

Shubert Theatre

1910, 1935, 2011

Built in 1910, to accommodate The Shubert Theatrical Company of New York, the Shubert Theatre is the oldest legitimate theatre in Minneapolis.

The Shubert Theatrical Company was run by brothers Levi, Samuel, and Jacob and by 1920, the Company was the largest theater owning company in the United States. When Samuel died in a train wreck in 1905, the brothers memorialized him by naming several new theatres after him including one in St. Paul (now called the Fitzgerald Theatre) and one in Minneapolis.

The theatre was designed by William Swasey and built at a cost of \$250,000. The front of the building had a Classical Revival façade with four pairs of bas-relief columns framing three arched windows on the second floor. The façade is composed of glazed terracotta with a granite base. It is a mid-sized theatre consisting of 1,500 seats with two balconies.

Opening night featured *The White Sister* starring Viola Allen, an American stage actress who starred in over two dozen Broadway productions from 1885 to 1916. Alexander Bainbridge became the Shubert's manager. Bainbridge created a resident acting ensemble. Tickets ranged from \$.50 to \$2.50.



Viola Allen



Minneapolis Journal, August 25, 1929

In 1910, Bainbridge formed the Bainbridge Players which had become, per the *Minneapolis Journal* on August 24, 1929, the “oldest and most widely known stock organization in the country.” Bainbridge spent \$50,000 in 1929 updating the structure for its 19th season.

The theatre was initially a stock company house, then a vaudeville and burlesque showplace.

In 1915, The Shubert began to play movies (as well as continue its live theatre) accompanied by a forty-piece orchestra.

In 1918, the flu epidemic closed all the theatres in Minneapolis. Bainbridge disbanded the Players in 1933. He became the mayor of Minneapolis in 1933 until 1935.

In 1935, the Shubert reopened as the Alvin Theatre, named after its new owner, William Alvin Steffes. Steffes added the Art Deco marquee and continued with both movies and live theatre until December of 1940. Two months later, it reopened as a Burlesque venue and continued as such until 1953. Gypsy Lee and Dudley Riggs both performed at the Alvin.

W. Al. Steffes and Civic Opera of Chicago
PRESENT
COE GLADE
—IN—
'CARMEN'
Monday, March 23 (8:15 p.m. only)
"Best 'Carmen' in 30 Years," N. Y. Sun.
'RIGOLETTO'
With Angelo Pilotto, Leading Baritone, La Scala Opera, Milan
Tuesday, March 24 (2:15 & 8:15 p.m.)
MATINEE PRICES: 50c to \$2.00 plus tax. Boxes \$2.50 plus tax.
EVENING PRICES: 50c, 75c, \$1.00, \$2.00, \$2.50 plus tax.
Boxes \$3.00 plus tax.
MAIL ORDERS NOW BEING RECEIVED AT ALVIN THEATRE
Public sale opens at Alvin Theatre box office, 11 a.m., Wednesday.
ALVIN THEATRE
MINNEAPOLIS

Minneapolis Star, March 14, 1936

SISTER FERN, speaks
SUNDAY, 7:30 P.M.
"THE BIG 4 BATTLE FOR PEACE"



PASTOR OLSON, speaks
SUNDAY, 2:30 P.M.
"OUR ENEMY'S LAST STAND"
SERVICES DAILY 7:30 P.M. EXCEPT MONDAY



Dear Christian,
We're continuing to believe for a move from God. We want you to join us in fasting and prayer. Meet with us at the M.E.A. each nite this week. Our faith is encouraged. We believe the answer is on the way.
Pastor Olson and Sister Fern

Minneapolis Evangelical Auditorium
22 North 7th Street

Minneapolis Star, July 23, 1955

Minneapolis premiere of *Around the World in 80 Days*, produced by Michael Todd. Todd, who was a candy vendor in the old Shubert Theatre, attended the premiere with his wife, Elizabeth Taylor.

Beginning in 1982, the Shubert sat vacant at its original address at 22 North 7th Street. Suburban multiplexes were replacing single-screen movie houses.

In 1987, the Minneapolis City Council approved plans for the redevelopment of what came to be known as Block E. The development threatened the Shubert. The Block, with the exception of the Shubert, was razed. In 1990, the Heritage Preservation Commission convinced the City not to demolish The Shubert. In 1996, was added to the National Register of Historic Places.

Artspace suggested moving the Shubert a quarter mile out of Block E to its current location, 516 Hennepin Avenue.

In 1953, the theatre was briefly home to Minneapolis Evangelical Auditorium.

The Theatre subsequently became a movie theatre, known as the Academy, running from the mid-1950s, featuring first run movies. The theatre closed in 1982.

The Theatre was operated by Ted Mann hosting the

Most Beautiful--New--Air Conditioned
• NEW SEATING • COMFORT • LATEST AIR CONDITIONING • ULTRA MODERN LOUNGES • ALL NEW APPOINTMENTS
Academy Theatre

GALA NORTHWEST PREMIERE
Friday, July 12—
8 p.m.
Sponsored by the Minnesota Editorial Association Memorial Fund.
Premiere High Performance (SOLD OUT)
MICHAEL TODD'S



Around the World in 80 days in Todd's

Star Tribune, July 7, 1957

THE COWLES CENTER FOR DANCE & THE PERFORMING ARTS

Two old buildings flank a new atrium to create a new cover-down space dedicated mostly to dance.

1. Hennepin Center for the Arts
Completed in 1990, the former Masonic Temple houses four theaters, dance companies and two dance studios, as well as other arts organizations.

2. New Atrium
Patrons will enter through this new structure between the two old buildings. The lobby has a concessions counter and box office.

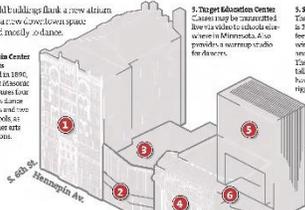
3. Historic facade
One of the few pieces of the original 1910 theater structure that remains intact.

4. Theater Education Center
Classes may be transferred here to related to include the new theater in Minnesota. Also provides a teaching studio for dancers.

5. Stage and stage house
The performance stage is 28 feet wide and 29 feet deep, with a total of 100 seats on one side and 70 feet on the other. The proscenium is 35 feet high, and the stage house has 52 different scenery stages.

6. Goodale Theater
Seating for 505 on a main level (216 seats) and a mezzanine balcony (290). The old theater had two stages jacked below it.

7. Orchestra pit
The orchestra pit can be raised to stage level to accommodate the symphony or may be lowered to seat up to 12 musicians. There are facilities to be installed in January 2012.



Star Tribune, September 4, 2011

It took twelve days to move the 6-million-pound building on rubber tires through a succession of parking lots to its new location in February of 1999. The building traveled 150 feet per day, with the move costing \$4.7 million. The renovation was done at a cost of \$38 million.

As of 2011, the former Shubert Theatre, now known as the Goodale Theater, is part of The Cowles Center for Dance and the Performing Arts, which features the 500-seat Goodale, eight story Masonic Temple, built in 1888, and a newer-construction atrium connecting the two buildings.