

THE NEW ORPHEUM THEATER, LOS ANGELES

THE ARCHITECT & ENGINEER

OF CALIFORNIA
PACIFIC COAST STATES



Published by
\$1.50 a Year
25c a Copy

THE ARCHITECT & ENGINEER CO.

Entered at the Post Office, San Francisco, as second class matter

621 Monadnock Bldg.
San Francisco
Vol. XXVI. No. 2

SEPTEMBER, 1911



Frontispiece
The Architect and Engineer
September, 1911

THE NEW ORPHEUM THEATER AND OFFICE BUILDING, LOS ANGELES

G. Albert
Lansburgh,
Architect

THE Architect and Engineer

Of California
Pacific Coast States

VOL. XXVI.

SEPTEMBER, 1911.

No. 2.



*Group on Marquise, Orpheum Theater, Los Angeles
Executed by D. and J. J. Mora*

The New Orpheum Theater Building, Los Angeles*

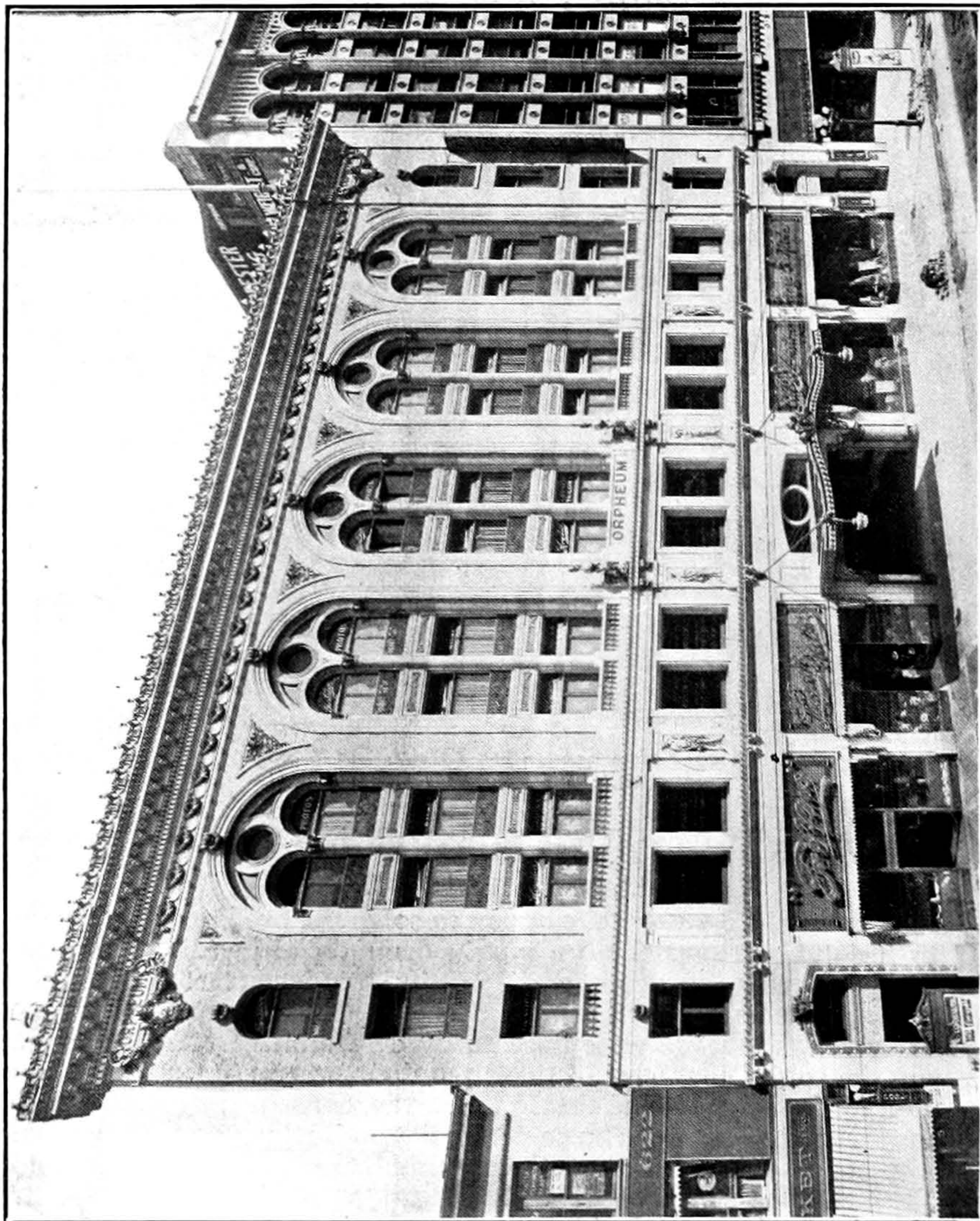
By WILLIAM HAMILTON CLINE

WHEN the architect was called upon to solve the problem of indicating to the public that behind a purely commercial building there was to be placed a gorgeous and beautiful rendezvous for the Muses, the difficulties were paramount.

The lines of the facade were necessarily determined by the stores and offices, and the sordid character of these requirements were surely far from those called for by a vaudeville theater. It was, consequently, only by the artistic grouping and careful choice of details and colorings that he could give to the composition the attractiveness and character that so forcibly tells of the existence of the stage and auditorium and especially that this stage is for the modern vaudeville.

The facade is replete with color, but so beautifully harmonized, that it satisfies the taste and leaves the spectator delighted with this new venture in polychrome designing. The Orpheum has the first colored facade to be erected in Los Angeles, and one of the first in the West. Its beautiful semi-glazed terra cotta is the first of its kind to be made in California and the most many colored yet produced in one burning, each new color formerly requiring a separate firing.

*In the execution of this work Mr. Lansburgh was represented by R. B. Young & Son of Los Angeles, as resident architects.



*Broadway Front, Orpheum Theater and Office Building, Los Angeles
G. Albert Lansburgh, Architect
Carl Leonardt, General Contractor*

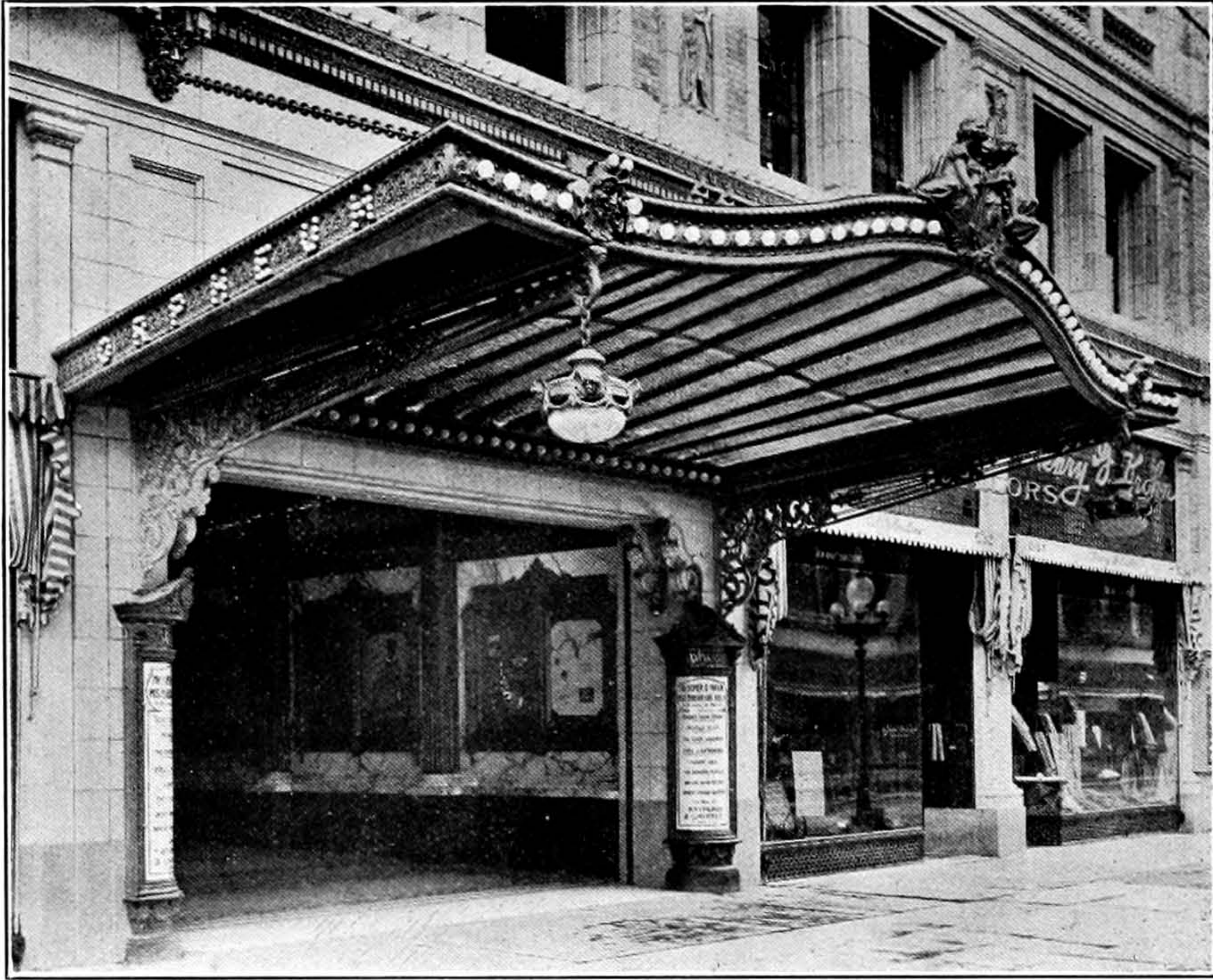


*Detail of Broadway Front, Orpheum Theater, Los Angeles
Riverside Portland Cement Used*

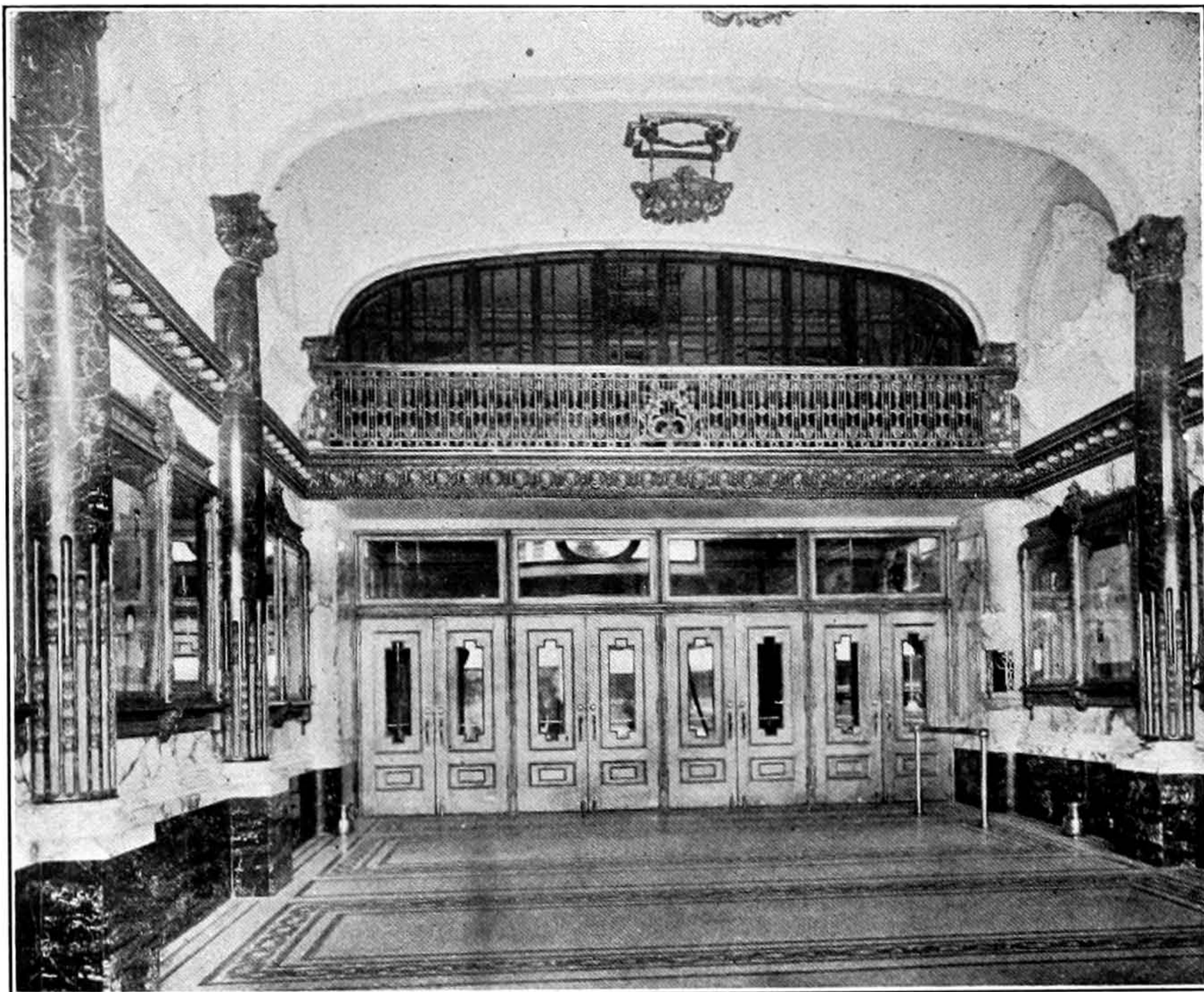
The four figures in the panels were modeled by the late Domingo Mora, an eminent Spanish sculptor of New York, who became greatly interested in Mr. Lansburgh's effort to display Music, Song, Comedy and the Dance in a modern way, so characteristic of the vaudeville. The hand of the artist is plainly visible in the execution of the work and Mr. Lansburgh's colors are certainly most harmonious.

These, with the cornices, spandrels, keys and freezes, are well studied, and the harps, bells and masks, with their colors and clean cut modelling, have successfully produced the required character.

The marquee of wrought iron over the entrance, the wrought iron lamps and the bronze frames finish the picture and attract us forcibly to the most beautiful of lobbies, handsomely finished in expensive imported marble from the Nile and Italy, a Caen stone vaulted ceiling and lovely bronze frames and balcony rails, most luxuriantly illuminated with very



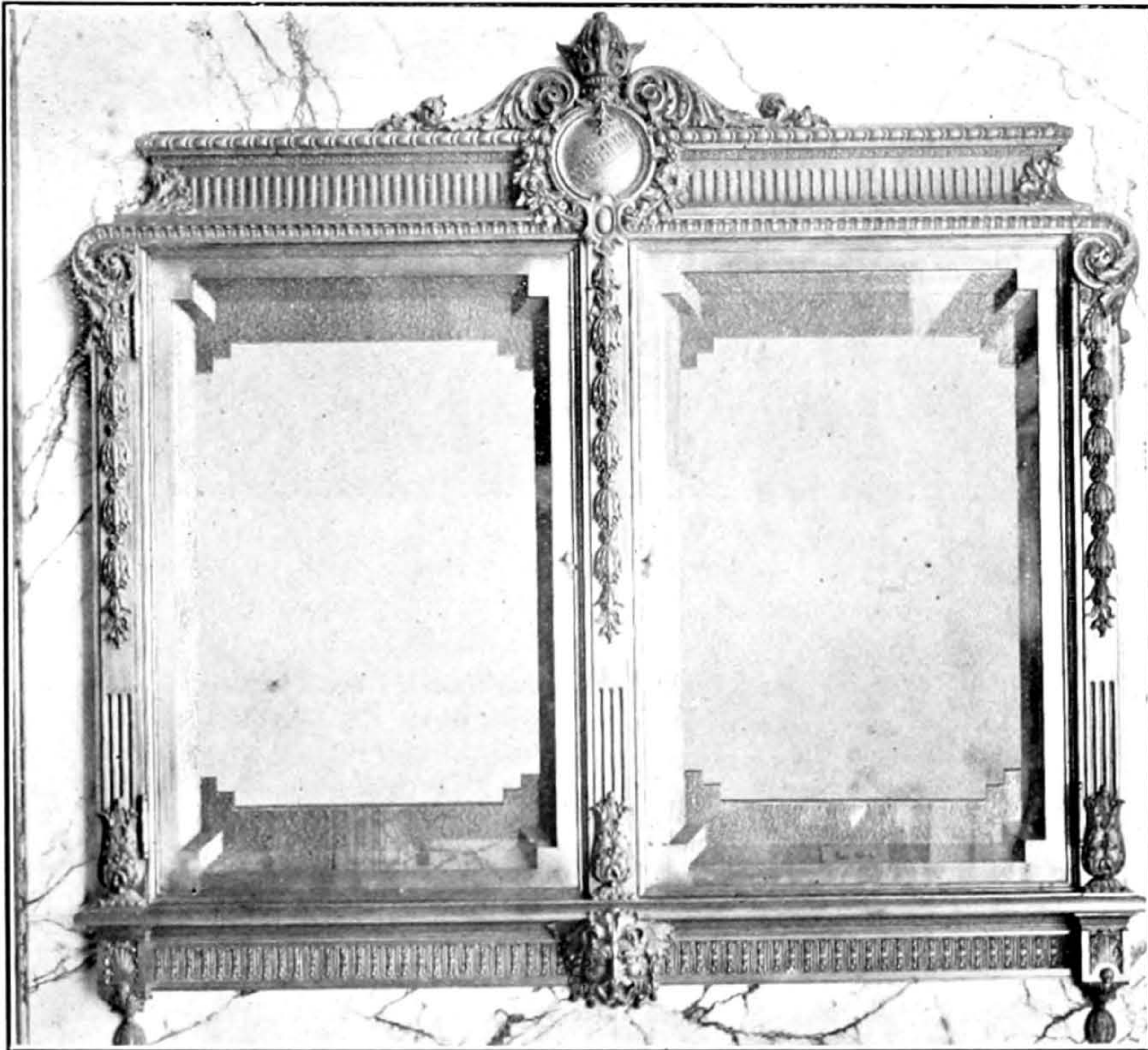
*Marquise of Orpheum Theater, Los Angeles
Executed in Cast Iron by California Artistic Metal and Wire Co., San Francisco
G. Albert Lansburgh, Architect*



*Foyer, Orpheum Theater, Los Angeles
G. Albert Lansburgh, Architect*



*View From the Balcony, Orpheum Theater, Los Angeles
G. Albert Lansburgh, Architect*



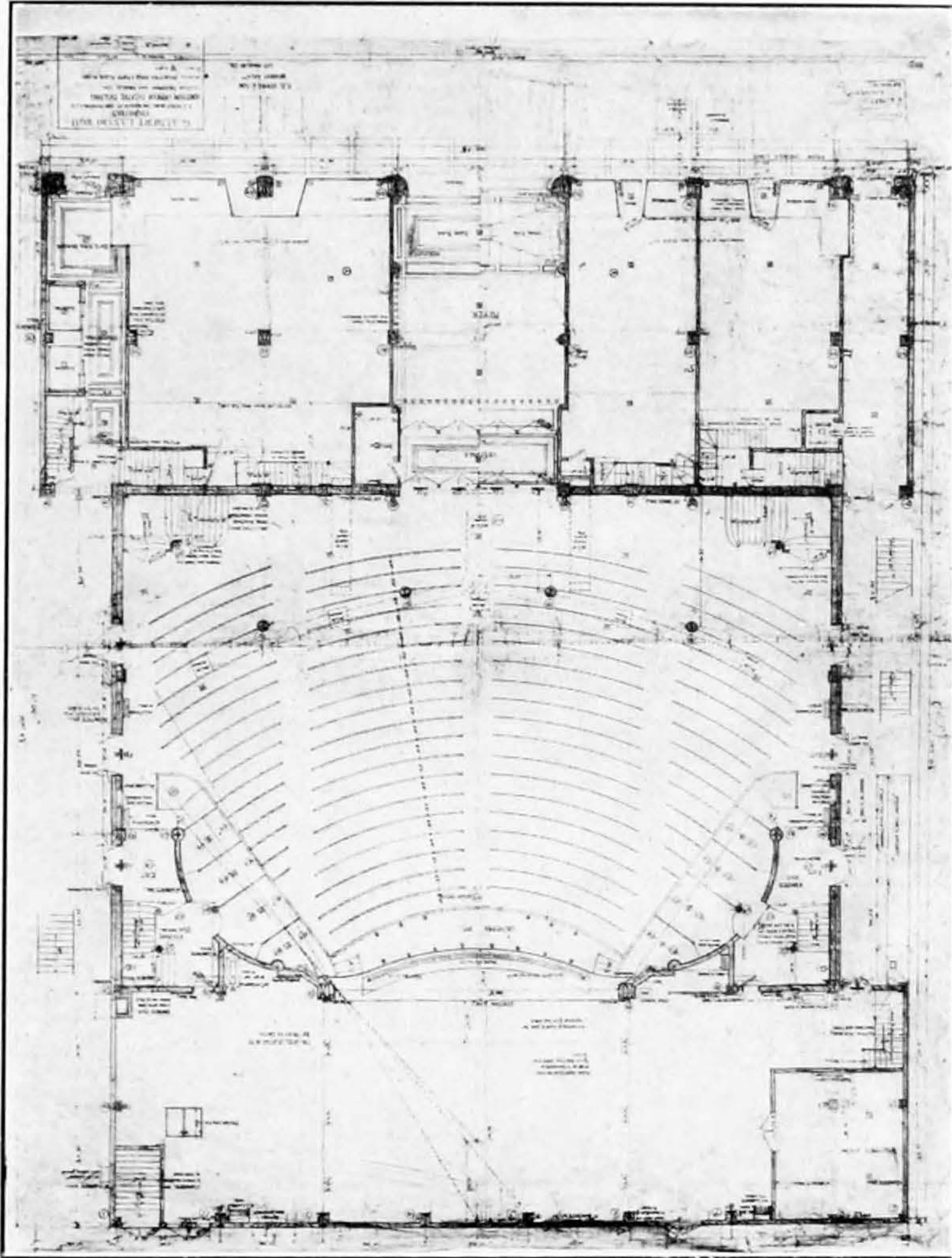
*Ornamental Cast Iron, Bronze Plated Photograph Cabinets, Orpheum Theater, Los Angeles
Executed by California Artistic Metal and Wire Co., San Francisco
G. Albert Lansburgh, Architect*



*Detail of Foyer, Orpheum Theater, Los Angeles
G. Albert Lansburgh, Architect*

beautiful and original chandeliers, the costliest of mosaic floors and a box office window in carved marble that without any trouble relieves us of the price of admission and ushers us into the most satisfactory and charming auditorium that the West has yet seen, so vast, and yet so homelike, that the last row seems to be on top of the orchestra leader's rail, so deceptive is the arrangement of the floor and so perfect the sight lines and acoustics.

There are 2000 good, comfortable seats in the auditorium divided among the orchestra and parquet sections, two balconies and thirty-nine boxes, and so that there might be a precipitated exit in case of emergency,

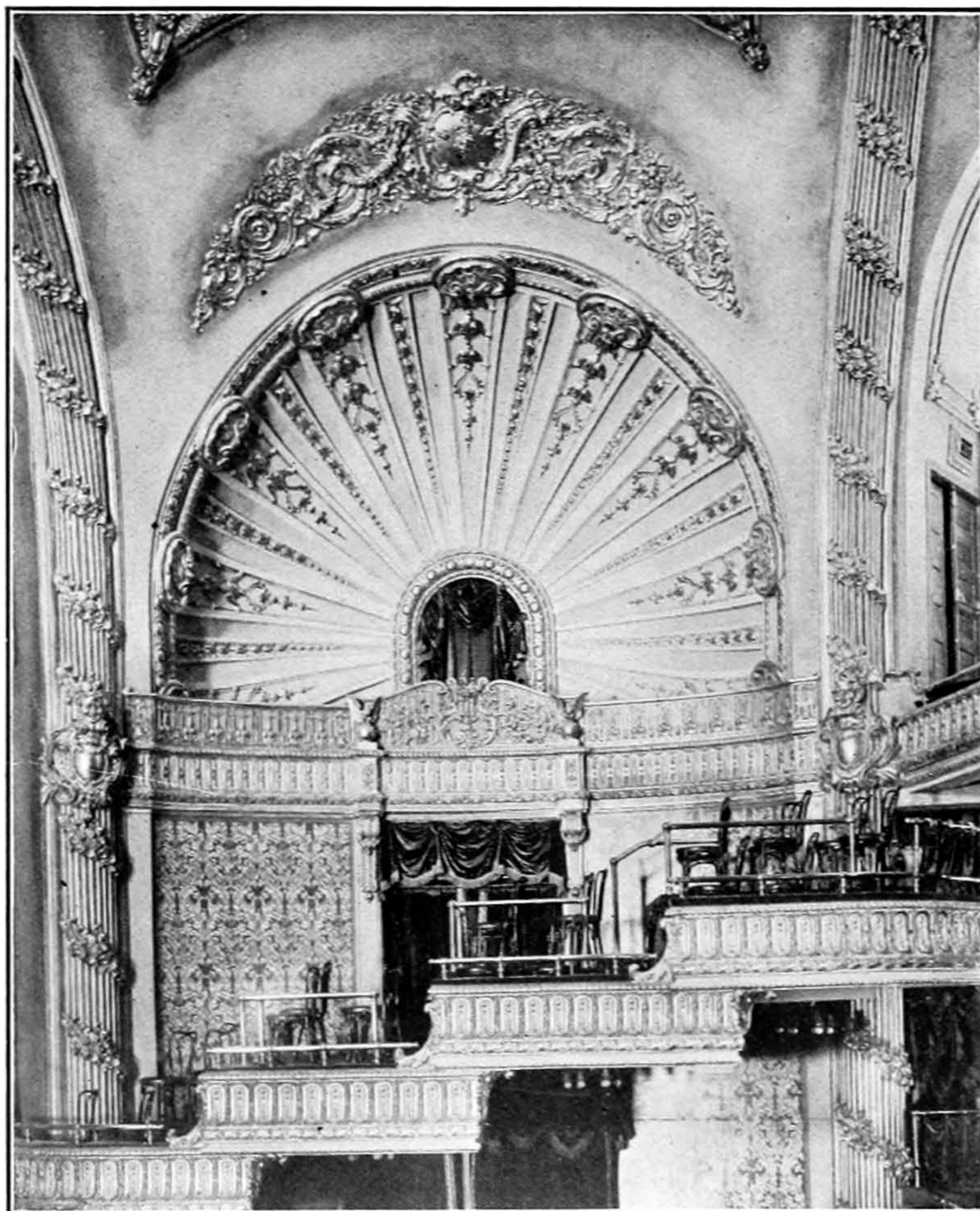


*First Floor Plan, Orpheum Theater, Los Angeles
G. Albert Lansburgh, Architect*

there are twenty-two exits leading to the large lateral courts and to the streets, both in front and in the rear of the building.

There is certainly no need of a panic in this most fireproof of buildings, which has nothing in it to burn except the seats; even the scenery and draperies are treated with fireproofing liquids, and the entire building, except above the audience, is equipped with a network of fusible link automatic sprinklers which fuse at the least exaggerated heat from a fire and quench it with showers of water from the pressure tanks above the roof. The entire building is of steel frame with reinforced concrete floors and walls.

As to the lines of the interior, the scale, detail and coloring of the decorations, the architect has said the last word in modern theater designing. There is no old-fashioned proscenium arch or sounding board; no dual



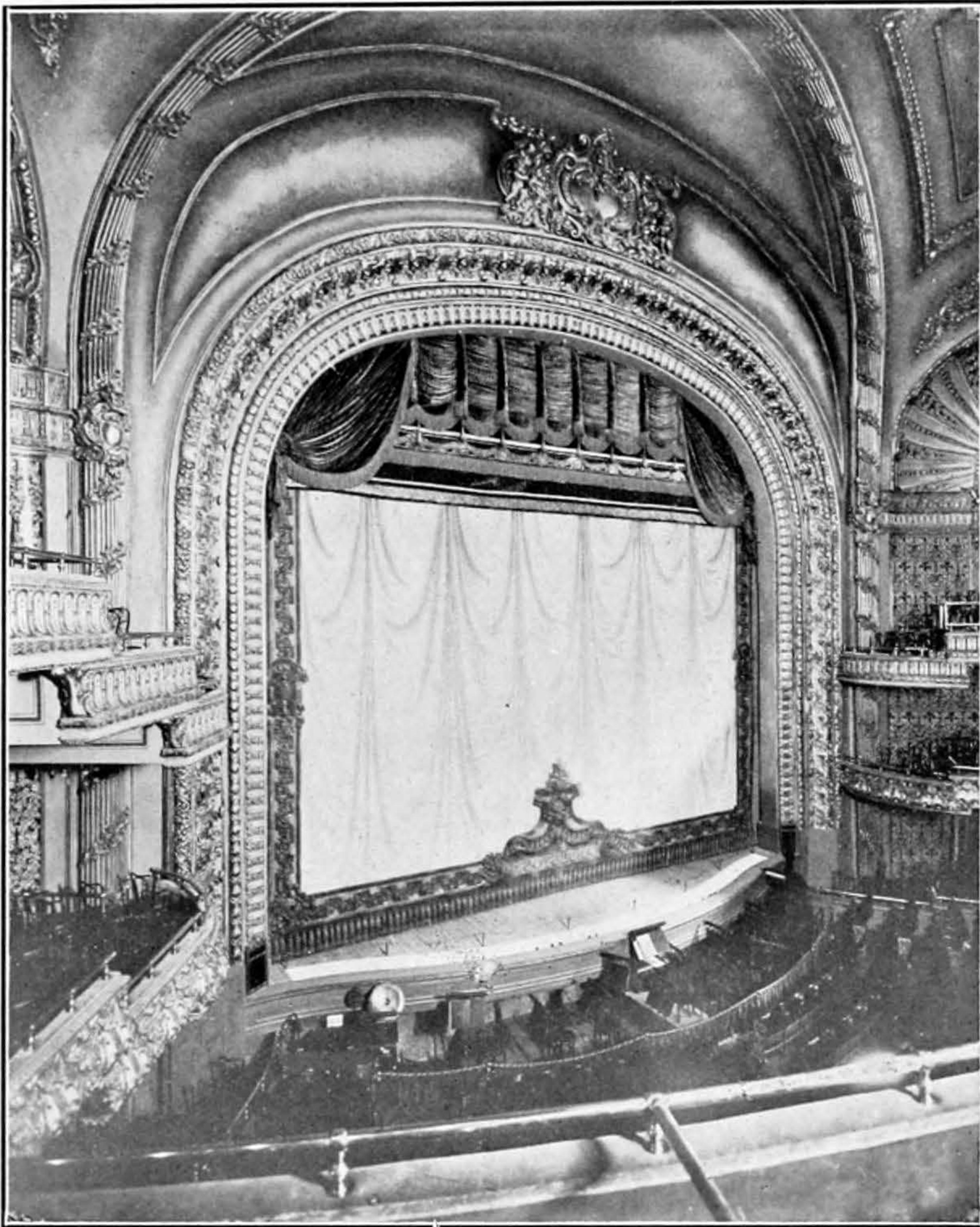
*Detail of Upper Boxes, Orpheum Theater, Los Angeles
G. Albert Lansburgh, Architect*

composition of the ceiling, but a continuous enveloped scheme so thoroughly tied together that each element is in its place and each feature in its correct value. There is nothing that could be left out, nor does one feel the necessity to add a single feature to the design. The galleries and balconies are built on the cantilever principle, with columns well in the rear of the house, so that the view is unobstructed.

The general color scheme is a warm roseate old gold and ivory, highlighted with bronze and burnished gold, which contrasts most successfully with the gendarme blue draperies and old rose curtain.

There are several innovations worthy of note, such as the indirect lighting done by means of concealed lights and reflectors artfully hidden in the domes and penetrations of the ceilings.

The heating, ventilating and cooling of the auditorium is done by a system of supply and exhaust fans driven by electric motors operating in a plenum or air chamber under the auditorium floor—for the supply—and



*Proscenium Arch, Orpheum Theater, Los Angeles
G. Albert Lansburgh, Architect*

above the ceiling, for the exhaust. The air is thoroughly washed in coke washers over which a cataract of water is constantly falling for the purpose of ridding it of dust and impurities. The air is then driven over coolers or heating coils, as the necessity may be, and the temperature regulated by thermostatic automatic regulators placed at different points in the theater.

A feature of great interest to the ladies is the parlor and retiring rooms placed on the mezzanine, between the orchestra floor and balcony, and very accessible from either level. This parlor has a balcony or loggia overlooking the entrance lobby, so that the ladies may await their escorts and still be completely out of the way of the throng.

So that the men may have the comfort of a smoke during the entre-act, a large and elegantly furnished lounging room has been fitted up in the basement immediately under the lobby. There are also coat and hat check rooms for men and women on each floor, and toilets, lavatories and retiring rooms on each balcony and gallery.



*Interior Orpheum Theater, Los Angeles, Showing Arrangement of Boxes
Steam Heating and Ventilating Installed by Eugene Murray, Los Angeles
G. Albert Lansburgh, Architect*

Not only is the public comfortably housed, but the artists are very carefully considered. The dressing rooms are models, equipped with mirrors, electric lights, metallic dressing tables, hot and cold water, perfect ventilation, and attached thereto are two shower baths, fitted up most carefully, one for the women and one for the men. Even to the performing animals do these details continue, there being an especially arranged den with tanks for their care.

Some of the main points of interest in the design and construction of the building are:

The lot is 122 x 150 feet.

The auditorium measures 100 feet in width by 70 feet in depth, and its average height is 70 feet.

The stage measures 32 feet in depth and 110 feet in width.

The proscenium arch is 40 feet wide by 38 feet high.

The gridiron is entirely of steel, and is 70 feet above the stage.

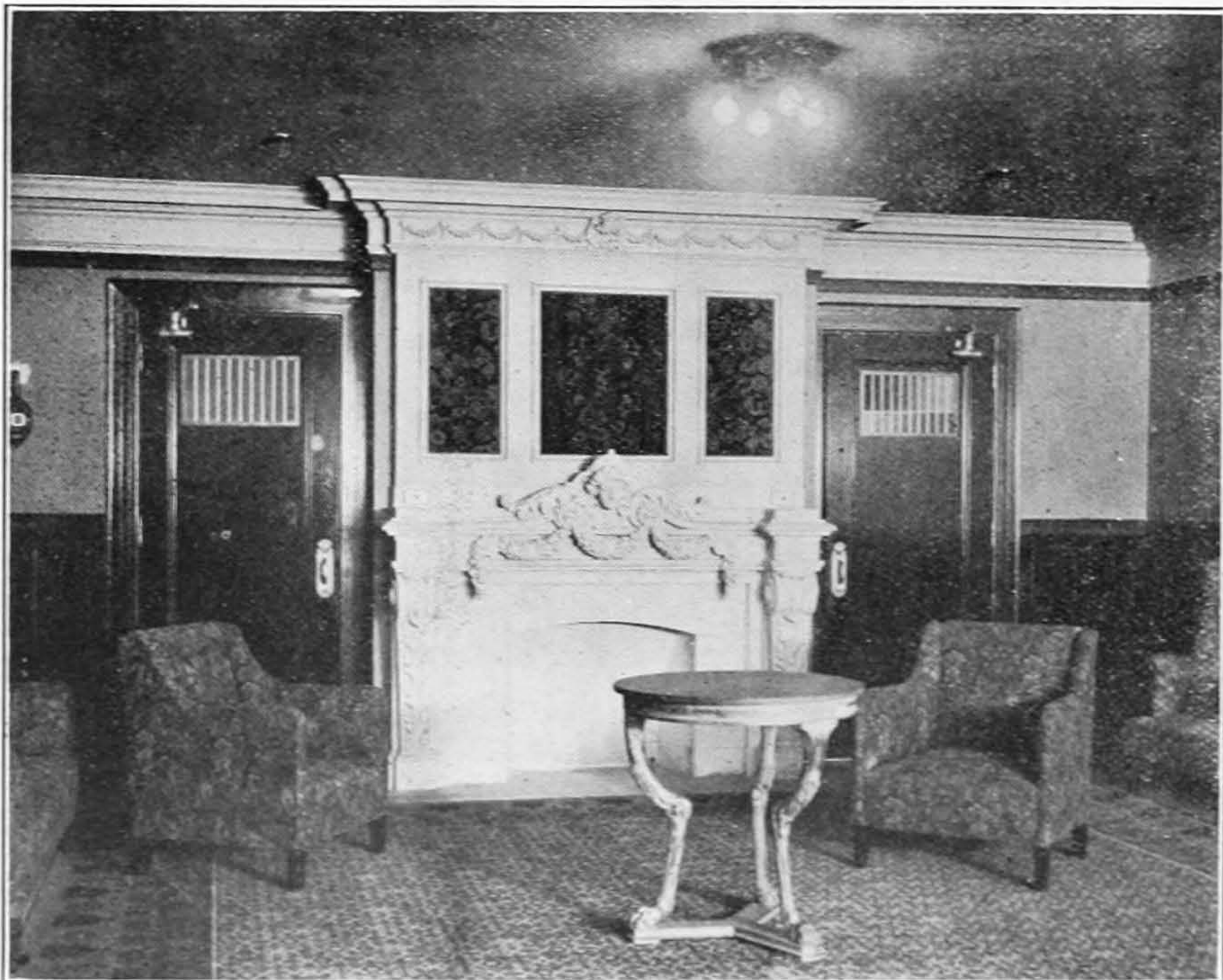
The cost of the building is about \$350,000.



G. Albert Lansburgh, Architect



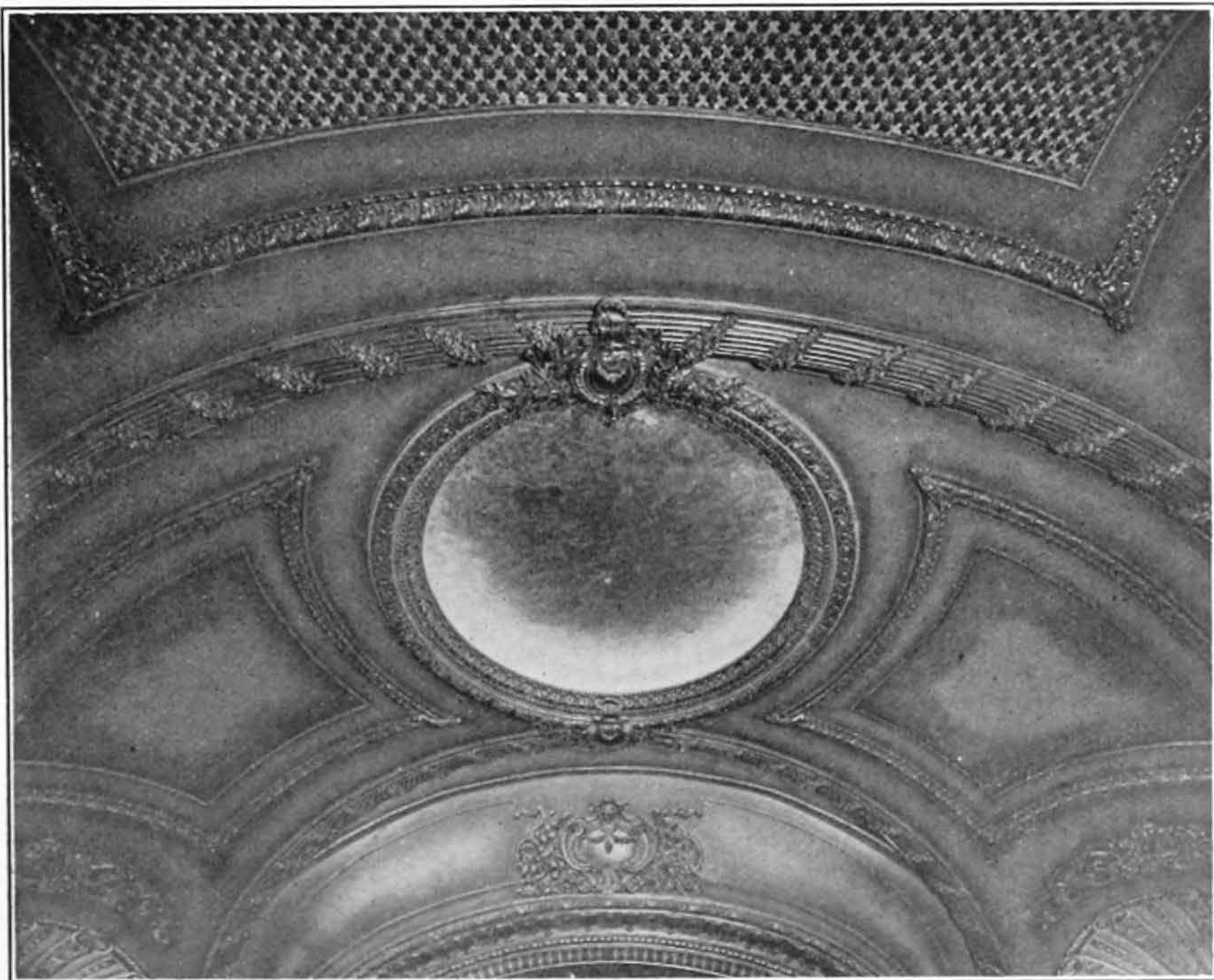
Ladies' Parlor, Orpheum Theater, Los Angeles
Plumbing by James W. Hellman, Los Angeles



Gentlemen's Smoking Room, Orpheum Theater, Los Angeles

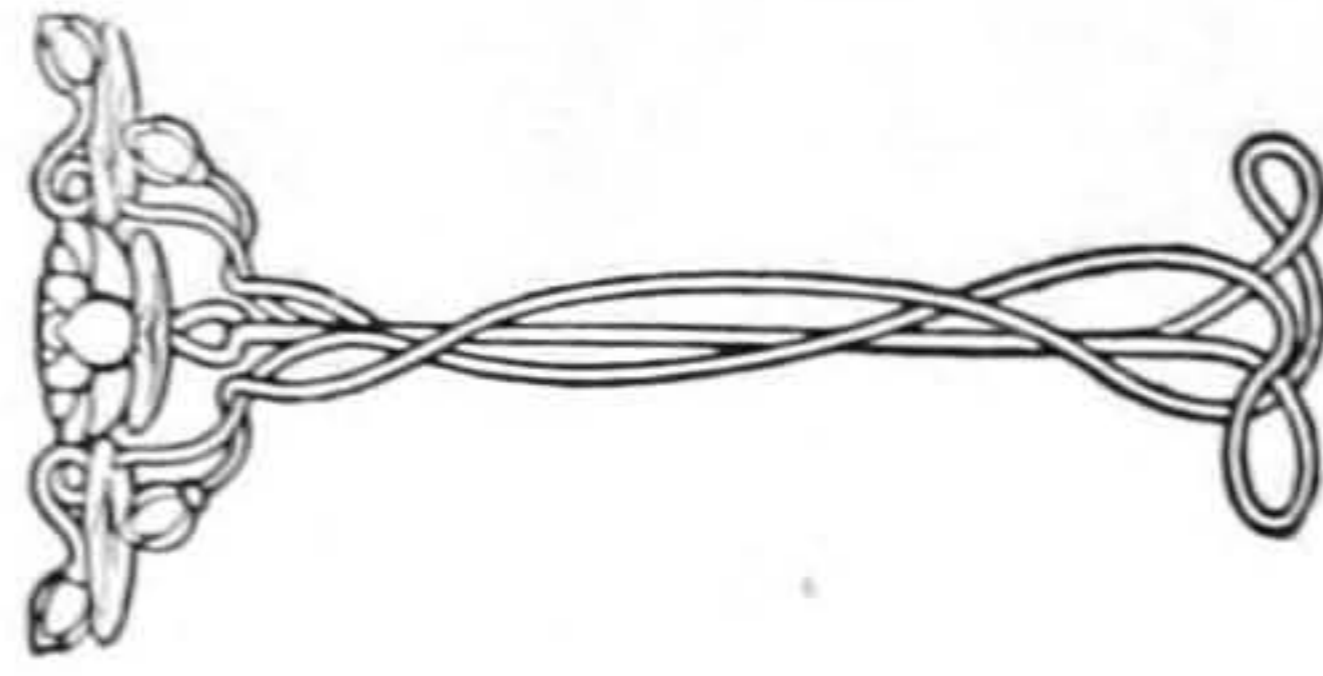


Detail of Proscenium Arch, Orpheum Theater, Los Angeles

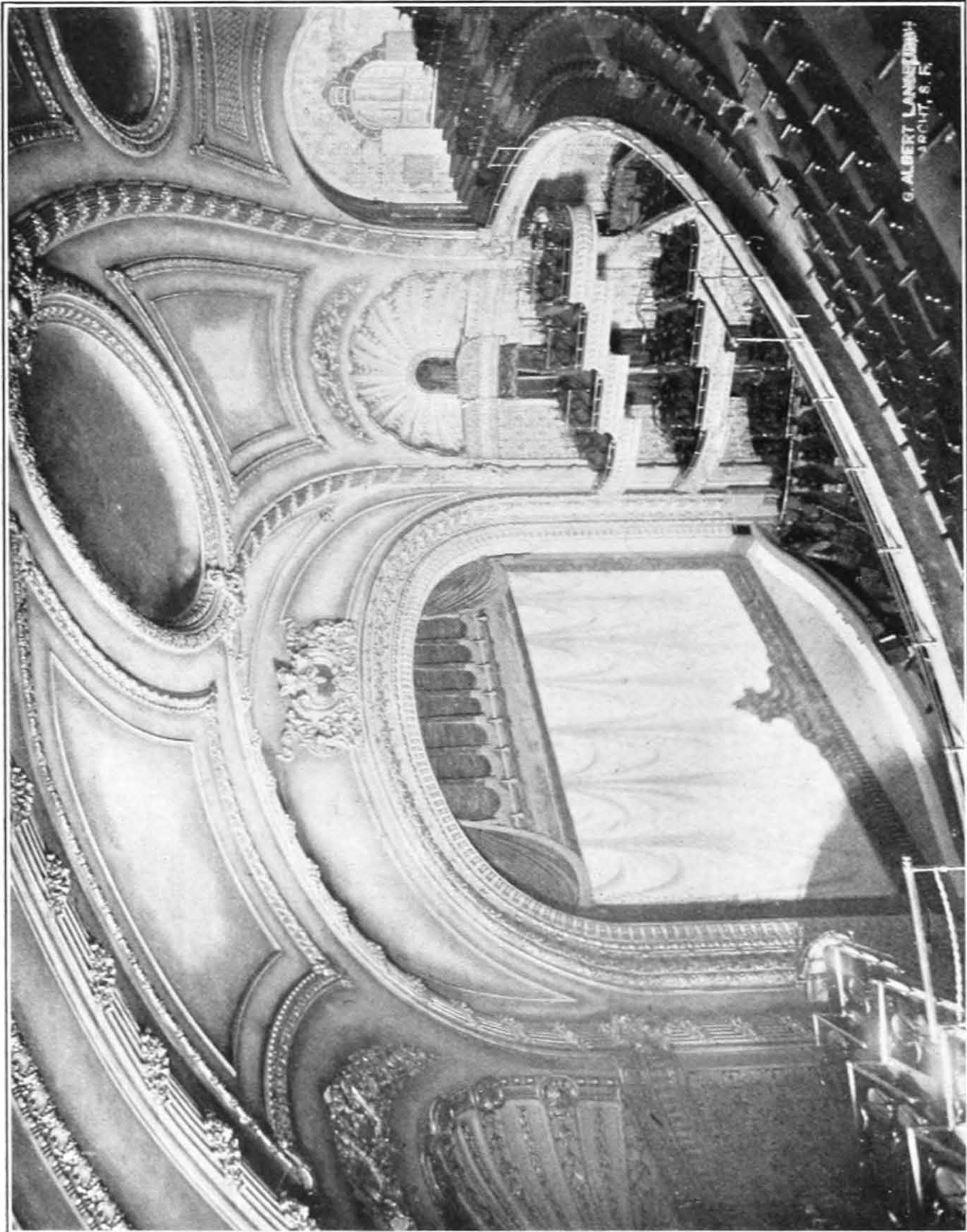


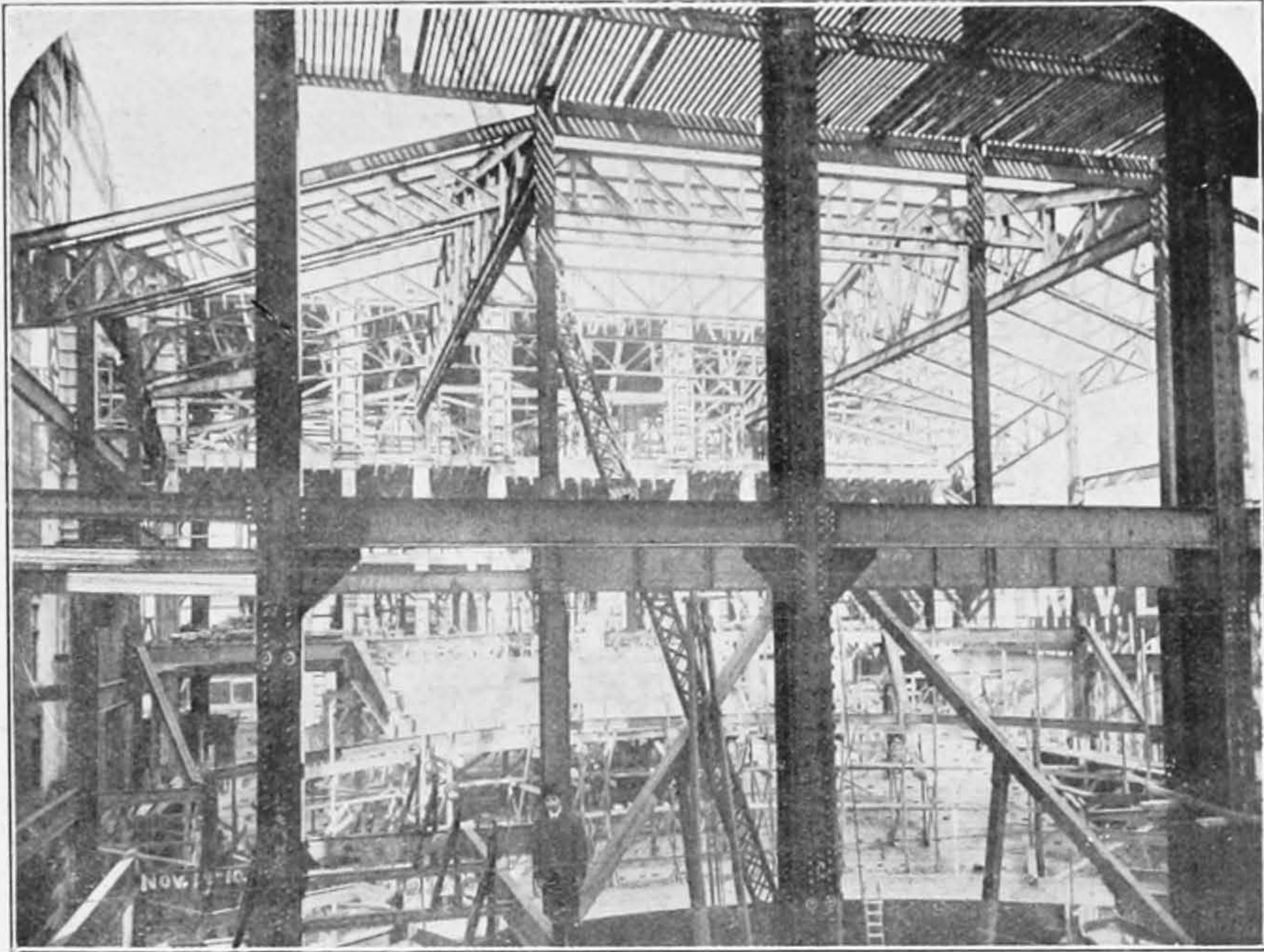
Detail of Ceiling, Orpheum Theater, Los Angeles

*Interior Orpheum Theater,
Los Angeles*

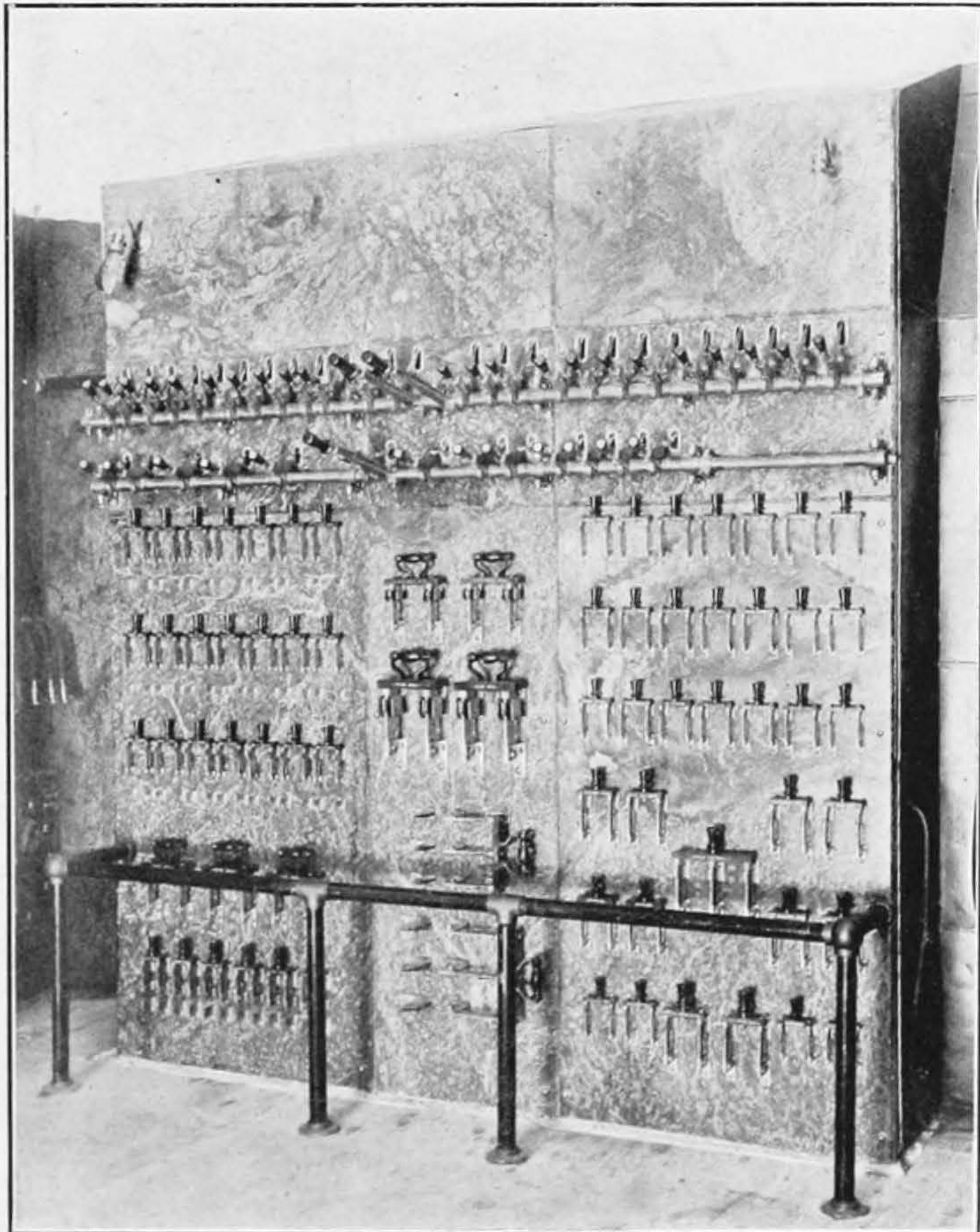


G. Albert Lansburgh, Architect





*Progress Photo of Orpheum Theater Structural Steel and Elevators
by Llewellyn Iron Works, Los Angeles*



Main Stage Switchboard, Orpheum Theater, Los Angeles

Installed by Max D. Baron

