

Pantages Theatre

1916, 1922, 1945, 1961, 2002

The Pantages opened in 1916 as a vaudeville house. It was originally designed by Kees and Colburn to be a twelve-story complex in the Art Moderne/Beaux-Arts style. Built at a cost of \$15,000, the building height was reduced to two stories. The interior kept its extravagant Beaux-Arts features.



Star Tribune, November 1, 1916

The Pantages' first show was a vaudeville lineup of singers, comedians, and a banjo player.

In 1922, the Pantages was remodeled, and a glass dome was added.

In 1926, it became a movie theatre.

In 1945, RKO purchased the Theatre and renovated it by adding birds-eye maple.

The name was changed to RKO Pan Theatre in 1946. *Gilda* was the first movie shown.

In 1961, RKO sold the Pantages to Ted Mann, who already owned five downtown theatres. Once again, the theatre was renovated, this time to allow 700 mm movies.

Theatregoers entered the theatre through a spacious lobby with a massive ornamental iron canopy. The auditorium had ornate plaster ceiling coves and columns along the proscenium.

It was the first Minneapolis theatre to feature air conditioning (with ice). The theatre contained both a mezzanine and a second lobby on the balcony level with restrooms and telephones.

The Pantages (the twenty-sixth built) was part of Greek immigrant Alexander Pantages' consortia of theatres. Pantages was a Greek immigrant who was a vaudeville entrepreneur and early motion picture producer. He developed theatres across the United States and Canada but lost his empire following a scandal (although subsequently acquitted).



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in the auditorium's ceiling.

The Pantages Theatre was reopened in 2002 at a cost of \$9.5 million, showcasing music, theatre, and dance.

In 2005, the city transferred ownership to the Hennepin Theatre Trust. The Theatre currently seats 1014.

The theatre reopened as Mann Theatre, a first run movie house, on March 15, 1961, with the movie, *Spartacus*. *The Sound of Music* was previewed at the Mann in 1965.

The Mann Theatre continued to operate from 1965 through 1984, when it closed.

The Mann remained closed until 1996, when Tom Hoch and Fred Krohn initiated an effort to save and restore the Theatre.

During the renovation, architectural drawings were used to restore the decorative plaster work, and layers of paint were removed from the stained glass



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