

Learning Places Fall 2016
Chin/Swift

SITE REPORT [part II: performer/spectator]
Theater District & Street Performance



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INTRODUCTION

Describe Scope of Activity [identify performer (object/building/humans/technology) and spectators]

The day started well with a wonderful class, full of interesting information about the theater industry in New York. Professor Swift transports us to what was New York in 1800's with short pleasant history. After this, he took us to the theater district and gave us short explanation of some of the theaters.

PRE-VISIT REFLECTION

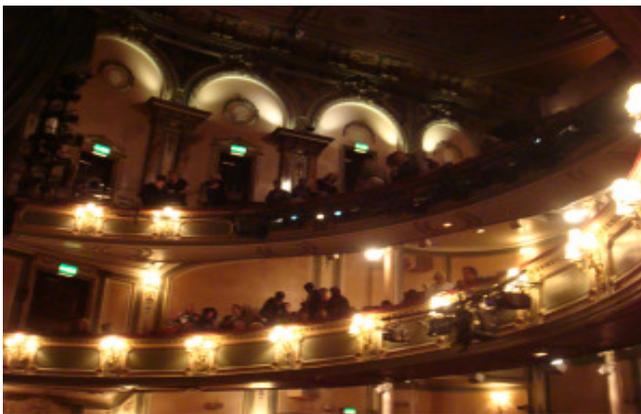
I used to walk around this area but I never stopped to see the details of every theater or building around this area. It is something that I used to do when I traveled here, because I had the time, my mind was relaxed and I enjoyed the architecture and little details. Also, the guide explained to us the relevant information about every place. So, today our guide was our professor who did a great job.

SITE DOCUMENTATION (photos/sketches)



This is the majestic theater located in 245 West 44th street it was founded in 1927 and designed by architecture Herbert J, Krapp. During the great depression it was soled to the Shubert brothers, and it is operated nowadays by the Shubert Organization. This theater was designated New York City Landmark because of its interior and exterior design. The long running of

the Phantom of the Opera has been playing in this theater since 1988. This performance obtains Box office record.



“The Chanins commissioned Herbert Krapp to design the theatre complex in what he called a “modern Spanish” style, complete with terracotta base and Spanish brick-wall ornamentation, and arched windows. The Majestic's exterior also includes a stylized Palladian motif above the entrance. The interior features the Adam-style detailing common in many Shubert houses. Decades before the current vogue for stadium

seating in movie theaters, Krapp had conceived of a similar concept for the theatre's orchestra. With its steep rake, it offers ideal sight lines for audience members. Another forward-thinking aspect of the design was the creation of a single large balcony rather than two smaller ones—today’s producers are hesitant to book two-balcony houses because second-balcony seating is less desirable to modern audiences.” (Majestic Theatre. (2015).



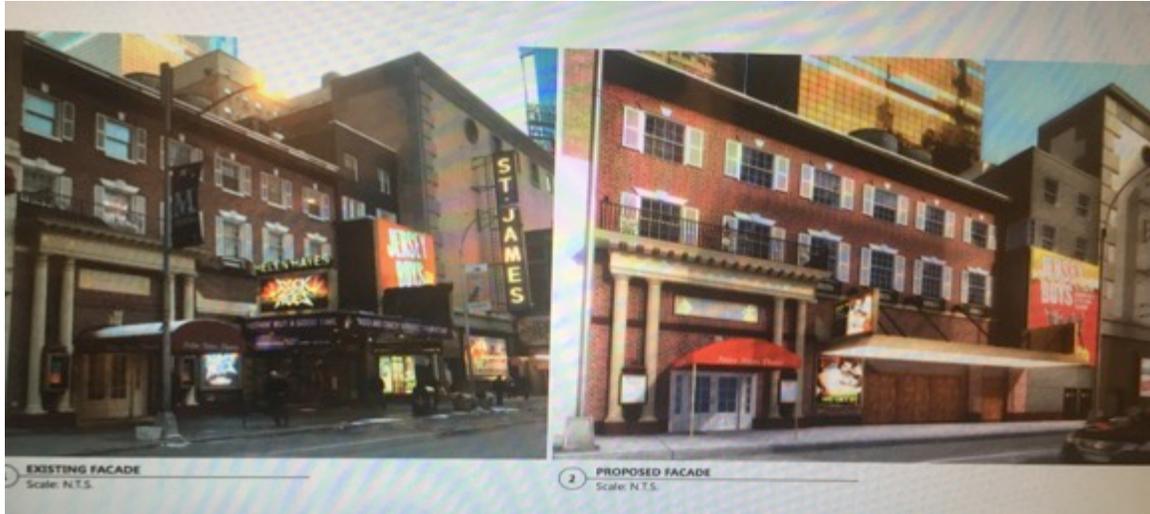
Abraham Erlanger, founding member of theatrical syndicate, built the theater in 1927 called The Erlanger. When he died, the Astor's family took control of the venue because they owned the land, and they rename the theater St. James. The current owners, James H. Binger and his wife. (St James Theater. (n.d.).

Little Theater. Was built by Henry Harris and Jesse Lasky in 1911 (Neoclassical architecture). It was rename in 1983 as Helen Hayes.

Helen Hayes Theater it is surrounded by large theaters currently presenting a shows while Helen Hayes is being remodeled. We were able to access the theater because the door was open and there was no kind of security. The following photos are from the interior and the work being done “ Crowded closely between two adjoining buildings, its Georgian design is in a manner accentuated*. The materials used in the facade are red brick and French limestone. The exterior woodwork is painted pure white with blind green shutters, and the iron work is a dull black.” (The Little Theatre, New York. (2016).



This pictures shows how the front will look after remodeling. If you want to see the pictures and the plans, please check the following link [http://www.nyc.gov/html/lpc/downloads/pdf/presentation-materials/11-24-2015/240%20West%2044th%20Street%20\(2\).pdf](http://www.nyc.gov/html/lpc/downloads/pdf/presentation-materials/11-24-2015/240%20West%2044th%20Street%20(2).pdf).



Manhattan Theatre Club



We had the opportunity to come into this theater because the professor knows the stage manager. She was explaining to us that they started to make the new stage two weeks ago for the new show called Heisenberg.



Write description of sketch or photo here, explaining why it is important and what it shows

Street Performance



Robert John Burck, known as the naked Cowboy is an American street performer. He is making a good living in Times Square. After him other cowboys and cowgirls started the business too. Now there are painted ladies everywhere in Time Square even though they were banned. In my opinion, these girls are not doing any kind of performance. They just ask for money in a rude way while exposing their bodies.



This group of dancers and acrobats were making a show in front of H&M in Times Square. They make funny jokes and ask people to participate in the show. The way that they ask for money is in a comedic way making people feel embarrassed. They make a lot of money in this presentation that took approx. 15 minutes. Most of the people around were tourist; therefore, they gave to the performance the money they asked for.

QUALITATIVE SITE OBSERVATIONS

1. Description of the performance object, person, or technology (costume, media, text, props, sets, etc.)

These street performances use their bodies and abilities in singing and acrobatics making people have a good time. Also, the acrobatics use a speaker to play loud music. The cowboys use a guitar and singing.

2. Choreography of performance

They line people and jump in top of them

3. Description of performance limits (ground, walls, barricades, streets, buildings)

No specific limits, they stand anywhere in the pedestrian area.

4. Description of audience (static, moving, direction of attention)

Must of them are tourist.

Some of them are static observing what is going on. Others just make a quick look and continue their path.

5. **Description of audience (socio-economic, community identity)**
Audience from different parts of the world, the acrobats ask to the participant where they come from to make the country feel proud of the contribution or tip they give.

6. **Description of performer/spectator dynamics (engagement, morphology)**

People are really engaged in the performance and they participate clapping etc.

7. **Other Observations**

QUANTITATIVE DATA for Area of Study

Subject	Data
Size of performance space	8feet by f 50eet
Size of spectator space	Between 42& 47 St
Range of dynamic change	
# Of points of focus	Tkts Times Square Madame Tussauds,Rypley's
Number of spectators (range)	Thousand during the day
Time period of performance	15 Min

# of repetitions	I don't know
Cost of performance (if any)	They ask for \$1-\$20
Other data	39 theaters 29millions sq. feet commercial. 18,000 hotel rooms

Professor Swift walks and will give a short explanation about architecture, et style.

QUESTIONS TO RESEARCH FURTHER

QUESTIONS:

1. Who controls Times Square street performers?
2. What a law does pertinent to street performers?
3. Do street performers need any permit?

RESEARCH METHOD/SOURCE FOR EACH QUESTION ABOVE:

1. Question 1
 - a. City council – Mayor- **the Street Activity Permit Office (SAPO)**
 - b. New York City Transportation
2. Question 2
 - a. Create new rules for pedestrian plazas.
3. Question 3
 - a. “Mayor LaGuardia started a street performer’s ban in 1935 and the total ban went into effect on January 1, 1936. The New York Times had many articles on the public outcry over the ban. NBC Radio did a live broadcast in support of street performers. Judges dismissed cases, but the ban remained in effect until 1970, when Mayor Lindsey lifted the street performance ban.” Alvarez, M. (2014).

SUMMARY / POST VISIT REFLECTION

I really like the history class and the tour around of theaters because as an immigrant I want to know more about this city. For this reason I chose this class. In this class, I had to go to Times Square to observe the space and people performance and it was interesting.

References

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