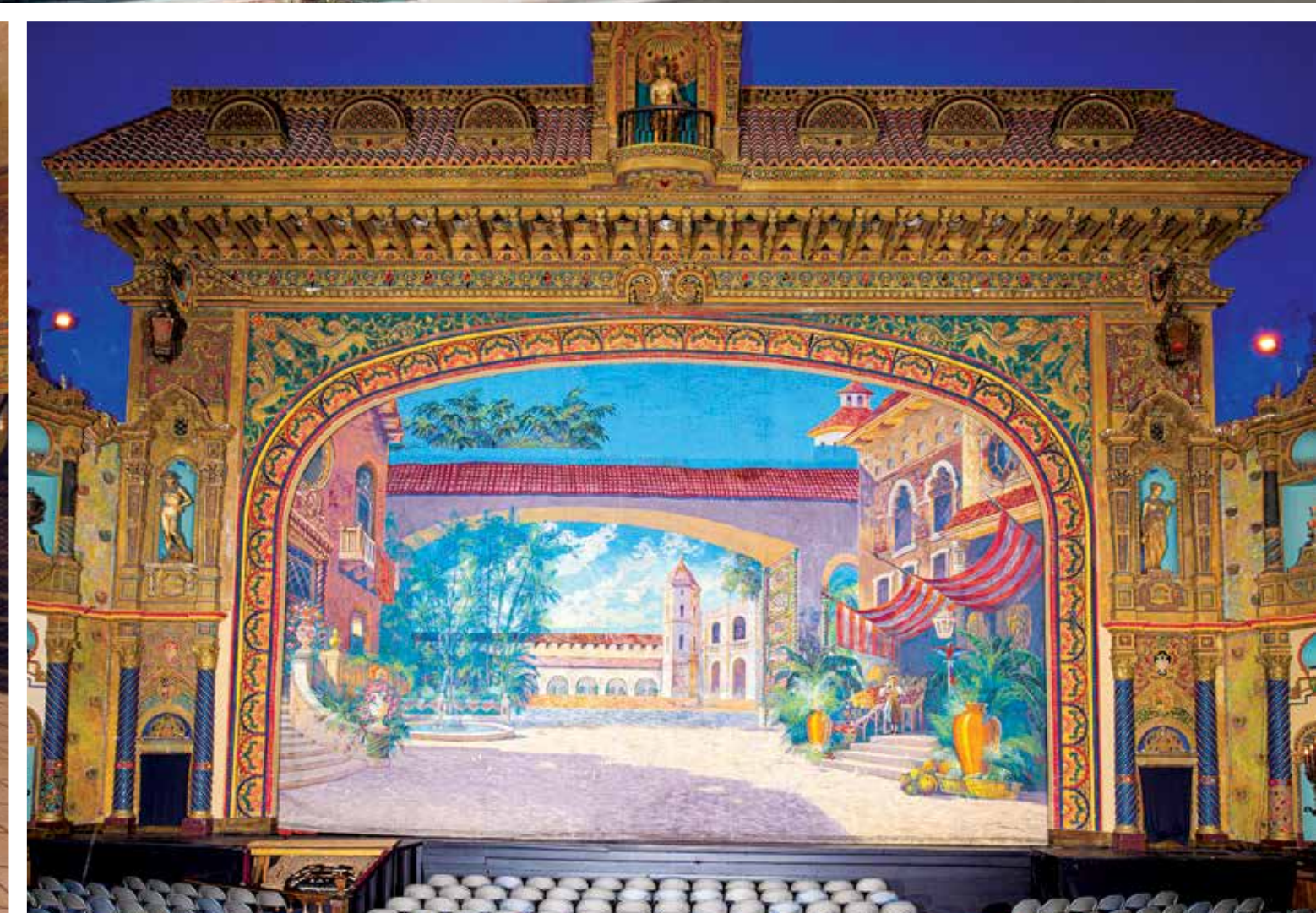


2022 Governor's Award for Historic Preservation



Kalamazoo State Theatre

Kalamazoo State Theatre; and The Hinman Company

Long-term stewardship of the Kalamazoo State Theatre, Kalamazoo

The State Theatre opened in 1927 at the height of the roaring '20s. Designed by celebrated theater architect John Eberson, the interior was decorated in one of his signature "atmospheric" styles. The audience felt they were seated in a Mediterranean Courtyard, set beneath a deep blue sky with twinkling star lights. When the theater closed in 1982, demolition was threatened.

In 1985, The Hinman Company purchased the building to save the theater and reopen it as a performance venue. After almost 60 years, the building was tired. Careful analysis revealed the original paint colors, which were matched with fresh paint. Substantial investments behind the scenes in new heating, air conditioning, and lighting improved audience comfort and

expanded the variety of acts that can perform here. From new carpeting to new stage curtains, the theater has been thoughtfully updated while preserving the character-defining features of Eberson's design.

The Kalamazoo State Theatre got creative during the height of the pandemic, allowing performers to use their façade marquee canopy as a stage and the audience to use the street below as an outdoor seating space. After years of effort, the State Theatre was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in late 2021, cementing its unique architecture in the story of Michigan's history. With this exemplary stewardship, the show will go on at the State Theatre for years to come.