

# FILMS

## The Times

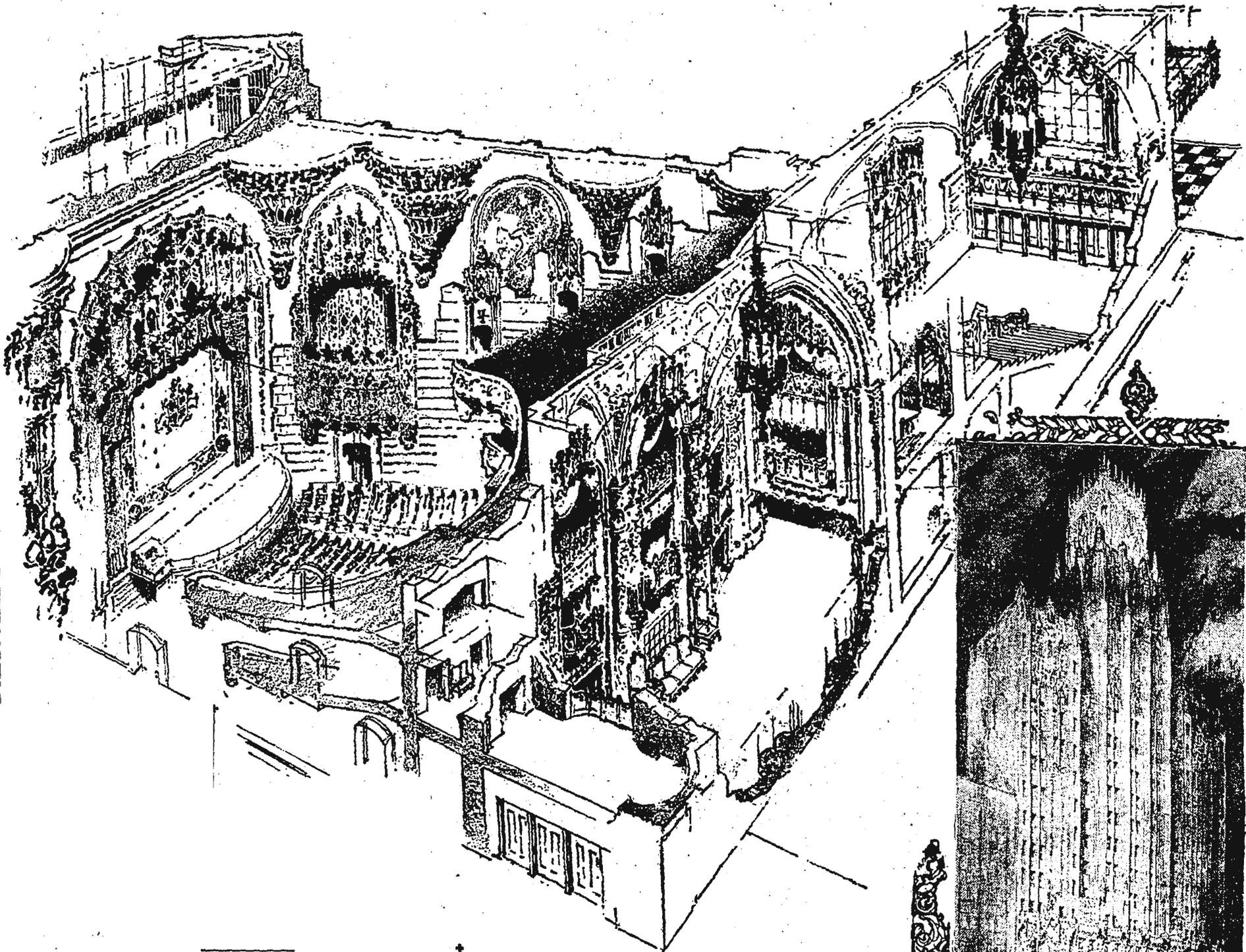
LOS ANGELES

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### PORTALS OF STATELY NEW UNITED ARTISTS THEATER SOON TO OPEN

"One of the most beautiful theaters in the United States" is the statement used to describe the new United Artists Playhouse on Broadway, between Ninth and Tenth streets, which is to be formally opened on the night of the 26th inst. with the premier showing of Mary Pickford's "My Best Girl." There has been a tremendous expenditure of money upon the part of Joseph M. Schenck and associates on the interior decorative features of the theater, it is said. The unique sketch below by Staff Artist Charles H. Owens of The Times represents a cross section of the huge theater. Also may be seen a photograph of the exterior which fronts on Broadway.



BY EDWIN SCHALERT

#### PLAYHOUSE for motion pictures!

That is the dream to be realized in the new United Artists Theater, which opens the 26th inst. It is a \$3,500,000 structure between Ninth and Tenth streets on Broadway, and a rhapsody in gold, as regards the elaborateness of its construction. It is a showhouse of 2100 capacity and is the first to be built here for pictures to have a mezzanine floor in addition to a balcony and lower floor—thus three for the accommodation of audiences.

The premiere of this theater will be one of the great events of filmdom. It is sponsored by the United Artists Pictures Corporation, which includes the most celebrated stars of the films, and those who in a majority of cases have done much if not the most, to make film history through a period of years.

#### FULFILLED IDEAL

The theater is to be a fulfillment of their ideal in presentation in that it will give the true emphasis to the motion picture itself. According to present plans, there will be no prologues or other stage entertainment, but a highly perfected musical accompaniment. Attention will be concentrated on the shadow entertainment.

The opening showing will be of "My Best Girl," with Mary Pickford. It is considered her most successful production in several years. Mary's film was selected because she herself has been from almost their very beginning identified with the growth of pictures. She was the first star to gain fame and to retain it until the present.

The idea for a theater of the type of the United Artists was conceived approximately two years ago. At that time I remember Joseph M. Schenck,

president of United Artists, told me that the artistic presentation of motion pictures could best be obtained through the proper mingling of truly fine pictures and truly fine music, without additional presentations. "The two form a natural bond, and in the main the music should be quiet and tastefully chosen, played by an adequate orchestra, so as to form a natural and unostentatious accompaniment," he said. "I believe that if pictures are presented in this fashion they will find the public more than receptive, and that they will reach a public, which is beginning to weary of seeing programs in which the importance of the pictures themselves is diminished by too much added entertainment."

In recent weeks Mr. Schenck has even more forcibly expressed his belief in the future of the theater that is dedicated to pictures, and the dangers to the film industry itself through the overemphasis on stage diversions.

#### CHAIN OF TWENTY

The United Artists Theater here is one of a chain of about twenty theaters to be built in various cities of the United States. The policy will be much the same in all of them, except that it is planned to make the house here in the future the world premiere theater.

This is another step toward the advancement of Los Angeles in the field of picture exhibition.

It is impossible for this plan to be fulfilled in the instance of Mary Pickford's film, because that has already been shown elsewhere, but this picture was chosen for the opening for the special reasons already mentioned, and the policy will be put in force with later presentations.

Carl Elinor, known for the quality of his musical scores, will be the guest conductor for the opening evening. He has arranged the score for the picture. All the United Artists stars will be present, and will broadcast a greeting to the public nationally over the radio. Among those who have promised to speak are Mary Pickford, Norma Talmadge, Gloria Swanson, Douglas Fairbanks, John Barrymore, Charles Chaplin, D. W. Griffith, Corinne Griffith, Dolores Del Rio, Vilma Banky, Ronald Colman, Sam Goldwyn, who produces pictures for United Artists and others.

Mr. Schenck and I. C. Freud, who was associated with him in the building enterprise, Miss Pickford, various State and civic officials, Harold B. Franklin of the West Coast Theaters, which are identified with the management, will take part in the dedication ceremonies.

#### LONG IN BUILDING

The theater required nine or ten months to construct. The type of architecture is Spanish Gothic. The interior, the lobby and foyer in style of construction cathedral-like, are ornate. The foyer has a high vaulted ceiling lavishly decorated.

The dominant note in the auditorium itself is gold—distant spaces of greenish gold for the ceiling and walls, crystallizing directly overhead in a brilliant sunburst. Aisles are roomy and chairs comfortable.

The mezzanine floor directly under the balcony is of small capacity, taking the place of the conventional loges. It is a new idea in theater construction, and affords an attractive exclusiveness to these seats. There are no star boxes. Mural paintings adorn the side walls, depicting film portrayals and personalities.

The stage, designed definitely for pictures, is not deep. The proscenium arch is, however, of a good width. The theater has both capacity and intimacy, and would seem to attain a new objective in suitability to film projection.

In addition to the orchestral accompaniment, there will occasionally be singing as an embellishment to the musical accompaniment either of chorus or soloist. Dion Romandi is the conductor of the orchestra.

Comfort has been sought throughout the structure of the theater, ample space being promised for the intermission promenade in the foyer, while there are besides smoking rooms and lounges on various floors.

All of which gives promise of one of the most dazzling premieres in motion-picture annals.