

REFERENCE CODE: AkAMH

REPOSITORY NAME:

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TITLE: Porath Architects 4th Avenue Theatre Collection

COLLECTION NUMBER: B2023.004

OVERVIEW OF THE COLLECTION

Dates: 1992

Extent: 1 Box and 1 oversize folder

Language and Scripts: English

Name of creator(s): Porath Architects

Administrative/Biographical History:

Porath Architects was founded by Dale Porath and Art Kjos as Porath Kjos in 1982. Kjos left the firm two years later and Porath added other partners later, including them in the firm's name. In 1999, the firm was bought by Bill Tatom who had worked for the firm from 1984-1996. Porath Architects provided design services including design-build work, and specialized in planning schools, retail facilities, and churches. Major projects for the firm included the early 1980s design of Mears Junior High School; remodeling University Center to add a theater; renovating Dimond Center to include a skating rink and office tower; designing Valley River Center in Eagle River and planning for Carrs stores construction. The firm also worked on plans of the downtown Anchorage FBI building and renovating Kmart stores. ¹

The 4th Avenue Theatre originally was a movie theater, radio station, and a television station. It was an example of Art Deco architecture designed by B. Marcus Priteca, along with Augustine A. Porreca of Seattle. The building was commissioned to be built by Alaska

¹ Pounds, Nancy. Business Profile: Porath Tatom Architects. In Alaska Journal of Commerce, <https://www.alaskajournal.com/community/2002-01-07/business-profile-porath-tatom-architects>.

entrepreneur Austin “Captain” Lathrop. Construction began in 1941 and was completed by 1947. The inside of the building consisted of murals of Mount Denali and The Big Dipper as symbols of Alaska. The murals, as well as the original interior design, were by Anthony B. Heinsbergen and Frank Bouman of Los Angeles.² The theater had nearly 1,000 seats and was over 11,500 square feet in size. It ran primarily as a single movie theater from the 1940s until the 1980s. Included in the building was a radio station and a television station located in the building as well as a penthouse for Lathrop. The 4th Avenue Theatre was used as a banquet hall and events center for a few years. It was vacant for nearly fifteen years until it was demolished at the end of 2022.³

In 1992, the 4th Avenue Theatre had a renovation conducted by Porath Architects in order to meet preservation standards for the National Park Service for Historic Preservation. During that time period, it was owned by Robert Gottstein of Iditarod Properties Incorporated of Anchorage, AK.⁴ The plans were to have the 4th Avenue Theatre be converted into a part-time banquet hall, gift shop, theater, and snack bar. Renovations were conducted from October 1991 to June 1992. William ‘Bill’ Tatom of Porath Architects did the before and after renovation assessments.

Scope and Content Description:

This collection consists of 19 folders that were rehoused from original two binders with the Historic Preservation Certification Application created by Porath Architects, which includes 368 4x6 inch photographs of the theatre before and after the renovation. The collection also includes 26 schematic drawings that accompany the application and represent the proposed remodels to the office and penthouse are housed in an oversized folder in the map drawers.

CONDITIONS GOVERNING ACCESS AND USE

Restrictions on Access: The collection is open for research use.

Physical Access: Original items in good condition.

Technical Access: No special equipment is needed to access the materials.

Conditions Governing Reproduction and Use:

The Anchorage Museum is the owner of the materials and makes available reproductions for research, publication, and other uses. Written permission must be obtained from the Anchorage Museum before any reproduction use. The Anchorage Museum does not

² Hoagland, Alison. (1993). *Buildings of Alaska*. Oxford University Press.

³ Thiessen, Mark. Associated Press. Efforts fail to save historic Alaska theater from demolition. The San Diego Union-Tribune, <https://www.sandiegouniontribune.com/entertainment/national/story/2022-08-04/efforts-fail-to-save-historic-alaska-theater-from-demolition>.

⁴ Bennett. Ed. Business History. Alaska Journal of Commerce. <https://www.alaskajournal.com/community/2003-09-02/business-history>.

necessarily hold copyright to all of the materials in the collections. In some cases, permission for use may require seeking additional authorization from the copyright owners.

Preferred Citation:

Porath Architects 4th Avenue Theatre Collection, Anchorage Museum, B2023.4

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Acquisition and Appraisal Information

Donated by Jobe Paul Bernier for Nvision Architecture (formerly Porath Architects) in March 2023.

Processing Note

Materials originally housed in binders were rehoused in archival folders.

Separated Materials

Materials that were not pertinent to the collection or duplicated materials already in other collections were weeded and offered back to the donor.

RELATED MATERIALS

Lu Liston Collection, B1989.016

Doris Rhodes Slides, B1993.020

Morris Reese Slides, B2000.017

Henry M. deButts Slides, B2009.038

William Jennings Bryan Swank Photographs, B2012.006

Frank Borys Slides, B2012.029

Hobart Hyatt Collection, B2012.030

Louise Gallop Collection, B2014.001

Walter Deane Slides, B2014.002

Matthew P. Mullaney Slides, B2014.019

Leonard and Geraldine Thomas Photographs, B2017.007

George Hayes Collection, B2018.020

SUBJECTS

4th Avenue Theatre

Bouman, Frank George, 1914-1999

Empress Theatre

Fourth Avenue Theatre

Gottstein, Robert, 1957-

Heinsbergen, Anthony B., 1894-1981

Hufeisen, C. Williams

Iditarod Properties Incorporated

Lathrop, Austin "Cap," 1865-1950

Lathrop Building
Nvision Architecture
Pantages Theater
Porreca, Augustine A., 1898 - 1992
Priteca, B. Marcus, 1889-1971
Porath Architects
Tatom, Bill III, 1952 -
Architectural drawings – 20th century – Alaska
Architectural firms – Alaska
Architecture – 20th century – Alaska
Art deco – Architecture – Alaska
Building – Repair and reconstruction – Alaska
Business enterprises – Alaska
Mural painting and decoration – Alaska
Theaters – motion pictures – Alaska
Anchorage (Alaska)

Detailed Description of the Collection

Box 1

Historic Certification Application

Binder 1

Folder 1 - Historic Preservation Certification Application [Part 2 Description of Rehabilitation March 18, 1992]

Folder 2 - A. Exterior Entry – Three pages of photographs of the exterior entry. Eight photographs total.

Folder 3 - B. Lower Lobby – Thirteen pages of photographs of the lower lobby. Forty-two photographs total.

Folder 4 - C. Upper Lobby – Eight pages of photographs of the upper lobby. Thirty photographs total.

Folder 5 - D. Lower Theater – Six pages of photographs of the lower theater. Eighteen photographs total.

Folder 6 - E. Upper Theater – Six pages of photographs of the upper theater. Sixteen photographs total.

Folder 7 - F. Penthouse – Ten pages of photographs of the penthouse. Thirty-four photographs total.

Folder 8 - G. Attic/Storage – Eight pages of photographs of the attic/storage. Twenty-eight photographs total.

Folder 9 - H. Café/Misc. – Three pages of photographs of the café and of the radio station office. Twelve photographs total.

Binder 2

Folder 10 - Historic Preservation Certification Application [Request for Certification of Completed Work September 8, 1992]

Folder 11 - A. Exterior/Entry – Description of photographs. Three pages of photographs of the exterior entry. Eight photographs total.

Folder 12 - B. Lower Lobby – Description of photographs. Thirteen pages of photographs of the lower lobby. Forty-two photographs total.

Folder 13 - C. Upper Lobby – Description of photographs. Eight pages of photographs of the upper lobby. Thirty photographs total.

Folder 14 - D. Lower Theater – Description of photographs. Six pages of photographs of the lower theater. Seventeen photographs total.

Folder 15 - E. Upper Theater – Description of photographs. Six pages of photographs of the upper theater. Sixteen photographs total.

Folder 16 - F. Penthouse – Description of photographs. Ten pages of photographs of the penthouse. Thirty-four photographs total.

Folder 17 - G. Attic/Storage – Description of photographs. Eight pages of photographs of the attic and storage area. Twenty-one photographs total.

Folder 18 - H. Café/Misc. – Description of photographs. Three pages of photographs of the café and doorway. Twelve photographs total.

Misc.

Folder 19 – Schematic. Conf. Room 403 Lighting Plan. 1/8" = 1' 0".

OVERSIZED

Folder 1

4th Avenue Theatre, Penthouse Remodel. Iditarod Properties. Inc. Owner, Anchorage, Alaska. Drawing Index.

4th Avenue Hotel, 4th Avenue, Anchorage, Alaska. Schematic Design A. Sheet Number A of 1. Revisions: Date 3-30-95, Drawn PDD, Check DHP, Project 9440.

4th Avenue Theatre, Penthouse Remodel, Anchorage, Alaska. Floor Plan/Reflected Ceiling Plan. Sheet Number A1. Revisions: Date 11/6/1991, Drawn WFB, Check BT, Project 9148.00.

4th Avenue Theatre Elevator, Anchorage, Alaska. Floor Plans. Sheet Number A1.1. Revisions: Date, Drawn T.Amerson, Check B.Tatom, Project 9148.01.

4th Avenue Theatre Elevator, Anchorage, Alaska. Plans, Details [Schedules]. Sheet Number A1.2. Revisions: Date, Drawn T.Amerson, Check B.Tatom, Project 9148.01.

4th Avenue Theatre Elevator, Anchorage, Alaska. Sections. Sheet Number A1.3. Revisions: Date, Drawn T.Amerson, Check B.Tatom, Project 9148.01.

4th Avenue Theatre, Penthouse Remodel, Anchorage, Alaska. Interior Elevations. Sheet Number A2. Revisions: Date 11/6/1991, Drawn WFB, Check BT, Project 9148.00.

4th Avenue Theatre, Penthouse Remodel, Anchorage, Alaska. Details. Sheet Number A3. Revisions: Date 10/28/1991, Drawn WFB, Check, Project 9148.00.

4th Avenue Theatre, Penthouse Remodel, Anchorage, Alaska. Details. Sheet Number A3.1. Revisions: Date 11/6/1991, Drawn WFB/GDK, Check BT, Project 9148.00.

4th Avenue Theatre, Penthouse Remodel, Anchorage, Alaska. Freight Lift Section/Plan/Electrical. Sheet Number A3.2. Revisions: Date 11/6/1991, Drawn WFB, Check BT, Project 9148.01.

4th Ave. Theatre, Penthouse Remodel, Anchorage, Alaska. Demolition Plans. Sheet Number A4 of 8. Revisions: Date 11/6/91, Drawn TA, Check BT, Project 9148.

4th Ave. Theatre, Penthouse Remodel, Anchorage, Alaska. Stair Plan. Sheet Number A5 of 8. Revisions: Date 11/6/91, Drawn TA, Check BT, Project 9148.

4th Ave. Theater, Penthouse Remodel, Anchorage, Alaska. Sections at Stair. Sheet Number A6 of 8. Revisions: Date 11/6/91, Drawn TA, Check BT, Project 9148.

4th Ave. Theatre, Penthouse Remodel, Anchorage, Alaska. Sections and Details. Sheet Number A7 of 8. Revisions: Date 11/6/91, Drawn TA, Check BT, Project 9148.

4th Ave. Theatre, Penthouse Remodel, Anchorage, Alaska. Details. Sheet Number A8 of 8. Revisions: Date 11/6/91, Drawn TA, Check BT, Project 9148.

4th Ave. Theatre, Penthouse Remodel, Anchorage, Alaska. Structural Plans and Stair Details. Sheet Number S-1. Revisions: Date 11/6/91, Drawn TJF/MWB, Check DLB, Project.

4th Ave. Theater, Office Remodel, Anchorage, Alaska. Sheet Number N-1. Revisions: Date 10/28/91, Drawn JW, Check CLL, Project 1064.

4th Ave. Theatre, Penthouse Remodel, Anchorage, Alaska. Mechanical Plans [Details]. Sheet Number M-1 of 1. Revisions: Date 11/06/91, Drawn JW, Check CLL, Project 1064.

4th Ave. Theater, Office Remodel, Anchorage, Alaska. Sheet Number E-1 of 3. Revisions: Date 10/28/91, Drawn JW, Check FM, Project 1054.

4th Avenue Theatre, Penthouse Remodel, Anchorage, Alaska. Power plan legion [fixture schedule]. Sheet Number E-1 of 4. Revisions: Date 11/06/91, Drawn JW, Check FM, Project 1064.

4th Ave. Theater, Office Remodel, Anchorage, Alaska. Sheet Number E-2 of 3. Revisions: Date 10/28/91, Drawn JW, Check FM, Project 1064.

4th Avenue Theatre, Penthouse Remodel, Anchorage, Alaska. Lighting Plan [panel schedule]. Sheet Number E-2 of 4. Revisions: Date 11/06/91, Drawn JW, Check WB, Project 1064.

4th Ave. Theater, Office Remodel, Anchorage, Alaska. Sheet Number E-3 of 3. Revisions: Date 10/28/91, Drawn JW, Check FM, Project 1064

4th Avenue Theater, Penthouse Remodel, Anchorage, Alaska. Stair [partial floorplans]. Sheet Number E-3 of 4. Revisions: Date 11/06/91, Drawn JW, Check FM, Project 1064.

4th Avenue Theatre, Penthouse Remodel, Anchorage, Alaska. Electrical Specifications. Sheet Number E-4 of 4. Revisions: Date 11/06/91, Drawn JW, Check WB, Project 1064.

4th Avenue Theatre, Penthouse Remodel, Anchorage, Alaska. Structural Details/Penthouse. Revisions: Date 10/28/1991, Drawn WFB.

Guide written: July 21, 2023