

A Beauty Spot in a Southern Clime - - The Arcadia

Q New theatre erected and operated by Dent Theatres, Inc., of Dallas, and designed by W. Scott Dunne, offers original as well as practical features in construction. Efficiency in floor plan is an outstanding factor.



The entrance to the Arcadia. The tree stump is of concrete reinforced with railroad rails, while the branches are of angle iron bolted to the rails. Surely, no tree in Arcadia was ever stronger.

O RIGINALITY, of course, is that which makes men and things—from cabbages to kings—outstanding. And on the other hand, originality may be that which makes men and things merely bizarre—and thus, as time passes on, ridiculous. But, as the wise men have said about conduct (which is an art itself), the proper course is that of moderation. And in this fashion is introduced the Arcadia.

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The Arcadia is a house erected and operated by Dent Theatres, Inc., in a suburb of Dallas. It is an unusual motion picture palace. But it would seem that it is also a house of lasting beauty—as lasting as even beauty may ever be. And these are serious matters in the designing of theatres, par-

ticularly when one considers the fact that the city of Dallas itself has a sizeable but not extremely large population of less than 300,000.

The Arcadia, however, is not only an original and attractive theatre. It is an exceedingly practical theatre for its purposes. The Dent circuit, of course, has had the experience in handling large numbers of people pleasure-bent that many other circuits have had. And it has applied the lessons learned.

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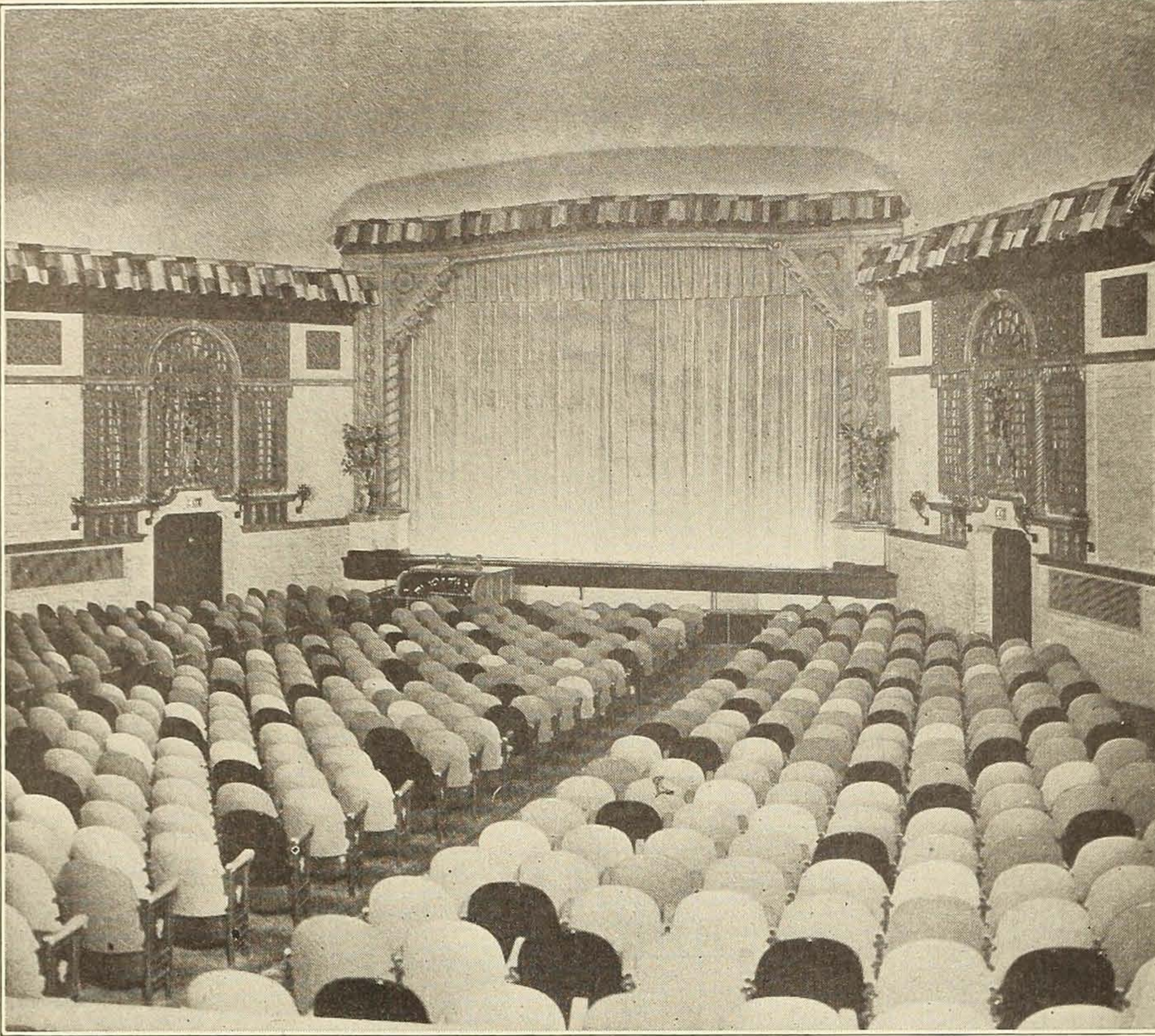
The Arcadia has a floor plan notably efficient for the handling of such crowds. It is surrounded by large parking slabs. Comfort and convenience were obviously as much the guiding factors in the designing

of this house as was the need for beauty. For the Arcadia is situated in a residential community of the higher type.

The Arcadia was designed by W. Scott Dunne after a series of consultations with practical showmen, to be accommodated in an arcade shopping building measuring 100x110, owned by A. J. Klein of Dallas. This building occupied a corner and was set 50 feet back of sidewalk lines and 50 feet off the north and west property lines, the intervening spaces having been paved with concrete so that the building stood as an island surrounded by parking space.

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It was decided to use two-thirds of the depth of the building along its entire length and in addition to project this 60-foot width



A view of the auditorium, looking toward the stage. To the patron, the ceiling has a true sky effect, the blue reaching down to the top of the "garden" walls, back of the tiled colonnade. The motif is Mediterranean.

northward over the slab there, thus securing a space 60x160 parallel to Greenville avenue, and to use the original arcade entrance in the center of the building for the theatre entrance. As 25 feet was devoted to stage, this brought the entrance of the theatre to the righthand side of the theatre, a little to the rear of the center of the auditorium, which was excellent for the amphitheatre type of theatre desired. The potential clientele of fairly well-to-do home owners made a balcony inadvisable, and the amphitheatre house is the nearest possible approach to the one-floor, one-price house.

The interior of the space to be used was gutted, except for the shops facing on Sears street. The forward end and north slab were excavated, forming a concrete basement under stage (in which are the dressing rooms and art shop) and giving slope to the floor, and the rear end was vaulted over the shops, which remained in their original positions.

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The auditorium is atmospheric. The motif is a garden wall and colonnade in the Mediterranean style. The garden walls are of travertine stone, the columns above them of plaster, surmounted by a tile coping of variegated color. The smaller columns are also of plaster and are surmounted by wrought iron lamps of Italian design.

The entrance foyer is simple and beautiful. It is of travertine with a micolithic ceiling. Five one-sheet size, wrought iron frames in Italian design, adorn each wall. Three are practical one sheet frames, and two contain bevel mirrors. In the vestibule between this foyer and the auditorium are two additional wrought iron frames enclosing full length mirrors. Suspended wrought iron lamps are additional fixtures in foyer and vestibule. There is also a handsome drinking fountain in the vestibule.

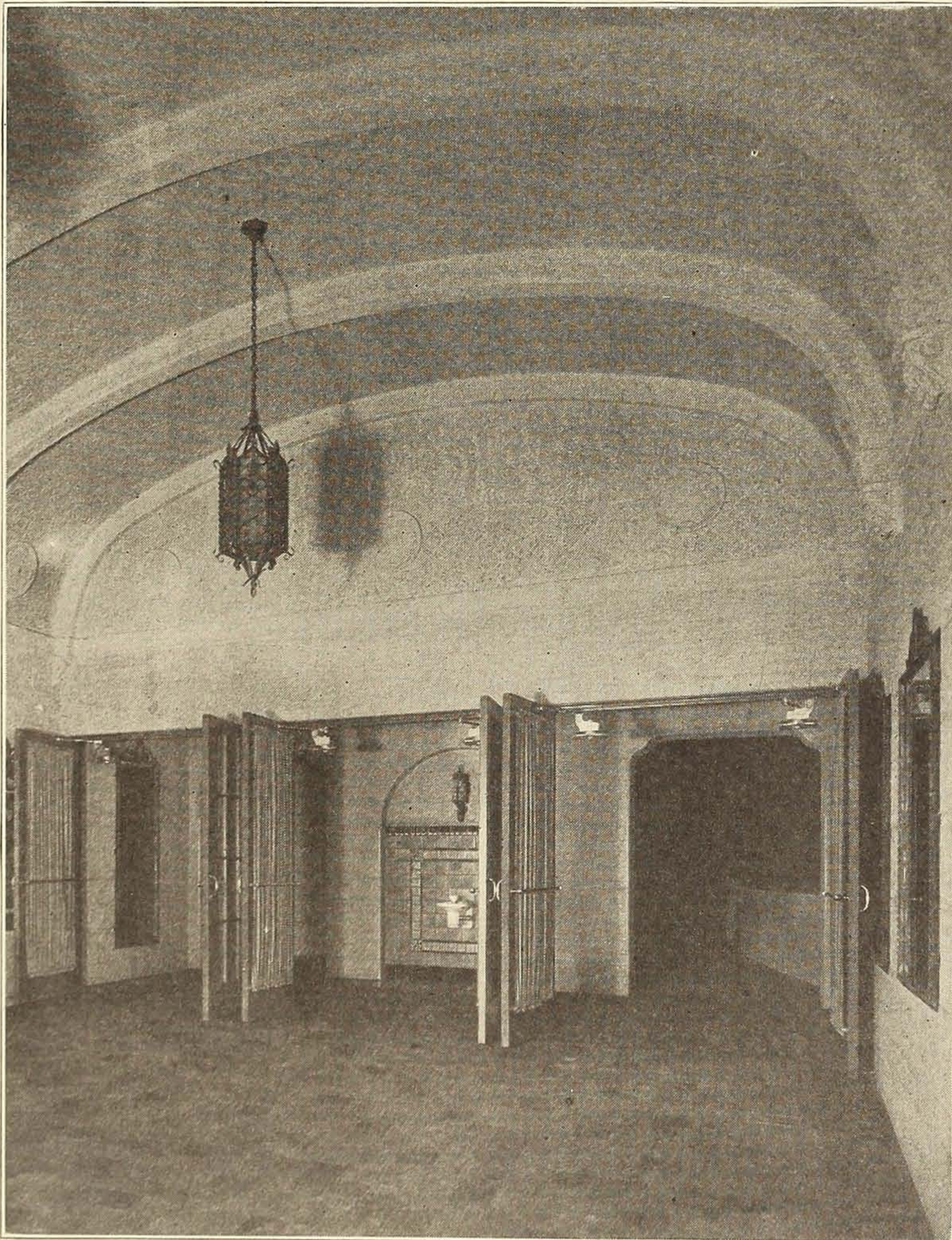
The Arcadia stage is fully rigged. Below it are the dressing rooms and art shop, all of concrete. The dressing room floor is reached by a circular staircase of cast iron.

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The booth is equipped with two of the very latest Simplex projectors, Brenkert spot light, double dissolving stereopticon, etc. The location of the booth is such that there is a very insignificant projection angle. Consequently, it shows a better picture than many other houses.

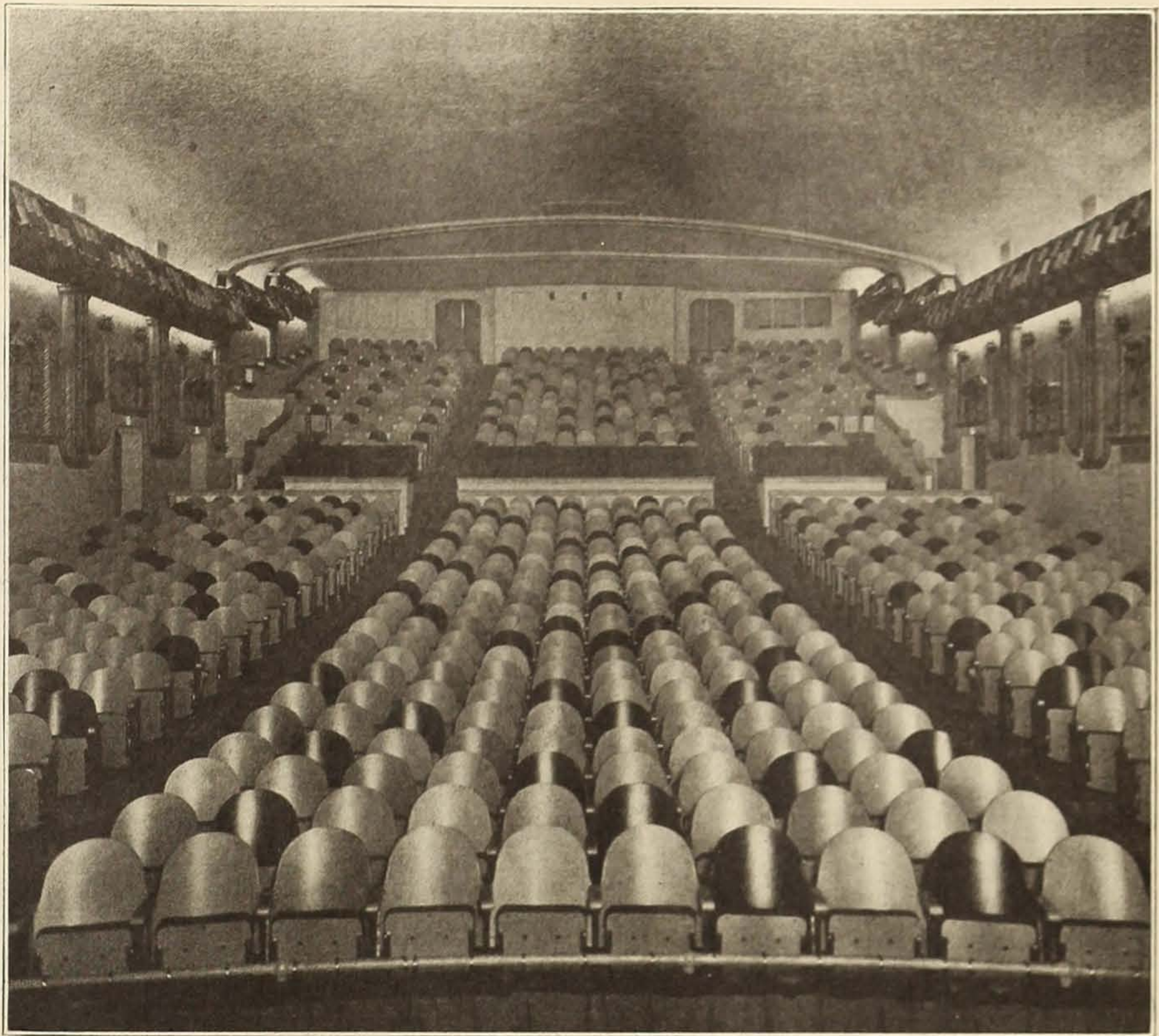
The organ is a Reuter, the largest theatre organ in Dallas, with 12 sets of pipes and several instruments of percussion in the main instrument and an echo organ with quite a complement of instruments.

The seating of the auditorium is a chair of our own design built by American Seating Company. There are 1,040 chairs in the forecourt and amphitheatre. Dent Thea-



The foyer at the entrance to the auditorium. This vaulted chamber is of travertine with a micolithic ceiling. On the walls are five wrought iron frames of Italian design, three for one-sheets, two with mirrors.

The auditorium from the stage. Noteworthy is the unique seating, the 1,040 chairs fitting into the color scheme of the theatre. The seats are in six different color-groups and set with backs fitted at random.



Dent Theatres, Inc., gave an unusual theatre an unusual treatment and caused the seating to be drawn into the decorative scheme of the house. The chair backs and arm rests are finished in duco, with probably the backs of one-half of the total number of chairs done in desert sand, the balance in other colors. There are approximately 100 in cafe-au-lait, 100 in a light shade of blue, 100 in orchid, 100 in green, 100 in Chinese red. All of the arm rests are in desert sand. The pneumatic seats are finished in gray Spanish leather. The backs were fitted at any regularity or irregularity. The effect is as startling as it is pleasing. There is a satiny sheen to these ducoed backs which you will observe in the photo taken from the stage.

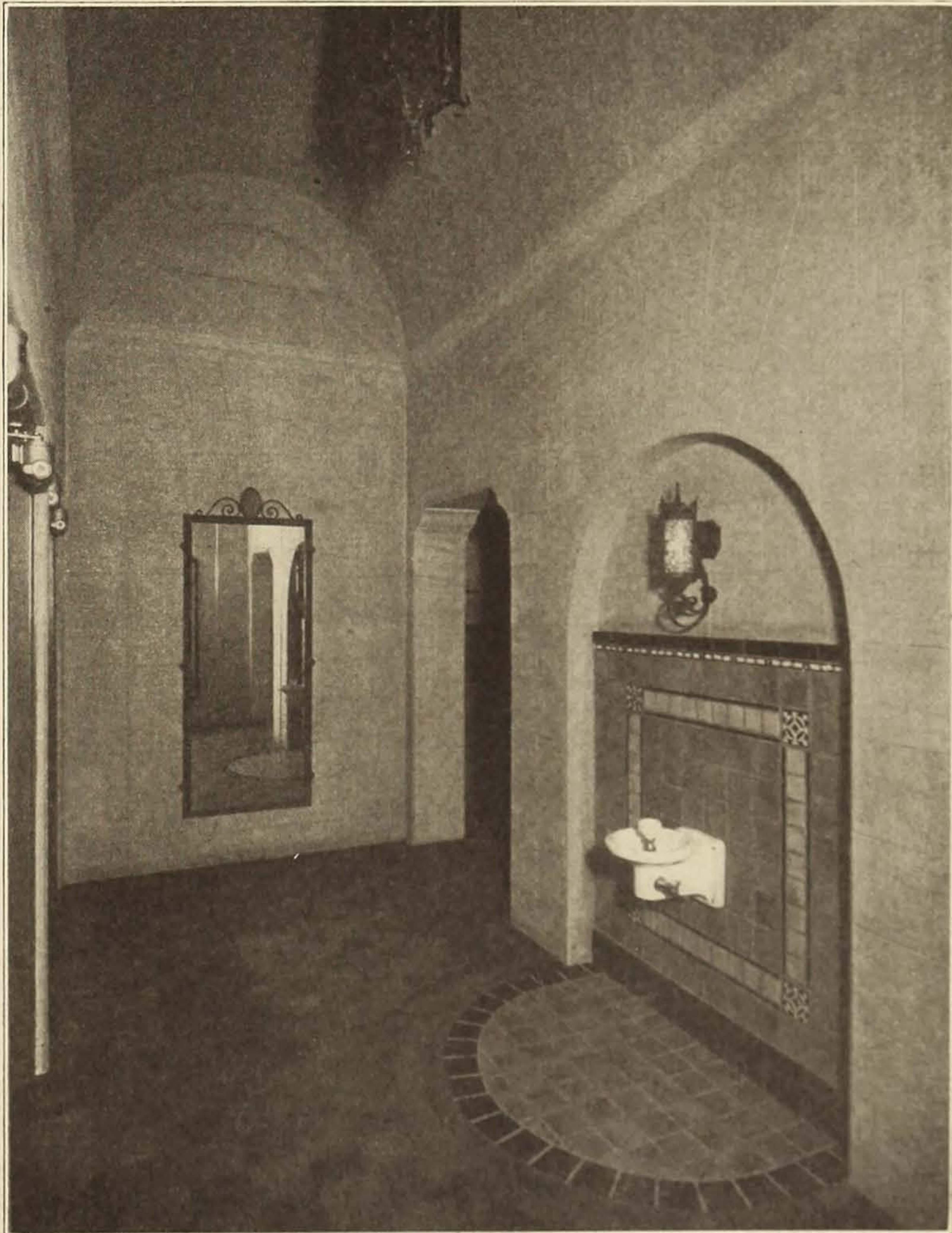
For the loges, the Roxy triple spring seat loge chair was selected. Thirty-one of these are used. They are identical in every detail, even to color, to the chairs in the loge section of the Roxy theatre, New York.

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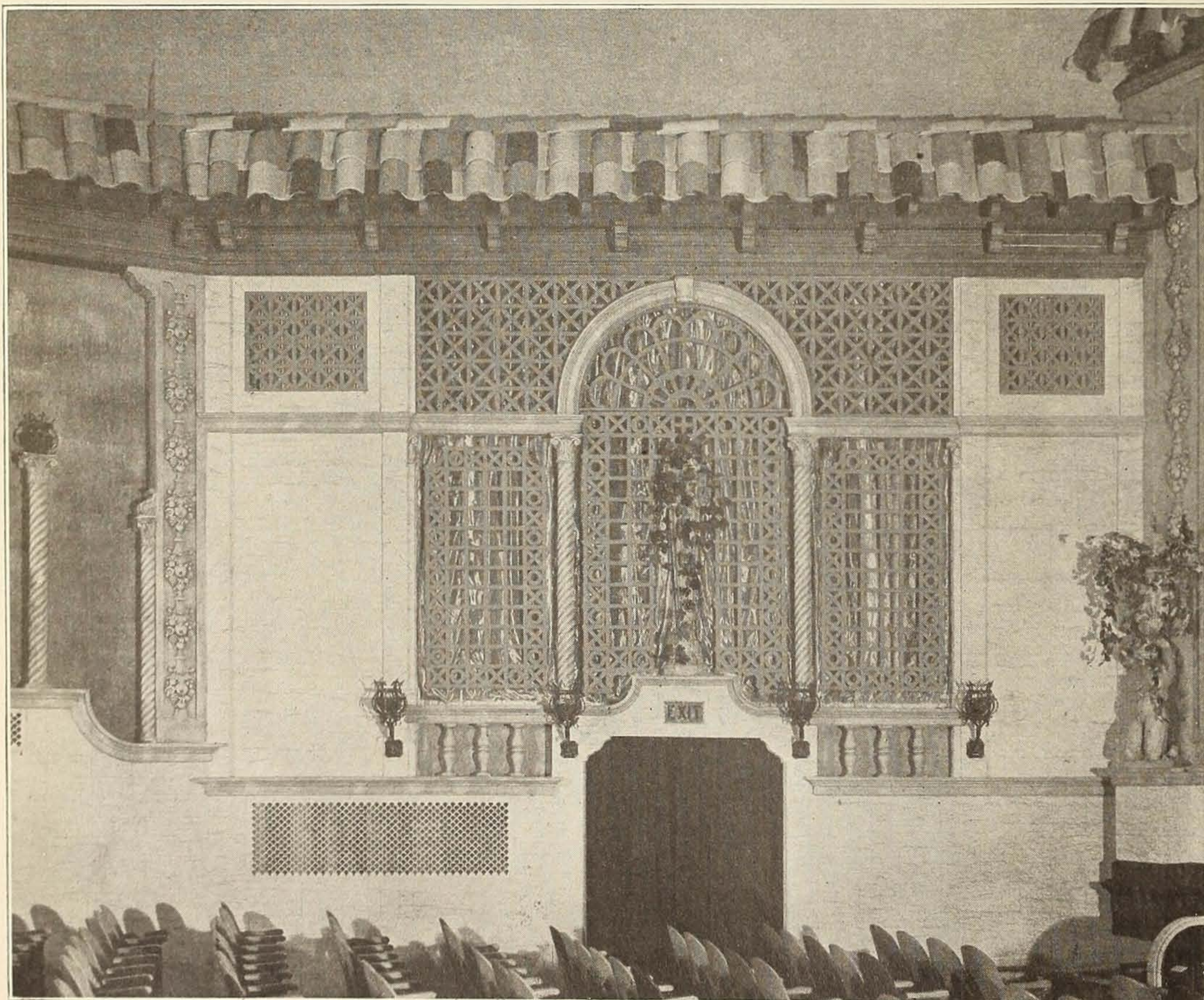
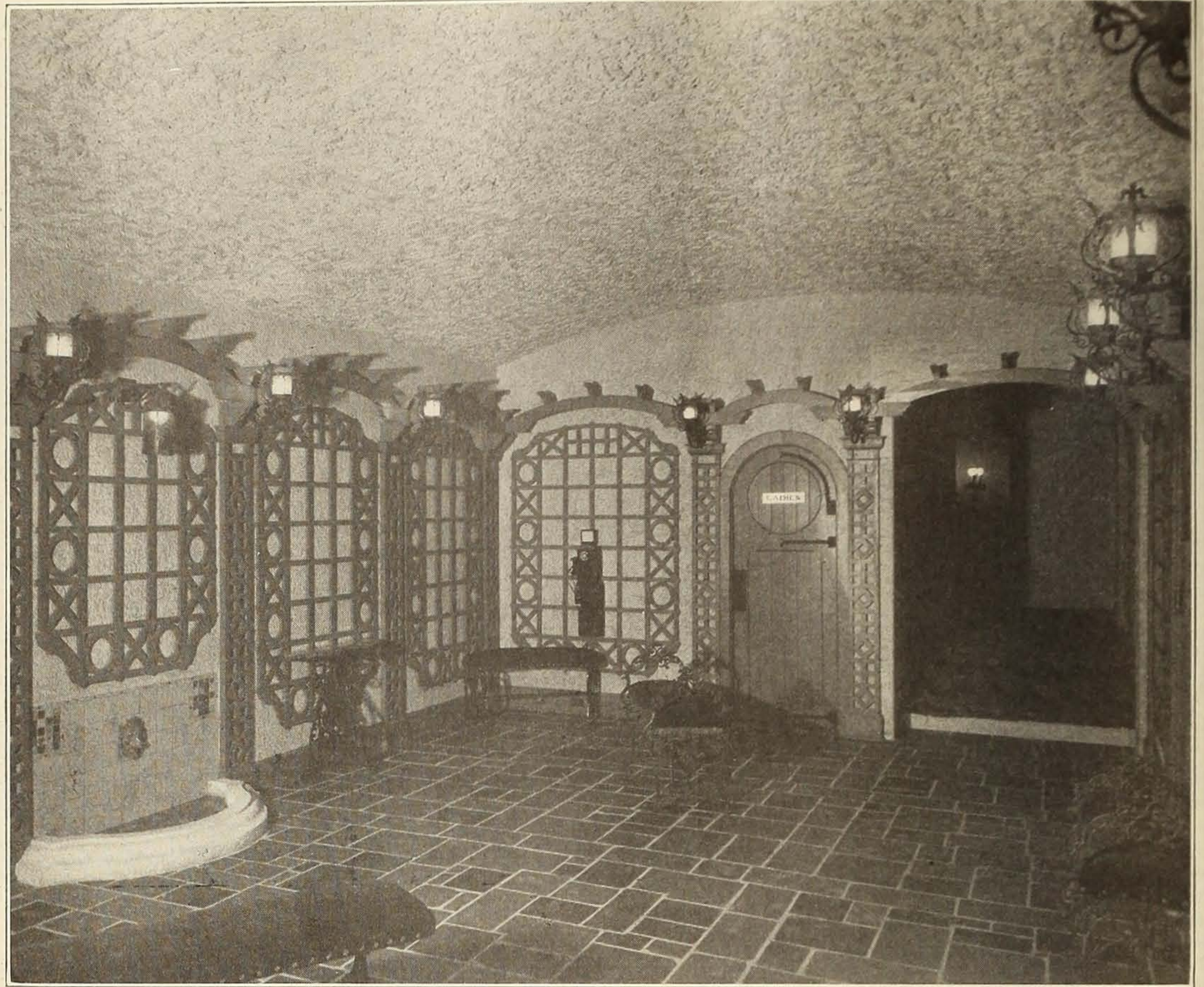
A very excellent ventilating system devised by the engineering department of Dent Theatres, Inc., and found thoroughly practical in other Dent theatres is used in the Arcadia. On the west side of the building, 12 feet above the sidewalk, is a Carrier air washer. From the spray chamber the air is carried down into a large basement located below the center of the auditorium. From the basement it is carried forward under pressure in three concrete ducts, each 4 feet by 4 feet, two of which run along and under the side aisles, and the third running parallel to these along the exact center of the forecourt. The side ducts discharge their cool air through orifices placed along the side walls, at a height of about 6 feet 6 inches. The center duct exhausts this air through grilles under the central bank of seats. The rear section gets an equal amount of cooled air through two galvanized ducts, which discharge through grilles in the floor, and two which exhaust. Another galvanized duct carries air to the lounge beneath the amphitheatre and to the various compartments opening therein. Extending completely across the ceiling, just forward of the projection room, is a grille for additional exhausting of air when the theatre is packed in very sultry weather. There is no lack of circulation of air in this house. The heating system employs the same system of ducts for pumping in heated air and exhausting it. Natural gas is used in the hot air furnace.

The Arcadia represents an outlay of \$95,000 for building and \$45,000 for equipment. Theatre men who have visited and inspected the house say not any of this money has been wasted. Indeed, the Arcadia is more than a show house—it is one of the show places of Dallas.

The vestibule to the auditorium, a charming little ante-chamber fitting, from ceiling to fountain, into the Italian scheme of things. Here are two more wrought iron mirrors, and as in the foyer, wrought iron lamps.



The lounge. It is located below the amphitheatre and has off one end the women's room, with the men's off the other. The furniture is of iron and red mohair.



The organ loft and adjoining wall panels. The organ has 12 sets of pipes. In this detail is shown more clearly the Italian garden motif in the decorative plan.