inches to the East side of Carlisle Street; thence extending Northward along the East side of Carlisle Street one hundred and thirty-five feet to a point; thence Eastward at right angles to Carlisle Street eighty-eight feet eleven inches to a point; thence Southward on a line parallel with said Broad Street nineteen feet to a point and thence Eastward at right angles to Broad Street eighty-eight feet eleven inches to the first mentioned point and place of beginning.
>
> Being 4732 to 4742 North Broad Street.[1]

[1] Description of "Premises 'B'" from the deed transferring ownership from the Deliverance Evangelistic Association to Owen W. Williamson, dated April 1, 1999, document number 49056117, deed book 997, pages 348-349.

Figure 4. The primary elevation, along the west side of North Broad Street. Site photos by author, 2024, unless otherwise noted.

6. PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

The Logan Theatre is a two-story (with upper mezzanine) movie theater located at 4732-42 North Broad Street in between Loudon and Wyoming Streets in the Logan neighborhood of Philadelphia.[2] Primarily constructed of brick, the structure largely fills the full lot, extending to Carlisle Street at the rear and abutting both property lines at various points.

Primary Elevation

The primary elevation along North Broad Street features a façade of limestone, buff brick, and terracotta. As was typical of neighborhood theaters of the early 20th century, the design draws from a variety of revival styles with Classical Revival being most prominent and the primary elevation generally arranged along Palladian principles.

The elevation is symmetrical: two piers at the second floor and detailing at the parapet divide the façade into three sections. The central portion sits proud of the others by a single wythe of brick, but gives the impression of a proscenium entrance, which would have been further emphasized by the original marquee.

[2] Historic documents often spelled Loudon Street as "Louden" and that spelling remains in use in some cases, including as the name for the SEPTA substation which neighbors the subject property to the north.

Figure 5: The Logan Theatre in 1923. Photo from the Irvin R. Glazer Theater Collection, Athenaeum of Philadelphia.

The elevation is dominated by seven large arched windows, with rhythmic pilasters punctuating the spaces in between. The façade features sparse but effective ornamentation, with each large window crowned by a decorative keystone, each pilaster topped by a capital following the Tower of the Winds Order, and each pier featuring a relief. Large medallions mark the first and last bays of the elevation and rosettes along the frieze follow the rhythm of pilasters and piers. A distinguished but subtle cornice ornamented with dentils and egg and dart coving runs across the entire front elevation, before a parapet tops the façade. Two narrow windows appear in the first and last bays to light the stairways.


Figure 6: Capitals of the Tower of the Winds Order—small acanthus leaves with longer, flat leaves behind—top the pilasters. Botanical motifs fill the spandrels around the arched windows. The piers which set off the central section of the elevation feature palmettes in relief. Rosettes on the frieze follow the rhythm of pilasters and piers.

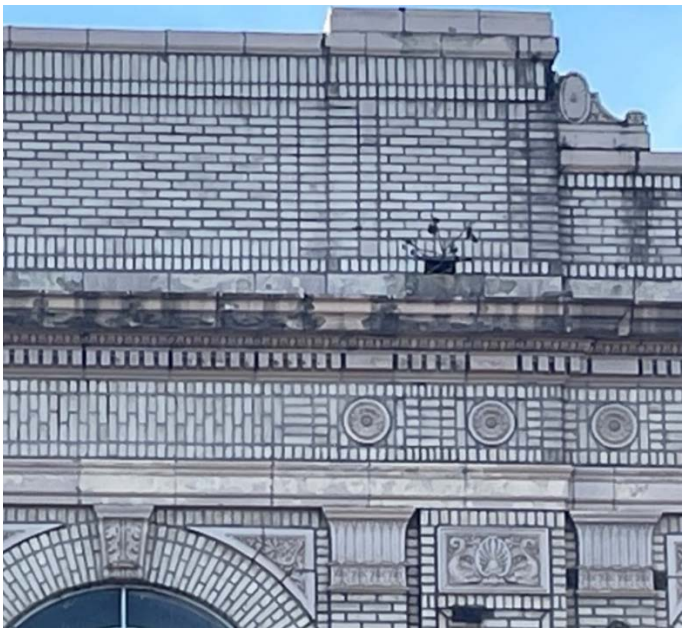


Figure 7: The keystones above the large windows also feature acanthus leaves. A volute (at top right) adorns the parapet wall. Brick laid in a variety of bonds gives visual texture to the façade.

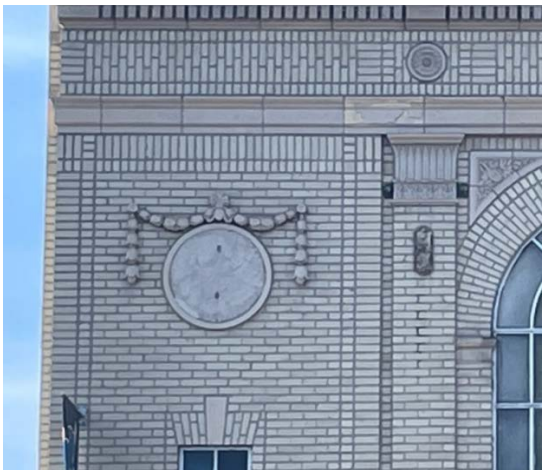


Figure 8: A large medallion appears at each end of the elevation.

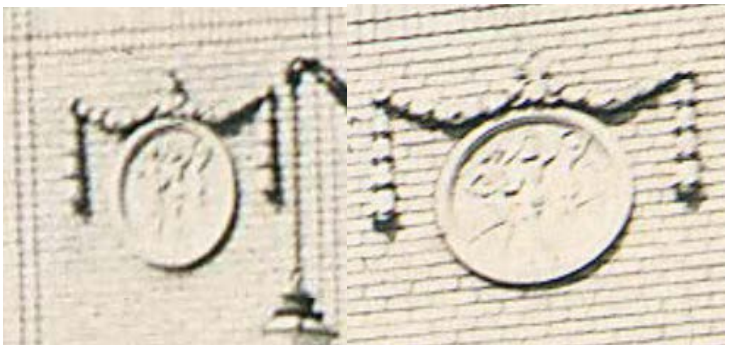


Figure 9: The medallions' original ornament is difficult to make out but appears to feature human forms dancing. Details of 1923 photo of the Logan Theatre from the Glazer Theater Collection.

The front elevation has significant historical integrity but does feature modifications. As it was originally constructed, the first floor featured two banks of entry doors under the marquee, flanked by two storefronts on each side. At the second floor, the original arched windows comprised fanlights above six-over-six operable double-hung windows flanked by sidelights. The inner portion of the fanlights could be tilted inward to provide greater ventilation (see Figure 13). At each end of the elevation, doors led to the second-floor ballroom, operated, initially, as the Walz Studio of Dancing. The rightmost window is split (from the interior) by an upper mezzanine above the ballroom (Figures 10,11).

Figure 10: A photo from the Glazer Theater Collection shows the mezzanine above the ballroom furnished with wicker furniture.

Figure 11: The ballroom and its mezzanine survive in altered form today. Photo by Chandra Lampreich published by *HiddenCity.*

Pendant lights hung from each pilaster other than those above the marquee. Wooden plaques remain where these lamps were once attached. The smaller windows which flank the elevation are obscured in the 1923 photo by signage for the dance studio, so it is unclear what the original pane arrangement was there. A 1965 photo may suggest an original Beaux-Arts pane arrangement.

Figure 12: Detail of 1965 photo showing the narrow window at the south end of the Broad Street elevation. Photo by Lou Zacharias for the *Philadelphia Daily News*, published May 21, 1965.

Figure 13: Detail of 1923 photograph showing the entry points to the theater flanked by storefronts. Photo from the Glazer Theater Collection.

The marquee itself was highly ornate, with metal detailing and panes of glass which would have glowed when the lights beneath were illuminated. It was secured to the façade with four guy wires which do not survive.

The marquee was altered as early as 1928 and by 1965 (see Figure 24) was truncated into a chamfered shape.[3] During its use as the Deliverance Evangelist Church, the marquee was simplified to a slimmer, buff colored element. Currently there are remnants of supports of the previous marquee or marquees which are exposed to the elements. In the center of the central window, a large blade sign, sitting on what remains of the marquee and secured to the façade by wires, was added to the façade during the church's stewardship and now declares the property's future as the Cicely Tyson Music Theatre. The large arched windows on the second floor were replaced with more contemporary panes of colored glass, with the bottom-most panes operable casement windows. The narrow side windows have been likewise replaced with colored fixed panes.

Figure 14: The east elevation of the building, viewed from the pedestrian level.

The first floor of the east elevation has been more modified from its original appearance that what sits above, with much of the limestone replaced with a textured brick currently painted yellow. Two central wider door openings sit at the center of the façade, flanked by single-width pedestrian doors. Two additional doors appear at each end of the elevation. This rhythm of doorways appears to be preserved from the original design, though each entrance is currently shrouded by security gates. The former storefronts have been largely enclosed, with four smaller windows where they once were. Two air conditioning units protrude from the wall above two of the windows.

[3] "Advance Construction News," *Philadelphia Real Estate Record and Builders' Guide,* March 5, 1924, V. 39, n. 10, p. 151.

Figure 15: View of the property in sometime around 2012, showing the slimmed marquee and the central blade sign. The church had moved to another location in 1992, but its signage, including crosses on the large medallions, remains in this image. Photo from coverage by *HiddenCity*.

Side Elevations

The north and south elevations appear to broadly be reflections of each other. These façades are constructed of red brick and are significantly more pragmatic than the front elevation. Long fire exit stairs stretch along each side, with fire exit doors at each level, and descending toward the rear of the property. Remaining metal supports show that these fire stairs were once covered by roofs or awnings. Seven piers punctuate each side elevation, and the fire stairs appear to be anchored to these piers. The otherwise plain walls have a small stepback midway up the height, a subtle but elegant detail.

Figure 16: South elevation of subject property, viewed from Carlisle Street. The uneven gray portion at the base of the rear side wall appears to be a remnant of a wall on the adjoining parcel.

As the fire stair nears the rear of the south elevation, it connects to an entry/exit portal in the building. It is difficult to see the rear portion of the north elevation to confirm that the north fire stair does likewise, but it seems likely that these fire routes would have led to a common rear exit. The south elevation also features fire exit doors at the pedestrian level below each of the upper fire doors.

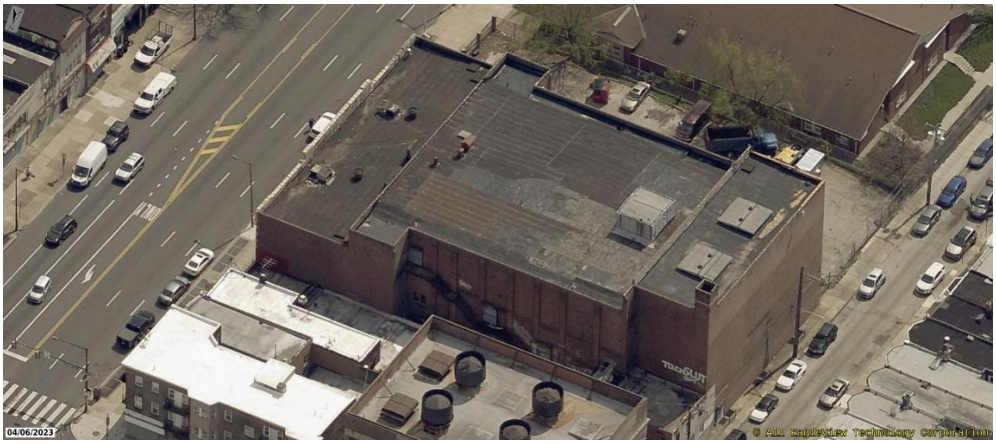


Figure 17: Aerial view looking southeast. Pictometry.phila.gov, image taken April 2023.

The side elevations appear to be largely unaltered. The front portion of the south elevation originally abutted a neighboring structure at the first floor. That portion is now coated in stucco in the absence of the neighbor, and a low wall runs along that stretch. A low wall remnant also runs along the rear portion of the south elevation. Security gates, lighting, and security cameras have been added.

The rearmost portion of the structure comprises two components: a large red-brick block which stretches up above the rest of the building and which appears to be largely original though it breaks the symmetry portrayed elsewhere; and a two-story red-brick structure in the northernmost lobe of the property. The side façades of the larger block are blank brick walls. The north elevation of the smaller addition features six windows on the second floor and five on the first floor. These window openings have brick lintels and sills, which represent the extent of masonry detailing on the façade. Several window openings have been boarded up and others have been significantly altered. The windows which appear most likely to be original to the addition are two-over-two double-hung windows.

The shorter block in the northwest corner of the property appears different in construction to the main block, suggesting it was a later addition, but a similar footprint appears on the 1924 Sanborn map of the property (Figure 18), suggesting it was either a very early addition or rebuilt at some point.[4]

[4] Sanborn Map Company, *Insurance Maps of Philadelphia*, Pennsylvania, Vol 23, 1924, plate 2248. Accessed from the Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps Collection of Pennsylvania State University Libraries.

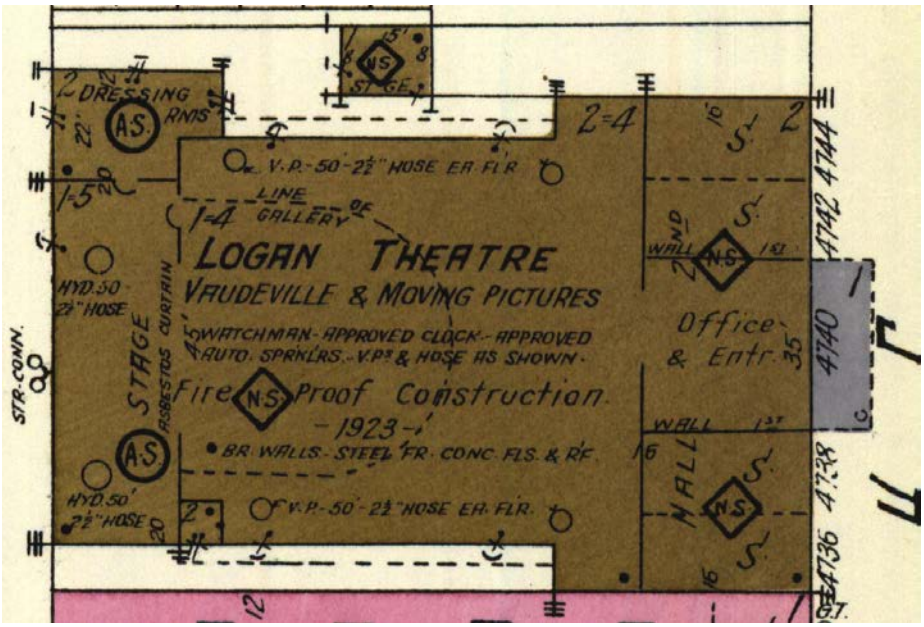


Figure 18: Detail of 1924 Sanborn map showing the low rear addition ("Dressing Rms.") and the small free-standing structure (at top of image). Sanborn Map Company, *Insurance Maps of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania,* Vol. 23, 1924, sheet 2248.

There is also a small structure tucked behind the two-story block. It appears on early maps of the property as free-standing, but it is difficult to see from public right-of-way or aerial imagery, either to describe its style or current condition. From an oblique angle (Figure 19), it appears to be a simple brick utility structure. The 1924 Sanborn map indicates that it was of fireproof construction, with two window openings and a skylight.

Figure 19: Oblique view of the north elevation of subject property, seen from Carlisle Street. The free-standing utility building can be seen to the left and the former Dressing Rooms structure is at right.

The rear (west) elevation is composed of the walls of both rear blocks which face Carlisle St. The west wall of the two-story addition has been coated in stucco and features three windows at the second-floor level and two window openings and a door at the first floor. The upper windows appear significantly altered and the first-floor windows are boarded up. The door has a roll-down security gate. The stucco extends onto a portion the rear wall of the larger block, which is otherwise a plain brick wall. There appears to have been one large opening at the pedestrian level which has been largely infilled, with a rolldown security gate obscuring the current door. This was perhaps the rear terminus of the fire exits.

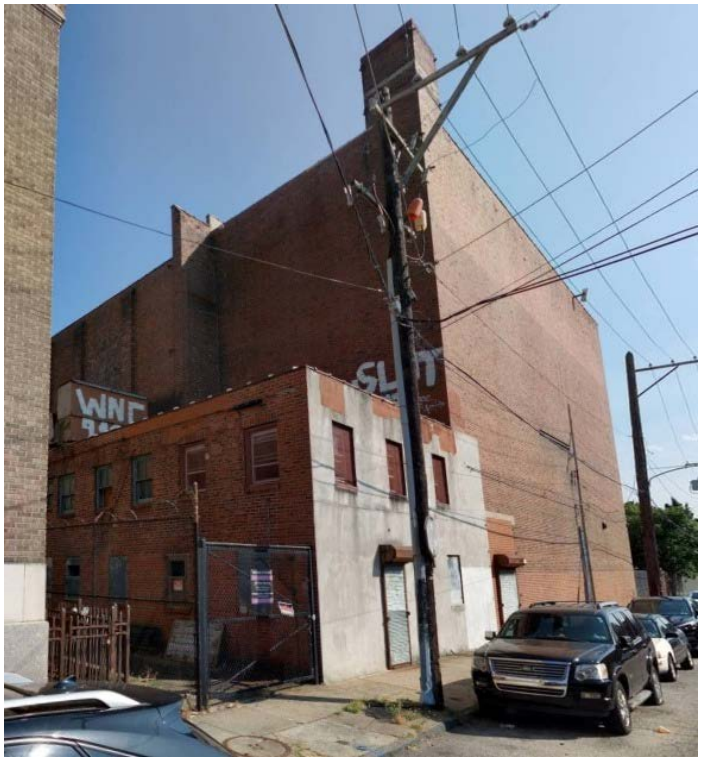


Figure 20: Rear (West) elevation of the Logan Theatre viewed from Carlisle Street. Image taken September 2024, accessed via Cyclomedia.phila.gov.

One feature of the original design of the Logan Theatre which does not survive is the large roof-top sign. It is unclear when this sign was removed, but the basic structure is recognizable at least until 1939 in an aerial photo by the Dallin Aerial Survey Company. A water tower once sat above the building's southwest corner and can be seen in the Dallin Survey images. Overall, the roof of the structure is unremarkable, constructed (according to the 1924 Sanborn map, Figure 18) of concrete. The roof steps up twice in

a fashion common to theaters, as the exterior accommodates the spaces within. A tile coping caps every edge of the roof apart from the primary façade.

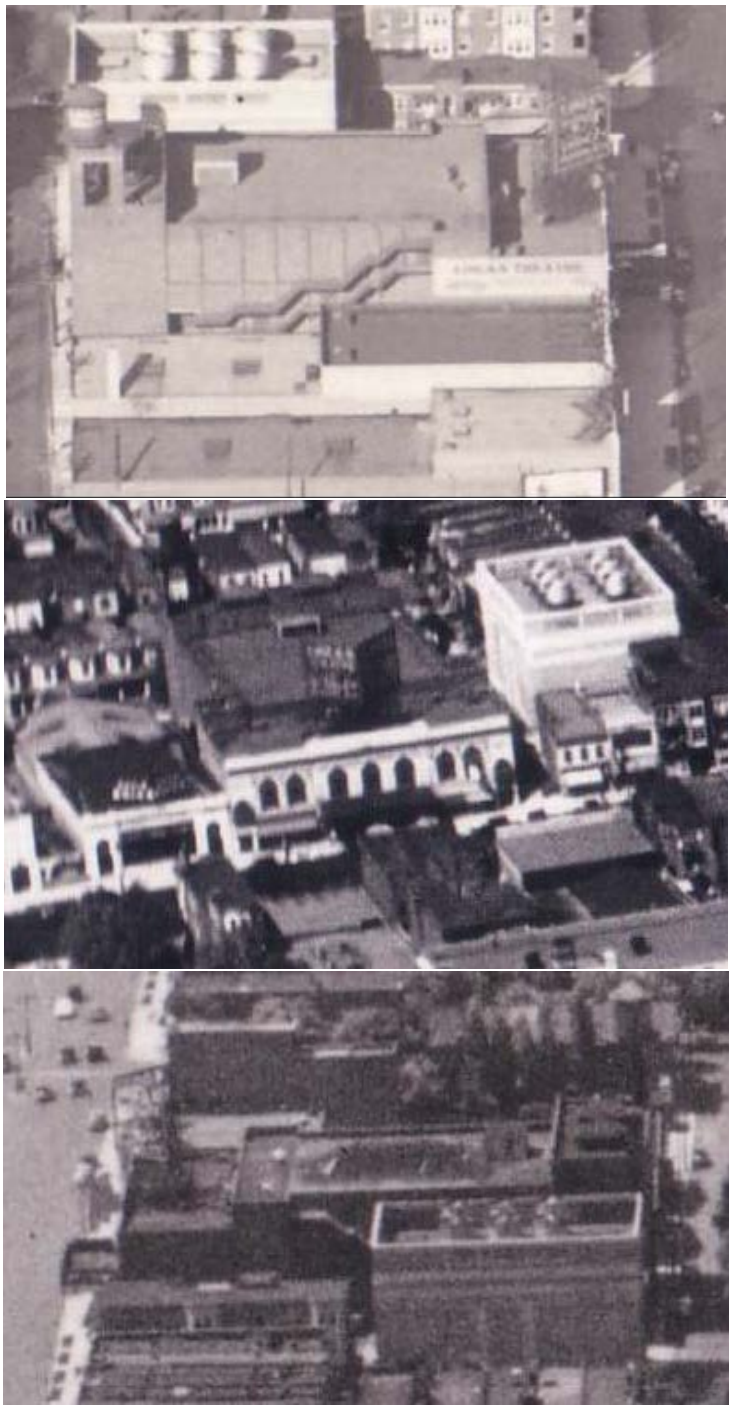


Figure 21, 22, 23: Details from aerial views of the Logan Theatre. Top: In 1929, the covered fire exits and rear water tower are visible, looking north. Middle: The primary elevation in 1931, looking west. Bottom: The rooftop sign (or at least its structure) survived to 1939, looking south. Images from the Dallin Aerial Survey Company Collection, Hagley Museum and Library.

Figure 24: A 1965 newspaper photo shows the condition of the Logan Theatre during a fire to the neighboring building, now demolished. The original pane arrangements of two storefronts can be seen after the removal of their awnings. The center portions of the fan lights on the second floor appear to have been replaced by solid panels. Photo from the *Philadelphia Daily News*, May 21, 1965.

7. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Logan Theatre at 3742-42 North Broad Street in the Logan neighborhood of Philadelphia is a significant historic resource worthy of designation by the Philadelphia Historical Commission and inclusion on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

Hoffman-Henon, the building's architects, were renowned designers of movie theaters and were featured in prominent trade periodicals of the motion picture industry and received commissions from as far away as Quito, Ecuador. The firm's work for Catholic churches, schools, and institutions has also greatly contributed to Philadelphia's built environment and has been historically designated at the local and national level.

The Hoffman-Henon design for the Logan Theatre displays a mix of economy and ornament which was typical of early-20th-century neighborhood movie theaters. Each of these theaters sought to stand out from its immediate context and so these designs often drew from a variety of architectural styles while largely remaining rooted in the lineage of earlier theaters which drew on classical architecture to deliver monumental and (often) symmetrical façades. While Philadelphia once had over 400 movie theaters, the Logan is one of relatively few survivors with significant architectural integrity.

As an active movie theater for nearly fifty years, the Logan Theatre was a part of the broader Logan community. It was constructed during a period of rapid development in

the surrounding blocks and remained a community fixture as Logan's demographics changed dramatically in the 1950s and 1960s. Commercial spaces on the first floor and a ballroom on the second floor extended the building's influence beyond the silver screen. Later the property was the venue for cooking classes and worship services while it was still showing movies and presenting closed circuit relays of some of Muhammad Ali's biggest fights.

For these reasons, the building satisfies the following Criteria for Designation as enumerated in Section 14-1004 of the Philadelphia Code:

(c) Reflects the environment in an era characterized by a distinctive architectural style; and

(e) Is the work of a designer, architect, landscape architect or designer, or engineer whose work has significantly influenced the historical, architectural, economic, social, or cultural development of the City, Commonwealth, or Nation; and

(j) Exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social, or historical heritage of the community.

The period of significance stretches from the building's construction in 1923 to the end of its use as a movie theater in 1973.

In 1973, the theater was sold to the Deliverance Evangelistic Association, a church which occupied the property until 1992. The building has not regularly been used since. Beginning in 2005, the current owner, Dr. Owen Williamson, purchased the property and began to maintain and begin to restore the building, with the aim of returning the opulent interior to use. Recent efforts have proposed reopening the theater as a performing arts venue, and Dr. Williamson's associates have christened it the Cicely Tyson Performing Arts Center.

Historic Context: The Stanley Company of America

The Logan Theatre was built in 1923 as a movie theater for the Stanley Company of America.[5] The company had its origins in the real estate investments of brothers Jules and Stanley Mastbaum, who began acquiring early movie theaters, around 1910, under the name of the Motion Picture Company of America, later changed to the Central Market Street Company. In 1914, the Mastbaums commissioned a new theatre at 16th and Market Streets, designed by William H. Hoffman, originally named the Stanley (later the Stanton).[6] In 1918, Stanley Mastbaum, the younger of the brothers, died suddenly. [7]

[5] As early as 1922, engineer and contractor Percival M. Sax was under contract to build a theater on this site, then described as "one-story with gallery." *Moving Picture World*, December 2, 1922, page 470. It is unclear how Sax was connected to the eventual theater and the Hoffman-Henon design.

[6] Irvin R. Glazer, *Philadelphia Theaters, A Pictorial Architectural History,* Athenaeum of Philadelphia and Dover Press, 1994, pages 17, 86.

[7] "Jules E. Mastbaum, Phila. Jewish Leader and Philanthropist, Dies at 54," *Jewish Daily Bulletin*, December 9, 1926, pages 3-4.

Jules reincorporated their company in 1919, by then known as the Stanley Company, as the Stanley Company of America, and announced recent acquisitions as well as significant plans for expansion. After a couple of mergers, the new corporation was operating twenty-two movie theaters in Philadelphia, three local theaters exclusively hosting vaudeville acts, and a handful of theaters spread between New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. The merger included two existing Stanley ventures—The Stanley Booking Company and The Central Market Street Company—as well as Sablosky & McGuirk Enterprises (vaudeville theater operators), and Alexander R. Boyd (another theater operator who would go on to commission the Boyd Theatre, built 1928 from Hoffman-Henon). Jules Mastbaum announced that the Capitol Theatre at 724 Market Street, designed by Paul J. Henon, Jr., was nearing completion, that ground had been broken for a new theatre, to be named the Stanley, at 19th and Market Streets, and that new theaters were being planned for both 52nd and Chestnut Streets and the Logan neighborhood.[8]

While commissioning several more significant new theaters in the early 1920s, the Stanley Company continued to acquire competitors' theaters. In August of 1922, Stanley bought the Aldine Theatre, an independent film theater opened only one year prior, from the Felt brothers. According to *Motion Picture World*, this acquisition established "absolute control of the first run situation in the Philadelphia territory." The article went on to suggest that the Stanley Company was in a good position to both expand its geographic reach and hold its strong position. As to how the company was able to achieve this, the author shared a frank assessment: "Incidentally, the most powerful weapon of the Stanley company is the Jules Mastbaum Real Estate Corporation, through which most of the theatre deals have been consummated."[9]

In May 1926, the Stanley Company completed another series of mergers, consolidating with 225 more theaters and becoming the largest theater chain in the world.[10] Jules Mastbaum did not live to enjoy this superlative very long, passing away in December 1926 at the age of 54. In the years before his death, Jules Mastbaum had been involved with the planning of the Sesquicentennial celebration in Philadelphia, purchasing 98 works of the sculptor Auguste Rodin for display at the exposition, and he included a bequest in his will to create a museum to display these works permanently.[11]

After Jules Mastbaum's death, the Logan Theatre remained with the company through numerous mergers, so that by the time the Logan Theatre closed in 1973, the company was known as RKO Stanley-Warner.[12]

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[8] "Theatre Firms Here Merge with Stanley," *Evening Public Ledger,* Philadelphia, PA, June 3, 1919, page 11; John Andrew Gallery, "Nomination to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places: 1910 Chestnut St, Boyd Theatre," designated August 9, 2008. McGuirk is also spelled "McGurk" in some records.

[9] "Stanley Gets Strangle Hold on First-Run Situation: Aldine Acquisition Said to Have Resulted in Settlement with Fox," *Moving Picture World*, August 19, 1922, 561.

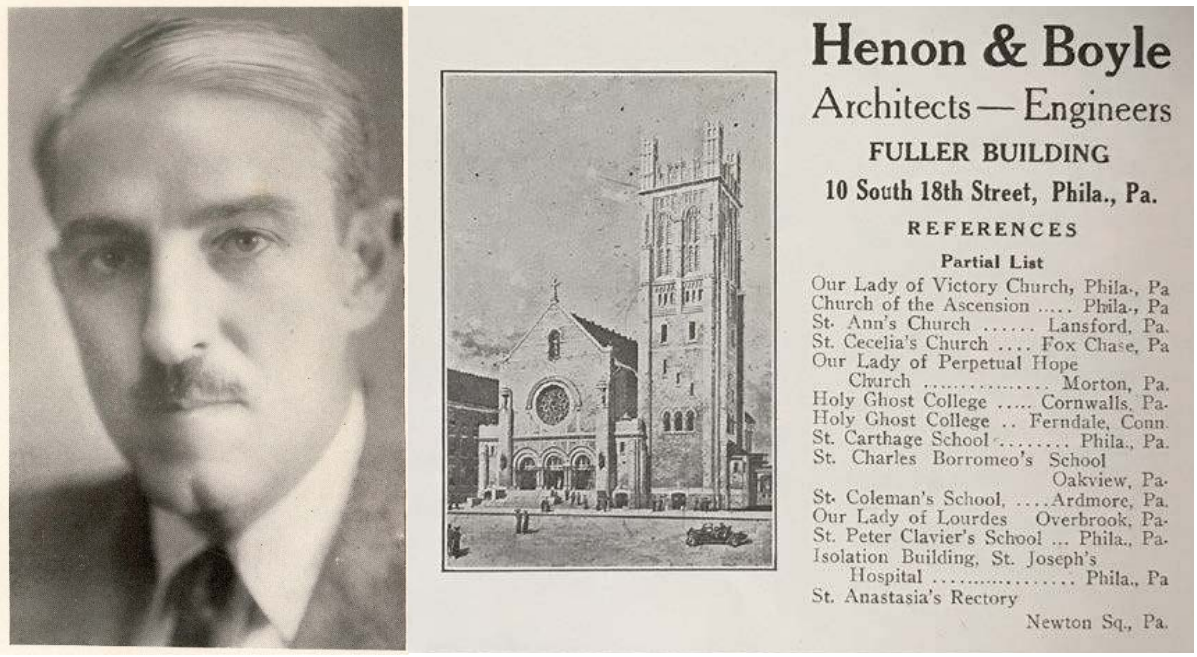
[10] "Jules E. Mastbaum, Phila. Jewish Leader and Philanthropist, Dies at 54," *Jewish Daily Bulletin*, page 4.

[11] "J. E. Mastbaum, Movie Magnate, Dies in Hospital," *The Philadelphia Inquirer,* December 8, 1926, pages 1, 12.

[12] Oscar Teller, "The Saga of a Movie Chain Giant – That Was," *The Philadelphia Inquirer,* May 26, 1973, page 25.

Criterion E: Henon and Hoffman

In its "Theatre Building & Equipment Buyers Guide" of December 29th, 1928, *Moving Picture News* devoted twenty-four pages to an essay written by Paul J. Henon, Jr. titled "The Architect's Service to the Industry" and illustrated with a multitude of photos and illustrations (including eight color plates) of theaters designed by the firm of Hoffman-Henon. Another ten pages of advertisements touted various companies' work with Hoffman-Henon and wished the firm well "on the completion of its sixteenth year of highly merited success in its distinctive branch of architecture."[13] Above the title of his essay, Paul Henon is described as "The Designer of 100 Theatres"; whether or not that number was based in any fact (and Hoffman-Henon had been making variations on that claim since at least 1921[14]), it is certainly true that the firm had left a significant mark on the business of designing theaters and on the built environment of Philadelphia.



Figures 25, 26: Left: Portrait of Paul J. Henon, Jr., published with his essay in *Motion Picture News*, December 29, 1928; Right: Advertisement for Henon & Boyle, from 1910, cites their work on churches and schools. Source: Athenaeum of Philadelphia, Hoffman-Henon Collection.

Paul Henon began his career in partnership with James F. Boyle from 1911 to 1918, the firm carrying on the legacy of Boyle's father, Rowland J. Boyle, designing primarily for Catholic churches and schools.

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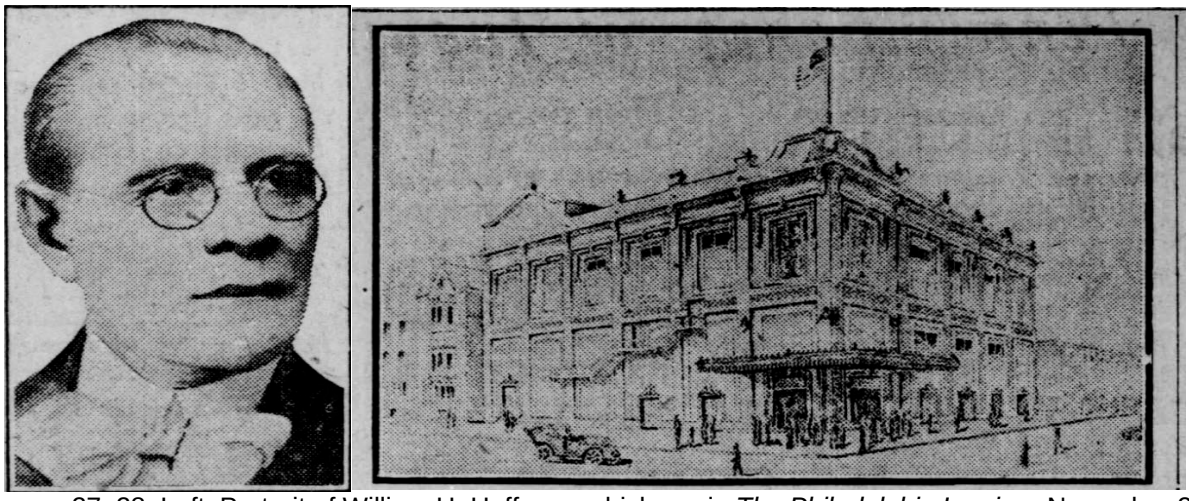
[13] "Theatre Building & Equipment Buyers Guide," *Motion Picture News,* December 29, 1928, Section Two. The advertisements citing Hoffman-Henon run from page 17 to page 26, and Henon's essay runs from page 27 to page 50. It seems plausible that the "16 years" began with William H. Hoffman's first theater commissions in Philadelphia in 1912.

[14] Advertisement for Hoffman-Henon Co., Inc., *Motion Picture News,* November 26, 1921: page 2867.

By 1914, if not earlier, Paul Henon began a working relationship with future executives of the Stanley Company when Henon & Boyle were contracted by Alexander R. Boyd to build a theater (the Arcadia Theatre) at 1529-31 Chestnut Street on land belonging to the Mastbaum brothers and their real estate partner Alfred W. Fleisher.[15]

In June 1918, Henon and Boyle took on a contract with the Mastbaums for alterations to a theater in the vicinity of 16th and Market Streets (likely the Regent Theatre at 1632-34 Market Street).[16] After Boyle's death in October from the 1918 Influenza epidemic, Henon was solely credited in early 1919 with alterations to the Palace Theatre (1214-16 Market Street) and converting 722-24 Market Street, formerly a millinery store, into the Capitol Theatre.[17] Both of these projects were included in Jules Mastbaum's announcement of the incorporation of the Stanley Company of America that June.[18]



Figures 27, 28: Left: Portrait of William H. Hoffman, which ran in *The Philadelphia Inquirer,* November 25, 1923, page 3; Right: Illustration of the vaudeville theater Hoffman designed at 26th Street and Girard Avenue, published in *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, October 13, 1912, page 7.

Meanwhile, William H. Hoffman had been building a significant reputation of his own. Originally from Pittsburgh, Hoffman received his first mentions in *The Philadelphia Real Estate Record and Builders' Guide* in October 1911.[19] In January 1912, he won a contract for a theater at 52nd and Market Streets for a Pittsburgh-based property owner and in July of that year, he was contracted to design a "Moving Picture Theatre" at 333 Market Street (the Market Street Theatre).[20] By October of 1912, *the Philadelphia Inquirer* was calling him "one of the best known of theatre architects" when it announced

[15] "Theatre on Chestnut Street," *The Philadelphia Inquirer,* July 5, 1914, page 15.

[16] "Building Permits Granted," *The Philadelphia Inquirer,* July 31, 1918, page 13; The Regent is listed among Henon's accomplishments in the announcement of his partnership with Hoffman: "Activities of the Day in Real Estate," *The Philadelphia Inquirer,* June 17, 1919, page 17.

[17] "Activities of the Day in Real Estate," *The Philadelphia Inquirer,* March 22, 1919, page 9; "Activities of the Day in Real Estate," *The Philadelphia Inquirer,* March 28, 1919, page 15; "Capitol Theatre," *Philadelphia Architects and Buildings,* the Athenaeum of Philadelphia.

[18] "Theatre Firms Here Merge with Stanley," *Evening Public Ledger,* Philadelphia, PA, June 3, 1919, page 11.

[19] *Builders' Guide,* Volume 26, n. 41, October 11, 1911, pages 687 and 690.

[20] *Builders' Guide,* Volume 27: n. 5, January 31, 1912, page 76; n. 30, July 24, 1912, page 481.

he was designing a vaudeville theater at 26th Street and Girard Avenue for J. Fred Zimmerman.[21]

Hoffman formed a productive partnership with fellow Pittsburgher Harvey Childs Hodgens upon the latter's move to Philadelphia in 1913. *The Philadelphia Real Estate Record and Builders' Guide* reported contracts for at least eleven theater projects in 1913 to W. H. Hoffman and Co.[22] Newspaper notices report Hodgens' involvement in at least four of those.[23] Hodgens would go on to form an architectural partnership with Albert Douglas Hill by at least 1923, which would design many neighborhood theaters including the Colney Theatre (1924-25), the Admiral Theatre (1928), and the Rexy Theatre (1928) in Philadelphia, and the Tower Theatre (1927) in Upper Darby.[24]

One of Hoffman's 1913 contracts with Hodgens was with the Stanley Company, for whom Hoffman designed the Stanley Theatre (built 1914, later known as the Stanton) at 1614-22 Market Street, described as a "completely equipped vaudeville theatre."[25] Hoffman designed another vaudeville theater built in 1914, the Cross Keys, at 5931 Market Street, operated by John J. McGuirk for the Stanley Amusement Company, with the Mastbaum brothers negotiating the deal.[26]

World War I significantly slowed the construction of theaters in Philadelphia, and Hoffman is only credited with one such project during the war, 1916 alterations to the Coliseum Theatre.[27]

In June 1919, just two weeks after Jules Mastbaum announced the reincorporation of the Stanley Company of America, *The Philadelphia Inquirer* reported that the two theater architects had joined forces:

> One of the biggest consolidations in architectural and engineering circles for some time was consummated last week with the combining of Paul J. Henon Company with Hoffman and Company. Some of the work done by Paul J. Henon, Jr., was the designing

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[21] "Northwest to have Vaudeville Theatre," *The Philadelphia Inquirer,* October 13, 1912, page 7.

[22] *Builders' Guide*, Volume 28 (1913): April 16, n. 16, p. 252; May 7, n. 19, p. 295; May 14, n. 20, p. 313; June 11, n. 24, p. 375; July 2, n. 27, p. 423; July 16, n. 29, p. 466; July 23, n. 30, p. 479-80; July 30, n. 31, p. 496; September 3, n. 36, p. 577; October 22, n. 43 p. 687; November 5, n. 45 p. 720-21

[23] "To Begin Costly Operation," *The Philadelphia Inquirer,* May 10, 1913, page 4; "Review of the Week in Real Estate," *The Philadelphia Inquirer,* June 8, 1913, page 25; "Theatre Plans Finished," *The Philadelphia Inquirer,* June 27, 1913, page 14; "This City Shows Gain," *The Philadelphia Inquirer,* July 13, 1913, page 8.

[24] Attributions and dates from the Philadelphia Architects and Buildings project of the Athenaeum of Philadelphia, apart from the Admiral Theatre, which opened in 1928 according to Irvin R. Glazer in *Philadelphia Theaters, A Pictorial Architectural History*.

[25] "Review of the Week in Real Estate," *The Philadelphia Inquirer,* June 22, 1913, page 22. 1914 completion date comes from Glazer, *Philadelphia Theaters, A Pictorial Architectural History,* 86.

[26] "Theatre Contract Awarded," *The Philadelphia Inquirer,* March 7, 1914, page 13; "New Era Came to West Phila with 'L' Road," *Evening Public Ledger,* November 14, 1914, page 2.

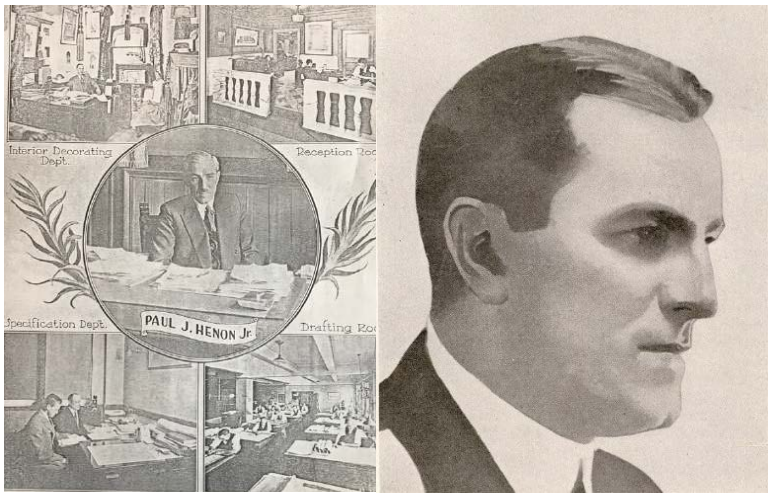
[27] Irvin R. Glazer's *Philadelphia Theaters: A Pictorial Architectural History* includes a chronological list of theaters which shows that after a booming market for theater design resulting in forty-one theaters in 1913 and sixty-six in 1914, only fifteen theaters were completed in 1915, two in 1916, one in 1917, and two in 1918 before the industry picked up again in 1919. Hoffman's work on the Coliseum is noted in Glazer, *Philadelphia Theaters, A Pictorial Architectural History,* 85.

> and building of the Church of Ascension, St. Cecilia's Church at Fox Chase, the Lady of Victory Church at Fifty-fourth and Vine streets, which was recently bombed, and the Arcadia and Regent Theatres.[28]

In October 1919, demolition began at the southwest corner of 19th and Market Streets. On May 8, 1920, Fanny Mastbaum, mother of Stanley and Jules, "wield[ed] the silver trowel" at the ceremonial laying of the cornerstone.[29] When the new Stanley Theatre opened on January 29th, 1921 with 4000 seats to fill, it was heralded as a needed solution:

> For some time there has been felt the necessity for providing for large attendance in a photo-play house. The present Stanley makes the nearest approach to the desideratum, but the New Stanley, it is believed, will solve the problem of seat accommodation for all patrons in the usual course of business.[30]

Paul's brother Daniel Henon, who had formed an engineering and construction company with W. Edward Pierce in 1920 which executed many of Hoffman-Henon's early designs, joined Hoffman-Henon by 1923.[31] William Hoffman died in 1924, but by then the Hoffman-Henon name had become established and the Henon brothers continued to operate their firm with that name into the 1930s.[32] In addition to theaters, the firm continued designing a significant number of buildings for Catholic institutions, as well as taking on alteration projects of various types.[33]



Figures 29, 30: Left: Undated photos of Paul J. Henon and the Hoffman-Henon firm. Source: Athenaeum of Philadelphia, Hoffman-Henon Collection. Right: portrait of Daniel Henon, published in *Motion Picture News*, 1928.

[28] "Activities of the Day in Real Estate," *The Philadelphia Inquirer,* June 17, 1919, page 17.
[29] "$2,000,000 Theatre for Stanley Group," *The Philadelphia Inquirer,* May 2, 1920, page 42; "New Stanley Theatre Cornerstone is Laid," *The Philadelphia Inquirer,* May 9, 1920, page 2.
[30] "$2,000,000 Theatre for Stanley Group," *The Philadelphia Inquirer,* May 2, 1920, page 42.
[31] "Henon, Daniel T.," *Philadelphia Architects and Buildings,* Athenaeum of Philadelphia.
[32] "William H. Hoffman, Architect, Former Pittsburgher, Dies," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette,* April 26, 1924, page 14.
[33] "Henon, Paul J., Jr.," *Philadelphia Architects and Buildings,* Athenaeum of Philadelphia.

Hoffman-Henon designed theaters for a variety of clients but at least eleven were designed from the ground up for the Stanley Company of America, and many more renovated for Stanley within buildings designed by others. In addition to theaters in Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Atlantic City, Hoffman-Henon designed Stanley theaters in smaller towns and cities throughout Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware.[34] By the end of the 1930s, several forces, including the Great Depression and the advent of talking pictures, which did not require musical accompaniment, once again led to a slowdown of theater construction, and the Hoffman-Henon name was retired by the mid-1930s.[35]

As an example of the Stanley Company's dominance of the Philadelphia marketplace, in 1930, Stanley operated ten of the thirteen theaters which graced Market Street between 3rd Street and 22nd Street.[36] Four of these were designed by the firm of Hoffman-Henon and another five could be attributed to Hoffman (Stanton, 333 Market Street) or Henon (Regent, Palace, Capitol) before the architects went into business together.[37] Among the ten theaters on the Stanley roster, only the Victoria Theatre at 913 Market Street cannot (yet) be linked to design work by either William Hoffman or Paul Henon. Alterations to one of the non-Stanley theaters (the Princess Theatre at 1018 Market Street) are also credited to Hoffman-Henon in 1919.[38]

Figure 31: Market Street theaters, ca. 1930. Those designed by Hoffman-Henon for Stanley appear in red, and those designed or altered by Hoffman or Henon before their partnership appear in pink. Theaters designed by others appear in green. The Globe Theatre (demolished 1930) is shown in yellow and the Princess Theatre (altered by Hoffman-Henon, 1919) is in blue. Composite map by author using the 1942 Land Use Map as a base.

The four Market Street theaters commissioned by the Stanley Company after the Hoffman-Henon merger are among their most ambitious:

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[34] For instance, in 1921, *Motion Picture News* reported Hoffman-Henon working on theaters in Plainfield, NJ; Milford, DE; Middletown, Hazelton, and Pottstown, PA, as well as two theaters in Philadelphia. "Hoffman-Henon Busy on Many Theatre Plans," *Motion Picture News,* May 7, 1921, Vol. 23, n. 20, page 2962.

[35] *Philadelphia Architects and Buildings* suggests Paul Henon retired the name in 1930, but materials about the Bolivar Theatre in Quito, Ecuador, built 1933 mention "Hoffman and Henon."

[36] Stanley's influence was not limited to Market Street: Hoffman and/or Henon designed several theaters for the company along Chestnut Street, one of Philadelphia's other theater corridors, including the Arcadia Theatre (1529-31 Chestnut St, Henon & Boyle, 1914), Karlton Theatre (1412-24 Chestnut St, Hoffman-Henon, 1921).

[37] It is unclear the extent of Henon & Boyle's alterations to the Palace Theatre and the Regent Theatre, both of which were built earlier (1907 and 1913, respectively). Technically, the Globe Theatre (Stanley) at the northeast corner of Market and Juniper was still standing for a portion of 1930—Hoffman had received a contract for alterations to it in 1913. The Market Street theaters not operated by Stanley: The Fox Theatre (1600 Market), the Family Theatre in the Gibson Building (1307-11 Market St), and the Savoy Theatre (1211 Market, stage plays only).

[38] "Princess Theatre," *Philadelphia Architects and Buildings,* Athenaeum of Philadelphia.

- The Stanley Theatre at 19th and Market (built 1921, demolished 1973)[39]
- The Earle Theatre at 11th and Market (built 1924, demolished 1953, also known as the Elrae)
- The Erlanger Theatre at 21st and Market (built 1927, demolished 1978).
- The Mastbaum Theatre at 20th and Market (built 1929, demolished 1958)[40]

These four theaters, constructed within a single decade, display a range of scales and architectural styles while working from a common palette. They all appear to include street-level commercial spaces, likely a business strategy on behalf of the Stanley Company of America. The façades are primarily of limestone, terracotta, and buff brick, giving a unified appearance to the whole. Several of these other Stanley theaters once had similarly ornate marquees to that of the Logan Theatre—those of the Earle and The Stanley were perhaps even identical to it. [41]

Figure 32: Photo of the Earle Theatre (then called the Elrae) under construction shows the steel skeleton under the masonry façades. Photo from the Glazer Theater Collection.

[39] One claim to fame of the Stanley Theatre at 19th and Market Streets: it was there that Al Capone was arrested in 1929 while traveling through Philadelphia. Shawn Evans, "Historic Movie Theaters of Center City," *PhillyHistory Blog,* February 9, 2011.

[40] The Mastbaum was constructed after the 1928 acquisition of the Stanley Company by Warner Brothers, which may explain the somewhat expanded design palette compared to the previous three theaters.

[41] A 1928 advertisement for Edwin W. Wehmeyer, Engineer and Contractor of structural and ornamental ironwork, lists the Logan, the Earle, the Erlanger, the Mastbaum, and Stanley theaters in Atlantic City, Camden, and Baltimore as those exhibiting his work. The marquees of these theaters seem the most likely evidence of Wehmeyer's work. Muddying the waters, however, in 1924, Hoffman-Henon oversaw alterations to the marquees of the Logan and the Earle. "Edwin W. Wehmeyer" (Advertisement), *Motion Picture News,* December 29, 1928, page 77; "Advance Construction News," *Builders' Guide,* March 5, 1924, V. 39, n. 10, p. 151.

Figure 33: Stanley Theatre at 19th and Market Streets built 1921, demolished 1973. Photo from the Glazer Theater Collection.


Figure 34: Earle Theatre at 11th and Market Streets, built 1924, demolished 1953. Photo from the Glazer Theater Collection.

Figure 35: The Erlanger Theatre at 21st and Market Streets, built 1927, demolished 1978. Photo from the Glazer Theater Collection.

Figure 36: The Mastbaum Theatre at 20th and Market Streets built 1929, demolished 1958, was the largest of the four at 4700 seats. Photo from the Glazer Theater Collection.

Figure 37: Side elevation of the Earle Theatre along 11th Street. Photo from the Glazer Theater Collection.

Even with the largest and grandest of these theaters, Hoffman-Henon practiced economy, reserving more expensive materials for the dominant elevations: the Mastbaum Theatre's upper reaches appear to have been executed in stucco with limestone quoins. On the other hand, even the most modest of theaters has terracotta ornament. For instance, the side elevation of the Earle Theatre (Figure 37), which steps down from the primary façade and largely trades limestone for brick, features significant ornament. Above the limestone first floor's exit doors, a large colonnade motif, false doors, and medallions depicting artists at work fill what would otherwise be a blank space.

Of the four Stanley theaters on Market Street, the one at 19th and Market most resembles the Logan Theatre in scale, and in fact was at least partly the inspiration for the Logan's design, according to coverage of the Logan's opening.[42] Here are the arched windows at the center of the elevation between a colonnade of pilasters. There is also a subtle play with the plane of the elevation, as minor step-backs on either side of the colonnade break up the façade and give a sense that the building is pushing forward at the marquee.

[42] "Philadelphia," *Motion Picture News,* February 9, 1924, page 662.

Figure 38: The Stanley Theatre at 19th and Market Streets with a smaller sign than above which reveals the large arched windows. Photo from the Glazer Theater Collection.

Outside of their work with the Stanley Company, Hoffman-Henon proved that they could work in a variety of architectural styles. Their theater (built ca. 1926) for Warner Brothers in Bala Cynwyd, for instance, is a classic example of Egyptian Revival architecture.[43] Hoffman-Henon designed the Enright Theatre (1928) in Pittsburgh, PA, with Art Deco influences. The theater Hoffman-Henon designed for Warner Brothers on the Atlantic City boardwalk (sometimes called the Embassy Theatre, built ca. 1929), of which the front façade survives, is executed mostly in the Spanish Revival style.

[43] Gerry Senker, "The Long Sad Story of the Bala (nee Egyptian) Theater – 1927-2014," *This is Lower Merion and Narberth,* January 16, 2022.

Figure 39: Egyptian Theatre, opened in 1927, survives as the Bala Theatre. Photo from the Glazer Theater Collection.

Figure 40: Enright Theatre, built 1928 in Pittsburgh, PA. Pittsburgh City Photographer Collection, Historic Pittsburgh.


Warner Theatre Section

ATLANTIC CITY DAILY PRESS

Warner Theatre Section

ATLANTIC CITY, N. J., WEDNESDAY, JUNE 19, 1929

Beautiful Warner Theatre Distinctive Addition To City's Amusement Life

New Warner Rich In Art And Beauty

Interior Resembles Colorful Courtyard in Spanish Atmosphere

COST $3,000,000; WILL SEAT 5000

Equipped With Most Modern Type of Disappearing Orchestra Pit

WILL OPEN TODAY

Magnificence Unparalleled in History of American Theatre Construction

HARRY M. WARNER PRESIDENT WARNER BROS.

MAJOR ALBERT WARNER TREASURER WARNER BROS.

JACK L. WARNER DIRECTOR GENERAL OF PRODUCTION

WARNER

ON WITH THE SHOW

Two Parades Mark Opening

Notables Will Attend Impressive Dedicatory Ceremonies at Warner Today

Rapid Rise Of Warners Is Romantic

Careers of Three Warner Brothers Read Like Magic Fairy Tale

TRIO NOW CONTROL LARGE MOVIE CHAIN

First to Discover Wonderful Possibilities in Sound Pictures

WERE EARLY PIONEERS

Initiative, Foresight and Perseverance Main Factors for Success

Opening Show Is Attractive

'On With the Show' Here as Feature Film for Warner Inaugural

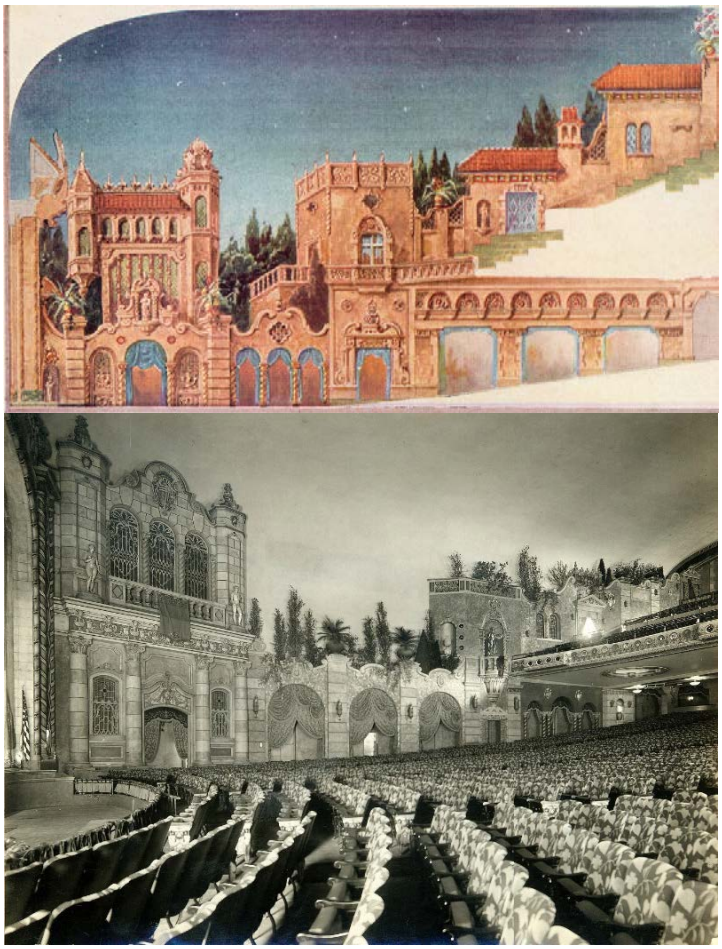
Figures 41, 42: Left: Warner Theaters promoted the construction of their new theater on the boardwalk with a whole section of the Atlantic City Daily Press. *Atlantic City Daily Press,* June 19, 1929, page 17. Right: The theater as it appeared in 1978. Library of Congress, John Margolies Roadside America photograph archive.

The Warner Theatre was one of Hoffman-Henon's most ambitious interiors, with the Spanish Revival continuing to the auditorium itself, with a three-dimensional skyline of buildings along each side. The Circle Theatre (built 1928, still standing at 4648-62 Frankford Avenue) featured similar interior architecture, with some of the curtained archways likely leading to fire exits. Both the Warner Theatre and the Circle Theatre were characterized as "atmospheric" theaters, a trend which emerged in the late 1920s, largely driven by the work of theater architect John Eberson.[44] In his book *Philadelphia Theaters, A-Z* Irvin R. Glazer describes the atmosphere created within the Circle Theatre:

> The auditorium, in Spanish design, is Philadelphia's only completely atmospheric theatre. The ceiling is painted dark blue with an especially designed electric star lighting scheme which follows the constellations. Moving cloud effects supplied by Brenograph machines complete the effect of an open air courtyard. The side wall scenic effects project five feet from the main side walls, each wall being of different design and detail. Sides of buildings, illuminated stained glass windows, imported Italian classic statues, plants, flowers and birds add to the realism. [45]

[44] Thomas J. Mathieson, "'Projects Everything but the Picture,' The Brenograph and the Brenkert Light Projection Company," (2017 booklet), Embassy Theatre Foundation, Fort Wayne, IN, 54.

[45] Irvin R. Glazer, *Philadelphia Theatres, A-Z,* Greenwood Press, 1986, page 86. The cloud machine was likely a "Brenograph Jr." produced by the Brenkert Light Projection Company, which produced a variety of "magic lantern" projectors for use in theaters, both for theatrical productions and film screenings. Released in December 1927, the "Jr." was a smaller projector which could be deployed in a variety of settings but which was primarily advertised for atmospheric projection on ceilings and walls. Mathieson, "'Projects Everything but the Picture," 54-56.



Figures 43, 44: Top: Illustration of one side of the Warner/Embassy Theatre auditorium, published as part of the Hoffman-Henon feature in *Motion Picture News*; Bottom: "Atmospheric" interior of the Circle Theatre. Photo from the Glazer Theater Collection.

Most of Hoffman-Henon's movie theaters do not survive or are significantly altered, but several are historically designated at various levels, including the Bala Theatre (163 Bala Avenue, Bala Cynwyd, PA), listed as a Class 1 structure in the Township of Lower Merion; the Stanley Theatre (237 Seventh Street, Pittsburgh, PA) a designated City Landmark; and the Boyd Theatre (1910 Chestnut Street) and the Locust Theatre (228-36 S 52nd Street, alterations by Hoffman-Henon in 1922) which are listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.[46] The Warner/Embassy Theatre (Atlantic City, NJ boardwalk) is considered eligible for listing on the National Register.[47] The Bolivar Theatre in Quito, Ecuador, one of Hoffman-Henon's last theaters, built in 1933, was recently renovated with the assistance of the World Monuments fund.[48]

Apart from the Logan Theatre, the Circle Theatre (Figure 45) is likely the most intact Hoffman-Henon theater in Philadelphia yet to be historically designated.

[46] Township of Lower Merion Historic Resource Inventory; "Properties that are Designated as City Landmarks or are Located in City Designated Historic Districts," Historic Review Commission of Pittsburgh.
[47] Atlantic City Master Plan, 2008.
[48] "Bolivar Theater," World Monuments Fund, accessed November 2024.

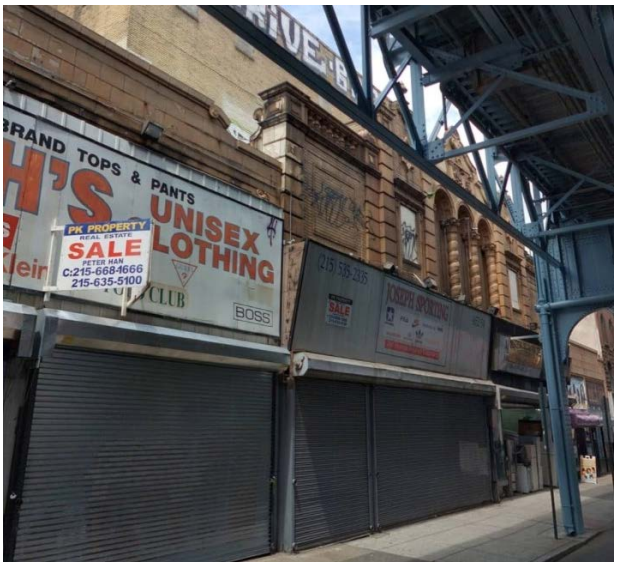


Figure 45: The Circle Theatre (built 1928, 4648-62 Frankford Avenue) is partially obscured by the elevated Market-Frankford Line. Image from Cyclomedia, June 2024.

Compared with Hoffman-Henon's theaters, the firm's work for Catholic churches, schools, and institutions has survived better. Several of these structures have been historically designated, including the St. Mary Magdalen de Pazzi Catholic School (625-33 Christian Street) and Ascension of Our Lord Roman Catholic Church (701-65 E Westmoreland Street), both on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places, and the St. Joseph's House for Homeless Industrious Boys (1511 and 1515-27 Allegheny Avenue) on the National Register of Historic Places.

Every one of the four nominations which resulted in the above properties being listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places cited the work of Hoffman-Henon and the firm's stature as satisfying Criterion E for designation.[49]

Criterion C: The Neighborhood Theater and the Classical Revival

In his 1928 essay in *Motion Picture News,* Paul J. Henon, Jr. presented a brief history of the movie theater:

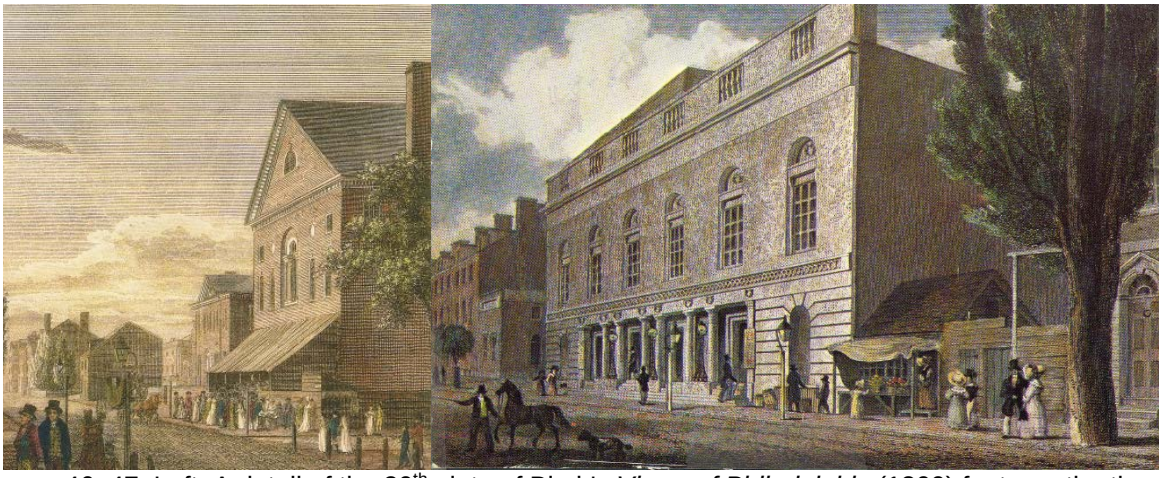
> I recall the first of the theatres erected for the sole purpose of exhibiting movies. These buildings with their few hundred seats, a small organ and no orchestra or surrounding program, were the fore-runners of a series of increasingly important enterprises… It became necessary to add orchestra pits to the movie theatre. Full stages became part of their equipment. Larger capacity naturally became a necessity. The movies were here to stay and they began to make an impression on the legitimate stage. Then the temple of the cinema began to rival in beauty, solidity, utility and capacity the home of drama, the

[49] The nomination form for "Ascension of Our Lord Church" does not have Criterion E checked, but the Statement of Significance includes a heading citing Criterion E and a summary of the career of Paul Henon Jr., who worked on the church as a partner in both Henon & Boyle and Hoffman-Henon. The National Register nomination for the St. Joseph's House for Homeless Industrious Boys cites Criterion C and describes Henon's work with Catholic organizations as "outstanding credentials" for his commission for the orphanage.

> scene of the light opera and musical comedy, the setting of the extravaganza and the home of the melodrama. The elaborate stages presented specialties, vaudeville acts and other attractions to surround the motion picture and lay the foundation for what has since become a distinct and distinctive type of entertainment…*While these developments were taking place in what might be termed the theatrical centers, smaller theatres were being erected in the neighborhoods and the smaller towns. These, on a reduced scale, emulated the palatial cinemas of the metropolises in so far as luxury and completeness of detail are concerned.*[50]

The Logan Theatre is certainly one of these more modest theaters, which ornamented various neighborhoods in Philadelphia. The Logan is also a testament to Hoffman-Henon's ability to draw from the visual language of the grandest "temple(s) of the cinema" and compose an elegant and economical building.

Theater architecture in the United States, from colonial times through the early 20th century was dominated by monumental forms, often drawing inspiration from Greek and Roman forms through the works of Palladio. Two early examples in Philadelphia, the early Chestnut Street Theatre (built 1791-1794 and portrayed in Birch's Views of Philadelphia) and the Walnut Street Theatre (remodeled by John Haviland 1828-29), both feature Palladian principles of symmetry and variously employ elements such as columns, arched windows, a pediment, and a cornice with dentils.[51]



Figures 46, 47: Left: A detail of the 20th plate of Birch's *Views of Philadelphia* (1800) features the theater on the north side of the 600 block of Chestnut Street. Right: Walnut Street Theatre after its 1827-28 renovation by architect John Haviland. Image from the Glazer Theater Collection.

American architects continued to evoke classical forms throughout the 19th century with work often classified as "Federal," "Greek Revival," and even "Jeffersonian." These styles proved especially popular for public buildings such as banks, houses of worship, government buildings, and theaters.

[50] Paul J. Henon, Jr., "The Architect's Service to the Industry," *Motion Picture News,* December 29, 1928, Section 2, emphasis added.

[51] For further exploration of neoclassical styles in theater design, see Oscar Beisert, "Nomination to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places: 2117-23 Germantown Ave," designated November 8, 2024, page 16.

The architecture at the 1893 Columbian Exposition in Chicago brought renewed interest in the classical architecture. The exposition included displays of the Beaux-Arts style—which added later Italian influences to classical forms and placed an emphasis on grandiose ornament—sitting along a less flamboyant strain of architecture, which came to be known as the Classical Revival— which was often characterized by prominent columns in front of a central entrance.

When the first purpose-built movie theaters were constructed, their designers drew freely from the variety of these various neoclassical styles, often combining them with other emerging architectural palettes, including the Commercial style.

As smaller, neighborhood theaters were developed, they, as Paul Henon wrote, "emulated the palatial cinemas of the metropolises in so far as luxury and completeness of detail are concerned." In his nomination of the Locust Theatre (228-36 S 52nd Street) to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places, Noah Yoder notes that many of these theaters were designed to stand out from their surroundings, with some of the most ornate located in Philadelphia's poorest neighborhoods.[52] Yoder identifies the Beaux-Arts, the Moorish Revival and the Egyptian Revival as architectural modes which read as especially lavish, but even more restrained neoclassical designs like the Logan Theatre drew visual attention along commercial corridors in largely residential areas.

The producers of architectural ornament were only too happy to provide theater architects with options. The 1930 catalogue of the Conkling-Armstrong Terra Cotta Company features images of several theaters in Philadelphia and beyond, including the Stanley Theatre at 19th and Market Streets and the Ambassador Theatre (see below, Figure 47), contending that terracotta was uniquely able to achieve the aesthetic aims of theaters:

> Theatres demand an architectural treatment that expresses their purpose. Color, modeling and attractive ornament are distinctly an asset and a necessity. Architectural Terra Cotta with all its decorative color and surface treatment possibilities has become the universal material for the facing and trimming of theatres.[53]

One estimate puts the number of movie theaters built in Philadelphia since the 1890s at 468. Of those, 396 were located outside of Center City.[54] Of those hundreds, HiddenCity estimated that 135 survived in some form in 2013, and fewer survive today.[55] Some have become commercial spaces and many more have become home to religious communities, as the Logan Theatre did. While many of these former movie theaters are significantly altered, some of these retain a great deal of historical integrity and architectural interest.

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[52] Noah Yoder, "Nomination to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places: 228-36 S 52nd St, Locust Theatre," designated November 9, 2018, page 18.

[53] *Conkling-Armstrong Terra Cotta Company, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania,* (catalogue), 1930, no page numbers. Accessed via Archive.org

[54] Shawn Evans, "Neighborhood Movie Theaters," *PhillyHistory Blog,* June 7, 2011.

[55] Rachel Hildebrandt, "How to Spot a Theater," *HiddenCity,* May 14, 2013.

Looking at a selection of the surviving neighborhood theaters built in the 1910s and 1920s (Figures 47, 48) offers a sense of the varied, but broadly neoclassical, architectural forms they took. Some of the surviving theaters occupy similar frontage to the Logan Theatre, with or without incorporating storefronts. Others were designed on smaller parcels and were built with more verticality.

While each design is different, these theaters largely share certain characteristics including symmetrical façades divided into three sections, with pilasters, piers, or columns defining elements or breaking up the elevation. Arches, especially around windows or doors, are a recurring element, as are prominent cornices which vary from relatively simple to elaborate. Brick, limestone, and architectural terracotta are the primary façade materials. Many of the windows are multi-light double-hung, as was popular in a variety of Revival architectural styles, offering utility as well as a sense of history. While these buildings, located on commercial corridors, are sited right on the sidewalk, many utilize minor variations in plane to suggest façades which protrude or recede at the center, drawing focus to the marquee and the entrance.

One of the earlier neighborhood movie theaters to survive is the former Jefferson Theatre (2217-2223 North 29th Street), built in 1913.[56] The enormous central lunette, in brick and terracotta, remains stunning over a century after it was designed by John D. Allen. A blind arcade, once hidden behind the theater's sign, is now revealed over the central entrance. Opened a few years later in 1915, the Apollo Theatre (later the Capital Theater) at 1237-45 North 52nd Street is characterized by two large cloister vaults giving almost a Moorish Revival look though the main elevation is very neoclassical, with a blind arcade and two pedimented doors on the second floor and Corinthian order pilasters.[57]

The former Ambassador Theatre at 5538-50 Baltimore Avenue (opened 1921) and the Diamond Theatre at 2117-23 Germantown Avenue (constructed 1922-23) feature elaborate terracotta ornament including (respectively) urns in niches and an ornate central cartouche.[58]

The Colney Theatre (built 1924-25) at 5619-33 North 5th Street, features a tripartite elevation, like the Logan Theatre, which uses a very slight change of depth, defined by piers on either end of the central portion, to gently emphasize the entrance, flanked by shopfronts. Only the second floor of the former theater remains, but the artful, symmetrical elevation of architectural terracotta and buff brick is recognizable if you know where to look.

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[56] Unless otherwise stated, dates of theater construction come from Glazer, *Philadelphia Theaters, A Pictorial Architectural History* or *Philadelphia Architects and Buildings.*

[57] "Apollo Opening Today" Advertisement, *Evening Public Ledger,* October 30, 1915, page 17.

[58] The Diamond Theatre was recently added to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. Minutes of the 747th Meeting of the Philadelphia Historical Commission, November 8, 2024, page 15.

Figure 48: From top, the Jefferson (1913), Apollo (1915), Ambassador (1921), and Diamond (1922-23) documented in the Glazer Theater Collection and as they appeared in August 2024, images captured via Cyclomedia.

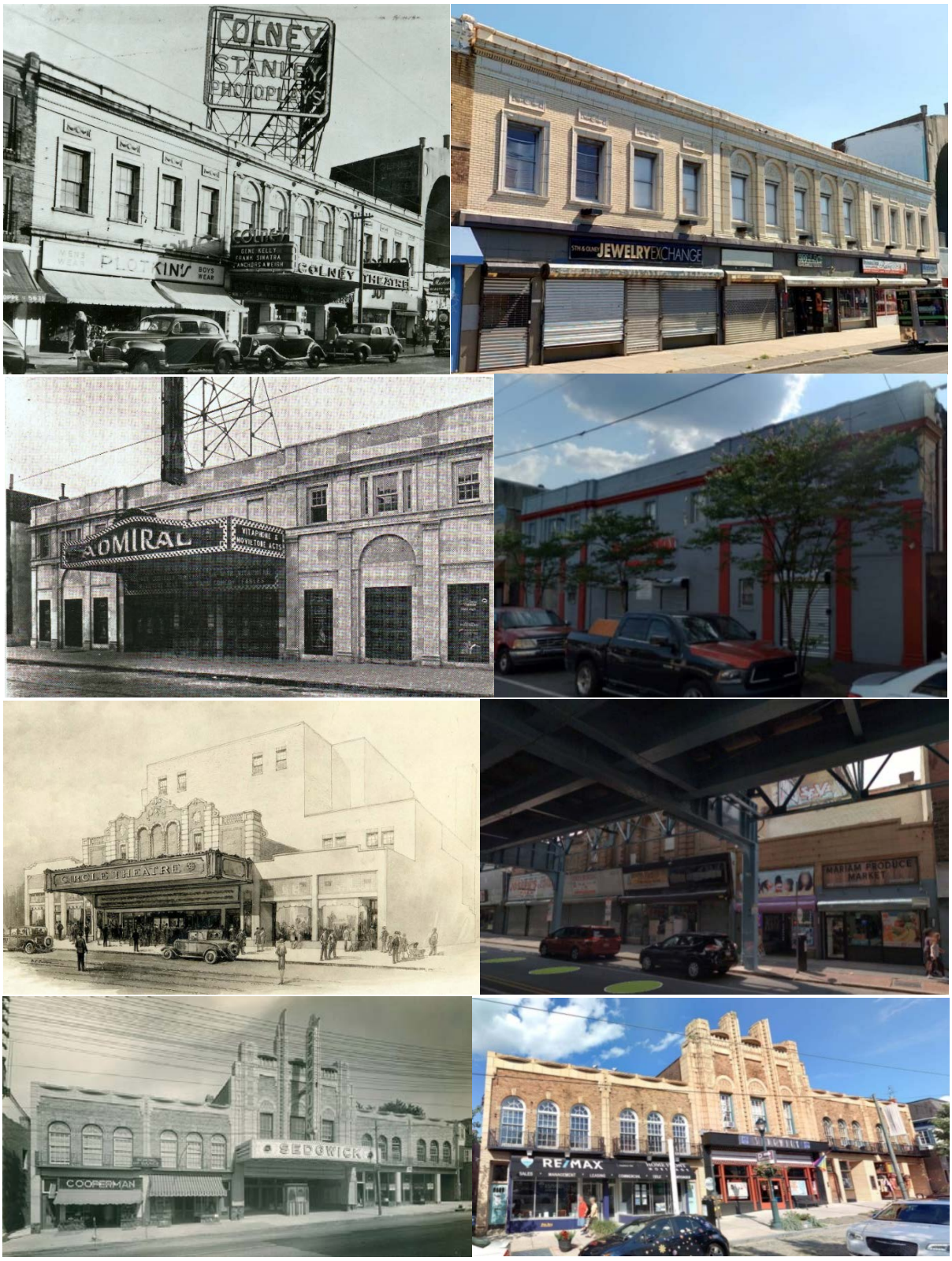


Figure 49: From top, the Colney (1924-25), Admiral (1928), Circle (1928), and Sedgwick (1928), documented in the Glazer Theater Collection and as they appeared in August 2024, images captured via Cyclomedia.

The former Admiral Theatre (built ca. 1928) at 2806 North 5th Street exhibits elements of Stripped Classicism, perhaps reflecting changing stylistic tastes, given its later construction, or economic limitations.

The Circle Theatre at 4648-62 Frankford Avenue (built 1928), while perhaps most notable for its interior design (see Figures 43), also represents an interesting case study in neighborhood theater design. The façade is ornamented by some of Spanish Revival touches, to bring unity with the interior, but the central portion of the elevation is largely organized along neoclassical principles. A small blind arcade takes central position, with piers further breaking up the elevation and evoking quoins while doing so. In contrast to many of the other theaters pictured above, the wings of the primary elevation abandon symmetry, though they retain visual balance. Hoffman-Henon included space for four shopfronts (two on each side) and detailed these spaces in much more contemporary styles. These limestone structures with details in terracotta might be considered Commercial Style, with the left wing suggesting some Art Deco influences.

Perhaps the most well-preserved early-20th-century neighborhood movie theater in Philadelphia is the Sedgwick Theatre at 7133-43 Germantown Avenue (built 1928). While the ornamentation on the Sedgwick is Art Deco in style, it is deployed throughout the primary elevation in a way that conforms to the more neoclassical use of terracotta, with pilasters and piers breaking up the façade and a decorative cornice. The windows are all multi-light double hung, with fan lights above the windows on the winds, giving the building a touch of the Colonial Revival. In the years after the Sedgwick was built, theater design would move further from neoclassical rhythms, and Art Deco became the principal style for theater design in the mid-20th century.

Returning to the design of the Logan Theatre, having surveyed a variety of other neighborhood theaters of similar vintage, the common architectural vocabulary becomes clear. The façade is tripartite and symmetrical, dominated by arched windows and punctuated by piers and pilasters, and architectural terracotta provides ornament throughout the primary elevation, including a prominent cornice.

Yet even as it shares many characteristics with other 1910s and 1920s neighborhood theaters, the Logan Theatre displays remarkable ambition. Compared with the neighborhood theaters which were built before it, the Logan is significantly more massive, both occupying a longer street frontage than most and rising to accommodate a lofty ballroom with a mezzanine. The large second-floor windows bear witness to this space and would have glowed with light when the ballroom was in use. Though some of the later theaters, including the Circle and the Sedgwick used height at the center of the façade to create focal points of visual interest, they do not match the monumental scale of the Logan.

Figure 50: 1923 photo of the Logan Theatre, from the Glazer Theater Collection.

The interior, though more modest than Hoffman-Henon's most elaborate works, was not a rote rendition of other theaters in design or in technology. Gibelli & Co., a theater decorating company, boasted in an advertisement in *Exhibitors Trade Review* that they had recently completed "mural and fresco paintings" at the Logan Theatre, and included an illustration (Figure 50).[59] A further "beautiful seascape" mural showing a galleon tossed on the waves was included on the second-floor Mezzanine by R. MacGill Mackall of Baltimore (Figure 51).[60]

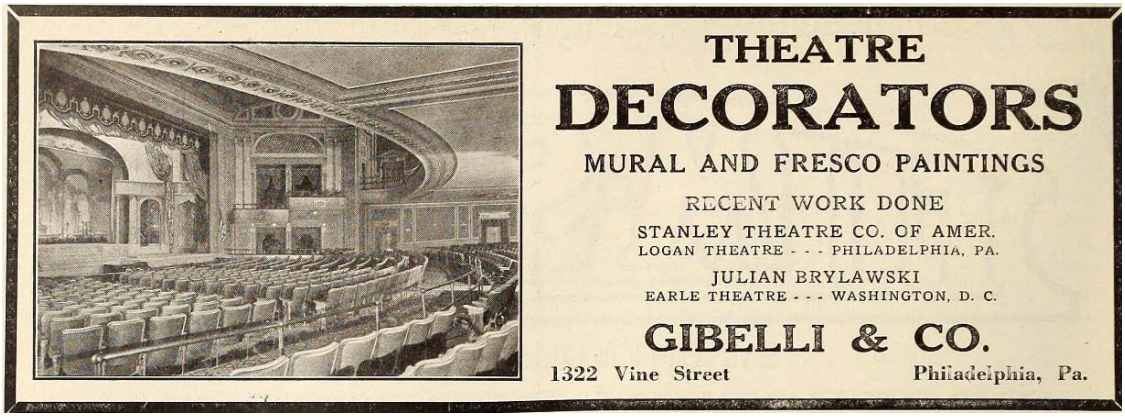


Figure 51: Advertisement for Gibelli and Co., in *Exhibition Trade Review* with illustration of the interior of the Logan Theatre, December 1924.

[59] "Theatre Decorators" (Advertisement), *Exhibition Trade Review,* December 27, 1924, Vol. 17, n. 5, page 230.
[60] "Philadelphia," *Motion Picture News,* February 9, 1924, page 662; Glazer, *Philadelphia Theatres, A-Z,* page 157; "R. McGill Mackall," Johns Hopkins Portrait Collection: https://medicalarchives.jhmi.edu/artist/r-mcgill-mackall/

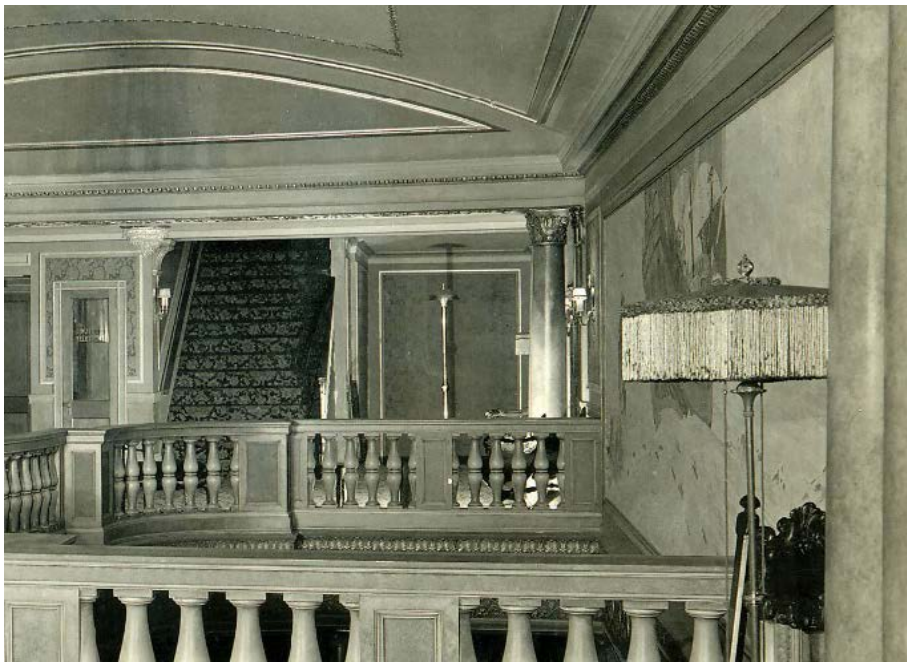


Figure 52: Detail of photo showing oblique view of the seascape mural by R. McGill Mackall on the second-floor mezzanine (at right). Photo from the Glazer Theater Collection.

A note in *Motion Picture News* shortly before the Logan opened claimed, perhaps hyperbolically, that "the stage setting is said to be the most expensive and beautiful in the entire country." Beyond that unmeasurable claim, the article further describes the innovations included in the new building:

> A miniature stage on the main stage will permit the display of tableax [sic] and the lighting system will surpass anything of its kind. There will also be a superior screen of new type which will give clearer and finer projection than ever before attained.[61]

While not approaching the ambition of the fully "atmospheric" theaters, the Logan's stage had a set evoking a garden with architectural features including archways for performers to make their entrances through (see Figures 51, 60).[62]

Coverage of the Logan Theatre's 1924 opening described the structure as "one of the most attractive in the city, rivaling in its pretentiousness the theatres of the central city section," a comment that neatly sums up the ambition of Hoffman-Henon and other designers of neighborhood movie theaters in that era.

Criterion J: Entertainment in a Rapidly Changing Neighborhood

As the largest movie theater in the Logan neighborhood of Philadelphia, the subject property was a significant part of the social fabric of its surroundings. Beyond the films screened in the building—first silent movies accompanied by live music and then adapting to changing technology and attitudes about what was appropriate—the Logan

[61] "Logan Theatre, Logan, Pa., Soon to Open," *Motion Picture News*, February 2, 1924, Vol. 29, n. 5, page 540.
[62] Glazer, *Philadelphia Theatres, A-Z,* page 157.

Theatre engaged with its neighbors in a variety of ways such that its history offers a window into the cultural and social heritage of the community. Commercial spaces activated the street frontage between film showings and the second-floor ballroom offered a dance space during a heyday of American dance. This space was opened under the aegis of Philadelphia's own "dance cop" Marguerite Walz but was hosting jazz by the end of the 1920s. As the movie theater business changed, the Logan was used more as a place for gathering. While these auxiliary uses are less documented than the film history, they may be the most important history going forward as the current owners of the property seek a future for the building.

Historic Context: The City Comes to Logan

The area now known as the Logan neighborhood was sparsely developed until the late 19th century and was still undergoing rapid change when the Logan Theatre was built in 1923. James Logan's estate, Stenton, built in the 1720s, was located between Germantown Avenue and York Road, two of the main northbound thoroughfares from Philadelphia. By the 1840s, Logan had several properties, including a "Cotton Factory" clustered in the southwest corner of Bristol Township, near the point where it met three other municipalities: the Northern Liberties, Penn Township, and Germantown. The development of the Philadelphia, Germantown, and Norristown Railroad in the vicinity (opened 1832) began to connect the countryside to the city but remained largely undeveloped in 1854 when various outlying municipalities in Philadelphia County were incorporated into the city of Philadelphia through the Act of Consolidation.

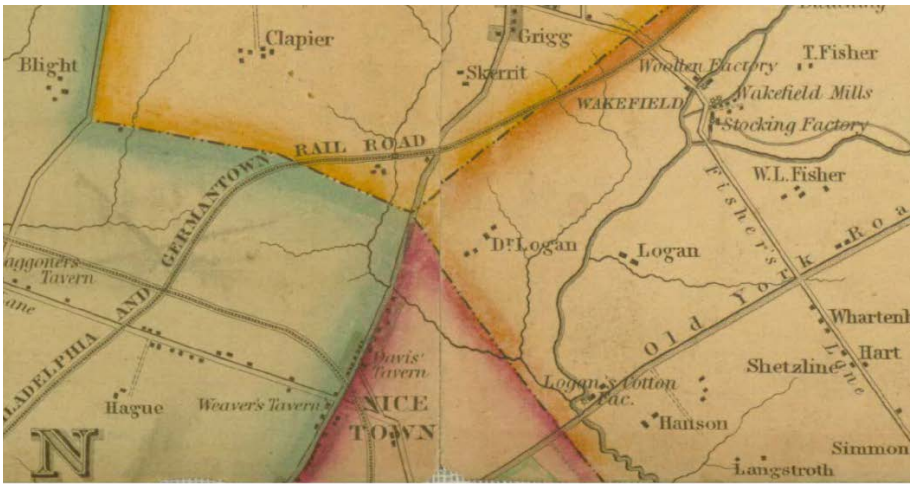


Figure 53: "A Map of the County of Philadelphia, 1843," published by Charles Ellet, Jr.

Other industrial sites followed Logan's Cotton Factory to the area. Wakefield Mills built a large knitting mill near the present-day intersection of Logan Street, Lindley Avenue, and Belfield Avenue by the 1820s, employing as many as 300 people. The extension of railroads and city streets led to some further industrial development, including the Heintz Manufacturing Company (metals and military weaponry), but the area remained under-developed compared to manufacturing centers in Germantown and Frankford.

Instead, residential development relied on demand from commuters, and consequently was somewhat delayed until further transportation infrastructure arrived.[63]

The lots upon which the Logan Theatre was constructed were subdivided for development (from land previously owned by J. Frederick Baechler) by the Second Broad Street Mutual Land Association and sold to individuals between 1890 and 1891.[64] Yet Bromley's 1910 *Atlas of the City of Philadelphia* (Figure 53) shows that even two decades after many of the Second Broad Street Mutual Land Association's lots were sold, they were undeveloped. In general, the blocks along Broad Street are less developed than those immediately south of Logan Station, suggesting the railroad was more attractive than horse drawn conveyances or the emerging automobile market.

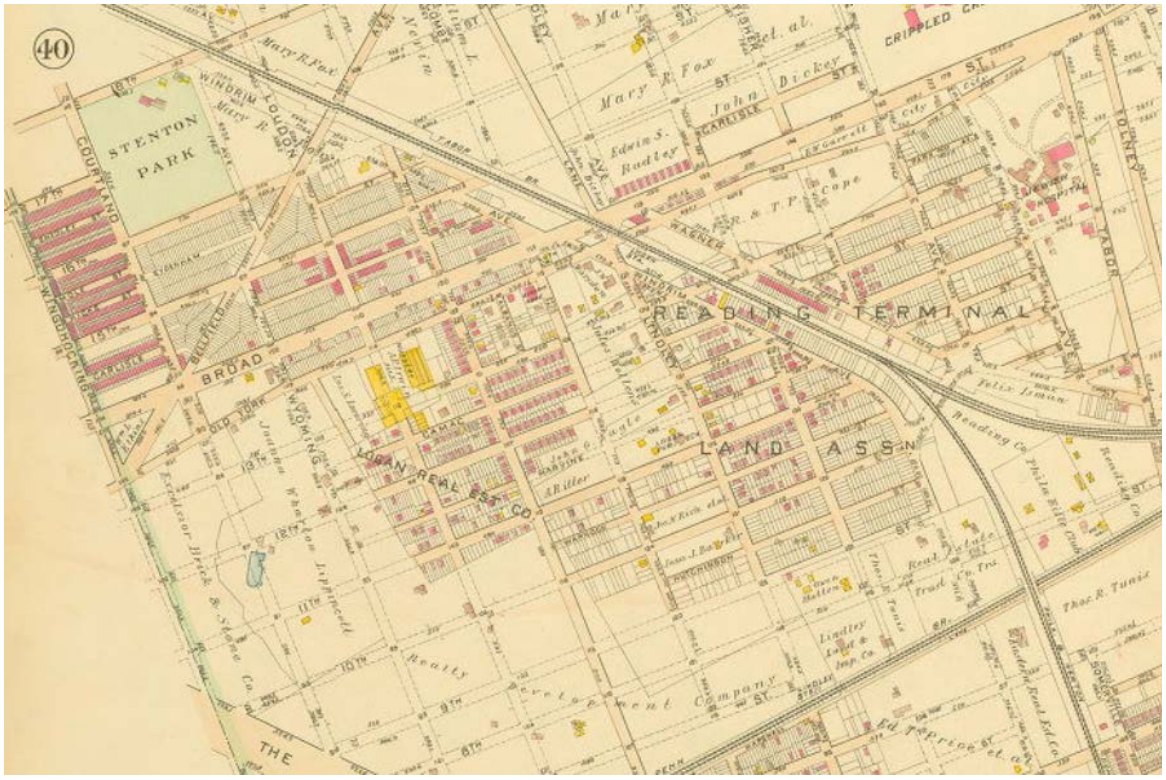


Figure 54: Bromley's Atlas of the City of Philadelphia, 1910, plate 39.

On October 20, 1917, John McGuirk and Abe and Lewis Sablosky, vaudeville impresarios, purchased 4740 North Broad Street from Samuel T. P. Read. Over the next five years, they accumulated additional adjacent properties resulting in the lot lines of the subject property. By Jules Mastbaum's 1919 announcement of the Stanley Company of America, if not before, McGuirk and the Sabloskys had become executives

[63] "Upper North District Plan," Philadelphia Planning Commission, 2016, page 10.

[64] The Second Broad Street Mutual Land Association was chartered in Harrisburg in 1887 and was authorized by its Board of Trustees to begin selling lots on April 3, 1890. "News Condensed," *The Philadelphia Inquirer,* May 24, 1887, page 8; Deed (121702) from 2nd Broad Street Mutual Land Association to William Kammerer, November 14th, 1890 Book 697, Pages 531-32. The transfer of land from Baechler to the Association was completed on June 28th 1887, and recorded in Deed Book GGP 286, Page 58. The Registry Map ledger 124 N 19 shows sales of

of the Stanley Company of America and a theater in Logan was on the agenda—by April 1922, the McGuirk/Sablosky partnership transferred ownership of the subject property to the Stanley Company.[65]

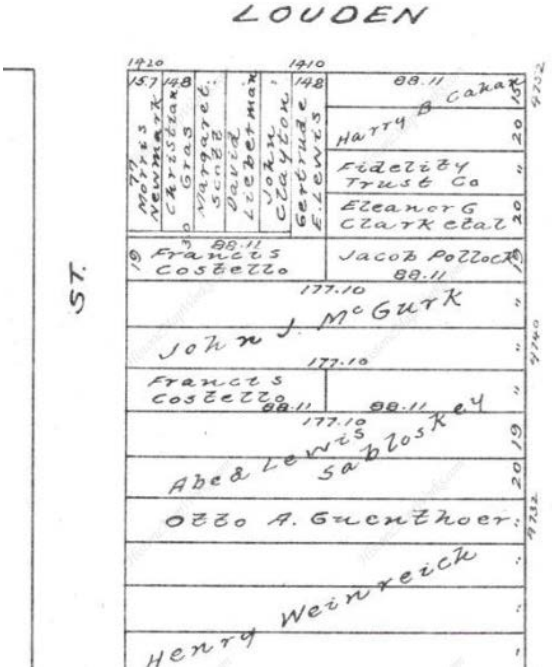


Figure 55: Elvino Smith's 1920 map of North Broad Street captures the state of play in the lots which would become the Logan Theatre just a few years later. John McGuirk, Abe Sablosky, and Lewis Sablosky had consolidated a U-shaped collection of properties, with Thomas Francis Costello controlling two lots along Carlisle St. To the south of these properties, 4732 N Broad Street was owned by Otto A. Guenthoer, who had owned the lot for a decade. Mr. Guenthoer would sell this lot to Costello on May 7, 1920, who would immediately transfer it to the McGuirk and Sablosky operation. Detail of *North Broad Street,* map by Elvino Smith, plate 47, accessed via HistoricMapWorks.com.

In the first decade of the 20th Century, "The Boulevard," now Roosevelt Boulevard, opened just a few blocks south of the future home of the Logan Theatre, and in 1928, the Broad Street Subway opened as far as Olney Station, offering a twenty-minute commute to City Hall and making development along Broad Street more attractive.[66]

These rapid improvements in transportation made the neighborhood attractive, especially to immigrants who had found a foothold in the city's cramped but affordable neighborhoods but who were looking for a more comfortable life for themselves and their children. Between the 1920s and 1950s, the area between the Boulevard and Logan Station was known as a Jewish neighborhood, with many residents being first-generation immigrants from Germany, Austria, and Eastern Europe.[67] J. M. Brewer's 1934 *Map of Philadelphia*, a map which appraised neighborhoods along racial and ethnic lines for use by lenders and real estate agents (often resulting in racial and ethnic

[65] These transactions can be seen on Map Registry Ledger 124 N 19 and are recorded in the deed (346626) transferring 8 lots from McGuirk and the Sabloskys to James M. Brennan on April 4, 1922.

[66] "Upper North District Plan," Philadelphia Planning Commission, 2016, page 10.

[67] Roseanne Skirble, "The Magic of Logan," *Tablet,* March 2, 2022.

discrimination), shows the concentration of Jewish residents (blue). Brewer's map also records some industrial sites (solid red) along railroad lines, and rates Broad Street between Louden Street and Wyoming Avenue (including the ten-year-old Logan Theatre) as "Fourth class retail (very mediocre location)."

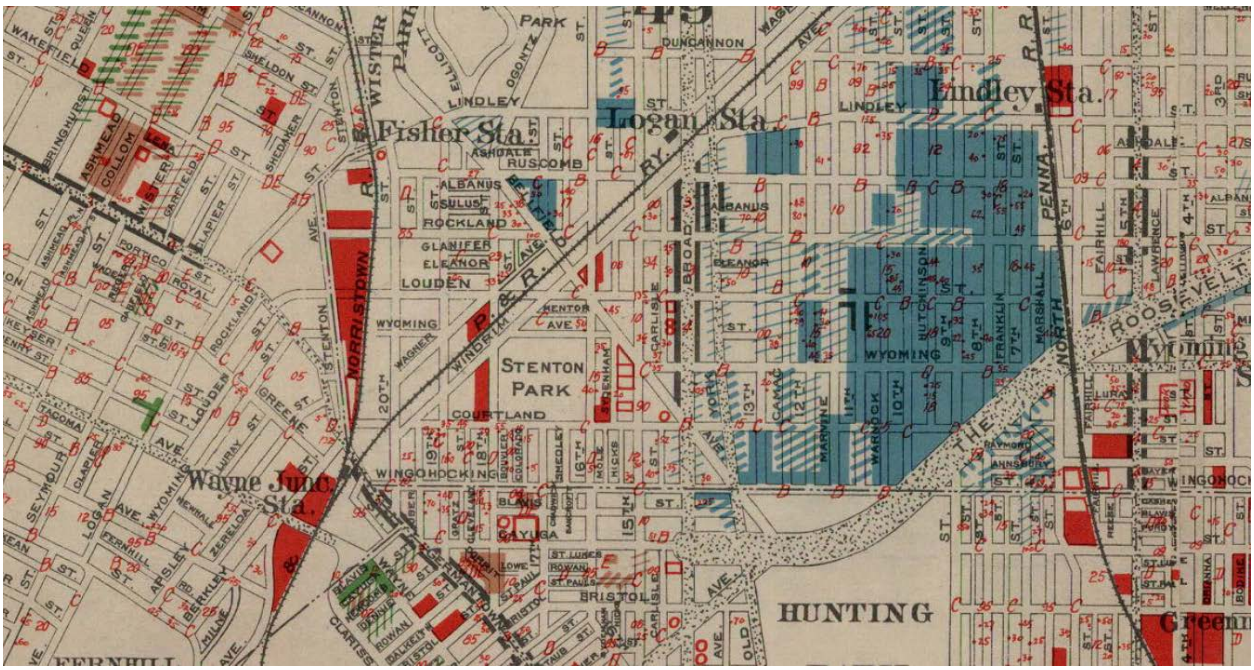


Figure 56: J. M. Brewer's *Map of Philadelphia* (1934) shows a significant Jewish population (in blue), industrial sites (solid red), and rates blocks (whether commercial or residential) on a five-point scale.

Within the context of the neighborhood, the Logan Theatre was notable for its scale. Aerial photographs from the late 1920s (Figures 56, 57) show the neighborhood as a broad sea of rowhouses, with a few institutional buildings such as the Jay Cooke Junior High School (now Jay Cooke Elementary School) on the east side of Old York Road below Loudon Street, a SEPTA substation (built ca. 1927[68]) at 1410-20 West Loudon Street, a Bell Telephone building at Rockland and Broad Streets, and the Zion Episcopal Church just south of Wyoming. These photos show a commercial corridor along Broad Street itself, much of it at a very small scale with the block north of the Logan Theatre consisting of houses with first-floor storefronts. There were a few other theaters in the vicinity, including the Rockland Theatre (Logan Auditorium) at 4910 North Broad Street which Hoffman-Henon performed alterations on in 1922, and the Felton Theatre at Rising Sun Avenue and Loudon Street, but they were smaller scale.[69]

[68] "Activities of the Day in Real Estate," *The Philadelphia Inquirer,* December 21, 1926, page 32.

[69] *Builders' Guide*, September 6, 1922, Vol. 37, no. 36, p 569; Glazer, *Philadelphia Theaters, A Pictorial Architectural History,* 41, 86.

Figures 57, 58: A 1929 aerial photo of the neighborhood surrounding the Logan with enlarged detail of the area immediately around Broad Street. Note the Jay Cooke Junior High School on the east side of Old York Road and the garages immediately to the south of the Logan Theatre. Dallin Aerial Survey Company Collection at the Hagley Museum and Library.

The Logan Opens, Offering Films for a Quarter

Opening in 1924, the Logan Theatre boasted 2,500 seats. Regular ticket prices were 20 cents for the balcony and 30 cents for the floor seats, with matinees offering a nickel

discount for both seat options.[70] The opening of the theater included speechifying from Mayor W. Freeland Kendrick, E. J. Lafferty ("city purchasing agent"), Charles W. Grakelow (Director of Public Welfare), and Jules E. Mastbaum himself. [71]

The first film screened at the Logan Theatre was the 1923 silent film adaptation of Robert W. Chambers's novel "The Common Law" and an advertisement announcing the opening also promised "Splendid Musical Programs."[72] Other early screenings include silent films including "Fashion Row," starring Mae Murray, "Rupert of Hentzau," "Tiger Rose," Buster Keaton's "Our Hospitality," "The Acquittal," and "Pleasure Mad".[73]

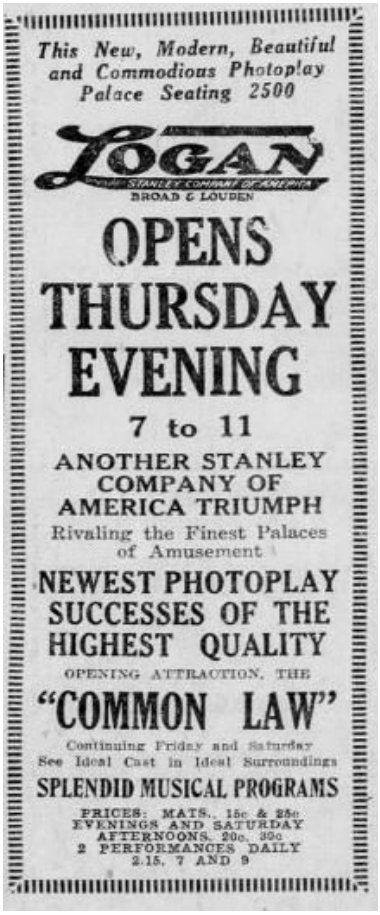


Figure 59: Advertisement in *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, Sunday, January 20th, 1924, announcing the opening of the Logan Theatre.

[70] "Philadelphia," *Motion Picture News,* February 9, 1924, page 662. It is unclear whether the Logan Theatre followed other movie theaters in discriminating against Black patrons, though the Stanley Company was certainly culpable, see Ken Finkel, "Culture War at 19th & Chestnut Streets," *Philly History Blog,* July 21, 2020.
[71] "Philadelphia," *Motion Picture News,* February 9, 1924, page 662; "Elaborate Ceremonies Open Logan Theatre, Philadelphia," *Moving Picture World,* February 16, 1924, page 567.
[72] Advertisement, *The Philadelphia Inquirer,* January 20, 1924, page 57.
[73] Advertisement, *The Philadelphia Inquirer,* February 1, 1924, page 18; Advertisement, *The Philadelphia Inquirer,* February 6, 1924, page 18; "In the Movie World," *The Philadelphia Inquirer,* February 10, 1924, page 62; and "The Silent Plays," *The Philadelphia Inquirer,* February 24, 1924, page 36.

These films were accompanied by live music, though perhaps on a smaller scale than at some Stanley theaters. While the Mastbaum Theatre (19th and Market Streets) included space for an orchestra, the Logan Theatre had a small pit area with an organ and a grand piano.[74] Like other Stanley theaters in the 1920s, the Logan mixed vaudeville acts with movies, which would likely have included musical ensembles on the stage or in the wings. It appears that live shows had ceased at the Logan Theatre by 1940.[75]

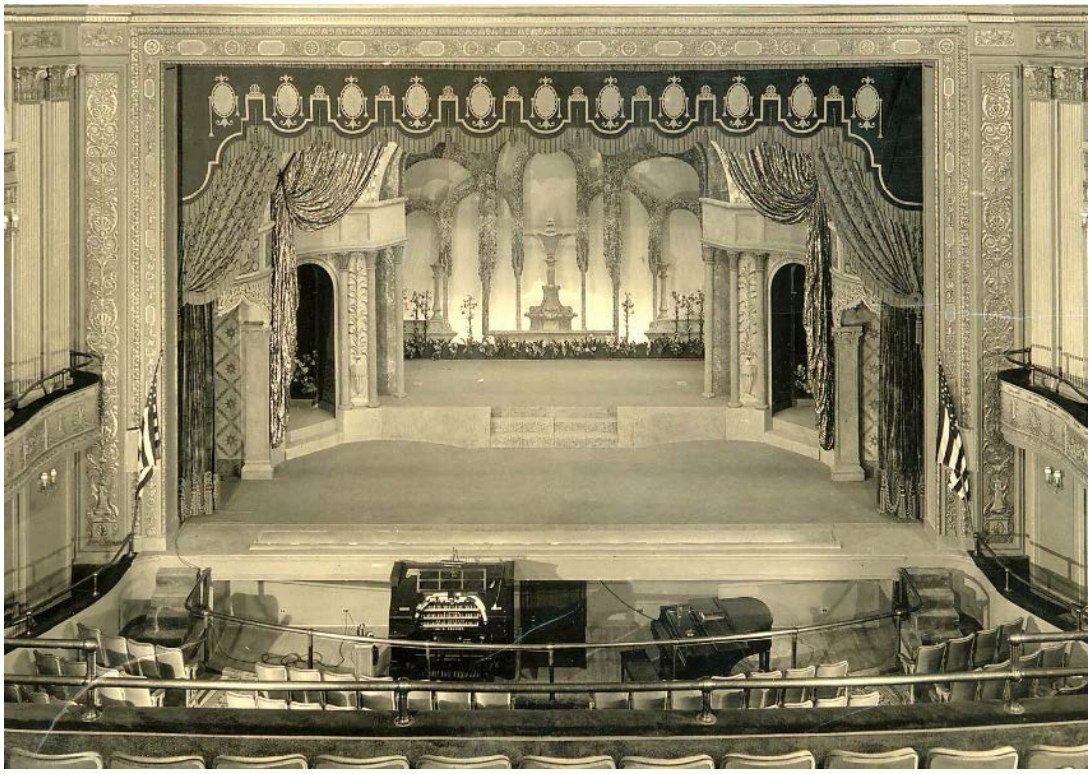
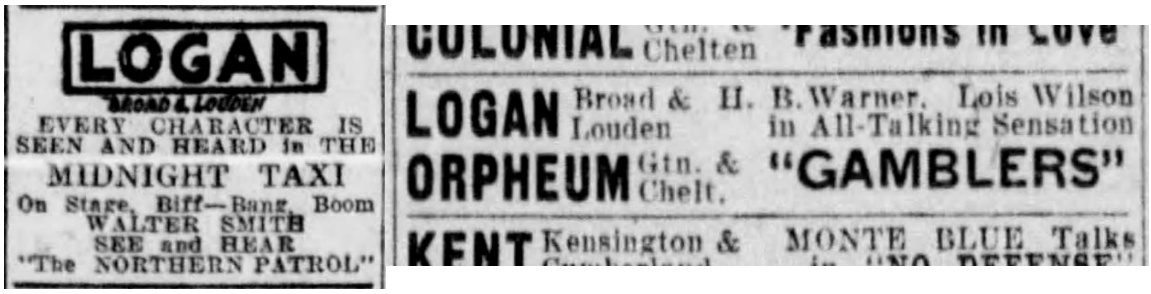


Figure 60: The small pit area at the Logan includes an organ and a grand piano. 1923 photo from Glazer Theater Collection.

Between 1927 and 1929, the movie industry rapidly developed the technology to incorporate sound into moving pictures. The earliest of these efforts included recorded music to accompany the film and within two years, many incorporated recorded speech, announcing the age of the "talkie." The Logan Theatre, part of the Warner Brothers network after their 1928 acquisition of the Stanley Company, incorporated Warner's Vitaphone technology, which used phonograph records along with the movie's film to provide sound.[76] As early as December, 1928, the Logan was advertising that "every character is seen and heard" in *The Midnight Taxi,* though the film only had occasional

[74] "Previn Well Known in Musical Fields," *The Philadelphia Inquirer,* February 28, 1929, page 4 of the "Mastbaum Special" insert.
[75] Glazer, *Philadelphia Theatres, A-Z,* 157.
[76] "Vitaphone" appears in movie listings for the Logan. See, for example, *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, January 29, 1929, page 8.

passages of dialog.[77] In August, 1929, the Logan presented perhaps its first "all-talkie" when audiences watched *The Gamblers* there.[78]



Figures 61, 62: Left: Advertisement (December 18, 1928) for *The Midnight Taxi*. Right: Advertisement (August 15, 1929) for *The Gamblers*.

Marguerite Walz Dance Studio

Though there may not have been an orchestra in front of the stage at the Logan, the second-floor ballroom was a different story. On April 21, 1924, Marguerite Walz opened her "Logan Studio of Dancing" there, with the "finest orchestra in the city." In addition to dancing every evening from 8:30 to 12, an advertisement promised free lessons and dance demonstrations, as well as afternoon dance sessions for children on Saturdays.[79]

The newspaper readers of Philadelphia may have been very familiar with Walz by 1924. Walz, born 1892 in Camden, New Jersey, had been a dance teacher since at least 1915, but became a national sensation when she went to the Mayor of Philadelphia in the spring of 1921, and asked him to supervise dancing in his city.[80] Walz's action seems to have been part of a coordinated effort of the American National Association Masters of Dancing, following their annual conference in Cleveland in 1921, to censor dancing at the city level.[81] The organization *hated* jazz in particular. Fenton T. Bott, one of the dancing "Masters", asked if there was anything wrong with jazz music itself, replied:

> There certainly is! Those moaning saxophones and the rest of the instruments with their broken, jerky rhythm make a purely sensual appeal. They call out to the low and rowdy instinct.[82]

Marguerite Walz's appeal to Philadelphia's mayor could not have been better timed, coming as the city was offering public dances on the newly opened Parkway,

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[77] Advertisement, *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, December 18, 1928, page 8; "The Midnight Tax," *Internet Movie Database,*

[78] Advertisement, *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, August 15, 1929, page 8.

[79] Advertisement, *The Philadelphia Inquirer,* April 20, 1924, page 57.

[80] A notice in *The News Herald* (Franklin, PA) advertised a demonstration Ms. Walz gave for the Wanango Country Club of "correct modern dances." August 5, 1915, page 8; John R. McMahon, "Unspeakable Jazz Must Go!" *Ladies Home Journal,* December 1921, Vol. 38, no. 12, page 116.

[81] McMahon, "Unspeakable Jazz Must Go!," 34.

[82] McMahon, "Unspeakable Jazz Must Go!," 34.

accompanied by Police or Fireman's Bands.[83] Walz was immediately named the official censor of the Parkway dances, and given an honorary post as policewoman, or as some newspapers put it, "copette."[84]

The news that Philadelphia had a policewoman, and that her bailiwick was dancing, graced the pages of periodicals across the country. A December 1921 story about the evils of jazz and the efforts by dancers to police it in *Ladies Home Journal*—"Unspeakable Jazz Must Go!"—featured feisty quotes from Walz and described her beauty, further raising her profile.[85] At the 1922 national gathering of the Masters of Dancing in New York City, Ms. Walz was in demand for journalists covering the event.[86] Over the next few years, features on Marguerite Walz were periodically syndicated, often including photo demonstrations of the posture and hand placement she found unacceptable.[87] Though she had married Charles Townsend (and taken his last name legally) by this time, Marguerite continued to use her maiden name professionally, and these features were happy to portray her as "Miss Walz."[88]

Figure 63: Readers of the *Lewiston Democrat-News* in Lewiston, Montana, may have found this demonstration of a "vulgar and unhealthy slouch" and correct posture to be useful.

[83] "History of the Parkway Dances," Association for Public Art, May 1, 2012.
[84] "City's First Copette," *Evening Public Ledger,* July 12, 1921.
[85] McMahon, "Unspeakable Jazz Must Go!," 116.
[86] Fay Stevenson, "How Do You Hold Your Partner When You Dance?" *The Evening Sun* (Hanover, PA), September 1, 1922, page 9; "Use of the Lady's Thumb in Dancing," *The Daily Argus* (Brookfield, MO), October 24, 1922, page 3.
[87] Fay Stevenson, "How Do You Hold Your Partner When You Dance?" *The Evening Sun* (Hanover, PA), September 1, 1922, page 9; *Lewiston Democrat-News* (Lewiston, MT), September 18, 1922, page 2.
[88] "Women's Stories Are Told in Bergen Murder; Witnesses Heard Scuffle," *Bergen Evening Record* (Hackensack, NJ), August 30, 1922, page 1.

In one feature—"On the Job With the Girl Cop"—author Sarah Comstock followed Walz through the dancers at one of the mass dances on the Parkway. Comstock painstakingly described Walz ("a slip of a blue-eyed person"), her uniform ("a most entrancing black gown"), and the billy club she carried to tap offending dancers on the shoulders ("long and slender…handsomely mahoganized, hangs from a blue silk cord with tassels"), and recorded the words of the "dance cop" as she went about her work:

> Most of the vulgar dancing is ignorance anyway…I should say at least seventy-five percent of it. Young people simply see that it's the fashion to wiggle the hips and throw them out, to dance cheek-to-cheek, to toddle or shake or stride. The children copy the older couples, without knowing there's anything wrong.[89]

In the midst of this national attention, Marguerite Walz became a character in a drama closer to home as her brother George "Chubby" Walz (alias "George Cline") shot and killed a man in Camden and she publicly defended him.[90] In this perfect brew of celebrity, Walz capitalized, producing dance demonstration films for the Stanley Company and opening several dance studios in the city, the Logan Theatre among them.[91]

Figure 64: Detail of 1923 photo showing one of the entrances to the Walz Studio of Dancing. Photo from the Glazer Theater Collection.

By the late 1920s, however, Walz's name began to appear less frequently in the news. In 1927, the *Press of Atlantic City* reported that Walz was associated with the Casino

[89] Sarah Comstock, "On the Job With the Girl Cop," *Fort Worth Record Telegram,* October 22, 1922, page 56.
[90] "Women's Stories Are Told in Bergen Murder; Witnesses Heard Scuffle," *Bergen Evening Record* (Hackensack, NJ), August 30, 1922, page 1.
[91] "Dance Studio Opening," *The Philadelphia Inquirer,* April 20, 1924, page 28.

Club Dance Studio in Ocean City, New Jersey.[92] By 1940, she was listed in the United States Census living on 45th Street in New York City with her brother "Chubby" and his family. She listed her "Industry" as "Culture—Dancing" and her occupation as "Teacher." She gave her name as Marguerite Townsend and her marital status as "divorced."[93]

If the Walz Studio of Dancing was not a long-term fixture at the Logan Theatre (it is unclear when exactly those bright signs dimmed for the last time), it is perhaps because jazz music and its attendant dance styles won the day. As early as July 1928, the Logan Stage Band was performing "peppy jazz music."[94]

Children's Matinees

By 1927, there was concern, in some quarters, about the content on display at the movies. Mrs. Walter Willard, "Chairman of the motion Picture Division of the State Federation of Pennsylvania Women," decided to do something about it, and reported on her activities in the *National Review Board Magazine*:

> I studied the motion picture situation thoroughly and became convinced that the real solution of whatever problems we as women have concerning the type of pictures shown, could be solved if we started at the root of life, the child. […] So I have felt that if we taught children to love what was fine and good in the Motion Pictures, when they grow older they would insist on seeing it, and that would solve the problem confronting both ourselves and the producer and the distributor, for I well knew that the making of a picture is a business, one of the foremost in the country, and the box office is the barometer by which selection is guided.

Mrs. Willard got in touch with the Stanley Company of America and began to work with the theater chain to provide children's matinees with material which she and her colleagues felt was best. The Logan Theatre was one of several neighborhood theaters to host such matinees, which began, according to Mrs. Willard, with a local Boy Scouts or Girl Scouts group marching to the stage, the blast of a bugle, a salute to the American flag and a Pledge of Allegiance, and finally "one or two verses of 'America.' Once the kids got to the pictures, they were treated to such as *The Pony Express, Peter Pan, Robin Hood, Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves, Treasure Island,* and *The Black Pirate* (this last one had "half of the first reel deleted"). These features were interspersed with educational films.[95]

Willard emphasized that films were chosen to "impress upon [children's] minds some phase of history and great achievements, for even the heroism of an animal, a horse, or

[92] "Theatre Aids Boy Orphan," *Press of Atlantic City,* August 17, 1927, page 4.
[93] United States Census, 1940, Enumeration District 31-433, sheet 9A.
[94] "'On the Beach' at the Logan," *The Philadelphia Inquirer,* July 10, 1928, page 8.
[95] Mrs. Walter Willard, "Better Films Activities," *National Review Board Magazine,* September 1927, Vol. 2, no. 9, page 11.

a dog will register a desire for emulation in the mind of a child." Lest any reader worry that the films on offer were too childish, Willard reassured them:

> As you can judge by this list we are not placing the children upon a milk and water diet. We are showing them red-blooded men and fearless women.

It's unclear whether this particular initiative lasted beyond its pilot program, but the effort certainly underscores the ways in which children came to be seen as a viable market for films, especially at neighborhood theaters within walking distance.

Changing Neighborhood

By the mid-20th century, the Logan neighborhood was undergoing rapid changes, again. Just as Logan had offered more opportunities than crowded boarding houses in the 1910s and 1920s, the suburbs beckoned a few decades later. A generation on from their arrival, many European immigrants and their children followed that call. In their place came new waves of immigration, from Latin America and Asia, as well as many Black Americans, who were still arriving in Philadelphia as part of the Great Migration as well as moving from other quarters of the city. [96]

While many parts of the neighborhood still offered the promise of comfortable and safe living that they had when they were developed, literal cracks began to show in others. A triangle of land between Roosevelt Boulevard and Loudon Street, from 6th to 11th Streets, was purchased in 1906 by a city official and his brothers and filled with waste ash and other trash to bring it up to grade. While the refuse was prone to catch on fire, houses were built on top of the dump in the 1920s. In 1959, the first evidence that the land was unstable came when a gas main pipe cracked, causing fires and explosions as the house foundations sank. By the time a thorough study was conducted in 1986, 957 homes were affected, as the settling and volatile earth led to sinking porches and broken foundations. Federal agencies came in to assess the problem and assessed that addressing the issue would come with a $48 million price tag. Explosions and fires remained a threat, and in 1987 Mayor Wilson Goode created the Logan Assistance Corporation to help relocate residents within the Triangle. [97]

When the last homes were vacated around 2010, the area was razed and became an unofficial dump once more. Acquired by the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority in 2012, the area has been in search of a developer ever since. [98]

The Logan Theatre sits six blocks from the infamous Triangle and was not affected by the sinking and exploding ground. Yet the drawn-out saga affected the neighborhood as

[96] Roseanne Skirble, "The Magic of Logan," *Tablet,* March 2, 2022.
[97] Keshler Thibert, "In Limbo: Logan Triangle Sinks Into Oblivion," *HiddenCity,* June 27, 2022.
[98] Keshler Thibert, "In Limbo: Logan Triangle Sinks Into Oblivion," *HiddenCity,* June 27, 2022.

a whole and has led to property speculation in the surrounding blocks in anticipation of the eventual redevelopment of the area; residents report a constant barrage of solicitations to buy homes on the cheap. [99]

Changing Business

As the neighborhood around the Logan Theatre experienced seismic change, the movie theater business underwent different transformations which rendered many of the "palaces" designed by Hoffman-Henon obsolete.

The Stanley Company, a subsidiary of Warner Brothers since 1928, was spun off as Stanley Warner Theaters in 1953 to comply with antitrust legislation.[100] Though the company tried to stay up to date with the newest innovations in film projection—upgrading the projection lamps at the Logan in 1963—the model of the single-room, large scale theater was on its way out.[101] Whereas in the 1940s the average American went to one movie a week, by the 1950s and 1960s television was cutting into theatergoing. While the most luxurious theaters maintained their appeal by catering to the elite, neighborhood theaters had it harder and by the 1970s a common solution was to cut one big theater into smaller ones to offer a wider range of pictures.[102]

Figure 65: The Cosmos Finance Company included an illustration of the Logan Theatre with an arrow to their entrance—one of those which had led into the ballroom in years past.

[99] Keshler Thibert, "In Limbo: Logan Triangle Sinks Into Oblivion," *HiddenCity,* June 27, 2022.
[100] "Boston to Hollywood". *Time*. May 21, 1956.
[101] "Core-Lite Lamps Cut Costs In Stanley Warner's Logan," *The Exhibitor* May 8, 1963, Vol. 69, no. 19, page PE-10.
[102] "The Megaplex," *99 Percent Invisible*, March 15, 2021.

In this challenging economy, the spaces within the Logan Theatre began to be reimagined. In 1948, the Cosmos Finance Company (specializing in auto loans) opened an office in the theater, not in one of the original storefronts, but on the second floor, and was accessed through one of the doors which had led to the Walz Dance Studio.[103]

In the face of other theaters' being chopped up, the Logan Theatre offered space for other uses which *did* need a large theater (though it was now down to 1,753 seats with the removal of box seats and other tweaks).[104] As early as 1959, the Logan played host to a "Reformation Rally" sponsored by the Logan Ministerium, presaging its later use as a church.[105] Between 1950 and 1965, the Logan's stage was regularly used to conduct cooking classes hosted by *The Philadelphia Inquirer* and sponsored by the Philadelphia Gas Works.[106] A beauty pageant in 1960 held one of its heats at the Logan.[107] Closed circuit feeds for live sporting events, especially boxing, provided an effective draw for the Logan in the 1960s and 1970s, but more regular income streams failed to materialize and the theater was sold to the Deliverance Evangelistic Association in 1973.[108]

Figure 66: An advertisement for the Inquirer Cooking Show from 1957 includes photos of two gas appliances, reflecting the sponsorship of the Philadelphia Gas Works.

[103] "Cosmos: Penna's Oldest Auto Loan Co." (Advertisement), *The Philadelphia Inquirer,* December 13, 1948, page 26.
[104] "The Saga of a Movie Chain Giant—That Was," *The Philadelphia Inquirer,* May 26, 1973, page 25.
[105] Advertisement, *The Philadelphia Inquirer,* October 24, 1959, page 6.
[106] See, for instance "Cooking Show Today At Logan Theater," *The Philadelphia Inquirer,* January 12, 1950, page 26; "Attend the Inquirer Cooking Show," *The Philadelphia Inquirer,* February 6, 1957 (see Figure 76); and "Cooking School At Logan Theater," *The Philadelphia Inquirer,* May 5, 1965, page 29.
[107] "Theaters Announced for Beauty Contest," *The Philadelphia Inquirer,* April 10, 1960, page 114.
[108] "The Saga of a Movie Chain Giant—That Was," *The Philadelphia Inquirer,* May 26, 1973, page 25.

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The author was able to dive into the movie theater's industry periodicals of the 20th century through Lantern, the search portal for the Media History Digital Library, an open access initiative of the Wisconsin Center for Film and Theater Research. Learn more and use the portal yourself at: https://lantern.mediahist.org/about

Two resources which are often useful in visualizing change in Philadelphia were also supremely valuable: the Greater Philadelphia GeoHistory Network's digitized maps and the Dallin Aerial Survey Company Collection at the Hagley Museum and Library.

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Appendix A: Nominations to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places involving Movies and Movie Theaters

1826 Chestnut St: **The Aldine Theatre**, nomination withdrawn February 11, 2022, nominated by the Preservation Alliance of Greater Philadelphia; Kevin Block, author

2117-23 Germantown Ave: **The Diamond Theatre**, designated November 8, 2024, nominated by the Keeping Society; Oscar Beisert, author

228-36 S 52nd St: **The Locust Theatre**, designated November 9, 2018; nominated by Noah Yoder

1910 Chestnut St: **The Boyd Theatre**, designated August 8, 2008; nominated by the Preservation Alliance of Greater Philadelphia; John Andrew Gallery, author

2301-03 N Broad St **(Jules Mastbaum residence)**, designated November 9, 2018; nominated by the Keeping Society; Amy Lambert, author

1608 N 15th St: **Siegmund Lubin House**, designated August 9, 2024, nominated by the Preservation Alliance of Greater Philadelphia; Matthew Havens, author

Appendix B: Selected Movie Theaters (in alphabetical order)

Theater Name	Address	Date	Architects	Status	Altered by H-H
Admiral Theatre	2806 North 5th St	1928	Hodgens & Hill	Standing	
Aldine Theatre	1826 Chestnut St	1921	W. F. Lotz	Standing	
Ambassador Theatre	5538-50 Baltimore Ave	1921	H. C. Hodgens	Standing	
Apollo Theatre (Capital)	1237-45 North 52nd St	1915	Thalheimer & Weitz	Standing	
Arcadia Theatre	1529-31 Chestnut St	1914	Henon & Boyle	Demolished	
Bolivar Theatre	Eugenio Espejo near Juan Jose Flores, Quito, Ecuador	1933	Hoffman-Henon	Standing	
Boyd Theatre	1910 Chestnut St	1928	Hoffman-Henon	Standing	
Capitol Theatre	724 Market St	1919	P. J. Henon	Demolished	
Circle Theatre	4648-62 Frankford Ave	1929	Hoffman-Henon	Standing	
Colney Theatre	5619-33 North 5th St	1924-25	Hodgens & Hill	Standing	
Cross Keys	5931 Market St	1914	W. H. Hoffman and Co.	Demolished	
Diamond Theatre	2117-23 Germantown Ave	1922-23	Neubauer & Supowitz	Standing	
Earle Theatre	11th and Market	1924	Hoffman-Henon	Demolished	
Egyptian Theatre (Bala Theatre)	163 Bala Ave, Bala Cynwyd, PA	1927	Hoffman-Henon	Standing	
Enright Theatre	Pittsburgh, PA	1928	Hoffman-Henon	Demolished	
Erlanger Theatre	21st and Market	1927	Hoffman-Henon	Demolished	
Jefferson Theatre	2217-2223 North 29th St	1913	J. D. Allen	Standing	
Locust Theatre	228-36 S 52nd St	1914	Stuckert & Sloan	Standing	1922
Logan Theatre	4732-42 N Broad St	1924	Hoffman-Henon	Standing	
Market Street Theatre (333 Market)	333 Market St	1912	W. H. Hoffman and Co.	Demolished	
Mastbaum Theatre	20th and Market	1929	Hoffman-Henon	Demolished	
Palace Theatre	1214-16 Market St	1919	P. J. Henon	Demolished	
Princess Theatre	1018 Market Street	1911	Unknown	Demolished	1919
Regent Theatre	1632-34 Market Street	1918	Henon & Boyle	Demolished	
Rockland Theatre (Logan Auditorium)	4910 N Broad St	1914	A. F. Schenck	Demolished	1922
Sedgwick Theatre	7133-43 Germantown Ave	1929	W. H. Lee	Standing	
Stanley Theatre	19th and Market	1921	Hoffman-Henon	Demolished	
Stanley Theatre	237 7th Street, Pittsburgh, PA	1928	Hoffman-Henon	Standing	
Stanton Theatre (originally Stanley)	16th and Market	1914	W. H. Hoffman and Co.	Demolished	
Warner Theatre (Embassy)	Atlantic City, NJ	1929	Hoffman-Henon	Standing	

Appendix C: Photos of the interior of the Logan Theatre in the Glazer Theater Collection at the Athenaeum of Philadelphia