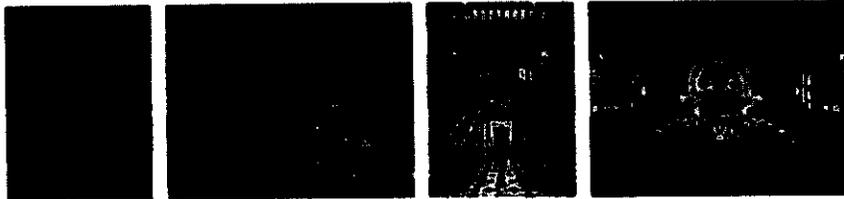


2. Annotated Print-Outs on Attempts to Sell Property

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Hope for the Boyd Theater?

Philadelphia's last movie "palace" - the historic 1927 Boyd Theater - may still have life as a live performance venue. The building's current owner, the Goldenberg Group, has indicated to the Preservation Alliance that it is serious about exploring redevelopment options for the 2400-seat Art Deco theater at 1910 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia.

Several months ago, the theater shut its doors and ceased operations as an movie house. Known as the "Sameric", the movie house was leased to United Artists which showed first-run movies until recently. United Artists has filed for bankruptcy, and has cited building inefficiencies and high costs for closing the Sameric.



The Goldenberg Group - which has owned the property since 1998 - has investigated other uses for the space, including live theater, music performances and art films, but the group reports that so far no one has expressed serious interest. Goldenberg has conferred with the Nederlander Company (owners of many live theaters in New York City), Clear Channel Entertainment (operators of the Merriam and Tower theaters, the Electric Factory, and the Tweeter Center), and the Philadelphia Theater Company. All ultimately declined interest in the Boyd, citing building inefficiencies, costs, or lack of demand for additional performance venues in Center City.

Nonetheless, Goldenberg has publicly and privately indicated that it continues to seek ways to reuse the theater, and continues discussions with other potential theater operators. Representatives of Goldenberg have met several times with the Preservation Alliance which has advised the property owners on the many possible preservation incentives that could help the redevelopment of the Boyd, including rehabilitation tax credits, transfer of development rights, easement charitable gift deductions, and tax-increment financing.

The Preservation Alliance submitted nomination to designate the Boyd, built in 1927, as a city-certified historic site. The submission was based on the theater's "significance as the last motion picture palace in Philadelphia, as a fine example of the work of the significant Philadelphia architecture firm of Hoffman and Henon, and as a unique remaining example in Philadelphia of the Art Deco motion picture palace, popular during the first quarter of the twentieth century, but constructed only once in Center City Philadelphia, at the Boyd Theater."



The owners opposed the designation, however, and in spring 2002, the Philadelphia Historic Commission, in a split vote, declined to designate the property as a local landmark, despite the recommendation of its own Designation Committee and many other supporters. Apparently, at least some of the Commissioners based their "no" decision, not on the historic and architectural significance of the property, but rather on the purported deteriorated condition and bleak economic future of the property.

Immediately after the historic designation denial, the Goldenberg Group obtained a demolition permit for the Boyd. Goldenberg has publicly stated that it has no actual plans to demolish the theater, but that the permit simply allows it another option.

Public concern has resulted in the formation of the Committee to Save the Boyd Theater which is actively advocating for the theater's preservation through rallies, petitions, fundraising, public meetings, and discussions with the Goldenberg Group. (Check the group's web site at www.savethesameric.com)

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PRESERVATION MATTERS

Boyd Theater Designated Historic, New Owner Selected

After many years of languishing in a state of uncertainty, preservation of the Boyd Theater on Chestnut Street moved closer to reality during the past four months. Progress was made on two fronts — protecting the theater from demolition and finding an owner willing to preserve and restore the much-loved 1928 theater, the last of Philadelphia's great movie palaces.

Legal Protection from Demolition
The effort to protect the Boyd Theater got off to a new start in 2008 when the Preservation Alliance placed the theater on its list of Endangered Properties in January. This listing was intended to remind the general public that the Boyd Theater still exists as a result of the inaction of Live Nation Live, the then-owner, to move ahead with plans for renovation as a live performance venue.

The Alliance and Friends of the Boyd Theater submitted a proposal to the National Historic Preservation Act. The proposal included among its 2008 I Most Endangered Historic Places. Not only did the Boyd make the list, but Senator Vice President Peter Brink contacted Live Nation officials directly to press upon them the importance of preserving the theater.

Scott Rice, director of the Trust's Northeast Field Office in Philadelphia, told an enthusiastic crowd of about 100 supporters gathered in front of the theater on May 22, "Nearly every major American city has managed to preserve and reuse at least one historic theater. Philadelphia should not be the exception, especially now as Center City is a thriving and growing area that can support the highest quality of the larger arts and cultural community."

In response to the positive public response to the National Trust's announcement, the Preservation Alliance submitted a new nomination to the Philadelphia Historical Commission to place the Boyd on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. Mayor Nutter and the City Council support a protected institution in this city," he said. "I hope that the Historical Commission will give a thorough evaluation of this structure's importance to our city and I pledge to work with them to preserve this building."

In August, the Historical Commission took the critical step of designating the Boyd, following the same process as the designation of the Designation Committee. The designa-

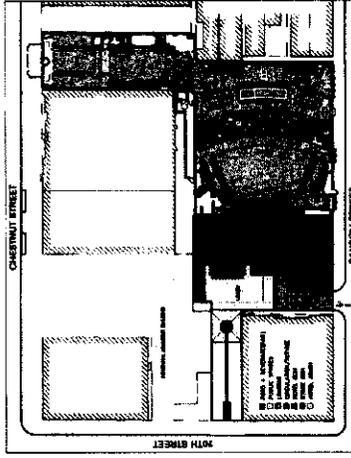
New Ownership Brings New Hopes
In conjunction with these efforts, the Preservation Alliance and Friends of the Boyd Theater worked with Live Nation to secure a new owner interested in preservation of the theater. In early 2008, Live Nation indicated its intent to sell the property and began active discussions with a number of developers who had expressed interest. After many weeks of evaluation, the Preservation Alliance and Friends of the Boyd Theater, in August, Hal Wheeler, principal of ARC Wheeler and a member of the board of directors of the Preservation Alliance, stated:

"Preservation of the Boyd Theater will not only contribute to the revitalization of the west Chestnut Street area, but will also make Philadelphia more competitive for conventions and corporate meetings. ARC Wheeler plans to sell the theater to the Preservation Alliance. Philadelphia is the only city in the United States that has a theater with a 'Twin' thematic focus, including private screening rooms. The hotel would be connected to the theater via the stage area and the first floor converted to valet-style seating. The theater would be restored and used for live performances, film, and other events. Lobbies and other areas would be converted for use as meeting spaces, restaurants and bar areas."

"Hal Wheeler is to be commended for both his imagination in coming up with a creative plan for the Boyd and for his courage in standing on such a high moral ground. I am proud to be an Alliance Executive Director. John Anderson Gallery.



One hundred Boyd supporters rallied in May.



The ground-floor plan for the Boyd.

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

It is often easy to overlook treasures right in your own backyard, as demonstrated by two articles in this issue. The first article, "Preservation Matters," by Peter Brink, Vice President of Live Nation, describes the Alliance's efforts to protect the Boyd Theater from demolition in 2007 and 2008. The second article, "New Ownership Brings New Hopes," by Hal Wheeler, principal of ARC Wheeler, describes the Alliance's efforts to find a developer interested in preserving the Boyd Theater. It was therefore a surprise — and a wonderful surprise at that — to find a Philadelphia developer and member of the Preservation Alliance board turn out to be the savior of the Boyd. Hal Wheeler did the job we can give to helping him accomplish his plans for the Boyd.

Secondly, the Alliance began searching for a deputy director/chief operating officer in late 2007. We advertised nationally and had applications from New York, New Jersey, Georgia and Pennsylvania. We were looking for someone with a strong background in historic preservation and a passion for Philadelphia. Through the interview process one candidate consistently emerged as having the skills and experience we sought and, quite surprisingly, again, that candidate turned out to be one of our board members, Blue Viter. We are delighted that Blue has now joined the Alliance as our new deputy director.

The idea of "treasures in your own backyard" is an underlying theme in the creation of a preservation plan for Philadelphia, a project described in the newsletter on which the Alliance has just begun work. We are just beginning public discussions to help us define what historic preservation could bring to the city. We are looking for people like you — 20 years from now and how we can get there. As part of this process we would like to know what "treasures" you see in your own neighborhood. What are the buildings, places and sites that you would miss if they were destroyed or significantly altered?

The Alliance is working on a new website that will feature a series of pictures and text about such treasures — some in Philadelphia, some in the hope that you will contribute to it and help us identify the places in your backyard that, like the Boyd Theater, make Philadelphia the distinctive city that it is.

John Anderson Gallery
Executive Director

Endangered History



National Trust for Historic Preservation Hails Historic Landmark Designation for Boyd Theatre in Philadelphia

Contributed By: **National Trust for Historic Preservation**

Email The Author: pr@nthp.org

Website: <http://www.PreservationNation.org>

Today, the National Trust for Historic Preservation hailed the Philadelphia Historical Commission's unanimous decision to add Boyd Theatre to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places, designating the theatre an historic landmark. The decision prevents demolition of the Art Deco masterpiece, which on May 20, 2008, was named to the National Trust for Historic Preservation's 2008 list of America's 11 Most Endangered Historic Places.

The Boyd Theatre, downtown ("Center City") Philadelphia's last surviving major motion picture palace opened Christmas Day in 1928 and operated until 2002. In 2005, Clear Channel, Inc. purchased the Boyd and planned to embark on a \$31 million restoration of the theatre as a live performance art venue. After Clear Channel underwent a re-organization, however, the Boyd was transferred to Live Nation. Restoration plans were halted in early 2006 when Live Nation decided to refocus itself as a concert presentation company. Subsequently, the Boyd was placed on the market and today remains vacant.

"Today's designation of Boyd Theatre as an historic landmark is a significant victory for the theatre and all of the people who have rallied to save it," says Richard Moe, president of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. "Finding a buyer who will restore the Boyd to its original grandeur will breathe new life into the Philadelphia community, while serving as a catalyst for economic revitalization."

Currently, there is no sales agreement in place for the Boyd Theatre. The National Trust for Historic Preservation is working with Live Nation and the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia to attract purchasers who will restore and use the historic theater. The Boyd is eligible for use of Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credits by developers. The National Trust for Historic Preservation works nationally with the League of Historic American Theatres to promote the restorations of movie palaces and the National Trust Community Investment Corporation has provided equity investments for restoration of a number of historic theaters. In 2001, the National Trust for Historic Preservation listed "Historic American Movie Theaters" among the 11 Most Endangered Historic Places in the country.

The Boyd Theatre was considered the most elegant theater in Philadelphia's premier shopping area, Chestnut Street. Designed by the architectural firm Hoffman-Henon, the Boyd was the only first-run Art Deco movie theatre ever erected in Center City Philadelphia. The rich beauty of its interior was characterized by luxurious ornamentation such as an exquisite, etched glass-mirrored lobby, an enormous auditorium with a seating capacity eclipsing 2,500 and stunning chandeliers. The Art Deco decorative motif was carried out in full force with stained glass insets, a huge mural by acclaimed artist Alfred Tulk and gold and black metal silhouettes celebrating the progress of women throughout the history of the world. The decoration inside the Boyd Theatre has survived and should be preserved.

Following the theatre's closing in 2002, a local group, Friends of the Boyd, Inc., a nonprofit organization of community volunteers, was formed. Since then, it has waged a highly visible citywide advocacy campaign to prevent the demolition of the theatre, including letters to city government, public testimony, rallies, editorials to key media outlets, and petition drives. Friends of the Boyd, Inc. has a website, and uses other tools in collaboration with local advocates, including the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia, which this year included the Boyd on its most endangered places list. The National Trust for Historic Preservation has had a longstanding interest in preserving the Boyd; in 1993, the National Trust was involved in litigation to grant landmark status to the Boyd, and Adrian Fine, the Director of the National Trust's Northeast Field Office, serves on the board of Friends of the Boyd, Inc.

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11 Most Endangered Historic Places

The Boyd Theatre

Year Listed: 2008
Location: Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Threat: Development, Neglect

Significance

Downtown ("Center City") Philadelphia's last surviving major motion picture palace opened Christmas Day in 1928 and operated until 2002. This masterpiece of Art Deco design now sits vacant, has no preservation easement in place, lacks designation as an historic landmark and is threatened with demolition.

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Old movie theaters find new life

By Adam Sylvain, USA TODAY

2/16/2012

Updated 2/16/2012 7:53 PM

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If you go to a movie this weekend, there's an increasing chance you might make your way to a classic old theater instead of a modern multi-screen complex.

Elegant old theaters from New York to Indiana to California are getting a new lease because they still strike a chord in anyone who loves the classic movie experience, says John Bell, head of the 1920s-era Tampa Theatre in Tampa.

"These theaters are imbued with a sense of history and collective memory that you just don't get at a cineplex," Bell says. "The romance and nostalgia captures people's imagination."

By Cheryl Gerber

The Joy Theater reopens after a \$5 million renovation in New Orleans on Dec. 29.

STORY: New Orleans' Joy Theater leads way for other restorations

Numbers aren't kept on how many theaters are getting a second life across the USA, but examples are plentiful:

- In Fowler Ind., interior renovations of the downtown Fowler Theatre are underway. The theater closed Jan. 25 after weekend showings of *Mission Impossible: Ghost Protocol* and will reopen this summer. The Fowler is run by an all-volunteer staff. No one involved with operations — from the projection booth to the concession counter — earns a salary.

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•The Hollywood Theatre in Portland, Ore., remains open during its renovations, which include the replacement of 70-year-old seats in three auditoriums. Built in 1926, the art deco theater recently hosted a combined film and live music production of a film known as *Turkish Star Wars*.

New Edition

Reprint Index |

•The Joy Theater in New Orleans reopened in December as a largely performing arts venue. During Hurricane Katrina, the theater's roof was ripped off, and the basement filled with water. When the building was surveyed for renovation, there was so much water, a boat was needed to measure the back wall.

Home | N

While studying at Keene State College in New Hampshire, Morgan Little works part-time at the Colonial Theatre and says college students appreciate seeing familiar faces when they visit the venue.

"When they go to the Colonial," Little says, "they get a sense of community."

Some theaters are still waiting for a second chance.

Howard Haas, president of Friends of the Boyd, says the historic Boyd Theatre in Philadelphia is for sale and in need of investors and money to bring it back to life.

"We need an angel of some sort," Haas says.

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