

*The interior of the new United Artists Theatre, Los Angeles.*

## An Era of Splendor

*The United Artists Theatres Corporation Lay the Groundwork for an Unusual Chain*

By Frank W. Stibick

THE new United Artists Theatre, Los Angeles, which was opened to the public the last of December is operated by West Coast Theatres, Inc. Located on South Broadway, in the heart of the business district of Los Angeles, this magnificent structure incorporates all or the best features of the most recently built theatres plus some additional new ones.

The new theatre utilizes slightly less than one-half of the total space in the new building which is to be known as the California Petroleum Corporation Building.

The style of architecture is Spanish Gothic. At the same

time the architects added a south of the Renaissance period.

The general interior arrangement of the theatre differs radically from other Los Angeles houses in that a great deal of attention has been given to both entrance lobby and foyer, to be called the "foyer promenoir." Lobby and foyer are approximately forty feet high.

The lobby is done in black, gold, red and buff marble, with large gold mirrors set in frames of antique design of antique gold. The balcony is panoramic, and in its rear is a promenade, with a passageway leading into the foyer.

The scenery is supported from a steel gridiron, high up

under the stage roof, and is operated by a counter-weighted system of ropes. The proscenium girder is 66 inches deep and 50 feet long and weighs 60 tons.

The theatre proper is 100 feet wide and 150 feet deep.

**A**N electric lift raises the orchestra pit to the stage level and there is a separate organ console lift, which raises to the same level. The organ is a Wurlitzer and is said to be the largest pipe organ in the west.

The main support of the balcony is a double web-plate girder which spans the entire auditorium, approximately 100 feet, and which carries seven cantilevers and the mezzanine, below. The girder is said to be the largest individual structural member ever fabricated

*The magnificent building in which the Los Angeles United Artists Theatre is housed. The building is known as the California Petroleum Corporation Building*



*The entrance lobby of the United Artists Theatre, Los Angeles is a symphony of color. The highly polished marble makes one feel as though he were in a cathedral.*

and erected in one piece in the west. It is three feet wide, seven feet high, 100 feet long and weighs 103 tons.

Every seat in the big auditorium will be alike. The chairs have been especially designed for this theatre and have deep cushions and air-inflated backs, a new feature in theatre construction.

A refrigeration plant has been installed at a cost of \$100,000 of the latest washed-air type, with de-humidifiers automatically controlled to maintain a proper temperature.

**T**HE theatre was built, not only for the present theatre-going needs, but has taken into account the expected growth of Los Angeles and the

certain development of the theatre. Its general style and equipment are expected to be a standard for many years to come.

**S**PECIAL accommodations have been made underneath the great foyer for women patrons. There is a large combination lounge and smoking room, washroom and—a decided novelty—a cosmetic room. This room has been fitted with elaborate dressing tables. The color scheme of the room is one of greens and taupes.

For men there are rooms underneath the main foyer, also.

The rug in the foyer was manufactured in Europe especially for the new theatre. The colors were determined here before the order was given that these colors might harmonize with the color scheme of the entire theatre. The rug is in the center of the foyer and is about 25 by 50 feet.

An elaborate lighting system has been installed. It is in five colors, red, blue, amber, white and green. Thus, with a

ten preset switchboard, practically any combination may be obtained. By means of a recently devised indirect lighting system, the entire color effect upon the ceiling, will be visible during the projection of the picture. The dome, in the center of the ceiling, is covered with silver-backed, rough-faced mirrored discs, about 3000 of them, and, in addition about 2000 glass pendants. From the mosaic dome, an enormous sunburst spreads in all directions. In the auditorium proper there are no lamps or chandeliers.

**T**HE side walls are in travertine, with three large perforated fans on each side.

Plans for the new house were drawn by C. Howard Crane, of Detroit, who has designed more than 300 theatres. Associated with him were Walker & Esine, Los Angeles architects. The building is owned by the Ninth and Broadway Building Company, operated by Joseph M. Schenck and I. C. Freud. United Artists Theatre Corporation has a lease on the theatre and a portion of the office space but the theatre itself will be operated by West Coast Theatres, Inc., under the direction of Harold B. Franklin. Bruce Fowler has been selected to manage the house.

When the United Artists Theatre Corporation laid the plans for the erection of the parent theatre of the chain it is contemplating, it chose C. Howard Crane, the famous Chicago architect to further the work.

Mr. Crane has a record of over 300 theatres, nearly without exception outstanding in the communities for sheer splendor. His is the splendid type of architecture. He has studied the mind of the average theatre-goer, and has come to the con-

clusion that Mr. Average Fan wants to see in the motion picture palaces what he could hope to see nowhere else.

It is for amusement, just as the motion picture itself is. It is to take him away from the drab realities of life,

into the splendor of the magic ages of the past.

Mr. Crane has been justified in this bit of psychological observation, for the patrons of the motion picture flock to the theatres of his creation.

In the planning of the United Artists

That was all important for the folks on the Pacific Coast have been given the opportunity to become intimately acquainted with the very best in theatre architecture.

Not alone the splendor of the type that Mr. Crane indulges in, or the

outstanding types of other well known architects. They have also seen the unusual theatres of Sid Grauman's conception, most notable among them, the Chinese Theatre, which was viewed in admiration by sight-seers.

It can be readily seen therefore, that when a theatre hereabouts gains the admiration and support of the communities, it must be a decidedly new step in theatre architecture.

**T**HE matter of suitable shows for the theatre will be taken care of sufficiently by the larger list of productions that United Artists are contemplating for the new year.

This company has signed up during the past year many of the leading and most favorite stars on the horizon, and at least twenty-four pictures, enough for a half year of shows.

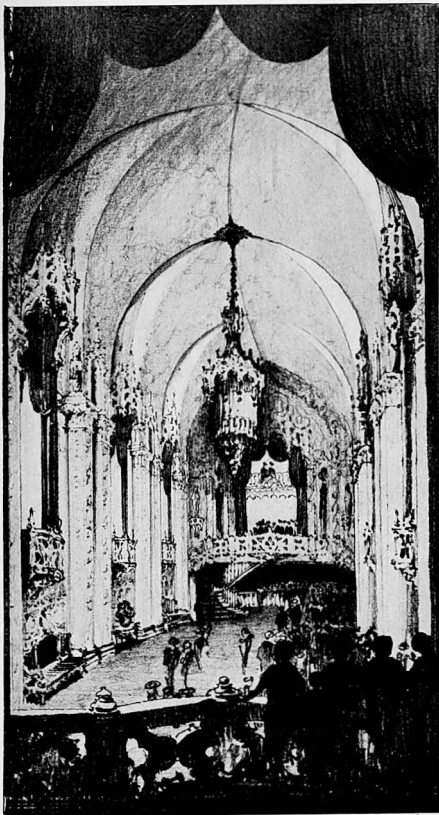
The rest of the program can easily be filled with the very best that the other producers will afford, for it will be sort of a plum for a picture to get a run in this theatre, similar to the first run condition as exists in the Roxy Theatre, New York.

A most elaborate program of presentations is being arranged for, to stand up to the mark set by Harold B. Franklin, under whose supervision the theatre will operate.

No doubt, the presentations will be of the nature that will

later warrant them being routed through the remaining United Artists theatres as quickly as they are completed.

It is no wonder therefore that when the theatre was opened, it was pronounced an immediate success.



*The "foyer promenoir" of the United Artists Theatres, Los Angeles, which with the lobby can accommodate a waiting crowd of 1,500 people without crowding or inconvenience to any.*

Theatre, Los Angeles, Mr. Crane had with him the firm of Walker and Esine, Los Angeles architects, as associates.

This firm also was aware of the pulse of the public, and more especially of the pulse of the West Coast public.