

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic THE DUPAGE THEATRE AND THE DUPAGE SHOPPES

and or common NICKNAME "THE DUPE"

2. Location

street & number 101-109 SOUTH MAIN STREET not for publication

city, town LOMBARD vicinity of

state ILLINOIS code 012 county DUPAGE code 043

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Global Reach Ltd. (Joseph A. Krier, sole shareholder)

street & number 23 W. St. Charles Road

city, town Lombard vicinity of state Illinois

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. DuPage County Courthouse—Recorder of Deeds

street & number 421 N. County Farm Road

city, town Wheaton state Illinois

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title N/A has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date federal state county local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

EXTERIOR

The DuPage Theatre and building is a square complex with a barrel-shaped roof that faces west onto Main Street and north towards Parkside Avenue in downtown Lombard, Illinois. It is directly south of the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad station and St. Charles Road, the main shopping strip in downtown Lombard. It is two stories tall, with a three story theatre entrance roof line.

The theatre itself runs along the south end of the building and covers approximately 14,000 square feet. Four store fronts face Main Street while three open off of Parkside Avenue with an entry for the ten second story apartments also facing Parkside.

At street level, the theatre entrance facade (west facade, SW corner) is comprised of three pairs of aluminum/plate glass doors which are flanked by movie poster cases set in the two side piers. This area was remodeled in the late 1950's. While the original configuration was retained, none of the original features are evident. The original terra cotta and poster cases remain behind this newer porcelain facing.

Above the entry doors spreads the lighted marquee which is the theatre's second. The marquee was altered from the traditional straight-sided rectangular shape to an angled trapezoid at the same time that the street facade was altered. The name DUPAGE appears in neon at the top of the marquee.

Rising above the marquee for three stories is the theatres' ornamental terra cotta facade. Two-color side piers with rope moulding, frame a diamond pattern field into which is centered the traditional arched movie palace window and smaller pedimented windows. The lower half of the central arch design provides windows for an apartment while the top half is of a black terra cotta cartouche surrounded by ornamentation.

The pediment's sweeping curve exhibits Baroque influences, and supports a central vase while shallow urns crown the side piers.

The balance of the west and north facades are of buff brick highlighted with terra cotta mouldings and medallions. The NW corner storefront retains its original windows and transoms while the balance of the storefronts have been altered. (Transoms and terra cotta base blocks are in storage in the building.) Above the north west corner and central apartment entrance the two story windows are surrounded by twisting pilasters, a broken pediment and recessed niche at the roof line.

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DuPage Theatre

INTERIOR

Upon entering the front doors one passes first into the ticket lobby, a one story room 22 ft. deep by 24 1/2 ft. wide. The floor is of checkered terrazzo with modest decorative plaster framed panels and walls scored to simulate stone blocks. At the center stands the original octagon ticket booth of gray marble, wainscoting supporting twisted columns and a decorative cornice. The original brass ticket machine still sits ready to serve customers.

Passing through the next set of wood and brass fixtured doors (original), one enters the theatre's Grande Hall or lobby. The original lighting fixtures have been replaced by Empire Style crystal chandeliers.

The terrazzo floor, of black, red and beige set in a diagonal parquet pattern, travels east 57 1/2 ft., where it joins with the inner foyer.

Alternating along both side walls are Renaissance paneled piers whose panels are of urns and floral motifs, and panels framed in rope mouldings. Centered at the top of these panels is a heraldic shield surrounded by foliated forms. An inner panel is defined with an acanthus moulding. The walls are of stucco as is the ceiling.

Lighting for this area is provided by contemporary wrought iron ceiling fixtures that are not original but are not out of context with the auditoriums "Spanish Patio" styling.

Passing through one of the three bracketed archways, one enters the inner foyer which runs north along the rear of the auditorium for 74 feet (15 ft. wide). Access to the seating is provided through four sets of wood plank doors. Waiting patrons may catch a glimpse of the show through one of the three sets of windows along the east wall of the foyer. These sets of six arched leaded windows, set apart by twisted and foliated columns, hint at the present design theme of the auditorium. Walls and ceiling here are also done in plaster stucco.

Mens' and ladies' lounges, and a staircase to the manager's office and projection booth are located along the west wall of the inner foyer.

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DuPage Theatre

AUDITORIUM

The DuPages' Auditorium was designed to create an atmospheric "Spanish Patio" under the stars.

The side walls consist of an arcade of wide arches done in heavy stucco and trimmed with rope moulding. Over every other arch, sits a balconet enriched with a cartouche and festoons and highlighted with a pair of stain glass obelisks. At one time rugs and tapestries hung over the walls of the colonnade while stuffed birds posed on the branches of trees. Ropes of garland and flowers also added realism against the midnight sky.

Behind these colonnades of arches are aisle one and four, while aisles two and three divide the 857 seats into three long sections (original seating was 1400 but was reduced in the 1950's for greater width and comfort.)

The proscenium arch centered on the east wall is similar to the arches used in Rapp & Rapp's Uptown Theatre, Chicago that are characterized by their concave corners. The proscenium is trimmed out in acanthus borders and rope mouldings.

Flanking the proscenium are the traditional organ grilles and boxes. The organ grill arch repeats the proscenium shape and incorporates a link border moulding surrounding the open plaster grill work of the pipe chamber. Below the organ box, a square arch leads to fire escape doors.

Rising from the floor to the top of the organ grilles on either side are narrow open plaster grilles (used for ventilation) that are crowned with an arched niche in which hangs a bell shaped light fixture, giving a spanish mission flavor.

Overhead the ceiling sweeps down to meet the sidewalls, is painted dark blue, and is studded with twinkling stars. Machines once sent clouds and sun rises wafting across the sky.

One of the finest features of the auditorium is its original lighting fixtures with their cast iron and bronzed arms and brackets supporting amber pebbled stain glass and jeweled shades in a variety of round, bell, box, star and obelisk shapes.

Six rows of original seats remain with their cast iron decorative end standards, and leather and wood seats and backs.

Just in front of the stage is a small orchestra pit and organ lift set behind a decorative balauster rail. Stairs on either side lead from the auditorium floor to the stage.

A small stage, 63 ft. by 10 ft., contains scenery lines and lighting, while a staircase leads up to two large dressing rooms stage left. Still hanging backstage is the theatre's original grande drape of striped silk with heavy fringe.

This nomination contains one contributing building.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates Opened July 26, 1928 **Builder/Architect** R.G. Wolff, Architect; C.M. Briggs, Engineer
Mid-West Paramount Co., Chicago, Gen. Contractor

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The DuPage Theatre possesses architectural significance as a fine smaller suburban movie palace of the late 1920s, and indeed exhibits even greater interest as an example of a limited number of exuberant and imaginative atmospheric type theatres.

In a more humanistic sense the DuPage provided its community with the major source of entertainment and, through the Depression, a safe escape for all.

ARCHITECTURE

The DuPage Theatre and commercial building were designed by architect R. G. Wolff. Mr. Wolff at one time was chief designer for the notable theatre architects C. W. and George Rapp who from the 1910s through the early 1930s all but invented and perfected the design and construction of the American movie palace. Mr. Wolff was a consultant on the historic Chicago Theatre in Chicago, and assisted a Mr. Beuhll (also of the Rapp and Rapp office) in the design of the Patio Theatre on West Irving Park Avenue in Chicago.

The Patio Theatre opened after the DuPage, and various architectural details employed in the DuPage found their way to the later and larger Patio Theatre.

The ancestry of the DuPage's atmospheric style auditorium dates back to 1922, with the opening of John Ebersson's Majestic Theatre in Houston, Texas.

John Ebersson first came to the U.S. from Austria and settled in St. Louis. Some time after 1908, Ebersson joined forces with a theatrical producer and began travelling to smaller towns selling ideas and plans for small opera houses. The times were right and Ebersson's designs were a success. It was not, however, until the movie palace came into existence in the 1920s that Ebersson really made his mark.

Bored with the sameness of turn-of-the-century theatres and early movie palaces (with their academic interiors, classical motifs, crystal chandeliers, red plush carpets, domes and marble staircases) Ebersson devised a unique theme that became known as "atmospheric." Ebersson described his new theatres as "a magnificent amphitheatre under a glorious moonlit sky...an Italian garden, a Persian court, a Spanish patio, or a mystic Egyptian temple yard... where friendly stars twinkled and wisps of clouds drifted." In all, Ebersson designed nearly one hundred atmospheric theatres between 1922 and 1932.

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Aside from the visual fantasy that Eberson created, the atmospheric's chief advantage was cost. Employing a simple vaulted ceiling, little or no marble, no heavy relief plaster domes and ceilings, few chandeliers, and no fine draperies, they saved considerable construction time and money. The atmospheric style theatres were, therefore, able to please both cost-conscious builders and a jaded public that yearned to be transported to more far away and exotic places.

Always practical, John Eberson founded the Michaelangelo Studios of Chicago to produce decorative plaster castings. These would be used to decorate the lobby and auditorium sidewalls in Eberson -designed playhouses throughout the country. Thus, a certain level of standardization was achieved and costs could be defrayed even further.

John Eberson knew what he was doing, as he had a financial interest in Chicago's Capitol Theatre (1924) and Avalon Theatre (1927), both built by Warner Brothers.

Eberson's premier designs include the Paradise, Valencia, and 175th Street Theatres in New York City; The Capitol, Avalon and Paradise Theatres in Chicago; Leow's Akron and Canton Paramount in Ohio; The Majestic in San Antonio; and the Aragon Ballroom in Chicago.

The DuPage is a direct descendant of Eberson's originals and compares in scale with the atmospheric Nortown in Chicago and the Valencia in Evanston, Illinois, both by local architect J.E.O. Pridmore.

The DuPages' closest atmospheric neighbor is the Arcada, about 18 miles west in St. Charles, Illinois.

The idea of combining theatrical, commercial and or residential spaces in one building was not new in 1928 when the DuPage was built. This idea had its roots in later Victorian small-town opera houses that were very often on the second floor or in the back of a city hall, lodge or other commercial structure. Early movie palaces were often placed prominently in multi-purpose structures and office buildings, usually where property was at a premium - as in larger cities - or where cost was a factor as in neighborhoods and smaller towns, such as Lombard. As early as 1889, the famous Auditorium Theatre in Chicago was incorporated into Adler and Sullivan's noted Auditorium Hotel, while the State Lake Theatre was incorporated in Rapp and Rapp's State Lake office building of 1917. The Tivoli Theatre (in nearby Downers Grove Illinois) was designed with street level storefronts and a second story hotel and a bowling alley in the basement. The larger Rialto Square Theatre (1926 Rapp and Rapp) in Joliet, Illinois similarly offers street level storefronts, a basement bowling/billiard ball, and several floors

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of professional office space. In Aurora, Illinois, the Paramount Theatre (1931 Rapp & Rapp) was built without commercial space but a strip of stores was added alongside its auditorium within a few years.

The DuPage is therefore, representative of the theatrical/commercial/residential type building common in the 1920's and is the only such facility to have been built in Lombard and is typical of the atmospheric style of movie palace, already well developed by 1928 (Refer to section 7, Interior Auditorium Description).

The DuPage remains as the only atmospheric suburban movie palace within a 15 mile radius of Lombard.

The "Dupe" as it was nicknamed was constructed on the homesight of a Miss Mae Linee (Mrs. Elkins) herself notable in that she was one of the early movie critics for the Chicago Tribune at a time when movie critiquing was a new field, and women were beginning to break into a man's profession such as journalism.

It is interesting to note that there are two buildings near the property as well, one a gas station and the other a garage which at one time was used for Saturday nite movies back when Lombard was a small rural community. These two buildings are not part of the nomination.

In small town Lombard, the theatre's six storefronts (now seven) were an intregal part of Lombard commerce. Advertised as the smart "DuPage Shoppes", they are to this day an intregal part of Lombard's small downtown. Direct proximity to C & NW passenger train service allowed access by rural residents from miles around.

The DuPage Theatre brought to its small community, theatre, entertainment and culture especially during the lean years of the depression, it offered an escape close to home.

The DuPage's opening film was the Yellow Lily, and was accompanied on the theatre pipe organ, followed by a small orchestra and vaudeville acts. Even veteran George Goble broadcast from the stage on WLS radio. This format continued for many years augmented by "Bank Night" when 25 baskets of food were given out at saturday matinee serial features and cartoons and Saturday nights. With radio in its infancy, expensive to purchase, and no television, the DuPage was and still is an important part of life and provided the fun times for thousands of residents fortunate enough to grow up in sight of her towering facade and dazzling marquee.

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10. Verbal Boundary Description

That part of Block 22 in town of Lombard, being a subdivision in Sections 5, 6, 7, 8 and 18, Township 39 North, Range 11, East of the Third Principal Meridian, described as follows: Beginning at a point on the East line of Main Street, 599.0 feet North of the Southwest corner of said block 22 and running thence Easterly to a point of the center line of said block 22 that is 286.8 feet South of the Southerly line of said Parkside Avenue, thence North of said center line of Block 22, 286.8 feet to the Southerly line of said Parkside Avenue, thence Southwesterly along the Southerly line of said Parkside Avenue to the East line of Main Street, 191.85 feet to the place of beginning, according to the Plat thereof recorded April 23, 1868, as document 9483, in DuPage County, Illinois.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Meyer, Franz Sales, Handbook of Ornament, Dover Publications, New York, 1957.
 Lombard Spectator, Lombard, Illinois,
 Budd, Lillian, Footsteps on the Tall Grass Prairie, Lombard Historical Society, 1976.

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property Less than one acre
 Quadrangle name Lombard, IL Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A	1 6	4 1 5 5 5 0	4 6 3 7 4 0 0	B			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

Verbal boundary description and justification

See continuation sheet

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

1. Laura Croshere
 name/title 2. Don Lampert
 3. Pete Kramer
 organization 1. Park Avenue Antiques, Inc. date August, 1987
 street & number 1. 23 W. St. Charles Road telephone 1. 312-953-1044
 2. 2257 N. Kedzie Blvd. 2. 312-252-6183
 3. 272 E. Taylor 3. 312-627-4051
 city or town 1. Lombard, IL 60148 2. Chicago, IL 60647 state 3. Lombard, IL 60148

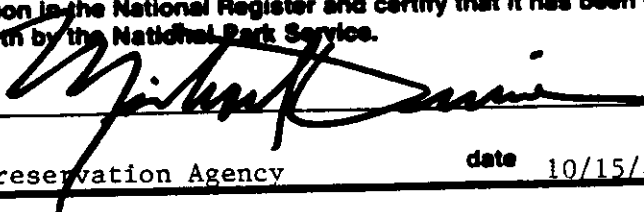
12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature



title Director, Illinois Historic Preservation Agency date 10/15/87

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

date

Attest:

Chief of Registration



United States Department of the Interior



NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

P.O. BOX 37127

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20013-7127

IN REPLY REFER TO:

NOV 27 1987

The Director of the National Park Service is pleased to inform you that the following properties have been entered in the National Register of Historic Places beginning November 15, 1987 and ending November 21, 1987. For further information call (202) 343-9552.

STATE, County, Vicinity, Property, Address, (Date Listed)

- AMERICAN SOMOA, Western Division, A'a Village Site (AS34-33) (11/19/87)
AMERICAN SOMOA, Western Division, Tataga-Matau Fortified Quarry Complex (AS-34-10) (11/19/87)
- COLORADO, Denver County, Denver, First Congregational Church, 980 Clarkson St. (11/16/87)
- CONNECTICUT, Hartford County, Southington, Frost, Levi B., House, 1089 Marion Ave. (11/20/87)
- FLORIDA, Leon County, Tallahassee, Woman's Club of Tallahassee, 1513 Cristobal Dr. (11/20/87)
- ILLINOIS, Dupage County, Lombard, Dupage Theatre and Dupage Shoppes, 101--109 S. Main St. (11/20/87)
ILLINOIS, LaSalle County, Utica, Spring Valley House-Sulphur Springs Hotel, Dee Bennett Rd. (11/20/87)
ILLINOIS, Winnebago County, Rockford, Haight Village Historic District, Roughly bounded by Walnut & Kishwaukee Sts., Chicago Northwestern RR tracks, & Madison St. (11/20/87)
ILLINOIS, Woodford County, Benson, Benson Water Tower, Clayton St. between Front & Pleasant Sts. (11/20/87)
- IOWA, Henry County, Mount Pleasant, Harlan House Hotel, 122 N. Jefferson St. (11/16/87)
IOWA, Lucas County, Chariton, Stephens, A. J., House, 123 Seventeenth St. (11/16/87)
IOWA, Washington County, Washington, Stewart, Frank, House, 603 W. Washington St. (11/16/87)
- LOUISIANA, Rapides Parish, Alexandria, Masonic Home for Children, 5800 Masonic Dr. (11/20/87)
LOUISIANA, Rapides Parish, Meeker, Meeker Sugar Refinery, US 71 (11/16/87)
LOUISIANA, Vermilion Parish, Perry, Perry House, Orange Dr. (11/16/87)
- MICHIGAN, Huron County, Port Hope, First Methodist Episcopal Church (Port Hope MPS), 4451 Second St. (11/20/87)
MICHIGAN, Huron County, Port Hope, Herman House (Port Hope MPS), 4405 Main St. (11/20/87)
MICHIGAN, Huron County, Port Hope, Leuty, Isaac, House (Port Hope MPS), 7955 School St. (11/20/87)
MICHIGAN, Huron County, Port Hope, Masonic Temple (Port Hope MPS), 4425 Main St. (11/20/87)
MICHIGAN, Huron County, Port Hope, Schlichting Building (Port Hope MPS), 4443 Main St. (11/20/87)
MICHIGAN, Huron County, Port Hope, St. John's Lutheran Church (Port Hope MPS), 4527 Second St. (11/20/87)
MICHIGAN, Huron County, Port Hope, Stafford, Frederick H. and Elizabeth, House (Port Hope MPS), 4489 Main St. (11/20/87)
MICHIGAN, Huron County, Port Hope, Stafford, W. R., Flour Mill and Elevator (Port Hope MPS), 4310 Huron St. (11/20/87)