The Carolina Theatre

A classic venue for a modern draw

The Carolina Theatre, built in 1927 and listed on the National Register of Historic Places, is as timeless as it is beautiful, making it one of Greensboro’s most revered downtown landmarks.

Today, the theatre attracts some 90,000 people to the city each year to experience the atmosphere and ambiance of another era, while enjoying modern entertainment at its finest.

In its early days, as a popular stop for performers traveling between Washington and Atlanta, the theatre hosted some of the era’s most famous vaudeville performers. The Carolina also served as a first-run movie house for silent films.

Other firsts for the venue? It was one of the first air-conditioned public buildings in North Carolina, and in 1928 it installed the Vitaphone Sound System, becoming only the second theater in the state to have talking motion pictures. Today, the Carolina offers Dolby Digital Surround Sound and state-of-the-art projection capabilities.

Through the mid-20th century, the 1,100-seat theatre continued to serve as a community gathering place with events including live productions, films, and Saturday morning children’s programs. Caught in the midst of the growth of movie multiplexes and suburban shopping centers, however, the theatre’s allure faded. It was nearly razed to make room for a parking lot. In 1977, the United Arts Council of Greater Greensboro purchased it to provide a centrally located performing arts center to serve arts agencies and the community.

The Carolina Theatre was — and remains — the perfect spot for community theater, dance and school programs, children’s programs including the Carolina Kids’ Club and Christmas at the Carolina, classic and independent movies, speakers and lecturers, and concerts featuring top names in everything from blues, rock, and folk to R&B, bluegrass, and reggae.

The theatre is available to rent for private events, including weddings, anniversaries, church functions, graduations, and corporate events in both the auditorium and the banquet area, the Renaissance Room.