



ST. LOUIS' TEMPLES OF THESPIS: AGE OF SPECIALIZATION

by David J. Simmons

Live theater reached the zenith of its popularity in St. Louis during the 1880's and 1890's, and more theater buildings were erected locally during these years than at any other time. At the same time theater architecture entered a period of accelerated development and complex technological advancement. To meet the challenge proposed by this ever-changing environment, some architectural firms began to concentrate their efforts on theater design. The first American firm to specialize in theater architecture was John Bailey McElfattrick and Son (later Sons). Locally active between 1878 and 1893, this firm shaped local theater design for that generation. Out-of-town architects Peabody and Stearns (Boston), Oscar Cobb (Chicago), and Raeder, Coffin, and Crocker (also Chicago) made significant contributions as well. The local firms of Isaac Taylor, Otto Wilhelmi, William Swasey, and Kirchner and Kirchner demonstrated their proficiency in this area, especially with regard to playhouse conversions. A second generation of summer theaters in St. Louis commenced in the mid-1890's, succeeding the alfresco entertainment at Schnaider's Garden and Uhrig's Cave, continuing until about 1912. The local summer theater movement culminated in the 1919 birth of the St. Louis Municipal Theater's summer season. St. Louis saloon theaters provided a different kind of theatrical experience. In these places, audience reaction often eclipsed stage performance. Heavy tobacco smoke, drunkenness, criminal activity, vulgar language, and indecent exposure were frequent at these premises.

John Bailey McElfattrick and Sons

Born in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, John Bailey McElfattrick (1826-1906) trained with his father Edward, an architect and contractor. In 1851 he located his architectural practice in the Harrisburg and Philadelphia areas. He did not design his first theater until 1855. Later he moved his practice to Fort Wayne, Indiana and then to Louisville, Kentucky. As his practice expanded, the demand for theater design in America increased dramatically compelling him to specialize in this type of architecture. Architects in many communities refused to accept theater commissions because of their complexity. Trained by his father, John Morgan McElfattrick (1858-1891), the younger son, became a partner in the firm as of 1876. When the firm moved to St. Louis in 1878, he managed the local operation. After his death the firm closed the St. Louis office in 1893. William McElfattrick (1854-1922), the older son, received his partnership in 1883. A year later he established the New York office which he managed until his early death in 1922.

Although the firm produced many different kinds of buildings, its theater designs drew the most attention and praise. During its seventy-one year history, the firm erected at least 228 theaters in ninety different American cities. Sixty of these playhouses were located in the New York City area.

McElfattrick's main contribution to modern American theater architecture focused on technological innovation. After a serious study of design and construction techniques, the McElfattricks used the latest discoveries to continuously improve their architectural approach. By a method of trial and error they found what worked and implemented into their system. More than any other architect of this period, they were responsible for revolutionizing the practical side of theater design. Hugh Tallant, architect and theater critic, commented on the firm's importance in the *Brick Builder Magazine* December 1914 issue:

The practical side of this evolution was largely the achievement of a single architect Mr. J.B. McElfattrick who might well be called the father of the modern American theater.

Areas of the firm's achievement received notice by Andrew Craig Morrison in the 1981 *Macmillan Encyclopedia of Architects* edited by Adolf Placzek (Volume III, Page 135):

His designs were praised in their time for their reasoned approach to stage design, audience sight lines and acoustics, their safety from fire and panic, and their well-considered provisions for performers and audiences.

While the firm's St. Louis office specialized in theater work, it also created many other types of buildings including a dozen residences, three downtown business blocks from four to seven stories high, a four-story hotel with 116 guest rooms, other assorted commercial structures, and a design for the insane asylum at Nevada, Missouri. Under his father's supervision, John Morgan designed most of the commissions associated with the local office. Of the twelve theater projects designed for the local market, nine were completed. Theater projects for the Business Men's Association 1888, Academy of Music 1889, and Barnum's Theater 1889 failed to reach maturity. The firm worked on two theater interiors inside the expansive St. Louis Exposition and Entertainment Hall completed in 1884 under chief architect J. B. Legg (see *Newsletter* XV, 2B, Summer 2009 Extra). The smaller theater seated 1,350 people, and the large music hall accommodated 3,750. In two other commissions the firm served as the associate architect – the New Grand Opera House of 1885 with Oscar Cobb of Chicago as the principal architect and the Columbia Theater of 1897 with Kirchner and Kirchner as chief architects. The remaining

five projects designed by the McElfatrick team were Pope's Theater 1879, People's Theater 1881, New Olympic Theater 1881, Standard Theater 1883, and the Hagan Opera House 1891.

Pope's Theater

Located at 903 Olive, the three-story brick and stone Pope's Theater (82 by 150 feet) occupied the former site of the Unitarian Church of the Messiah. It was built for Charles Pope, local theatrical manager and entrepreneur, as a first-class drama operation to rival the Olympic Theater and the Grand Opera House. Using Italian Renaissance features, its three part front façade on Olive placed the 25-foot-wide main entrance in the center with retail space on either side and offices above. Rising to a height of sixty feet this two-part building divided into the 30-foot deep business section in front and the auditorium in the rear. The theater had four exits each on Ninth Street and the alley way on the west side of the building. A 25-foot-square vestibule linked the main entrance with the three-level auditorium measuring 70 by 78 feet and seating 1,750 people. At its north end the stage covered an area 70 by 45 feet, with ten dressing rooms placed off-stage in the rear and on the west side. The property rooms and carpentry shop occupied the basement. Project costs amounted to \$75,000 for the site, \$15,000 for demolition and \$110,000 to complete the theater.



Pope's Theatre, 903 Olive, 1879, J. B. McElfatrick, from J. Thomas Scharf, History of St. Louis City and County, 1883, p. 985.

After opening on September 22, 1879 with Lawrence Barrett in "Hamlet," Pope's Theater enjoyed a long period of great success. In 1884 McElfatrick added two floors to the front business area and installed an electric light system in the theater, making it the first completely electrified theater in St. Louis. Early in the 1890's John Hopkins leased the theater and changed its format to a stock company presentation. Following the purchase of the site in 1895 by a local syndicate, Pope's Theater closed. It was replaced by the Century Building, a ten-story office building equipped with a new theater.

People's Theater

Constructed in 1881 at 105 South Sixth Street (at Walnut) for the theatrical management team of Robinson and Mitchell, the three-story brick and stone People's Theater measured 115 by 135 feet. It offered comedy, opera buffa, and melodrama. Decorated in the Eastlake fashion both inside and out, this two-part building had a commercial area (40 feet deep) fronting on Walnut with retail on the first floor, offices on the second, and the Elks Lodge above. The theater itself fronted on Sixth Street, complete with main and auxiliary entrances. The vestibule (12 by 40 feet) accessed the box office, a business area, and the auditorium. Accommodating 2,250 people on three levels, the horseshoe-shaped auditorium displayed a domed and frescoed ceiling crowned with a 102-light chandelier. At its west end was a large stage (63 by 45 feet) furnished with two drop curtains – one painted with a Swiss village and the other a Venetian scene. Equipped with 11 dressing rooms, the steam heated theater had 23 exits. The architects supplied the theater with an inventory of 40 hand-painted theatrical sets. Total project costs exceeded \$85,000.

On September 10, 1881, Pope's opened with a play called "Lead Astray." Four years later Mitchell bought out Robinson's share and became the theater's sole proprietor. John H. Havlin of Cincinnati (1847-1924) purchased it in 1890. Changing its name to Havlin's Theater, he converted it to a house where melodramas of the "thriller" type were shown, as his obituary noted. Closed in 1911, the theater building survived until 1924.

New Olympic Theater

To remain competitive with the new Pope's and People's Theaters, the Spalding family decided to replace their Olympic Theater at 107 South Broadway with a new one. They demolished the Olympic after its farewell performance on April 2, 1882. Within five months they had completed a new Olympic Theater on the same site at a cost of \$250,000. Offering first class drama, it opened on September 11, 1882 with comedy star Joe Emmet. Across Elm Street from the Southern Hotel and Faust's Restaurant, the new Olympic soon became the most celebrated theater in St. Louis. A haunt of the city's rich and famous, it achieved an international reputation for its accommodations, management, and history of performance. The famed English actor Sir Henry Irving called this theater the finest playhouse in America. American actress Ethel Barrymore praised its facilities as among the best anywhere.

A three-part complex, the new Olympic had a commercial building fronting on Broadway, an attached theater auditorium behind it, and a free-standing support building for the theater across an alley behind the auditorium. The five-story brick commercial center with Bedford limestone front in the Italian Renaissance style ran along Broadway for 115 feet, with a depth of 40 feet. At street level were four retail spaces, a 30-foot-wide theater entrance, and a separate building entrance. Ten offices filled the second floor, and forty guest rooms on the three upper floors were leased to the St. James Hotel next door.

Most Olympic performers stayed at the St. James. Two sets of double doors at the theater's entrance led into a spacious lobby (28 by 48 feet). The theater section measured 115 by 81 feet. The lobby accessed the auditorium, ticket office, cloak room, and ladies' lounge. Running parallel to Broadway on a north-south axis, the auditorium (77 by 80 feet) had a capacity of 2,500 people seated on three levels. Its arrangement placed the stage (72 by 44 feet) at its south end and eighty feet of egress into a rear alley on its west side. The domed ceiling frescoed on a gold background had a 115-burner bronze gilt chandelier suspended from its center. Fifteen dressing rooms were situated either off stage or under it. On the other side of a rear alley, a freestanding four-story brick building annex fronted on Elm for 64 feet, with a depth of 114 feet. The annex housed retail and office space in the front area and theater support space in the rear.



The second Olympic Theatre, Broadway & Elm, 1882, J. B. McElfattrick, photographed in 1892.

As a result of excellent management provided by John Norton and later Pat Short plus excellent theatrical bookings, the new Olympic enjoyed a period of unparalleled success without experiencing a single season of financial loss. During the Norton era, the Olympic was managed in conjunction with the Grand Opera House. Between 1899 and 1911, Pat Short operated both the Olympic and the Century Theater. From 1897 onward the New York syndicate of Frohman, Klaw, and Erlanger handled all of the Olympic's bookings. Their efforts resulted in the Olympic being called "the House of Stars." After Pat Short's death in 1911, the syndicate leased the theater and appointed Walter Sanford as the new manager.

A year later, the Southern Hotel shocked the neighborhood by closing its doors. This had a domino effect on nearby businesses. In the spring of 1916, the Olympic ceased operations. At the same time, both the St. James Hotel and Faust's Restaurant shut down, turning the neighborhood into a ghost town. Demolition came to the theater in 1924.

Standard Theater

While most theaters originated with theatrical promoters and managers, the Standard Theater emerged from a different source. Edward Butler, the notorious Democratic political operative and leader of the infamous boodle ring, headed a syndicate that built the Standard Theater in 1883 for \$95,000. Located at 623 Walnut, at the northeast corner of Seventh, the three-story pressed brick and granite Standard followed the Italian Renaissance style, enhanced with a gabled roof and a galvanized iron pediment and cornice. It fronted on Walnut for 75 feet, with a depth of 138 feet. A main entrance of four double doors on Walnut led into a lobby (33 by 17 feet) giving access to the ticket office, check room, lounge, office, and auditorium. Gallery seating in the auditorium had a separate Walnut Street entrance.



Standard Theatre, 623 Walnut at Seventh, 1883, J. B. McElfattrick, Star-Times, The City of St. Louis and Its Resources, 1893, p. 160

The Standard's auditorium (70 by 80 feet) had a capacity of 2,600 people divided into three tiers. A separate lobby and lounge serviced each tier. A stage at its north end covered an area 68 by 45 feet. Exits on both sides and in the rear of the auditorium facilitated quick egress. One special safety device used at the Standard was a large wide door at the rear of the stage. If the building caught fire, the big door could be opened to allow a fire truck to enter the premises. Other safety devices included a retractable roof over the stage, metal fire escapes from the second and third tiers, and an iron-plated proscenium wall.

The play "The Power of Money" celebrated the opening of the Standard on September 8, 1883. Under the management of W.H. Smith, it offered a program of comedy, burlesque and drama. After the turn of the century it converted to a burlesque format. The Standard maintained its own female orchestra, with female singers and a female dancing troupe. Titles to its musical reviews told the tale – "Mischief Makers," "Tempresses," and "City Sports." After 38 years of service, the Standard closed on July 26, 1921 and was torn down several months later.

Hagan Opera House

Named for Oliver L. Hagan, one of the three investors in this project, the Hagan Opera House was located at 924 Pine at the southeast corner of Tenth, on a lot purchased by brewer Charles Stifel in 1888 for \$68,750. Both John Havlin, the theatrical manager, and J.B. McElfatrick, the architect, invested large amounts of capital in this theater's construction. Starting in the spring of 1891, theater construction required six months to complete at a cost of \$330,000. A comic opera called "The Queen's Mate" served as its first attraction on November 2, 1891.



The Hagan Opera House, 924 Pine at 10th, J. B. McElfatrick, 1891, Star-Times, The City of St. Louis and Its Resources, 1893, p. 161

Influenced by Renaissance Revival design, the five-story brick building with stone facings and terra cotta trim measured 109 feet on Pine and 125 feet on Tenth. A four-faced clock tower on the corner rose 150 feet. The commercial part of the building had five retail shops at street level plus an entrance hall with staircase and elevator. The building's four upper floors held fifty offices. The lavish lobby on Tenth Street (23 by 40 feet) featured a glass dome 40 feet high, mosaic marble floor, twin marble staircases, and a bronze and marble ticket office. Thomas C. Noxon and Patrick J. Toomey of the firm Noxon & Toomey Scenic Artist Co. frescoed the walls and ceiling of the auditorium. With a capacity of 1,800 people, it had four sections on three levels plus ten boxes and four loges. Seven hundred electric lights (red, green and white) illuminated this space. One of the theater's technological improvements was the use of electric motors to move scenery on the stage. Wide seats and aisles added to audience comfort. Both the first and second floors offered lounges for the ladies. Exits included ten along Tenth Street, three behind the stage, and six into an alley on the east side. To the rear, the theater had 18 dressing rooms,

green room, manager's office, employee area, and prop storage spaces.

Programming musical comedy, serious drama, and melodrama, the Hagan functioned under the capable management team of Hagan and Havlin. During a period of five years the theater maintained its own stock company. As of 1897 the name of the theater changed to the Imperial Theater and its program concentrated on melodrama. After 1911 it entered a period of decline. Eventually it provided an intermittent schedule of motion pictures, burlesque and melodrama. The owners tried but failed to reopen it two years after it closed in 1918. In 1921 they remodeled the building, reallocating the theater space for retail and office rentals.

Pickwick Theater

By the late 1870's more than a dozen drama clubs, both amateur and semi-professional, thrived in the local landscape. Under the forceful direction of Wayman McCreery, the McCullough Drama Club, the largest of these organizations, catered to an active membership of 500 people and a core of 50 professional performers. Another important drama organization called the Dickson Drama Club started as an amateur group but achieved professional status by touring the country in plays written by the American playwright Augustus Thomas. These and other local drama organizations clamored for a theater friendly to their needs – a place to meet, rehearse and perform. Eventually this need would be met by the Pickwick Theater. Plans for the new \$40,000 theater were executed in the summer of 1879 by the distinguished architectural firm of Peabody and Stearns of Boston. Project construction lasted seven months ending in the spring of the following year. Opening night on May 13, 1880, saw the performance of "Bells of Corneville" by the National English Opera Company.

With a sixty-foot front and a depth of 135 feet, the three-story brick Pickwick Theater stood at 2621 Washington Avenue just west of Jefferson. This theater depended on classical architecture for its design inspiration. A modest size second floor auditorium (60 by 55 feet) seated 800 patrons. A street-level entrance vestibule contained twin staircases leading to the second floor auditorium. Placing the stage at the north end, the auditorium had three large windows on each of the east and west walls and separate lounges for men and women at the south end. Behind the stage were eight dressing rooms. Beside the vestibule the first floor accommodated theater offices, meeting rooms, rehearsal area, and a restaurant. A storage area for 35 scenic sets and the kitchen filled the basement.

Professional musical comedy and drama entertained the audiences at the Pickwick Theater during the first six years of its operations. Afterward it changed to a theater rental. Throughout the 24 years of its existence, the Pickwick achieved recognition as the home of local amateur performance. The McCullough Drama Club headquartered its operations at the Pickwick. After the Pickwick's third season, its first manager departed with the money in the theater's treasury. Owners hired J.L. Johnson as the new manager to save the operation from bankruptcy. It survived until 1904. The St. Louis Brass

Company bought the building two years later for \$45,000 and remodeled it into an eight-story warehouse at a cost of \$60,000.



Pickwick Theater, 2621 Washington at Jefferson, 1880, Peabody & Stearns, Historical & Descriptive Review of St. Louis, 1894, p. 183

Rebuilt Grand Opera House

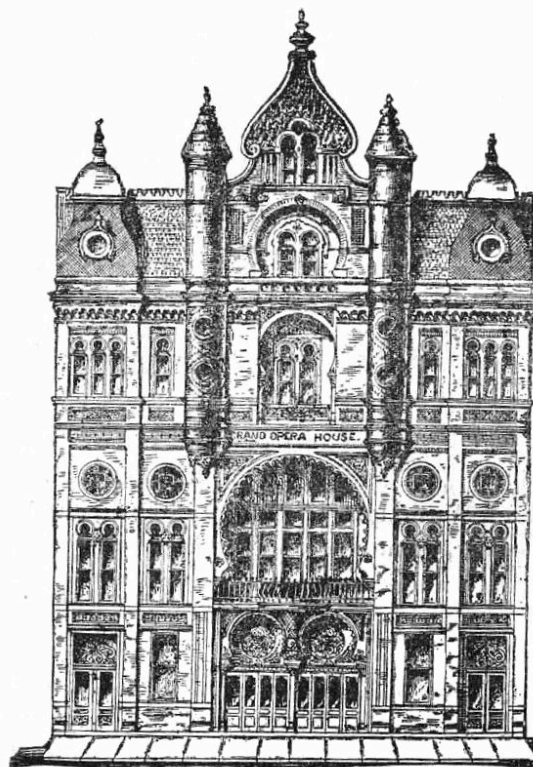
Following the construction of several new theaters Charles P. Chouteau wanted to update his Grand Opera House. For this purpose he hired Chicago architect Oscar Cobb and the local architectural team of Barnett and Taylor. The old theater closed on April 10, 1880, and the contractor gutted the building at 514 Market except for its exterior walls. Rebuilding required more than a year to complete at a cost exceeding \$100,000. On August 29, 1881, the rebuilt Grand Opera House gave its first performance.

Using Renaissance Revival architectural motifs, the exterior of the rebuilt theater was a modification of the previous theater's design. The three-door main entrance on Market Street passed into an elegant vestibule (33 by 13 feet) furnished with a mosaic marble floor, polished woodwork, frescoed ceiling, and second box office. Beyond the vestibule the glass partitioned foyer accessed the auditorium with twin staircases and provided lounges for both men and women. By lowering the auditorium floor several feet, the number of seats was increased to 2,600 on three levels. An expanded stage measured 72 by 44 feet. Noxon and Toomey frescoed the auditorium ceiling and painted the drop curtain with a scene called "The Land I Live In." Sixteen exits and two iron fire escapes guaranteed quick egress. But the most amazing feature of the auditorium was the twenty-lamp Heisler Electric Light System composed of 225 lights. A dynamo plant in the basement of the four-story theater support building on Sixth Street generated the power to run the electric lights. The support building also housed nine dressing rooms, green room, steam machinery, storage area, carpenter shop, and rehearsal space.

The success of the rebuilt Grand Opera House was short-lived. Fire destroyed the premises on May 28, 1884.

New Grand Opera House

After the fire, Chouteau again selected Oscar Cobb to design his new theater, but this time John Morgan McElfatrick served as associate architect. Seeking something of the unique and exotic, they focused on the Moorish emphasis for the theater's front façade. To further enhance the response, they slightly elongated the front's vertical thrust. Its unique façade design earned the theater a nickname – "the house of make believe." At a height of 102 feet, the four-story theater had a 75-foot frontage at 514 Market by a depth of 145 feet. Construction materials were pressed brick, decorated brick, terra cotta, and Carbondale limestone. In the center of the front design, a two-story Saracenic or horseshoe arch measured 24 feet across and 48 feet high. Below the arch, the main entrance had four sets of double doors. A small balcony and a large multi-colored stained glass window contributed to the façade's unique appeal. A pair of two story Moresque towers, rounded windows, hooded dormers, slate mansard roof, and horseshoe configurations added to its sense of fantasy.



The New Grand Opera House, 514 Market, 1885, Oscar Cobb with John Morgan McElfatrick

Inside the décor continued in the Moorish style. The ticket booth, counting room, and business office connected to the vestibule. The lobby had twin grand staircases and separate lounges for men and women. The auditorium provided 2,600 seats, 21 exits, and a large stage (75 by 50 feet). Steam heated the premises and 1200 electric lights illuminated the interiors. A rear annex or support building housed the green room, 15 dressing rooms, rehearsal hall, carpenter shop, and storage area.

After six months of construction the Grand Opera House gave its first production on September 14, 1885 as a first class drama house under the supervision of John Norton. For a number of years Norton operated this theater in conjunction with the Olympic Theater. Ownership of the Grand Opera House passed to John Rutledge during the mid-1890's. He leased it to Frank Tate in 1898. The theater remained a first class house. In 1912 it underwent an extensive remodeling.

Century Theater

As St. Louis' first theater to be housed in a tall office building, the Century Theater at 911 Olive had a short life, opening September 28, 1896 and closing April 14, 1913. Built for the Century Realty Company under the guidance of Edward Gardner, using mostly Chicago and Pittsburgh capital, the Century Building followed the plans of Chicago architects Raeder, Coffin and Crocker. Spanning the west side of Ninth Street between Olive and Locust, this ten-story building over basement occupied the eastern half of the block, with a total street frontage of 482 feet (228 feet on Ninth and 127 feet on Olive and Locust). Classified as Renaissance Revival, this building used gray Georgia marble over brick to clad its three street facades. Eight elevators and two staircases facilitated vertical movement. Retail operated on the lower two floors and the eight floors above held more than 300 offices. The building cost \$1,300,000.

Enclosed in a brick fire wall, the theater section in the western half of the building extended upward to the fifth floor and included most of the basement area. With its main entrance on Olive and stage entrance on Locust separate from the building entrances, the theater relied on a system of exits leading into an alley on the west side of the auditorium and into the building's main corridor on the east side. The auditorium had 1,600 seats upholstered in leather and featured a cantilevered balcony, a gallery suspended from the ceiling, 600 lights in ground glass globes, and a large stage (61 by 50 feet). Most important, the decoration and design of the ceiling and proscenium arch in the auditorium reflected the work of Adler and Sullivan's Chicago Auditorium. The proscenium's succession of receding arches suggested Sullivan's golden door concept. Just offstage were the star dressing rooms, and under the stage were another 26 dressing rooms plus two assembly halls. The ventilation required fresh air to be washed with water and then to be heated in the winter or cooled in the spring and fall.



The Century Building, 9th & Olive, 1896, Raeder, Coffin and Crocker. The main theater entry was under the arch on the right, with a secondary entrance on Olive.

Operated in conjunction with the Olympic Theater, Pat Short managed the Century, and Frohman's New York syndicate controlled its bookings of first class drama. In 1906 a group of local investors purchased both the Syndicate Trust and the Century Buildings for almost \$4 million. Seven years later the owners bought out the theater's lease and hired architect Harry Roach to remove the theater. Once completed, Roach joined together the first six floors of both buildings allowing for the expansion of the Scruggs, Vandervoort & Barney Department Store into the Century Building.

To Be Continued

SAH 2015 LECTURE SERIES

The St. Louis Public Library's Central Library is partnering with the St. Louis Chapter of the SAH in a series of free architecture lectures throughout 2015. Most talks will be held in the beautiful Carnegie Room at the top of steps on the third floor (also fully accessible). The Steedman Library, the endowed architecture library in the Fine Arts Room, will be open for viewing prior to each lecture.

"79 Views of the Gateway Arch"

Thursday, February 19, 7 p.m.

Justin Scherma, visiting professor at the Washington University School of Landscape Architecture, will discuss his photographic and historical survey of the 79 official neighborhoods of St. Louis.

"Russia in 1993"

Thursday, March 19, 7 p.m.

Peter Wollenberg, architectural conservator of Wollenberg Conservation, will discuss his experiences touring the architectural landmarks of Russia.

"From Abbeys to Street Art: Germany and Austria along the Danube"

Thursday, April 16, 7 p.m.

Paul Hohmann, architect at E+U Architecture and blogger at Vanishing STL, shares his take on the varied architecture of Central Europe.

"The Works of Eero Saarinen"

Wednesday, September 16, 7 p.m.

John Guenther, FAIA, LEED AP discusses the most talked about the most admired architect of the Mid-Century era, from his winning design for the St. Louis arch in 1948 to his unexpected death in 1961.

"The Architecture of Scotland"

Thursday, October 22, 7 p.m.

Esley Hamilton, historic preservationist with the St. Louis County Department of Parks and Recreation, will review the rich architectural history of Scotland, from the castles and abbeys of the Middle Ages to the famed work of Charles Rennie Mackintosh and modernist Basil Spence.

"Josep Lluís Sert and Urban Design"

Thursday, November 19, 7 p.m.

Eric Mumford, author and professor of architecture at the Washington University Sam Fox School, discusses the Catalan architect. Mumford is the co-editor of *Josep Lluís Sert: the architect of urban design, 1953-1969*, published in 2008.

TOWER GROVE PARK LECTURE SERIES FOR 2015

For the 26th year, the Friends of Tower Grove Park are sponsoring a series of lectures relating to the park, landscape design, and the life and times of Henry Shaw. Louis Gerteis, professor of history at UMSL, has faithfully shepherded this series for the past several years. The series is held in the Stupp Center in the park near the corner of Grand and Arsenal and is free.

"Landscape Architecture and the Rural Cemetery Movement in the Era of Henry Shaw"

Sunday, March 1, 3 p.m.

Nancy Ylvisaker is president of the Bellefontaine Cemetery Association, the non-profit organized in 1849 to create and maintain the region's largest non-sectarian cemetery. Bellefontaine's design is one of the nation's finest examples of the so-called rural cemetery movement.

"Transforming the Arch Experience"

Sunday, April 12, 3 p.m.

Ryan McClure and Mike Venso are museum consultants with CityArchRiver, the organization that has been spearheading the massive renovation of the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial. McClure and Venso will discuss their plans to expand the museum's exhibits.

Exhibit: American Buildings: Architectural Drawings from the Collection of Kyrle Boldt III

October 3, 2014 to February 14, 2015

The Sheldon Galleries, 3648 Washington Ave.

The Bernoudy Gallery of Architecture at the Sheldon is featuring selections of early- and mid-20th century architectural renderings exhibition from the collection of Kyrle Boldt III. They celebrate the art of the architectural delineator. Created before the days of computer technology and AutoCad, the drawings selected by Boldt were made primarily for presentation purposes. The exhibit includes examples of residential, commercial and industrial designs from the offices of Frank Lloyd Wright; Harris Armstrong; Frederick Dunn; Helfensteller, Hirsch and Watson; Murphy & Mackey; Meyer Loomstein; Henry Ives Cobb; Holabird and Root; Leonard Haeger; and many others.

MAC MIZUKI PHOTO COLLECTION NOW AVAILABLE

by Lauren Pey

The Missouri History Museum is pleased to announce the completion of processing and cataloging work on the Mac Mizuki Photography Collection. The collection contains negatives and other material created by Henry T. (Mac) Mizuki in the course of operating his independent photography studio, Mac Mizuki – Photography. Approximately 1,590 separate job assignments dating from 1953-1989 are represented in the collection. Mizuki specialized in interior and exterior architectural photography throughout the St. Louis area. In addition, the collection includes industrial photography, product shots taken for advertisements, and portraits of various individuals and groups.

Mizuki, who was born in 1919, opened his studio around 1953 and remained in business until his retirement in 1986. Much of his collection captures the boom of the post-war suburbs, extensively documenting the new houses, churches, schools, libraries, offices, department stores, and shopping centers that sprang up throughout St. Louis County. Many of these buildings were designed by prominent St. Louis-area architects working in the Modern and Mid-Century Modern styles, including Hellmuth, Obata & Kassabaum (HOK); Murphy & Mackey; Russell, Mullgardt, Schwarz & Van

Hoefen and succeeding firms; William B. Ittner, Inc.; Ittner & Bowersox, Kromm, Rikimaru & Johansen; Charles King; and Eugene J. Mackey III. While much of the collection focuses on the growth of St. Louis County, St. Louis City is also represented. Photos taken within the city show the construction of the Pruitt-Igoe housing project, as well as interior and exterior views of Pruitt-Igoe, Darst, and Cochran Gardens. Images of the city also show new office buildings, apartment buildings, and urban renewal projects.

Mizuki's job files usually included detailed information about the date, client, and subject. He also kept a file of clippings to document his published work. Full catalog records for all jobs and all currently digitized and cataloged images can be searched via the Cross Collections Search on the Missouri History Museum website, available at <http://collections.mohistory.org>. A full finding aid, 222 pages long, can be accessed through the collection-level record.

Editor's Note: Lauren Pey has been the Elkington Architectural Photo Processing Archivist for the Missouri History Museum since 2013. Her position was created through a bequest from Maxine Elkington (1923-2011), an architect who was the wife of architect Robert Elkington (1915-1994), a prominent modernist. Lauren can be reached at 314-746-4512 or lpey@mohistory.org.

News Letter

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