

Civic Theater, Crowd Glitter at Grand Opening



GLAMOUR EVERYWHERE—Men and women in formal dress packed Civic Theater last night for its

first performance. At intermission, left, groups on balconies look down on elegantly-decorated lobby.

In center photo are opera soloists Brian Sullivan and Dorothy Kirsten. Theater's majestic entrance

and part of the arriving crowd are shown in the scene at the right.—Evening Tribune Photos

'AT LONG LAST!'

Patrons Voice Pleasure On Acoustical Properties

BY JOE TRESKIN
 "Patrons attending the premiere performance in the Civic Theater last night were lavish in their praise. Most of them bawled, in so many words, 'At long last!'"
 "There were only a few dissenting voices cast. And these criticisms were centered about the decorations and color motif."
 "Acoustical equipment in the \$4-million theater came out flying, colors in its first test balcony revealed their undoubted acclaim for the fullness of the

(chestra under Earl Bernard) sound and the lack of "dead" spots or distortion.
 "The decorations are wonderful," Mr. and Mrs. Sirak Balaban of Tijuana said enthusiastically. "The acoustics are so fine that we enjoyed the music very much. The whole theater is terrific."
 "Skirt Ruffie Heard" An elderly couple who preferred not to give names remarked that "the acoustics are just grand. We were in the balcony and had no difficulty at all in hearing. In fact we heard Dorothy Kirsten when she ruffled her skirt."
 Dr. and Mrs. William F. Brownlee, 322 Hickory St., also were delighted with the sound as well as with the decor of muted bronze and gold.
 When criticism was offered, it was qualified with praise of the theater's other features.
 "So Very Happy" "The seating is comfortable. This was accomplished, even though the production was a last-minute addition to opening rations inside the theater," Mr. and Mrs. E. H. Malson, 518 Quimby St., said. "But don't get us wrong. We're so very happy that we have a theater now."
 Another music patron approved of the acoustics and exclaimed, "But I'm not particularly pleased with the interior decorations, especially the copper wall decorations." p.m.

First Week A Sell-Out at New Theater

San Diegoans jumped at the opportunity of filling the Civic Theater in its opening week productions.
 Morley Golden, chairman of the grand opening committee of the "Community Concerts," likened it to a "community explosion."
 Golden, in a brief address before the curtain raised on the San Diego Symphony Orchestra's concert last night, ticked off this report for the audience and had no difficulty at all.
 "First — Tickets for 'Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf,' which will be presented tonight at 8, were sold out 10 days after the announcement by the Broadway Theater League of San Diego."
 Second — Before the tickets were even printed, all the seats were qualified with praise of the theater's other features.
 Company's performance of "H.M.S. Pinafore" were sold out. This was accomplished, even though the production was a last-minute addition to opening rations inside the theater. Mr. and Mrs. E. H. Malson, 518 Quimby St., said. "But don't get us wrong. We're so very happy that we have a theater now."
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NOT SINGER, GOLDEN TELLS AUDIENCE

After receiving a standing ovation at the new Civic Theater last night, Morley H. Golden, chairman of the Opening Nights committee, said "I thought it was bewildering as I waited in the wings to come out here, but now I find it's you the members of the audience who are bewildered. 'In case you haven't noticed," he said, "I am not Dorothy Kirsten."

Continental seating, in the Golden, very elated by the reaction of San Diego patrons of the arts, said he envisioned using the Civic Theater for other than theatrical and musical events.
 "I would like to see it used for such things as school graduations," he said.
 And he explored the possibility of the theater's use for community worship.
 The theater, as Golden said, will live up fully to its multipurpose potential.

Extra Room Favored
 Most favored the extra room it afforded their legs. But some of the symphony-goers were unhappy with the large numbers of who shuffled past them on the way to their seats.

Continental seating, with the absence of a middle aisle, apparently will require a literal mental adjustment on the part of the patrons, but should not affect their comfort appreciably.
 "This is a fine monument to culture," was the appraisal given by another patron of the arts.

The Civic Theater, in an opening which smacked of historical significance for the city, is a dream become a reality for San Diego.