

# LAND OF MAGIC BEAUTY WITHIN WALLS OF RITZ

## Enchantment of Orient Is Transplanted

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Along the enchanted shores of the blue Mediterranean there is said to be a land where summer's sun is ever golden and winter's breezes never chill. There white clouds roll in lazy languour [sic] across a sky of sapphire, to trail dancing shadows over the face of villages gay with all the riot of color and romance that characterize the Moorish race.

In this land where civilization rose in marble and might before the dream of western empire had its birth, palaces that bespeak Byzantine grandeur now no more are said to dally, with the noonday sun. In these palaces the gorgeous architecture of a dozen peoples long since decadent blends to build a brilliant master piece.

They speak of the land of Othello the Moor, of the Alhambra and Granada's green plains of marbles such as only Greece has known, and with all these of a beauty transplanted from deeper within the confines of the fabled Orient.

### **John Ebersson, Designer**

The spirit of these scenes and the reality of this architecture is achieved by John Ebersson, foremost designer of American theaters, in the interior decoration of the Ritz.

Walking by night from the rush of modern Fourth street through the light-blazoned lobby of the Ritz, the Tulsan does not enter a theater auditorium but an enchanted land. He is within four walls and yet he is in the outdoors – an outdoors of almost limitless perspective and such an outdoors as only dreams have conjured in the most modern city of the modern west.

As if by magic, the patron is transplanted from familiar streets to the languorous land of the blue Mediterranean. Far, far above arches, the velvet blue sky of the outdoors by night; when the moon shines soft and fair. The stars in the constellations of late spring twinkle there. Fleecy clouds billow back and forth across the heavens. It is nature achieved by the painter's brush and the artist's mind.

### **Mediterranean Scene**

Before the spectators is a wonderful drop curtain hung upon an art-embellished stage. There the illusion of outdoors is aided by a seaside scene showing the villages of the east, quaint in their age

old complacency, yet bright with the reds, yellows and browns so familiar to the Mediterranean coast.

Glancing to either side the onlooker sees yet more faithful reproduction of the Moorish landscape, swaying gently in the faintest of nighttime [sic] breezes are the dark branches of the orange and pomegranate, wafting their fragrances as they have for centuries past above the gleaming walls of the Alhambra. Those trees, scientifically preserved, have been sent from the Orient to adorn the Ritz.

It is outdoors and it is not. Walls finished in all the wealth of eastern architecture rise in majesty on either side. Under the direction of William A. Hartman, of the Michael Angelo studios in Chicago, these walls have been so decorated that they are resplendent in colors rich and deep, yet present the weathered appearance of Spanish and Moorish edifices ages old.

### **Greek Sculpture**

Classic prizes adorn the walls and facing of the mezzanine floor. Copies of the great masterpieces of Greek sculpture look down, life size, from various parts of the big auditorium on the wonder of a twentieth-century invention – the motion picture show.

The crowning glory of the Ritz, the auditorium, is not its only beauty. In the lobby the same faithful following of the Mediterranean motif in architecture is noted. The walls are glorious in color combinations and the tiled floor elaborate in its unique designs.

Passing through the lobby one enters the yet more beautiful and ornate foyer. From the foyer entrance is gained either to the first level of the auditorium or the second. The eye naturally wanders to the second level, because a grand staircase floored in finest marble and walled with decorations elaborate in their beauty, leads to the mezzanine promenade.

### **Mezzanine Promenade**

The mezzanine promenade is perhaps the most enchanting feature of the theater from the viewpoint of artistic beauty. It is gorgeous in all its details. The arched ceiling required weeks to decorate and reflects a splendor that the most brilliant decorations of the auditorium proper do not attain.

The promenade leads directly to the mezzanine floor of the auditorium. To the left the promenade reaches the ladies' rest room and to the right the men's smoking room. Downstairs rest rooms and smoking rooms occupy the same positions. All are elaborately finished in marble and tile, with richly upholstered furniture in the lounging rooms.

The entire floor of the mezzanine promenade, grand staircases, offices of Talbot and his assistants, which adjoin, and the various rooms which lie at either end of the promenade are covered with one gigantic piece of carpet. It is a deep red in color and of the finest texture.