

# Oriental Theatre

City of Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Presented by Michael T. McQuillen, McQuillen Historical Consulting, LLC





Primary (northwest) elevation facing Farwell Avenue  
Oriental Theatre



May 2021 photo



1929 photo

Oriental Theatre



Dick & Bauer, Architects  
1926 west elevation plan



Oriental Theatre



Oriental Theatre

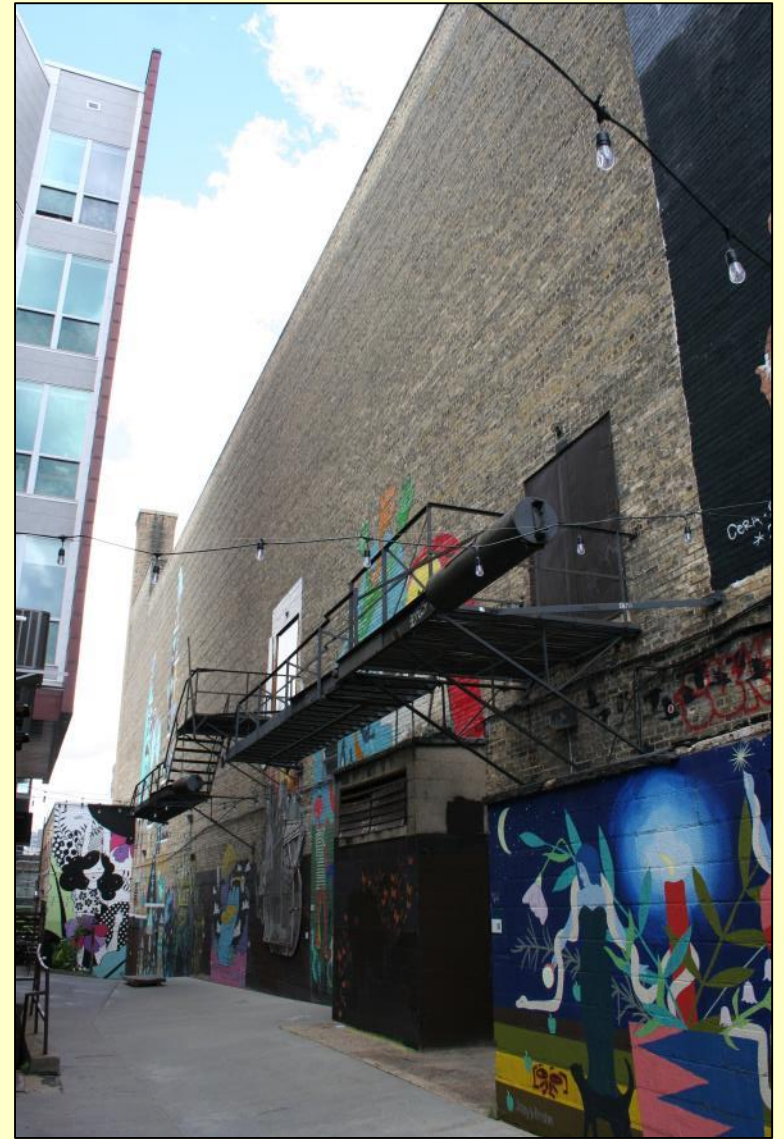


Southwest (East Kenilworth Place) elevation

Oriental Theatre



Rear (southeast) elevation



Rear (southeast) elevation

## Oriental Theatre



Northeast elevation

Oriental Theatre

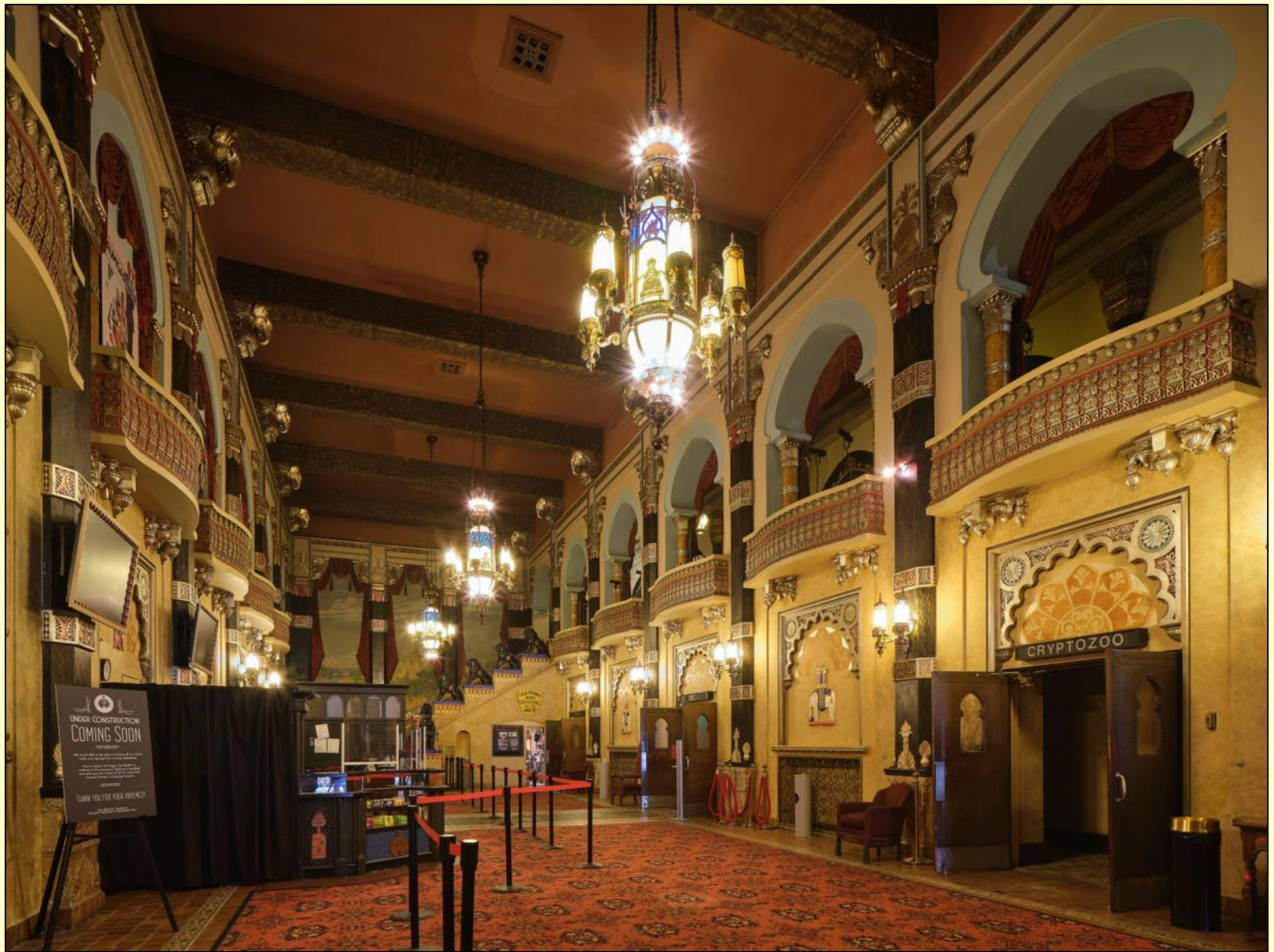




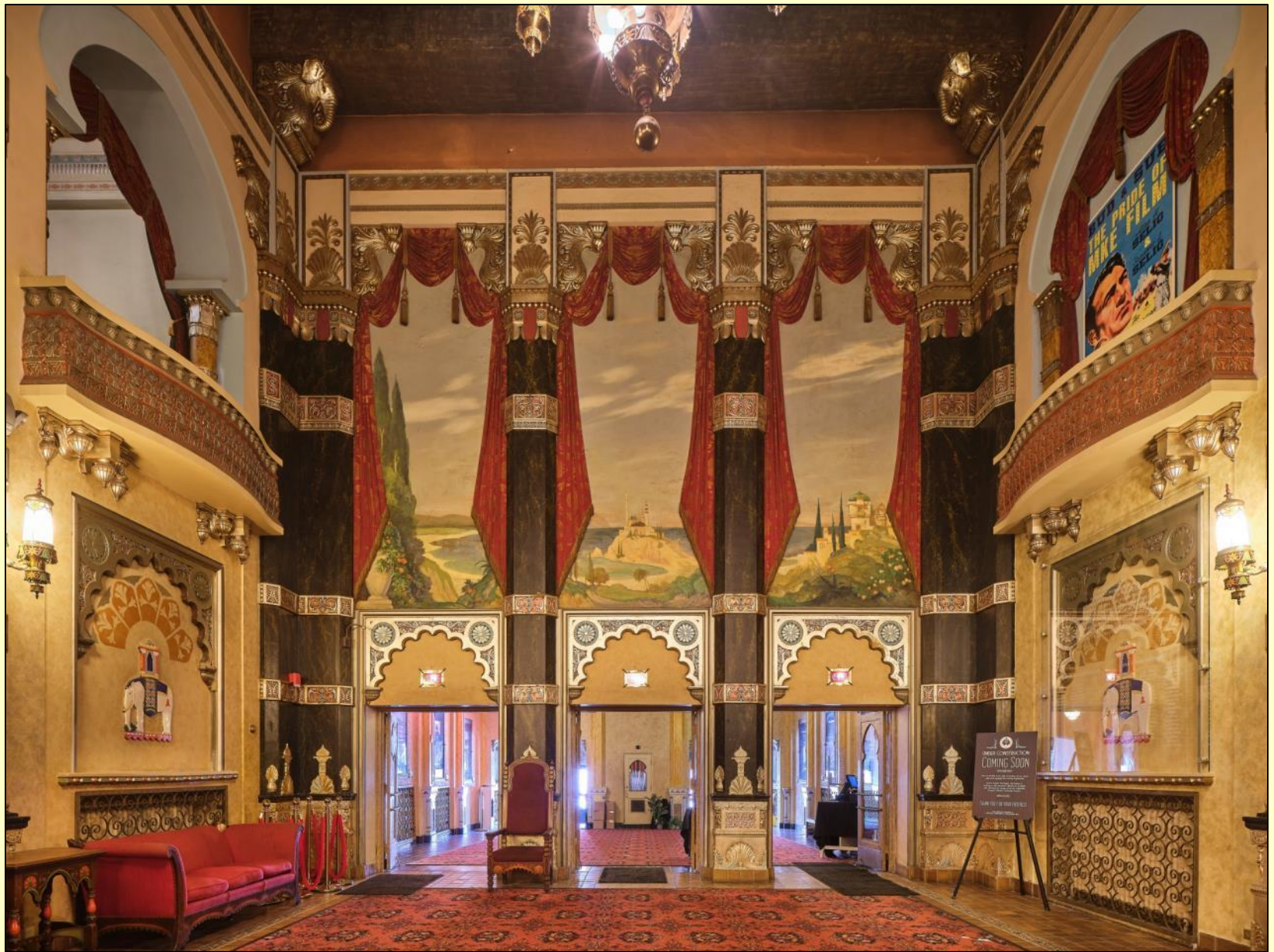
Historic ticket booth  
Oriental Theatre



Entrance lobby  
Oriental Theatre



Theater lobby  
Oriental Theatre

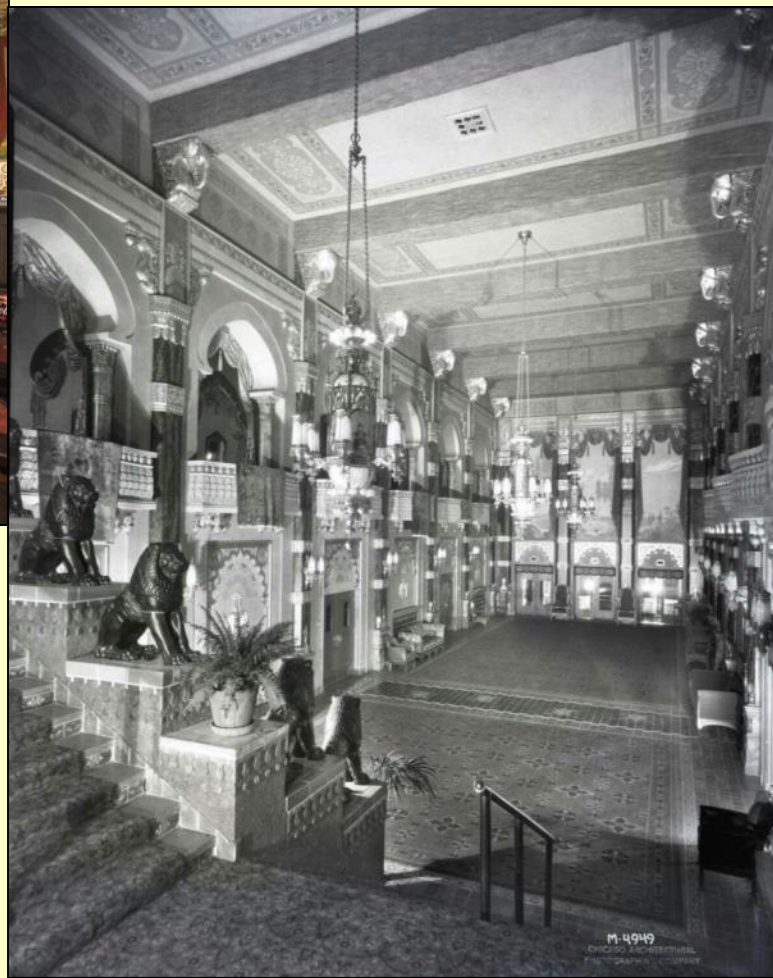
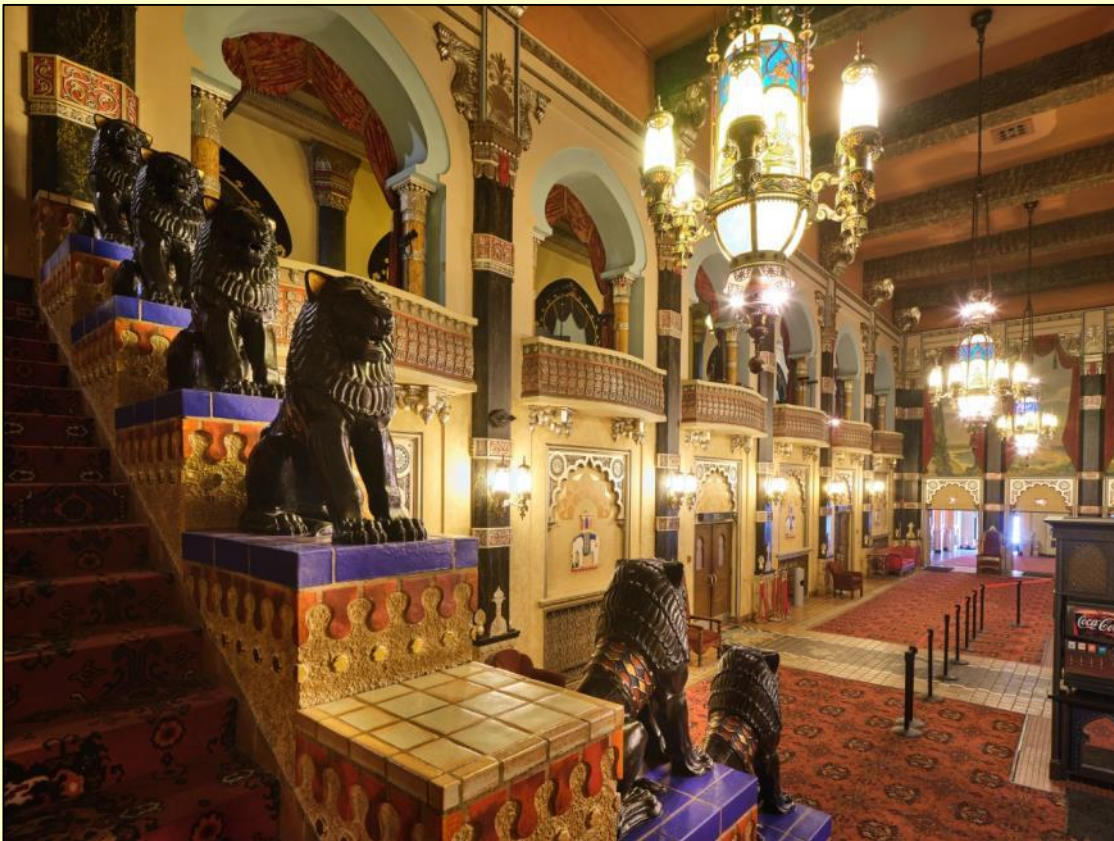


Theater lobby  
Oriental Theatre



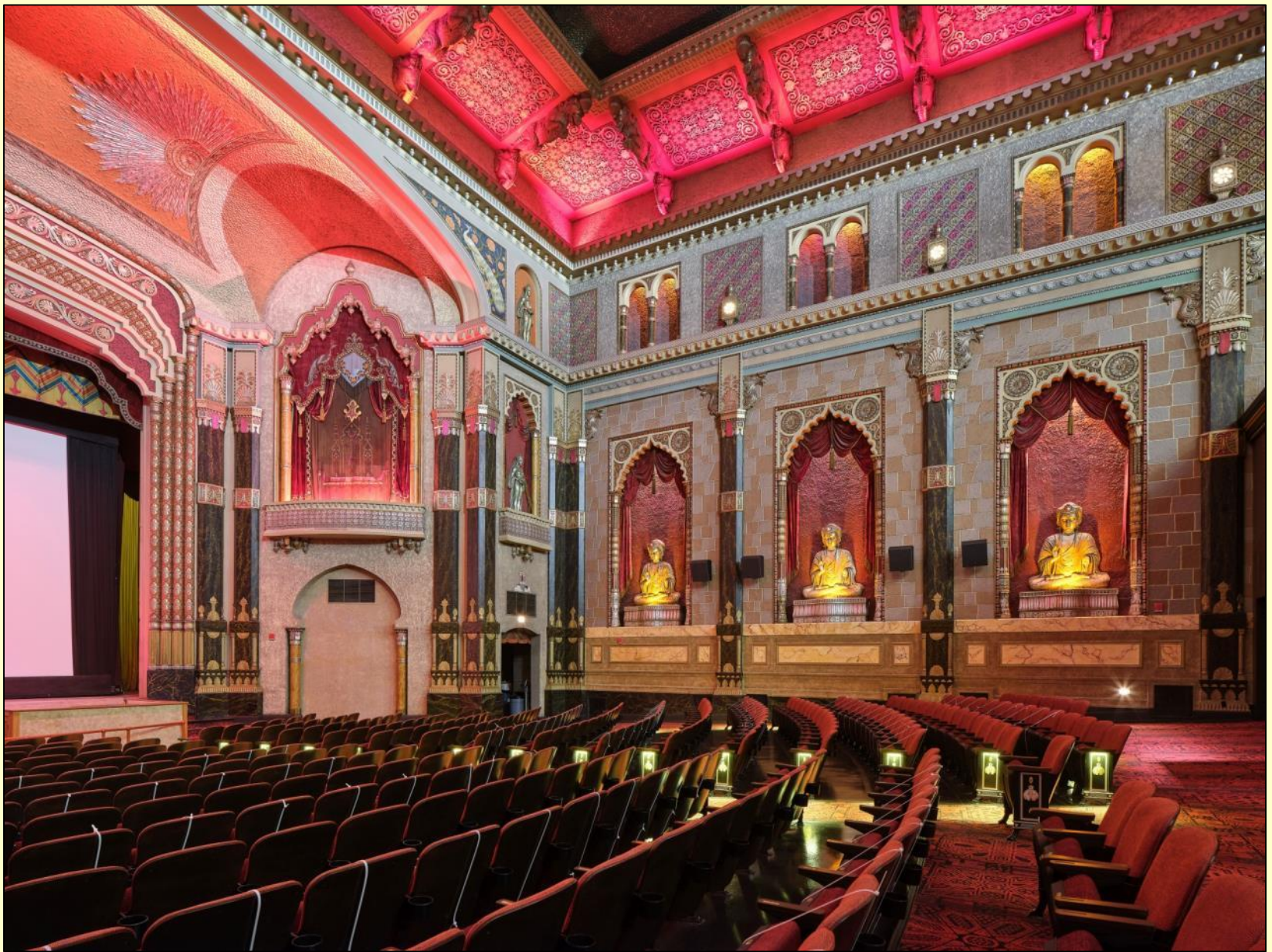
Theater lobby – stairs to balcony

Oriental Theatre



Theater lobby – 1927 photo on right;  
August 2021 photo above

## Oriental Theatre

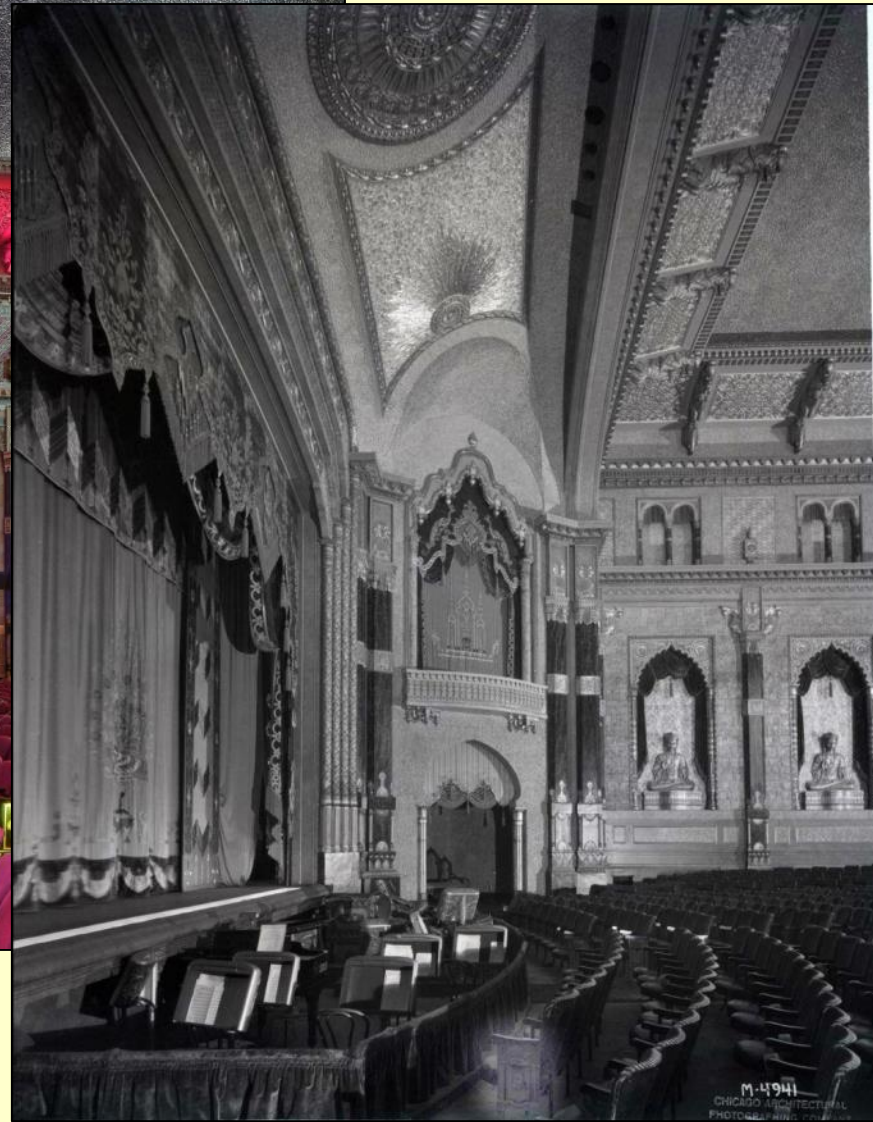


Theater auditorium  
Oriental Theatre



Theater auditorium - detail  
Oriental Theatre





Theater auditorium – 1927 photo on right; August 2021 photo above

## Oriental Theatre



Theater auditorium – view from balcony;  
1927 photo on right; August 2021 photo  
above



Oriental Theatre



Theater auditorium - detail  
Oriental Theatre



Theater auditorium - detail

Oriental Theatre

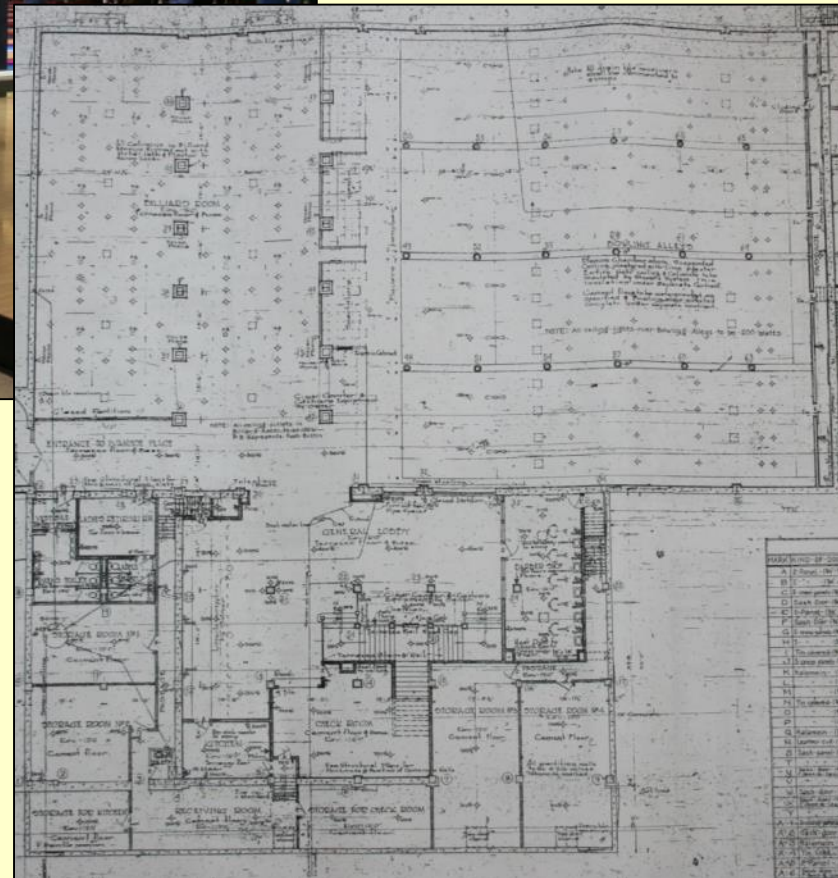


Balcony  
Oriental Theatre



Small theater inserted under balcony in 1988 (Theater B)

Oriental Theatre



Basement level recreation venue  
(Landmark Lanes)



Basement level recreation venue  
(Landmark Lanes)

# HERE'S YOUR INVITATION



*to Attend the Formal Opening of*

## BENSINGER RECREATION

*Oriental Theater Bldg.  
434 Farwell Avenue*

**SATURDAY, SEPT. 24**  
8:00 P. M.

*Jimmy Smith  
to Meet  
Charles Daw  
in Exhibition  
Bowling  
Match*

**MANY OTHER  
ATTRACTIONS**



*One Flight Down  
from the Lobby  
of the New*

### ORIENTAL THEATER

**20 BILLIARD TABLES  
16 BOWLING ALLEYS**



You and your friends, who find your entertainment and recreation in activity, participating in those social sports and games, bowling and billiards, may now enjoy the most modern equipment, pleasant atmosphere and artistic surroundings in the new BENSINGER RECREATION.

I. A. Bensinger & Son, an institution with more than fifty years of experience in serving seekers after beautiful recreation, is opening the last word in pleasure resorts.

Just one flight down from the new ORIENTAL THEATER you will discover this new rendezvous. It offers refinement in bowling and billiards which is sure to prove as attractive to the ladies as to gentlemen.

Sixteen bowling drives and twenty billiard tables, with the latest improved accessories, are being placed at your pleasure at the BENSINGER RECREATION. The refreshment fountain, grill room, and barber shop make the service complete.

From now on you and your friends, ladies and gentlemen, can round out your evenings of entertainment and recreation without leaving the attractive ORIENTAL THEATER building. Before or after the show you can get in a few strings of ten pins, or runs of three cushion, pocket or balkline billiards.

Here is a real civic center, with a variety of refined entertainment unexcelled anywhere. You are invited to make the most of the BENSINGER RECREATION.

Saturday, September 24, has been set for the opening. Special headline events are being planned for the formal dedication. The feature will be an exhibition bowling match between Jimmy Smith, considered by many the world's best ten pin collector, and Charles Daw, the most popular Milwaukee exponent of the ancient art of topping the maples. Bring your family and friends.

## BENSINGER RECREATION

*Oriental Theater Bldg.*

**434 FARWELL AVENUE  
CORNER OF NORTH AVENUE**

*CARL MINKLEY, Manager*

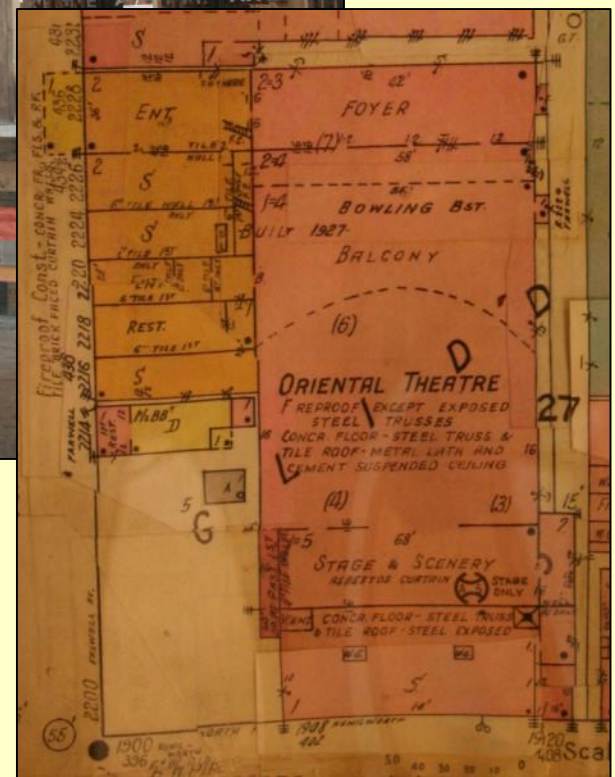
**Tel. Lakeside 797**





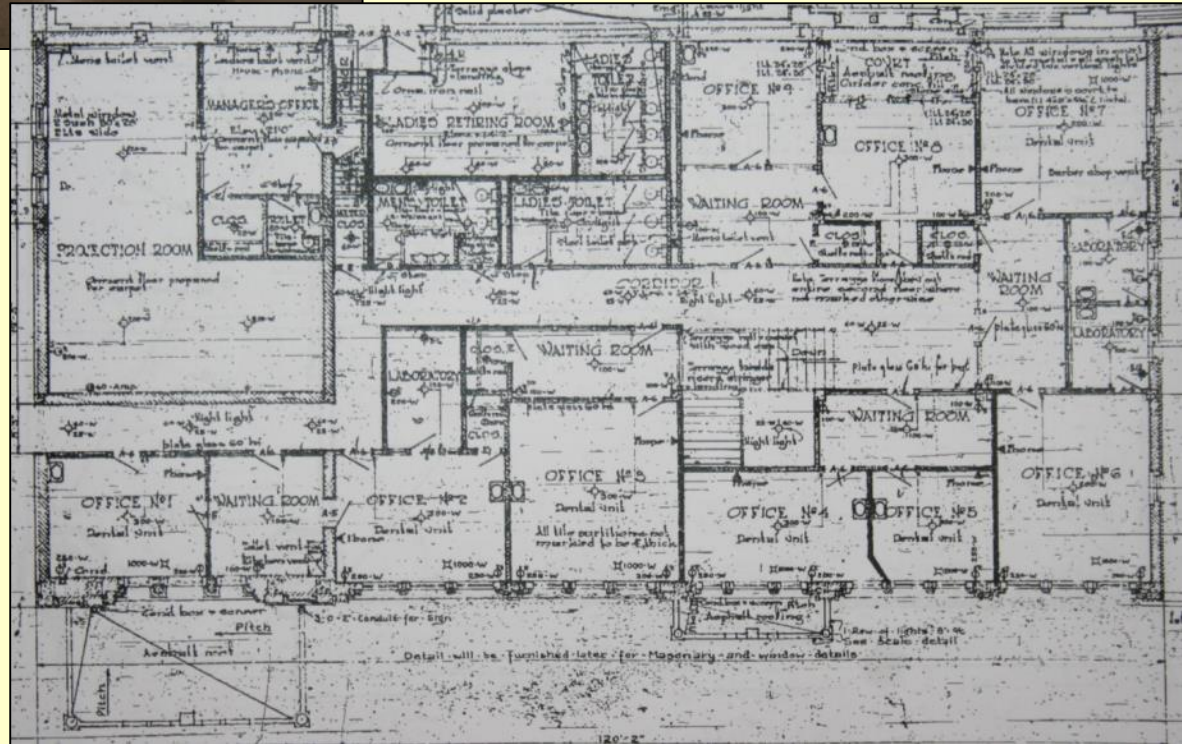


Interior one-story wing facing East Kenilworth Place  
(Axe Bar)





Office area  
(second floor)





## Warner Theater

212 W. Wisconsin Avenue

Built 1931, designed by Rapp & Rapp



## Tower Theater

757 N. 27<sup>th</sup> Street

Built 1926, designed by Dick & Bauer





## Avalon Theater

2469-2483 S. Kinnickinnic Avenue

Built 1929, designed by Russell Barr Williamson





Modjeska Theater  
1122 W. Historic Mitchell Street  
Built 1924, designed by Rapp & Rapp





**Garfield Theater**  
2947 North Dr. M. L. K., Jr. Drive  
Built 1927, designed by Dick & Bauer





Oriental Theatre