

Site Inventory Form

State Historical Society of Iowa

Inventory # 34-00328



1. Name of Property

Historic name: Charles Theater

Other names/site number:

2. Location

Street and number: 409 N Main St

City: Charles City County: Floyd

Legal description:

5. Classification

Category of property

Number of resources within property

Building(s)

Contributing

Non-contributing

0

1

building(s)

0

0

site(s)

0

0

structure(s)

0

0

object(s)

0

1

total

Name of related project report or multiple property study

HADB 00-231 Schwenk, Sally Fullerton, 2010 - Historic Movie Theaters of Iowa

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

COMMERCE/TRADE/specialty store

RECREATION AND CULTURE/theater/movie theater

Current Functions

RECREATION AND CULTURE/theater/movie theater

RECREATION AND CULTURE/theater/playhouse

7. Description

Architectural Classification

Modern Movement: Art Deco

Materials

Foundation: Concrete

Walls: Terra Cotta

Other: Brick

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

			Criteria				Considerations							
Opinion	Source	Year	A	B	C	D	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	
No opinion	SHPO	1979												
No opinion	Public	2004												
Contributing in potential district	Consultant	2010	Y	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	
Opinion of eligibility	Consultant	2010	Y	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	

Criteria legend: A: property is associated with significant events, B: property is associated with the lives of significant persons, C: property has distinctive architectural characteristics, D: property yields significant information in archeology or history.

Criteria considerations legend: A: owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes, B: removed from its original location, C: a birthplace or grave, D: a cemetery, E: a reconstructed building, object, or structure, F: a commemorative property, G: less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

Architecture

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Entertainment/Recreation

Construction date

built in 1934

Architect(s)

Wetherell and Harrison, Des Moines, IA

10. Geographic Data

UTM References

Zone

Easting

Northing

15

526272

4768529

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Continuation Sheet

Narratives

The dominant role of this theaters exterior design and the retention of its high-style Art Deco design treatment, its facade which departs from the traditional commercial block of the surrounding streetscapes and highly stylized and dramatic polychrome primary facade reflect its status of the Art Deco Movie Palace as executed in the mid-to-late 1930s in Iowa. In addition to its embodiment of the distinctive characteristics of a type, period and method of construction, it represents the work of Des Moines' master architectural firm of Wetherell & Harrison, noted for their design of Art Deco theaters; the building is one of the few extant examples of the firm's work in the Art Deco style in Iowa. The building also possesses high artistic value. It represents a pattern of features common to the Art Deco Movie Palace genre as found in Iowa and the individuality and variation of features that occurs within the Art Deco classification. The building is also significant for its commercial associations with the historic sub-contexts "State-wide Impact of Era of Centralization and Domination of Movie Theater chains, 1920 -1948 and "Movie theater Development in Iowa in the Great Depression and the War years: 1930-1946." An earlier stage theater (Hildreth Opera House) appears at this location on the 1924 Sanborn. The Charles Theater first appears on the 1947 Sanborn. Completed in 1935 from a design by Wetherell & Harrison of Des Moines, it originally seated 600. First operated by a subsidiary of Paramount Pictures, it later functioned under the ownership/management of Central States Theater Corporation. When Central States went bankrupt in the late 1990s, the building transferred to the City, who then gave it to the Stony Point Players. It still operates today with seating for 450