Florida Theatre - Historic Finishes Study

JACKSONVILLE, FL

The Florida Theatre is a Mediterranean Revival structure designed by the renowned theatre architects R.E. Hall of New York and Roy Benjamin of Jacksonville. The interior design of the theatre spaces was greatly influenced by the "atmospheric" theatre aesthetics pioneered by architect John Eberson, who stated at the opening of the Tampa Theatre in 1926 that his defining style originated in Florida. A hallmark of painted decoration in atmospheric theatres is the use of bright, primary colors applied using dry brush techniques to textured and ornamental surfaces. R.E. Hall employed this aesthetic simultaneously at the Florida Theatre and the Carolina Theatre in Charlotte, North Carolina.

The Florida Theatre was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in December of 1982. Efforts were made to preserve the building by the Arts Assembly of Jacksonville, who purchased it in 1981 and restored it between 1982 and 1983. While the original restoration appears largely faithful to the original decorative style, it did not match the brightness or hue of the original colors.

EverGreene was retained by KBJ – L&B Architects on behalf of the Florida Theatre Performing Arts Center, Inc. to investigate historic painted finishes in the Florida Theatre. The purpose of the limited finishes investigation was to support interior restoration efforts by identifying general color palettes of original painted decorative schemes for the auditorium, promenade lobby, and entrance lobby. The original polychrome decoration was determined to have been carried out using high-quality, vibrant mineral pigments and transparent glazes applied in complex sequences to create an ornate polychrome scheme.

MORE INFORMATION:

https://evergreene.com/projects/florida-theatre-historic-finishes-study/

SERVICES PERFORMED

Historic Finishes Investigation
Microscopy & Material ID

PROJECT DETAILS

Client
Florida Theatre Performing Arts Center, Inc

Architect
KBJ – L&B Architects

EVERGREENE
Architectural Arts