

Trust buys Fulton Theater showcase

The Pittsburgh Trust for Cultural Resources today announced its purchase of the Fulton Theater for \$2.1 million from Ernest and George Stern, former owners of the Cinemette movie circuit that is now owned by Cinema World.

Carol R. Brown, trust president, announced plans for gradual development of programming and renovation of the theater.

The trust will lease the Fulton's lobby and the adjoining Fulton Mini Theater, both of which are part of

the Stern-owned Fulton Building, "for 99 years, which is renewable, at \$20,000 a year."

Besides continuing as a movie house for Pittsburgh Filmmakers at least part time, the theater will be used by touring companies and maybe local groups such as Pittsburgh Public Theater when more seating capacity is beneficial.

The trust had leased the Fulton while renovating and reopening the former Stanley Theatre as the Benedum Center.

The Fulton opened Oct. 31, 1904, as a vaudeville house called the Gayety. The Gayety later became a legitimate theater in which such stars as Ethel Barrymore, Gertrude Lawrence and Helen Hayes performed. The name changed to the Fulton in 1930 when its primary fare became movies.

It discontinued daily shows four years ago but reopened primarily as a showcase for specialty movies and film festivals in the fall of 1985, presented by Pittsburgh Filmmakers.