



**ALEX THEATRE**  
PERFORMING ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT CENTER

## HISTORY

Since 1925, the Alex Theatre has been a Los Angeles area landmark. Designed by architects Charles R. Selkirk and Arthur G. Lindley, the Alexander Theatre, as it was originally known, opened its doors as a Vaudeville and motion picture house. Featuring Greek and Egyptian motifs, the Alex Theatre is not only an important example of the grand theatres of the early 20th century; it also provides a strong sense of identity for downtown Glendale, California.

In 1992, the Glendale Redevelopment Agency purchased the historic theatre to serve as the centerpiece of Glendale's revitalized Brand Boulevard. The agency dedicated \$6.2 million in public funds to restore the Alex to its former splendor and transfer it into a performing arts center. Since reopening on New Year's Eve 1993, the historic theatre has been a source of pride for residents and attracts thousands of theatergoers to Glendale each month.

The auditorium of the theatre is designed as an "atmospherium" with an open air illusion enhanced by the stage-set wall encircling the auditorium, creating the feeling of being enclosed in an ancient garden. The Alex is one of the few atmospheric theatres constructed in Southern California and one of only a handful that still remain. The new seating in the auditorium and the restored lobby areas capture the feeling and ambiance of the original design.

From the late 1920's through the 1950's, the Alex Theatre served as a preview house for major Hollywood releases and community events attracting the glamorous stars of the time from Hollywood. In 1940 in an effort to extend the glamour of the theatre out to Brand Boulevard, architect S. Charles Lee, a designer of over 400 movie houses, created a 100-foot tall Art Deco neon tower with a spiked starburst at the top. Integral to his design were the three dimensional marquee, outdoor ticketing kiosk, and the decorative terrazzo floor crested in bright tropical colors that were all restored as part of the restoration project.

Today, the Alex Theatre is owned by the City of Glendale and operated by the nonprofit Glendale Arts and serves as a multi-use facility for professional and community performing arts institutions. Resident companies include the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, Gay Men's Chorus of Los Angeles, Musical Theatre Guild, Alex Film Society, and the Glendale Youth Orchestra. In addition, the Alex Theatre host a full season of world-class presentations including music, opera, live theatre, comedy, lectures, popular concerts and dance.