

# Halloween show set at State

Father James Miller, a Ukrainian Orthodox priest from Fenton and nationally prominent theater organist will provide organ accompaniment for two silent films featuring Harold Lloyd and Laurel and Hardy when another popular Halloween party and show is held Saturday, Oct. 30 at Kalamazoo's glamorous State Theater.

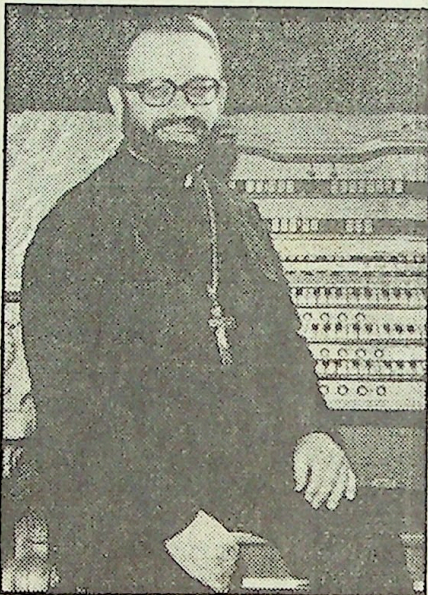
Plans for the now annual event were announced by Kenneth Butela of behalf of the State Theater Vaudeville Committee. He announced that tickets, priced at \$3, will go on sale Tuesday at The Keyboard Ceter, 6125 S. Westnedge; Don Dillon's Music Center, Southland; Status Galleries, Kalamazoo Center; Allman's TV and Organ, Maple Hill Mall; Treva Reed Music, 255 Portage and Stannard's Music, Crossroads Mall.

Reserved seats for the mezzanine only and general admission tickets for the main floor may be obtained by mail by writing to the State Theater Vaudeville Committee, Box 649, Com-

stock, Mi., 49041. Tickets will go on sale at the theater box office at 7 p.m., on the evening of the party.

Butela said Fr. Miller is an outstanding theater organist who has performed for American Theater Organ Society conventions and is currently staff organist for the Theater Organ and Pizza & Pipes Restaurant in Pontiac. In addition to playing the accompaniment for "Habeus Corpus," starring Laurel and Hardy, and "Haunted Spooks," the Harold Lloyd comedy, Fr. Miller will also present an organ concert and play for a sing-along.

Because of Fr. Miller's popularity, theater organ enthusiasts from Detroit, Toledo, Indianapolis and Chicago are expected to come to Kalamazoo for the show at the State as well as to inspect one of the most beautiful theaters of its kind remaining in the country, according to Butela.



Fr. James Miller

**THE STATE THEATRE**

**AMERICAN PRIMITIVE**

The Story of John and Abigail Adams  
by **WILLIAM GIBSON**

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featuring  
Barton Organ Concert

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Please send me \_\_\_\_\_ tickets for a GALA EVENING AT THE STATE THEATRE (No. \_\_\_\_\_ of tickets) for: (circle one) Friday, October 22/Saturday, October 23. I prefer to be seated in one of the following areas:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Center Orchestra, \$8.00 per seat
- \_\_\_\_\_ Left or Right Orchestra, \$7.50 per seat
- \_\_\_\_\_ Balcony, \$7.00 per seat

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10/3/82



# Belafonte concert is set at State

The State Theater's new career as a concert palace will get a mighty boost when famed singer and actor Harry Belafonte comes to Kalamazoo Oct. 24 for an evening of song in a benefit performance.

Belafonte's concert appearance here was confirmed by Wayne Deering. He said his Unlimited Entertainment Inc., would produce the show as a benefit for Third District Congressman Howard Wolpe, who is seeking reelection. Wolpe and Belafonte became acquainted in connection with the Democratic congressman's work on a congressional subcommittee on African affairs. The late singer and musician Harry Chapin appeared here on behalf of Wolpe two years ago.

Marking a rare concert appearance by Belafonte, the show has been set for 8 p.m. Belafonte will

bring along a group of musicians and a prominent black woman singer from Africa who was not further identified.

Deering said that tickets for only the show are \$18, \$15 and \$12. Tickets for orchestra seats and a post-concert reception for Belafonte are \$30. Both will go on sale Thursday at the usual locations.

Belafonte's concert will provide the former downtown movie palace with a busy weekend. "An Evening of Art and Theater," featuring unveiling of a large painting of the theater and presentation of the William Gibson play, "American Primitive," will be held the previous two evenings, and Belafonte has indicated he will attend the Saturday performance of that show.

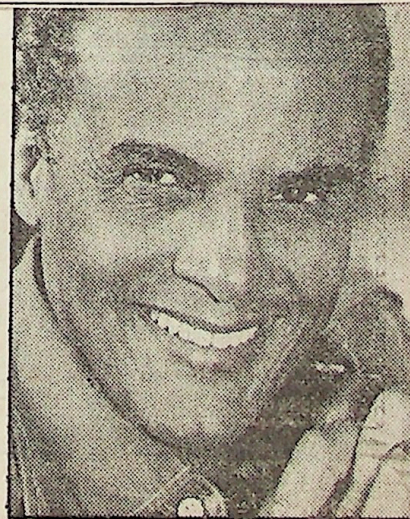
Until a year ago, Belafonte was touring extensively in Europe and Africa. He has been reported working on a play for Broadway, but said recently he was most interested in developing "entertainment with a message designed to increase understanding between people."



—Jim Bevins photo

## Organists for State gala

William Mollema and Yvonne Lowry will be at the console of the Barton Organ when "A Gala Evening of Art and Theater" is presented Oct. 22-23 at Kalamazoo's State Theater. The organ concert will follow the staging of William Gibson's "American Primitive" both evenings. Lowry will perform Friday with Mollema, who helped to restore the organ "in a labor of love," playing Saturday. Also planned as part of the program marking the unveiling of a painting of the movie palace will be a string quartet concert in the theater lobby starting at 7, and a wine and cheese reception following the play. Reservations may be made by calling 345-0002.



Harry Belafonte



# Kalamazoo's State gets 'documented'

8-27-82

## Send/ on the Aisle

No one can say for certain at this moment what will become of Kalamazoo's ornate downtown movie palace, the State. No longer regularly operating as a movie theater and being used only for special events and attractions, the State nevertheless remains an outstanding and unique example of theater architecture that will never be duplicated.

Whatever the theater's fate, the elegance of its interior is moving toward a preservation of the only sort that now seems possible. It is being chronicled in photographs and paintings by a group of local and area people for generations to come — and remind others of its halcyon days as the home of legitimate touring theater, vaudeville, silent and "talking" movies. This lovely showplace, the last of only five of its kind which were designed by John Eberson, an architect famed for his "atmospheric" theaters, may some day be gone but not forgotten thanks to Harry Burns of Kalamazoo and some dedicated associates.

With cooperation of the theater's owner, Butterfield Theaters of Southfield, Burns' Status Galleries, Ltd. in Kalamazoo Center has joined with photographer James Bevins and painter Craig Hendrix to document the interior. Bevins and Hendrix roamed the theater for days photographing its beautiful art decor. Using Bevin's photos as reference, Hendrix will shortly begin work on a 30 by 40 painting that offers a panoramic view of the stage — a painting he proposes to work on in daily, public view at the Kalamazoo Center starting July 9. A slide

of Bevins' photos will be projected as Hendrix works on his

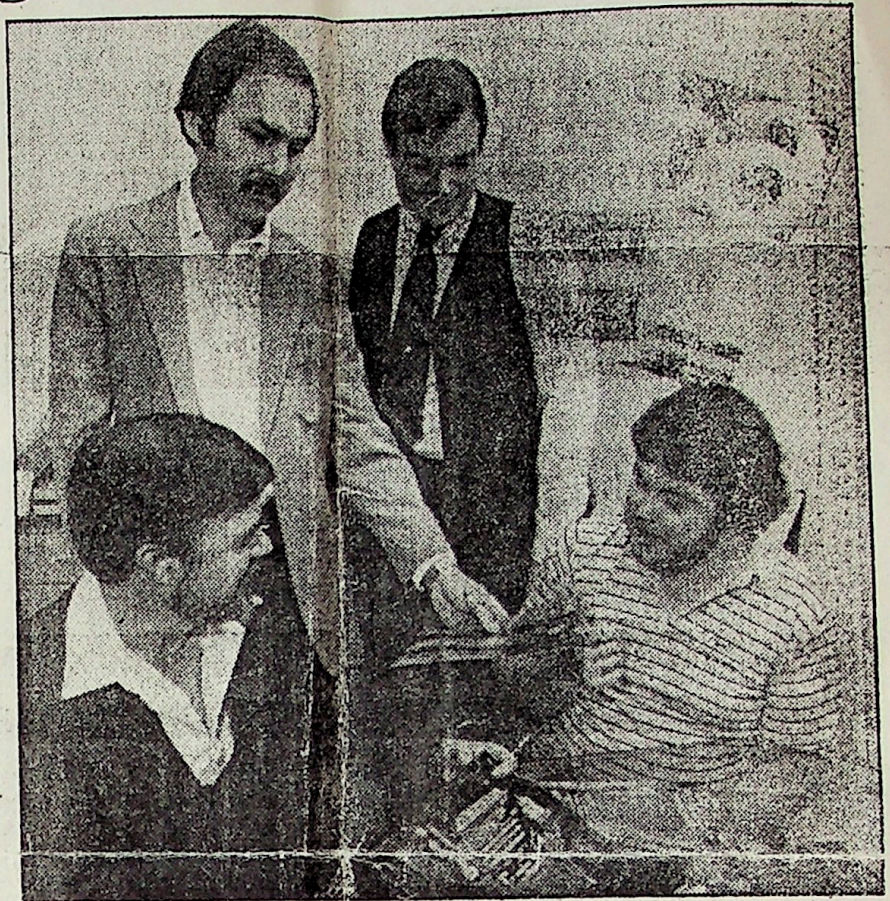
Bevins' colorful photos also will be produced in 20 by 40 signed editions of 48 each, 5 in the series, with the first to be released this month. Upon completion of the painting in September, a full color lithograph will be reproduced from Hendrix's original oil. The artist-signed and numbered edition will be limited to 250, with 25 artist's proofs.

Burns, who recalled spending many an afternoon watching movies in the State while growing up in Kalamazoo and says "I love that theater," is doing what hasn't been done extensively as many architecturally significant theaters are altered or razed. Even Broadway's Helen Hayes Theater was not thoroughly documented before recently falling under the wrecking ball. No pictures are known to exist of Kalamazoo's Capitol Theater, also ornate in its way before being remodeled and later razed to make way for a parking ramp.

A Plainwell photographer who specializes in commercial, fashion layouts, advertising illustration and industrial photographs, Bevins has come up with the most detailed and interesting photographs of the State's interior we have come across. Hendrix, who received his early art education at Princeton University, is from the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia who now lives in Constantine where he combines ministry with his painting career.

To mark completion of the documentation project, a reception party and an evening of live theater on the State Theater stage is being planned by Robert Walker, a well-known Kalamazoo actor who is also associated with the gallery. To the best of anyone's knowledge or records, it would be the first straight play on the theater's stage in more than 30 years.

**ONE WE RECOMMEND** — The best reason for theatergoers to visit Chicago this summer may very well be Milo O'Shea, who will bring the



Conferring on State Theater photos by Jim Bevins (right) are (from left) Harry Burns, Craig Hendrix and Robert Walker.

award-winning comedy, "Mass Appeal," to Drury Lane Theater in Water Tower Place on July 22 for an eight-week run.

Bill Davis's work about a successful but cynical priest and a troubled seminarian was the show which captured our fancy during a winter visit to Broadway where it ran for 28 weeks and was nominated for a Tony Award. It didn't win a Tony, but both the New York Drama League and Outer Critics' Circle voted O'Shea's performance the best of the season in a straight play. By our book, O'Shea is one of the finest actors of this if not several decades, and he was never any better than he is in "Mass Appeal." Davis, incidentally, is now working on the screenplay for a movie version which will be called "Internal Combustion."

Also coming to Chicago later in the year will be the musical, "42nd Street," which has been set for a Dec. 27 opening at the Civic Opera House.

Speaking of Chicago theater, "The King And I" starring Yul Brynner has been held over through July 18 at the Arie Crown and will leave Chicago with the all-time box office record. In 10 weeks at the McCormick Place playhouse, it will have grossed a cool \$4 million. Who says theater is dead or there's no longer a place for family-type shows.

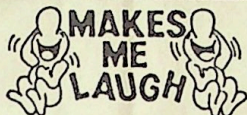
As for theater in the other direction, the word from Canada's Stratford is that the famed festival has already hit over \$5 million in advance ticket sales for the current season, with "The Mikado" at the Avon leading all shows in sales followed by "The Tempest" at the Festival Theater.

—Don W. Carlson



# ZANIES

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8 P.M.



FRI. & SAT.  
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TONIGHT THROUGH SUNDAY

**CHARLES VIRACOLA**

with **JIM HANNA**

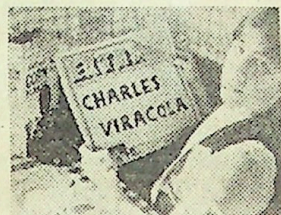
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**THIS SUNDAY ALL LADIES \$1.00**

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A BETTER BARTON—Barton organ advertisements trumpeted this make instrument as being "silver throated," but many of the organs were somewhat raucous. There were, of course, exceptions, and the Kalamazoo State Barton must have been one of those, to a degree, because the organ in its later years became a charmer. Under the restorative hands of John Catherwood and Bill Mollema it truly could claim to be "silver throated!" The two men made additions and changes, having the exceptional good fortune to be able to select pipework from other organs in the Butterfield chain. Their labor was rewarding in that they fashioned an excellent sounding organ. It is one that former State Theatre Organist Bud Taylor describes in glowing praise as being as good or better than a Wurlitzer of the same size! — photo by Brother Andrew Corsini

## ORGANIZED ADS

**FOR SALE**—WANGERIN 2/4 Theatre organ, oak console, less chests, pipes and percussions. Buyer to remove March 1st. \$300. Hammond RT-3 with JR 20, \$2,000. **SIX RANK PORTABLE Theatre Pipe Organ** with all new action, swell box and your stop list, \$9,000. Chris Feiereisen, 1801 Johnston Drive, Manitowoc, Wisc. 54220, or call (414) 682-9538 before 8am CST.

**WURLITZER THEATRE ORGAN**—3M/22R Paramount Publix Goldie Moderne Console. Now playing, \$38,000.00. Knabe Ampico grand piano wired to play from console, optional. Send \$1.00 for Specs and Photo. G. Merriken, 2141 Briggs Chaney Road, Silver Springs, Maryland 20904.

**BEST OFFER** gets this 2/6 Barton with single phase blower and more. For further information contact: Ron Wilfong, 3005 Pioneer, Oklahoma City, Okla. 73107, or call (405) 943-1980.

**WANTED**—Back issues of THE CONSOLE, May, 1965; December, 1970; May, 1980; Oct., 1980. Robert Ayres, 520 Ben Vista Drive, Salem, Ore. 97302.

ORGANIZED ADS BRING RESULTS

## CONTRIBUTOR ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Contributions made to The Console by readers adds to the interest of the publication, and many times these items are found only locally so that if they had not been sent the news would have been "lost!" The staff is indebted to the following readers for their contributions: Harold J. Brown, Joliet, Illinois; John Schellkopf, Beverly Hills, Calif; George Lufkin, Shelton, Washington; Gilbert C. Petzke, Evanston, Illinois; Irv Eiler, Los Angeles, Calif; Jack Reynolds, Los Angeles, Calif; William T. Benedict, Chicago, Illinois; Don Wick, Loveland, Colorado; Ray E. Wilson, Auburn, Calif; G. E. Marshall, Hunters Hill, N. S. W., Australia; Miles J. Rudasill, Jr., Richmond, Va; Rodger L. Reiner, Freeport, N. Y; The Windsheet, Nor-Cal Chapter Newsletter, Palo Alto, Calif; The Post Horn, Bluegrass Chapter, Lexington, Ky; The Organ Spiel, Sierra Chapter, Sacramento, Calif.

The Console is also indebted to Mrs. Juanita Hilsenbeck and Biff Buttler of New York, who telephoned the information about the death of Peter Schaeble, and also to Jeff Barker, another friend of Peter Schaeble, who called from Manchester, England to relate the same tragic news.

## NORTH TEXAS CHAPTER GETS INTO SILENT MOVIE SHOWS

North Texas (Dallas) Chapter ATOS will present its first silent film show featuring Charles Evans, Dallas organist, at the console of the Style 260 Wurlitzer pipe organ in John Beck Hall on Friday evening, January 30th. The film will be "Broken Blossoms," starring Lillian Gish and Richard Barthelmes. Showtime is announced for 8pm, and the evening's admission is announced at 50 cents (old time show prices).

John Beck hall is the organ studio the late John Beck added to his residence. His will left the home to friends who created the hall in his memory.



# The State Theatre

Written by Jerry Alexander

In these 1970's, the American Public has turned its mind back to previous eras of American life, in what future historians may call "The Great Nostalgia Explosion." One of the eras we look back upon is the "Roaring Twenties," the decade bracketed by World War One and the Great Depression: those hectic and carefree days of Prohibition, flappers, Babe Ruth, jazz, the Teapot Dome Scandal and seemingly unlimited financial expansion.

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This phenomenon did not bypass Kalamazoo. The State Theatre, at Burdick and Lovell Streets, was built during this era, and remains a major film house in Kalamazoo. Anyone entering senses this theatre is different. The State Theatre is a true movie "palace".

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Ebersson was born in Austria and, after receiving training in architecture and engineering, immigrated to this country in 1901. He soon opened his architectural office and began designing smaller theatres throughout the Midwest. By the early Twenties, Ebersson had graduated to designing larger vaudeville and movie houses.

In January, 1923, he struck architectural gold with the opening of the world's first atmospheric theatre, the Majestic in Houston. Ebersson had felt movie-palaces were becoming static in design, and conceived the idea of atmospheric theatres in order to use the inner courtyards of the Romantic architectural periods and the colors of the Mediterranean.

The audience sat in a simulated garden or courtyard canopied by a plain, dark blue ceiling with twinkling electric stars and moving clouds projected across the sky. The side walls were designed as building facades and garden walls. The windows of these buildings were lit from inside, with artificial trees and vines adorning the walls.

For the remainder of the movie-palace era, Ebersson designed atmospheric houses exclusively. His designs were often imitated, but only in a few cases were they equaled or surpassed.

Some of the other Ebersson atmospheric houses near Kalamazoo included the Capital in Flint; the Grand Opera and the Riveria Annex in Detroit; and the Capitol, Avalon and Paradise in Chicago. Another Ebersson atmospheric design was the Aragon Ballroom in Chicago. The architect died in 1954, after designing over 300 theatres.

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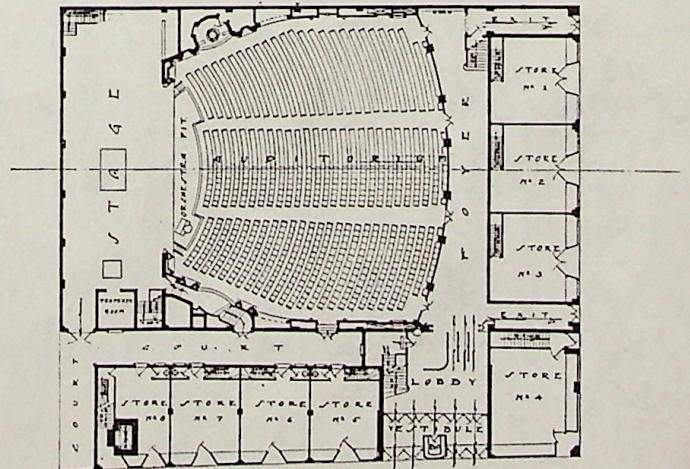
Beginning in 1934 with the touring company of "The Green Pastures," the State also presented many legitimate attractions. Included were: "You Can't Take It With You;" "White Oaks" with Ethel Barrymore; Clifton Webb as "The Man Who Came To Dinner;" "Hellzapoppin'"; "Life With Father;" "The Corn Is Green" with Ethel Barrymore; "Watch On The Rhine" with Paul Lucas; and "Harvey" starring James Dunne and, in supporting roles of the 1950 production, Jean Stapleton and Ernest Borgnine.

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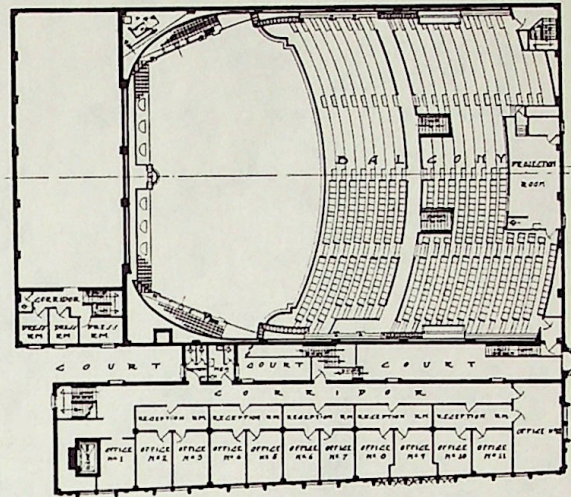
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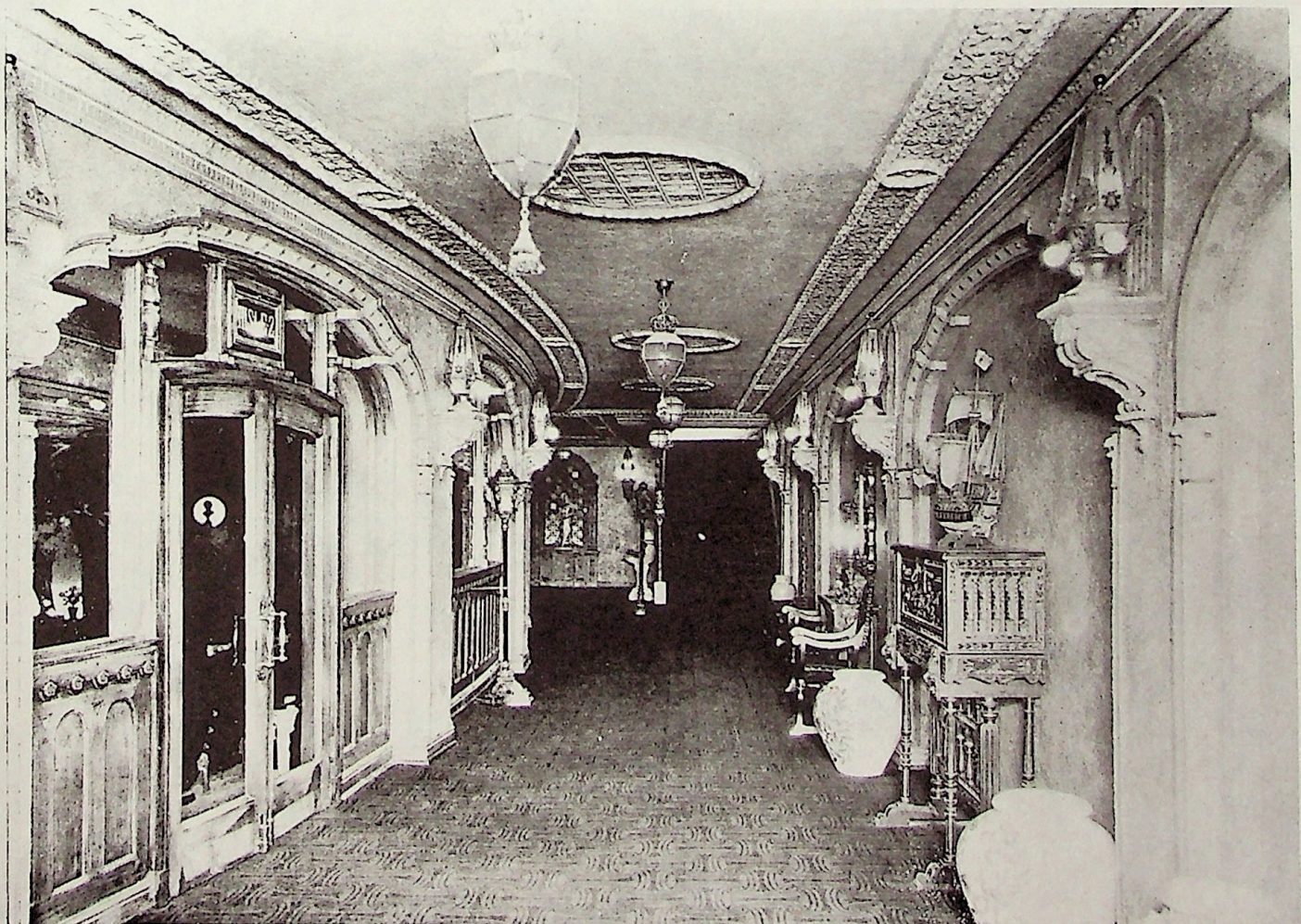
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The auditorium remained virtually untouched. The few removals included trees and vines, the birds suspended from the ceiling, and some of the statuary from the side walls. New seating was installed, reducing

Photos on these pages, from The Console Collection, originally were published in an issue of Motion Picture News, during 1927.



Below, the main floor foyer, showing enclosure at rear of auditorium seats. Furnishings and decorative pieces contribute to the air of comfort and warmth of this foyer.

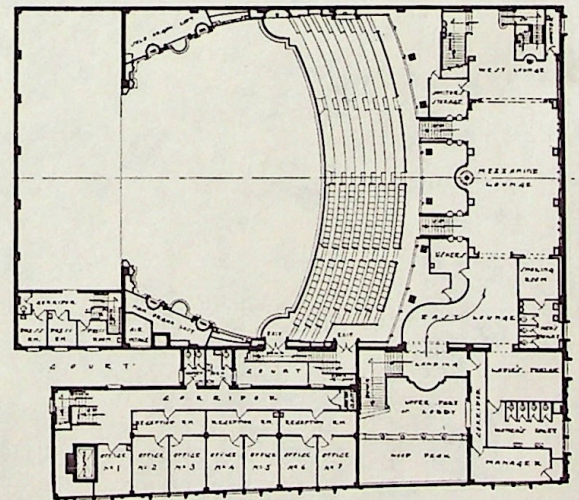






*Exterior view of the State Theatre, operated by the W. S. Butterfield Circuit, shown above. The building provides store and office space. The outside lines follow the Italian style of architecture featured in a play-house which reproduces a garden scene as an auditorium setting.*

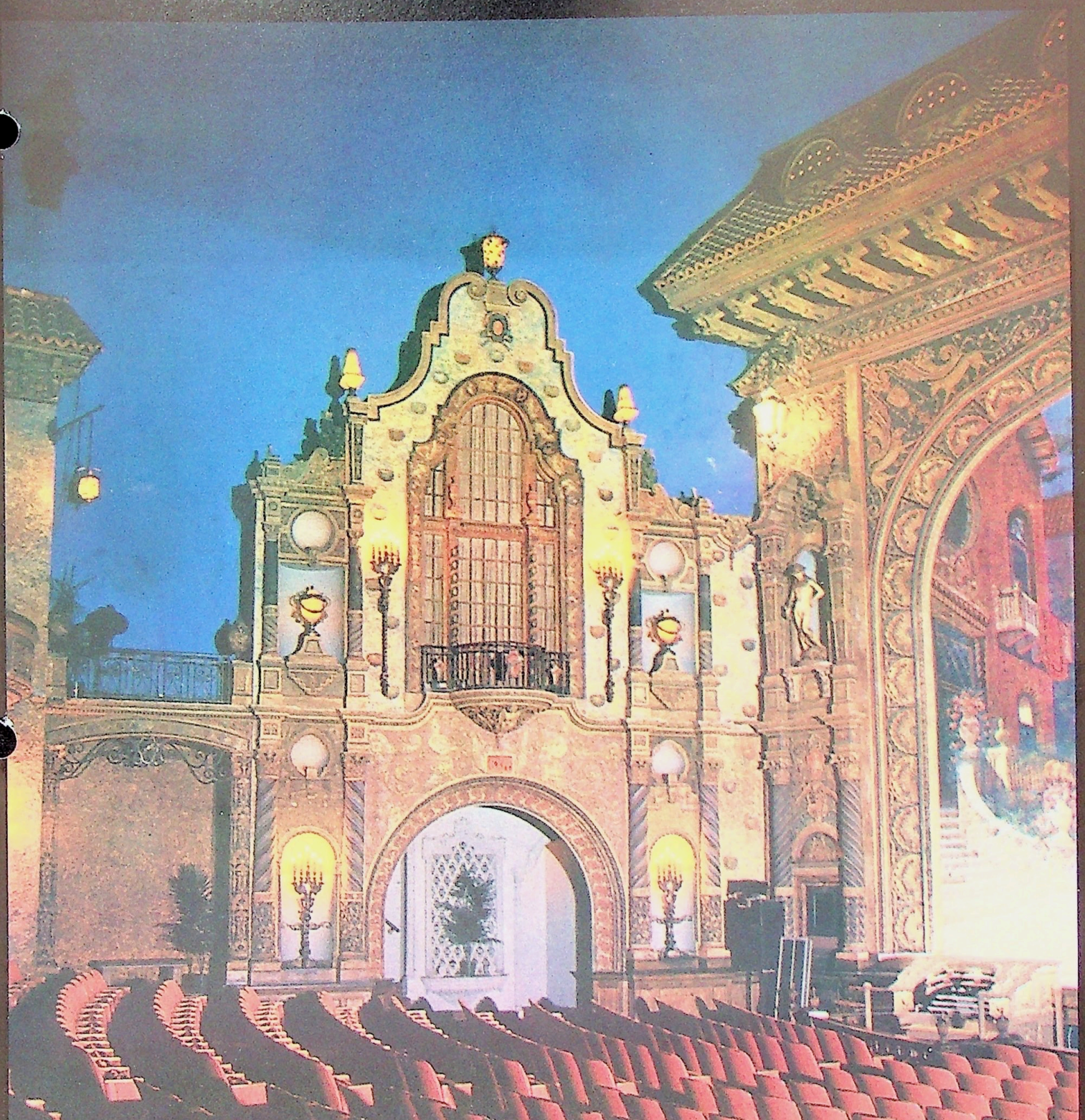
BUTTERFIELD THEATRE  
IN KALAMAZOO  
DESIGNED BY EBERSON



*The inner lobby of the State Theatre, Kalamazoo, showing stairway to mezzanine. Ceramic tile is used in stairs and floor.*








# Kalamazoo's Spanish Courtyard

VOLUME 19  
NUMBER 1

The  
**CONSOLE**  
PUBLISHED MONTHLY  
WHEREVER ORGANS ARE PLAYED AND HEARD, THE CONSOLE IS READ



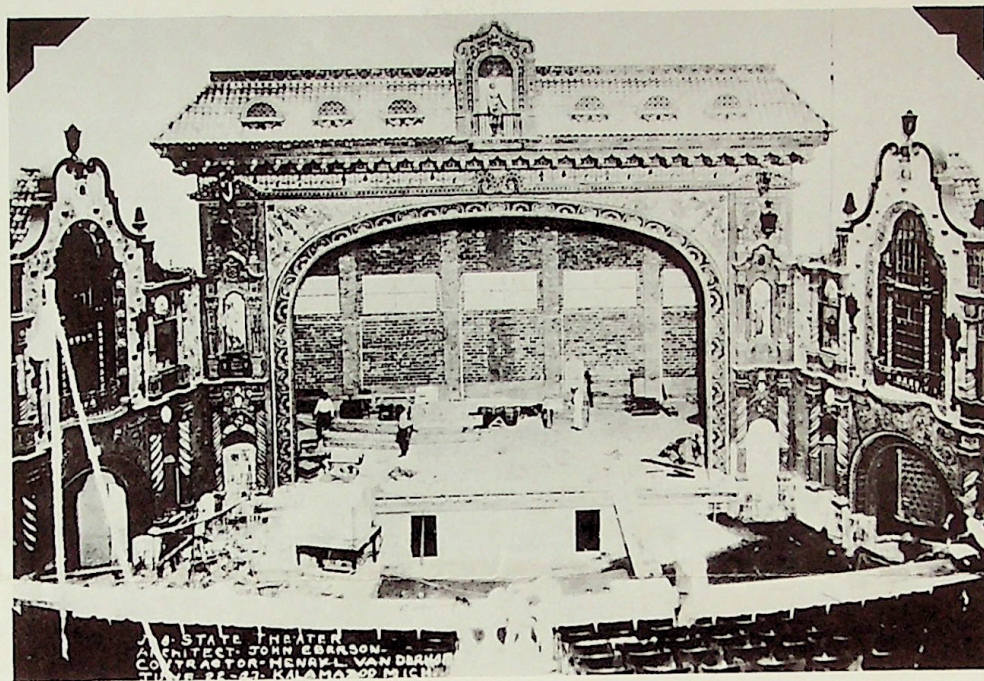
JANUARY  
1981

COLOR PHOTOS BY BROTHER ANDREW CORSINI



# Kalamazoo's Spanish

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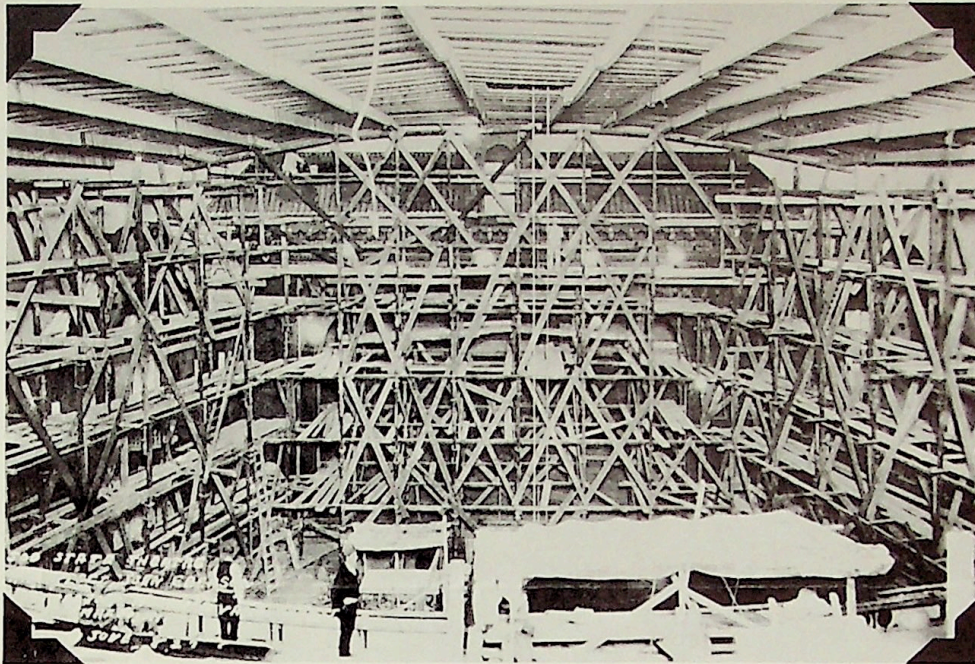
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The auditorium remained virtually untouched. The few removals included trees and vines, the birds suspended from the ceiling, and some of the statuary from the side walls. New seating was installed, reducing capacity to nearly 1400. (In 1974, the balcony was closed, cutting capacity to about 900.) Other casualties included the "cloud-machine," and, in the early 70's, the stars and much of the ornamental lighting were doused to save electricity.

From its opening, the State has presented first-run film entertainment. And although it is strictly a film house today, live entertainment was presented for many years. The stage area remains ready to mount a production with the 14 dressing rooms backstage still maintained.

What is the future for the State Theatre? Howard Poth, the current manager says, "We intend to operate it for another 50 years." Lyle Smith, Vice-President of Butterfield Theatres says, "It is our intention to continue to operate the State Theatre in the future . . . as a first-class, first-run theatre." Smith continued, ". . . in our opinion, Kalamazoo has the most vigorous and viable downtown of any community of like size in the Midwest, and we expect it will continue to grow and prosper."

Even though the State has not received an official "historic" or "landmark" designation in the community, it unofficially has that status to many who call Kalamazoo home.

After all, where else in this area can one sit in a Spanish Courtyard? □



JANUARY 19, 1986 2:00 & 6:00 PM

# GONE WITH THE WIND



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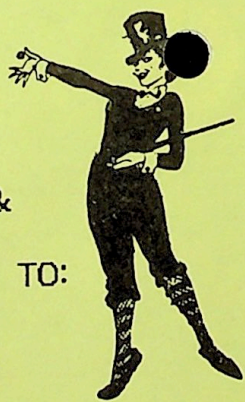
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Your financial gift will be used for the preservation and continued use of

Kalamazoo's Historic State Theatre

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As a member you will be listed in our Vaudeville Show Programs and you will receive advance notice of all State Theatre Vaudeville Productions.

Please help us serve you better by completing the survey below

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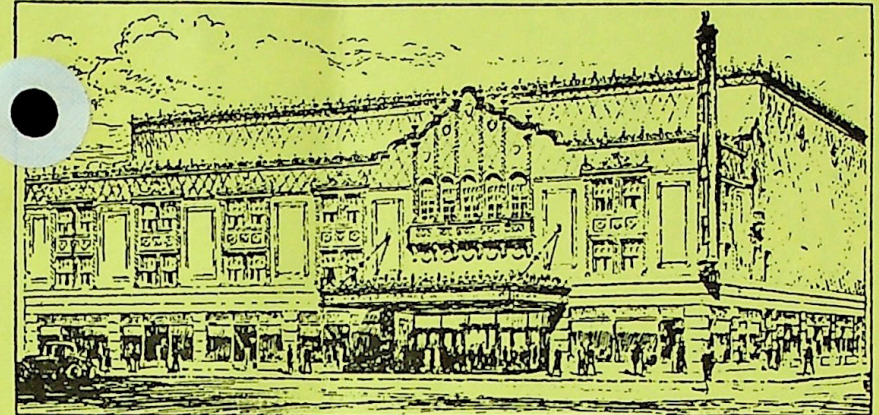
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- Please put me on your mailing list.
- I have ideas for programs at the theatre and have enclosed them.
- I am interested in the Preservation and use of the State Theatre. Tell me how I can Help!
- I am interested in (circle all those that apply to you)
  - Organ Concerts Children's Programs Family Programs
  - Concerts Classic Films Live Stage Shows
- I want to make a contribution. Please find my check enclosed.



# State Theatre

KALAMAZOO MICHIGAN



STATE THEATRE VAUDEVILLE ASSOCIATION

PRESENTS:

## AN OLD FASHIONED CHRISTMAS DECEMBER 8, 1985 3:00 PM

FEATURING

ORGANIST WILLIAM MOLLEMA  
KALAMAZOO BALLET COMPANY  
KALAMAZOO COMMUNITY CHORALE

ALL TICKETS ARE \$3.00

State Theatre Vaudeville  
P.O. Box 649  
Comstock, MI 49041

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Permit # 4

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MUSICAL!

Greater on  
Wide Screen!

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TICKETS \$3

THE MAIN CHARACTER FROM THE MOVIE WILL  
APPEAR LIVE AFTER THE SHOW TO SIGN  
AUTOGRAPHS AND FOR PICTURES.



# Plan Formal Reopening of State Theater

## Program to Be Held Thursday

Newly remodelled State Theater will have its grand opening Thursday as part of the Burdick Mall's fifth anniversary celebration.

Highlighting the opening will be a sneak preview at 7 p.m. of a top comedy as well as the regular attraction and organ solos by both Bill Hollema, senior physics major at Kalamazoo, and John Catherwood.

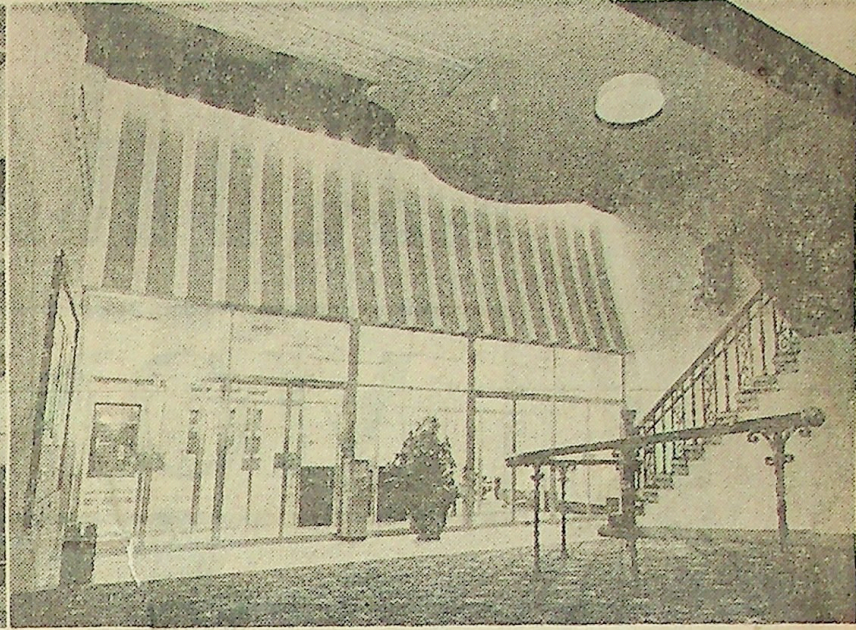
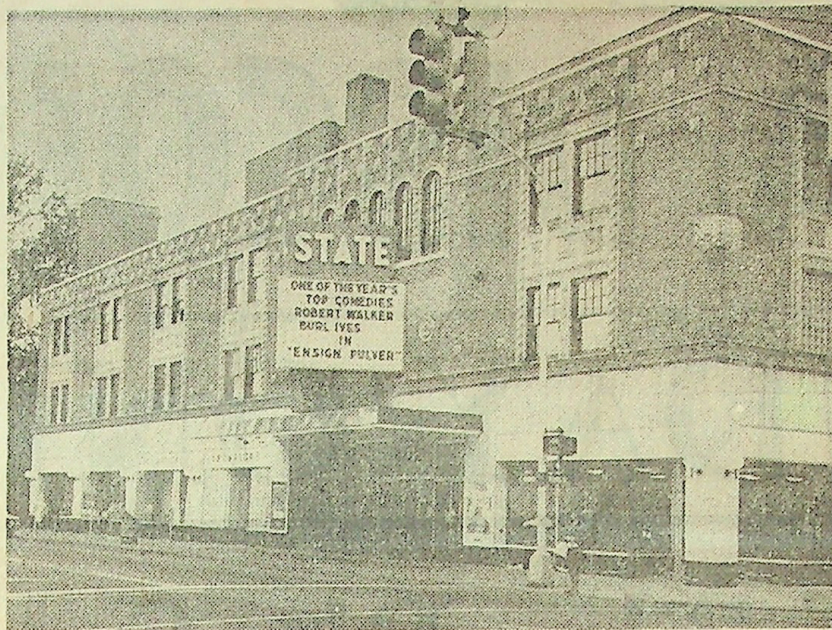
Mollema and Catherwood have spent part of the past two years repairing the 37-year-old organ.

State Theater manager Fred Marley said 250 Kalamazoo city and county dignitaries have been invited to the Thursday night opening.

Included in the theater building remodeling area a new marquee, new marble facing, new store fronts, new concession areas, new curtain, new carpeting, new orange crowd-control ropes, completely re-done restrooms and rearranged seating.

Reason for the fewer seats is that there now is six inches more leg room between rows, Marley said.

The new marquee brought to an end a common late-night



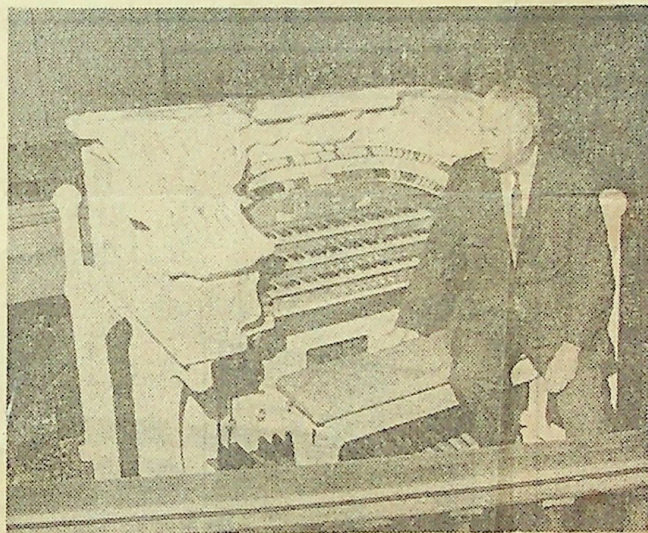
EXTERIOR AND LOBBY INTERIOR OF REFURNISHED AND REMODELED STATE THEATER Includes New Marquee, New Sign and New Fronts for Stores and Shops in Building

8-16-74

downtown sight—a long ladder used to change the letters on the old marquee.

The new marquee has an entrance behind it from the second floor. Located above the new boxoffice and entrance way, this permits use of an eight-foot stepladder rather than a 20-foot stepladder as needed before.

The grand opening feature beginning Thursday will be "Look for Love," a comedy starring Connie Francis and guest-starring Johnny Carson, George Hamilton, Yvette Mimieux, Paula Prentiss and Danny Thomas.



RESTORED ORGAN READY FOR USE Manager Fred Marley Surveys Job

—Gazette photos

HEATER FEATURED — The current issue of Console, a publication of the Theater Organ Society, contains a feature on the State Theater and three full-color photographs by Brother Arsini of Notre Dame University. Work in restoring the theater, one of the last movie places still regularly operating in Michigan, as well as *John Catherwood* and *William Catherwood* restoration of the theater's Barton organ, is recounted in an article by Jerry Alexander of Kalamazoo. Copies are available by mail to Console magazine, P. O. Box 744-C, Pasadena, Calif.,

## These districts, parcels proposed for National Register

- Stuart Neighborhood Historic District, bounded on the east by the Michigan Central Railroad tracks, on the north by North Street, on the west by Douglas Avenue and on the south by Main Street.

- Henderson Park Historic District, including Henderson Park, the Henderson Castle and properties along the south side of Grand Avenue from Thompson to Monroe.

- Vine Neighborhood Historic District, generally bounded on the east by Rose Street, on the north by Walnut Street, on the west by Westnedge Avenue and on the south by Vine Street, but also including properties along both sides of South Park Street southward to 919 and 922 S. Park.

- Bronson Park Historic District, bounded on the north by West Michigan Avenue, on the east by South Rose Street, on the south

- by West Lovell Street and on the west by South Park Street, including properties on the west side of Park Street and on the east side of Rose Street fronting on Bronson Park.

- Haymarket Historic District, located along East Michigan Avenue from Portage Street east to the former Grand Rapids and Indiana Railroad tracks.

- Rose Place Historic District, including 830 and 904 S. Rose and all properties on Rose Place.

- Stetson Chapel, Kalamazoo College.

- Marlborough Apartments, 471 W. South.

- David Lillienfield House, 447 W. South.

- Henry Gilbert House, 415 W. Lovell.

- Isaac Brown House, 427 S. Burdick.

- State Theatre, 404 S. Burdick.

- American National Bank Building, 136 E. Michigan.

- Lawrence and Chapin Building, 201 N. Rose.

- Baumann-Shakespeare Block, 202 N. Rose.

- Old Fire House No. 4, 526 N. Burdick.

- Alonzo T. Prentice House, 839 W. Lovell.

- James B. Cobb House, 526 S. Burdick.

- William L. Welsh Terrace, 101-105 W. Dutton.

- Peter B. Appeldorn House, 532 Village.

- Edgar M. Breese House, 711 Wheaton.

- Martin W. Roberts House, 703 Wheaton.

- Allen Potter Octagon House, 925 S. Westnedge.

- Enoch Shaffer House, 1437 Douglas.

- Engine House No. 3, 607 Charlotte.

- Center Building, Nazareth College.

- The Oaklands, Western Michigan University.

- Henry Montague House, Kalamazoo Regional Psychiatric Hospital.

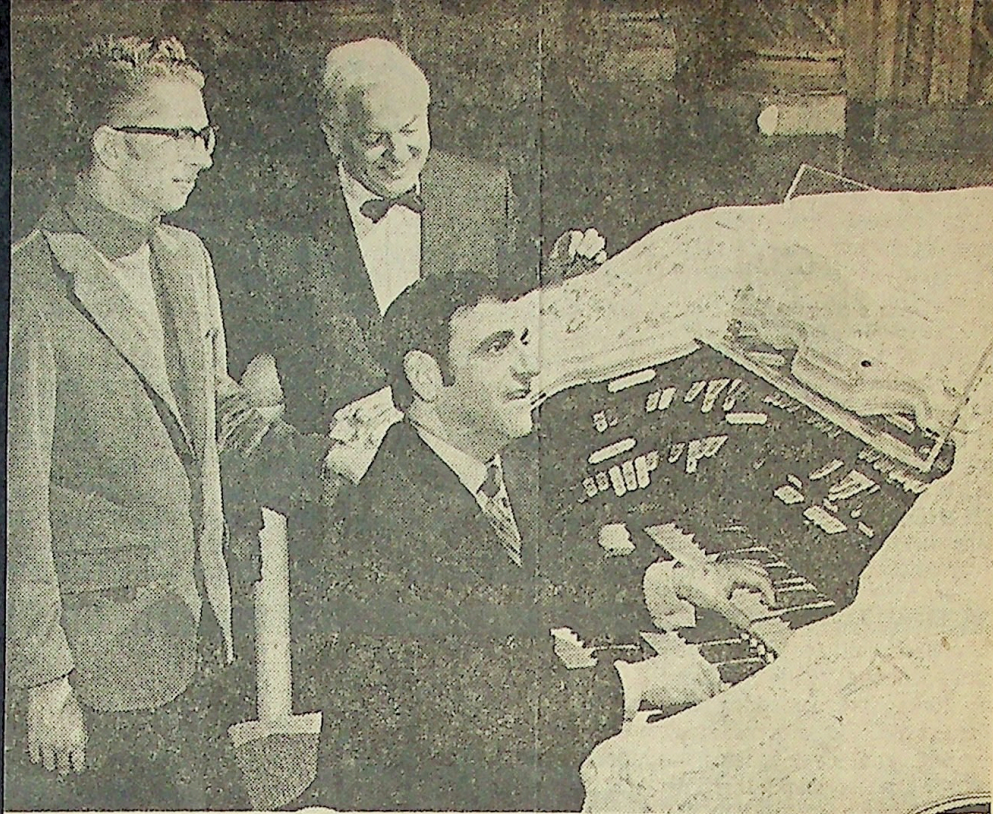
- State Hospital Gatehouse, Kalamazoo Regional Psychiatric Hospital.

- John Gibbs House, 3403 Parkview.

- Andrew J. Stevens House, 4024 Oakland.

- Bryant Paper Mill Complex, Portage Street.





ORGANIST STAN KANN TRIES OUT INSTRUMENT AT STATE THEATER  
 Watching Are Jerry Alexander (Left), WMUK Program Director, Fred Marley, Theater Manager  
 —Gazette photo

One of the men who played the State organ when it was used regularly was Bud Taylor, who later became organist at the Roxy Theater in New York City. He got his start at a funeral parlor in Vicksburg, learned under Leverenz who was "house organist" at the State, and now lives in Southern California where he is a recording artist.

Mollema was a Kalamazoo College physics student in 1962 when he discovered the organ

## THEATER WORLD

BY LOUIS BOCKSTANZ

### *Smallest Summer Theater Brings Back Popular Program*

SOUTH HAVEN — What well may be Western Michigan's smallest summer theater is planning a return engagement of its most popular attraction of the summer. The theater is the Village Theater at Sleepy Hollow Resort and the attraction is a double bill consisting of two musical dramas, "Trouble in Tahiti," by Leonard Bernstein and "The Telephone," by Gian Carlo Menotti.

The two dramas will be staged Saturday and Sunday at the 200-seat resort-theater north of South Haven, with performances to begin at 8:30 each evening. They were presented there July 19 and were so well received that the theater decided to bring them back for the two additional evenings.

The program is performed by Robert Smith, Janice Fleming Omvig, and Heather Golembo. They have played the same program in the Gate of Horn in Chicago for several weeks.

This is one of a series of programs being staged at the rustic barn-like theater on the grounds of the well-known resort. Although established and still primarily for the benefit of resort residents, the performances are open to the public — at an admission charge, of course.

The programs at the theater are an outgrowth of the desire of proprietor Richard Gray to add a bit of culture to the entertainment provided at the resort. The entertainment also includes such features as folk music concerts, film presentations, and, on a one-shot basis, a try-out by Kalamazoo College of one of its Festival Playhouse repertory plays last week.

#### **State Organ**

It will be noted in a page elsewhere on these pages that the big organ at the State Theater will be used again. The big old instrument, as old (37 years) as the theater, has not been heard in many years, having fallen into a sad state over the years. However a program of repair has been carried on and the voice of the organ will be heard again, one night a week, according to manager Fred Marley.

#### **More about music . . .**

Grand memories of a grand old era of the motion picture theater were brought back for many Thursday evening when the refurbished State Theater observed its formal "grand reopening."

A theater pipe organ has a sound all its own, and the sound was never better than on Thursday. Two years of "labor of love" by Bill Hollema and John Catherwood restored the State organ to its old glory. The music they played, in a half-hour concert before the show and later before a special "sneak preview," stirred the older folks in the audience and must have surprised the younger ones who had never heard a theater organ's full-throated sound.

Fred Marley, the State's manager, and Lyle Smith of Detroit, in charge of theater operations for Butterfield Theaters, Inc., said the Butterfield chain has reactivated a half-dozen organs in movie houses around Michigan. The State's organ posed the toughest job because it was in the worst shape, according to Smith.

Beautifully refinished, and spotlighted against the theater's new stage curtain, the grand old pipe organ was something to see as well as hear. And future audiences will be able to see and hear it, we're told; plans now are to present an organ program, along with the screen feature, at least one night a week.

And while there's room here, a word about the movie previewed at the State. It was "A Shot in the Dark," starring Peter Sellers, and just has to rate as one of the funniest films ever made. The preview audience was in hysterics as Sellers stumbled, bumbled and fumbled his way through one of the wildest of "mystery" yarns. And the five-minute cartoon titling which opens the movie is fun, too. "Shot" is the State's next regular attraction, opening Thursday (Jack R. Bell).



Phantom, a man with a face like a skull...

Lon Chaney "the man of a Thousand faces," designed the makeup for his character the Phantom. He put plugs in his nose to open the nostrils and make them slant up. He put plastic-like circles in his jaws. These made it look as though his cheekbones were sticking out. Hooks inside a wig pulled the skin of his face upward. Prongs pushed his lips back from false teeth.

Chaney made himself look like a walking dead man. And when THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA first appeared, people in the audience screamed and fainted.

Chaney's make-up tricks were very painful and are no longer used. In fact, they ruined his health.

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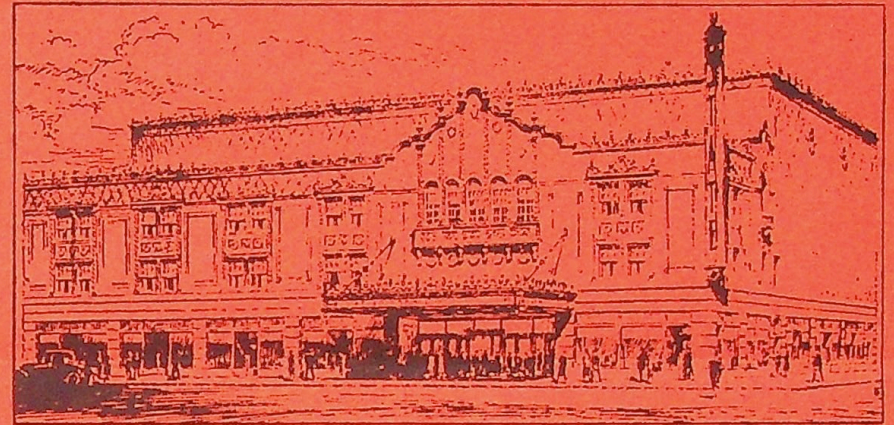
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# State Theatre

KALAMAZOO MICHIGAN



**wkmi 1360**

State Theatre Vaudeville Committee Presents

## Phantom of the Opera

Accompanied by

John Catherwood

October  
31st





THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA

Directed by ..... Rupert Julian
Secenerio by ..... Elliott J. Clawson
From the Novel by ..... Gaston Leroux
Photographers ..... Charles Van Eager
Milton Bridenbecker
Virgil Miller

CAST

Erik (The Phantom) ..... Lon Chaney
Christine Daae ..... Mary Philbin
Raoul de Chagny ..... Norman Kerry
Florine Papillon ..... Snitz Edwards
Simon ..... Gibson Gowland
Phillippe de Chagny ..... John Sainpolis
Carlotta ..... Virginia Pearson

"Considered by many to be the best of the Lon Chaney silent films, and rightly so. Never before or since has this magnificent story, about a wronged musician who hides in the bowels of a cavernous opera house while weaving his diabolical plot of revenge after he's been disfigured, been more satisfactorily mounted. Chaney is fascinating as the crazed "Phantom", and his makeup is a work of cinematic magic, especially for it's day." --Steven H. Scheuer

Tonight's film was released by Universal Pictures on September 6th, 1925

About our Organist John Catherwood...

Born and raised in Detroit, John received his formal education at Kalamazoo College.

An early facination with the pipe organ was instrumental in his spending several years as a boy choirister at St. Paul's Cathedral. He also regularly attended Saturday mattinees at downtown theatres where organs were still used

After college, and two years as a Chaplain's assistant at Ft. Riley, Kansas, he settled in Kalamazoo with his wife and family. A college days' friendship with Bud Taylor, well-known Kalamazoo Organist, was renewed. The old bug bit harder than ever and it wasn't long before John met Bill Mollema and in 1962 the two began total rebuilding of the State Theatre's Barton Organ.

Considered by many organists to be one of Barton Organ Company's finest, the State's organ was built in 1927 for the theatre's opening. Two new sets of pipes were added in 1978 completeing specifications drawn up by Bill and John when the projected began 18 years ago.

Although used only occasionally in recent years, Kalamazoo is indeed fortunate to have a working theatre organ installed in its' original home. Considering the beauty and elegance of that home, Kalamazoo is indeed, twice blessed. The "Golden Age" of the theatre Organ is still alive and well in Kalamazoo and with your continued support it will remain so!

\* \* \* \* \*

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City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_



**SPECIAL THANKS TO:**

James Lauck, Organ Builder and Technician

The State Theatre - Roger and Jere Hinman, Owners  
Kevin Brady, Theatre Manager  
Jamie Betwee, Assistant Theatre Manager

Ushers and Ticket Takers

Mark Crawford, WUHQ TV  
Ralph Grant, WKZO  
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A. Alexia Hayden, Kalamazoo Gazette  
Dave Hager, Kalamazoo Gazette  
The Coronet Advertiser, Galesburg  
Sue Howrigan

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Don Dillon's Music Center  
Keyboard World, Kalamazoo and Grand Rapids  
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The Printmill, Inc.

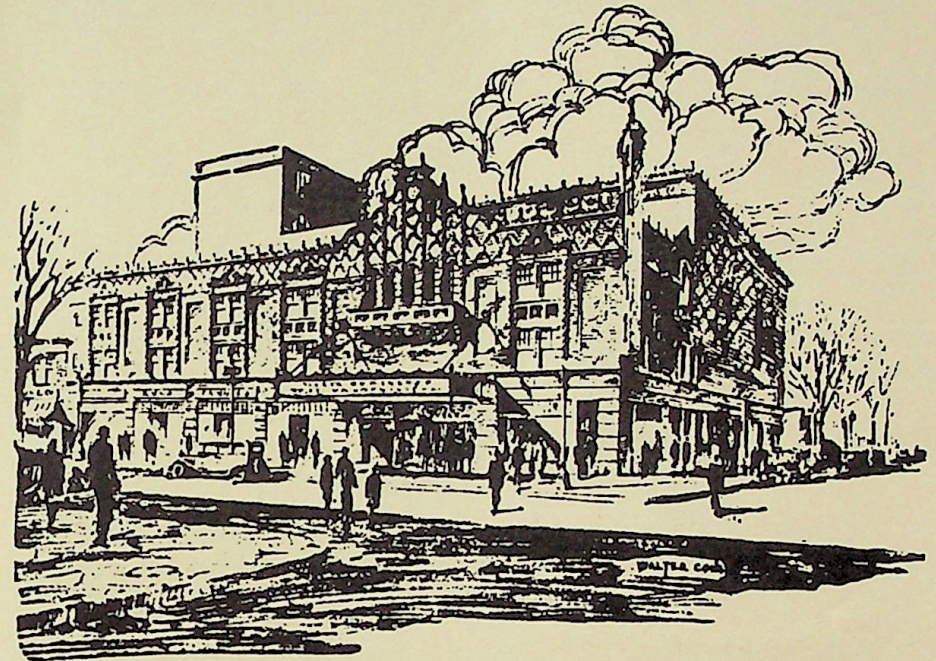
**SOUTHWEST MICHIGAN CHAPTER OFFICERS**

President	Ken Butela
Vice-President	Max Doolittle
Secretary/Treasurer	Mary Ann Law

*Front cover illustration from Opening Program, July 14, 1927*

# State Theatre

KALAMAZOO, MICHIGAN



American Theatre Organ Society  
Southwest Michigan Chapter

PRESENTS:

## STATE THEATRE 65th ANNIVERSARY SHOW

*Featuring*  
**DAVID COGSWELL**

at the  
Barton Theatre Pipe Organ

*also featuring*  
**The Lucky Chances Quartet**  
**Mark Doolittle's Magic**

**MAY 16, 1992 • 7:30 P.M.**



## PROGRAM

Barton Theatre Pipe Organ Overture	David Cogswell
Master of Ceremonies	Max Doolittle
“The Lucky Chances” Barbershop Quartet	William West - Tenor David Dolph - Lead James Sell - Baritone Herman Dykema - Bass
Master of Ceremonies	Max Doolittle
Mark Doolittle’s Magic Production	Mark Doolittle
“The General” Silent Film (first half)	David Cogswell Starring Buster Keaton
Master of Ceremonies	Max Doolittle

### *Intermission*

“The General” Silent Film (second half)	David Cogswell
Sing-along	Dorothy Butela Slide Projectionist
Master of Ceremonies	Max Doolittle
Finale “God Bless America” (words on program)	Audience Sing-along

## CREDITS

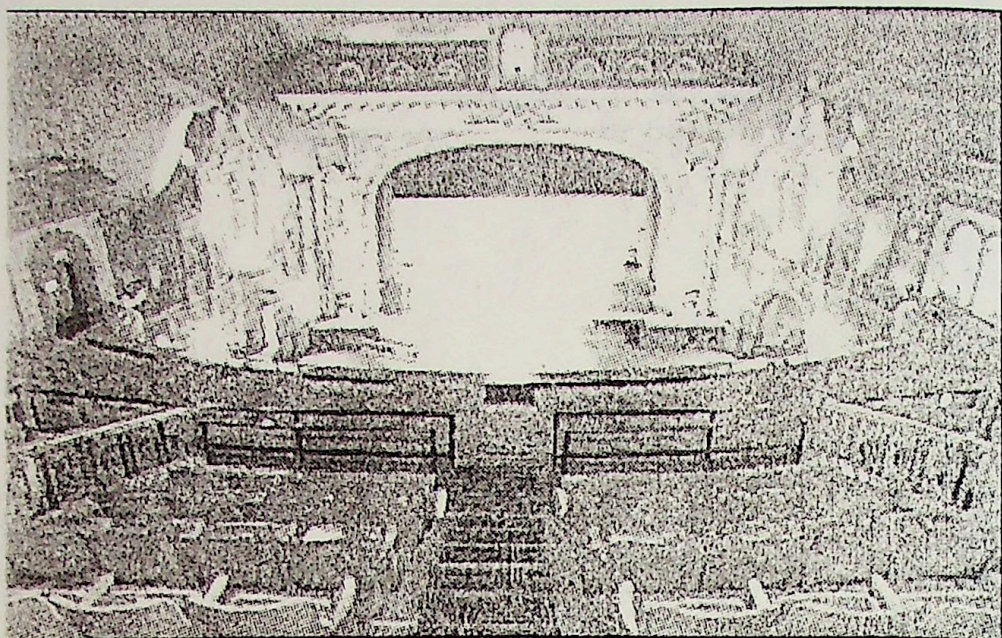
Program Director	Ken Butela
Stage Manager	Bob Hjortass
Assistant Stage Manager	Don Welsh
Film Projectionist	Dayton Maynard
Publicity and Ticket Coordinator	Janet Corstange

### GOD BLESS AMERICA

God Bless America  
Land that I love.  
Stand beside her  
and guide her,  
thru the night  
with a light from above  
From the mountains  
to the prairies  
To the oceans  
white with foam,  
God Bless America  
My home sweet home.



# & ENTERTAINMENT



The interior of the State Theatre, seen from the balcony.

## State Celebrates With 65th anniversary show

BY ALEXIA HAYDEN  
GAZETTE CORRESPONDENT

The audience at the State Theatre on Saturday will take a trip back to 1927 as the theater marks its 65th anniversary.

The Kalamazoo chapter of the American Theatre Organ Society has planned a showing of the silent film "The General," starring Buster Keaton, and will feature organist David Cogswell at the State's famous Barton Theatre Pipe Organ.

"We made up our minds to find a famous movie with a famous star that was produced in 1927 — the same year the theater opened," said Ken Butela, president of the local organ society.

The Lucky Chances, a barbershop quartet, and magician Mark Doolittle will also perform, in keeping with the popular entertainment of the time.

To get the look of the Roaring '20s" the chairman of the Vicksburg Antique Car Festival, Skip Knowles is planning to park models from the '20s along Burdick Street outside the theater.

"It will give it a real old-time effect," Butela said. "Young people can see what their grandfathers used to drive then."

Butela and his group long for the days when movie theaters were more than just boxes with film projectors.

"We're out to save and preserve old theaters and theater organs before they both become a lost art," Butela said.

Butela said he wasn't here when the theater opened, but he did attend many events when he arrived in the area from Chicago in the '50s.

However, it wasn't until Butela made a trip during the '60s to New York's Radio City Music Hall — where he heard the grand Wurlitzer organ, the largest of its kind in the country — that he began to fall in love with the instrument and see a need

to preserve one in his own backyard.

"You see people stand up and cheer and sing out with such a burst of enthusiasm, that you just don't see with any other type of entertainment," Butela lamented. "There is just no symphony orchestra that compares to the sound of the theater organ."

"I'm an old church organist who fell in love with the theater and the theater organ and in my retirement years I'm trying to throw some energy toward preserving the art."

Janet Corstange, another member of the organ society, remembers the State's earlier days.

"I was probably not quite a teen-ager the first time I came to the State Theatre," she said. "I think the first movie I saw was 'Meet me in St. Louis.'"

"It was a much bigger affair to go to the movies then because people just didn't go many places, so when you did go you got real dressed up."

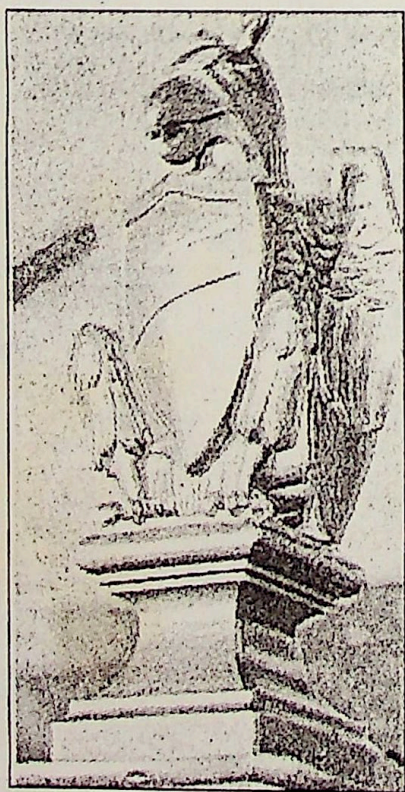
Of course, when Corstange began attending movies, in the early '40s, they were with full sound and there was really no need for an organist to accompany the picture.

"After the sound came, I guess they just turned off all the organs," she said. The State's organ was not used from 1937 until 1950, when organist Bud Taylor played it during movie intermissions for a year.

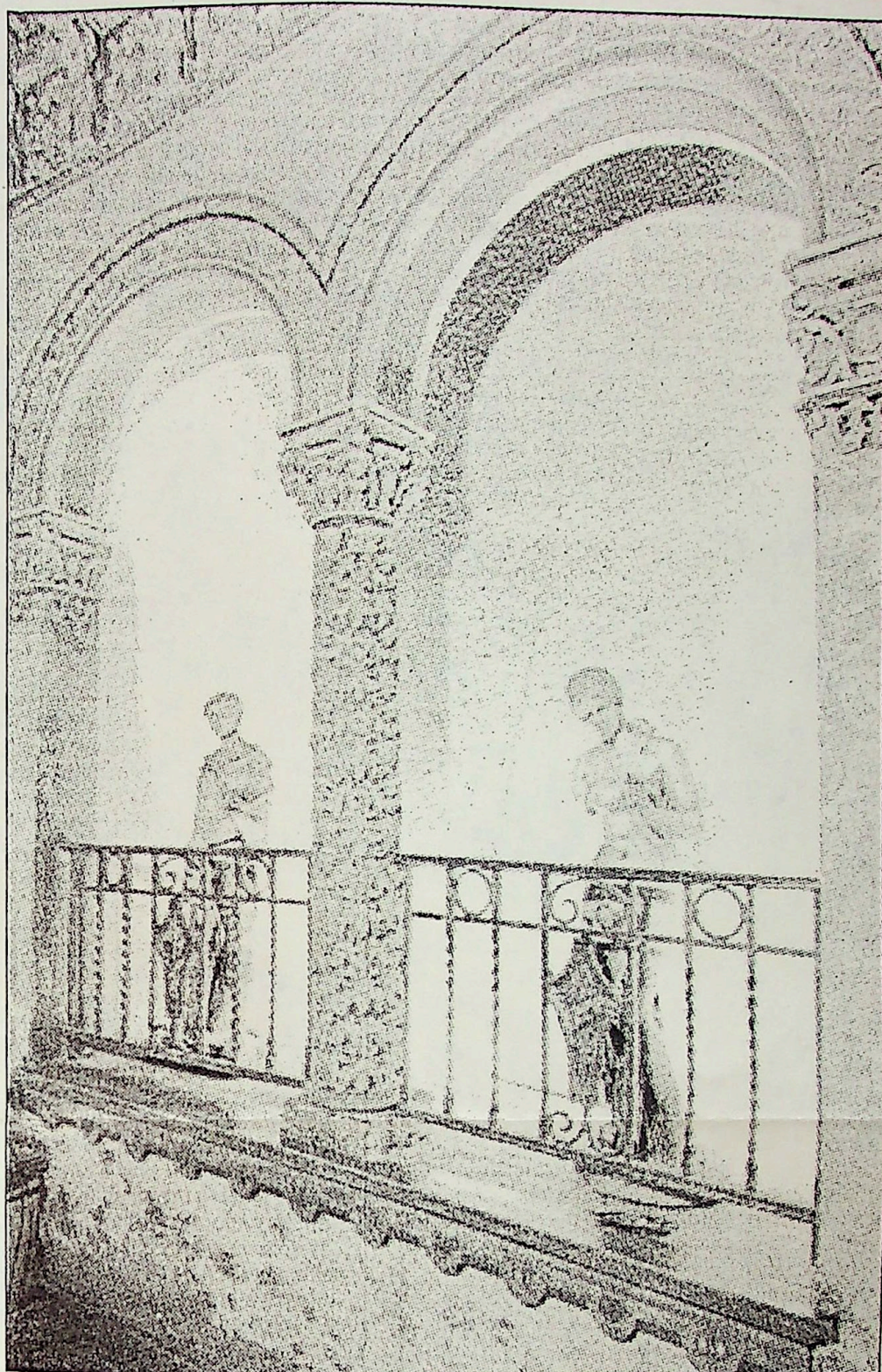
The Kalamazoo chapter of the American Theatre Organ Society was organized in 1984 to maintain the instrument and use it for special entertainment events.

Two organ technicians, William Mollema and John Catherwood, had revived the instrument in 1961 after 10 years of deterioration, but when careers and other interests took them away from the area, the organ fell silent again in 1971.

It was revived again in 1977 for the 50th anniversary of the theater, but it was sel-



A gargoyle on the stair railing in the main lobby.



GAZETTE PHOTOS / WAYNE ANDERSON

Two statues located along the west wall of the theater are among many of the originals that are still in place.

### PREVIEW

The State Theatre's 65th Anniversary Show is set for 7:30 p.m. Saturday. Tickets are \$6 in advance or \$7 at the door. Advance tickets may be purchased at the State Theatre box office, 404 S. Burdick; Keyboard World, 4407 S. Westnedge; Don Dillon's Music Center, 939 E. Cork; Treva Reed Music, 5540 W. Michigan; or Stannard's Music, 6128 Southland Mall.

dom played until the organ society became active.

"They (Catherwood and Mollema) were primarily technicians and just kept it up, but we (ATOS) use the organ as well as keeping it playable," said Butela. Over the last eight years the society has held annual silent film festivals and brought several nationally recognized organists to the area.

"If a theater is not active, it becomes a parking lot," Butela said, referring to the fate of many other theater organs and grandiose movie houses that were destroyed, including the Capitol Theater in Flint, the Grand Riviera in Detroit and the Avalon, Capitol and Paradise theaters in Chicago.

"This is one building in town that is truly irreplaceable. I don't think there are the craftsmen today that could do this type of work," Butela said.

The State Theatre, whose interior remains largely as it was when it was built, was designed by an Austrian-born architect, John Ebersson, who made a career of building movie palaces from 1923 until 1932.

The theater was commissioned by Colonel W.S. Butterfield and construction was started in October of 1926. It took nine months to build at a cost of \$350,000.

Upon entering the State, guests are transported to a time when opulent movie palaces were all the rage.

The theme for the theater was a Spanish garden during the reign of King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella. The audience sat in a courtyard under a plain, dark blue ceiling, where electric stars twinkled and cloud machines simulated puffy cumulus versions rolling by.

The walls of the auditorium were designed as garden walls and building facades with tile roofs that were lit from behind. The garden was filled with Romantic statues, many of which are still in place.

The lobby and mezzanine continued the theme with ceramic tiles, ornamental chandeliers, period pottery and leather seats. Only the tiles remain.

Originally, the exterior had ornamental cornices. They were leveled in 1964.

There was also a large vertical sign on the corner of the building that was replaced in 1964 with a smaller version and a marquee over the box office.

The same year, the original doors were replaced and an ornamental arch over the box office was removed and the original wrought-iron box office was replaced with a modern, glass-encased ticket office.

The theater's current owners, Roger and Jere Hinman, who bought the State in the early '80s, repaired a roof leak and did lots of work on the structure in order to preserve much of its original appearance, said Michael Mair, general manager for the Hinman Co. They also restored the original painting in the lobby and mezzanine and built a restaurant and club in the lower level of the building. That area is now used for office and commercial space.

"Roger's interest was to revive the theater and make valuable use of it, and I think he's done a successful job at that," Mair said.