

Coronet Theater Building
362-372-½ N. La Cienega Boulevard
CHC-2023-3136-HCM
ENV-2023-3137-CE

FINDINGS

- The Coronet Theatre Building “exemplifies significant contributions to the broad cultural, economic, or social history of the nation, state, city, or community” as a significant venue important to the development of performing arts in Los Angeles, particularly art, experimental film, and live performances.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The Coronet Theatre Building meets one of the Historic-Cultural Monument criteria: it “exemplifies significant contributions to the broad cultural, economic, or social history of the nation, state, city, or community” as a significant venue important to the development of performing arts in Los Angeles, particularly art, experimental film, and live performances.

The Coronet Theatre was one of the earliest, longest-running, and most successful performing arts venues in Los Angeles. Since its establishment in the post-war era, the Coronet Theatre has been a thriving location for performing arts including theater, dance, and music, as well as a learning center and model for others in art cinema curation. Among the several hundred plays performed at the Coronet Theatre over its 76 year history as a performing arts venue include the world premiere of the English language adaptation of influential theater practitioner Bertolt Brecht’s play Galileo (1947); author Ray Bradbury’s 1964 “Space Age Theatre” project; the West Coast premiere production of Fortune in Men’s Eyes (1969); Anne Commire’s premiere of Put Them All Together (1982); Brooklyn Laundry (1991), starring Glenn Close, Laura Dern, and Woody Harrelson; Claudia Sheer’s one-woman show, Blown Sideways Through Life (1994); Tori Spelling and Charlie Sheen’s Maybe Baby (2002); and The Vagina Monologue (2003). From its inception, the subject property also screened gay-focused entertainment and art cinema and served as a safe space for the gay community. Apart from live performances, the Coronet Theatre was also a significant venue for experimental film and hosted screenings of works such as John E. Schmitz’s film, Voices (1953) and the release of Kenneth Anger’s 1947 film, Fireworks, the first gay narrative film in the United States. In addition, the original second-floor dance and rehearsal studio (converted to a small theater space in 1999) housed the dance school, Coronet Dance Studio, which over its 27-years in operation was a practice dance space for many well known entertainers including Mitzi Gaynor, Barry Ashton, Nancy Sinatra, Betty Grable, Lucille Ball, Rod Steigener, Ann Margret, and Anthony Quinn. Further, the subject property served as the filming location for Conan O’Brien’s Conan in 2020 during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Despite interior and exterior alterations which were made throughout the period of significance, the subject property retains a very high level of integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association to convey its significance.

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (“CEQA”) FINDINGS

State of California CEQA Guidelines, Article 19, Section 15308, Class 8 “*consists of actions taken by regulatory agencies, as authorized by state or local ordinance, to assure*

the maintenance, restoration, enhancement, or protection of the environment where the regulatory process involves procedures for protection of the environment.”

State of California CEQA Guidelines Article 19, Section 15331, Class 31 “*consists of projects limited to maintenance, repair, stabilization, rehabilitation, restoration, preservation, conservation or reconstruction of historical resources in a manner consistent with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic buildings.*”

The designation of the Coronet Theatre Building as an Historic-Cultural Monument in accordance with Chapter 9, Article 1, of The City of Los Angeles Administrative Code (“LAAC”) will ensure that future construction activities involving the subject property are regulated in accordance with Section 22.171.14 of the LAAC. The purpose of the designation is to prevent significant impacts to an Historic-Cultural Monument through the application of the standards set forth in the LAAC.

Without the regulation imposed by way of the pending designation, the historic significance and integrity of the subject property could be lost through incompatible alterations and new construction and the demolition of an irreplaceable historic site/open space. The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation are expressly incorporated into the LAAC and provide standards concerning the historically appropriate construction activities which will ensure the continued preservation of the subject property.

The City of Los Angeles has determined based on the whole of the administrative record, that substantial evidence supports that the Project is exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section Article 19, Section 15308, Class 8 and Class 31, and none of the exceptions to a categorical exemption pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2 applies. The project was found to be exempt based on the following:

The use of Categorical Exemption Class 8 in connection with the proposed designation is consistent with the goals of maintaining, restoring, enhancing, and protecting the environment through the imposition of regulations designed to prevent the degradation of Historic-Cultural Monuments.

The use of Categorical Exemption Class 31 in connection with the proposed designation is consistent with the goals relating to the preservation, rehabilitation, restoration and reconstruction of historic buildings and sites in a manner consistent with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.

Categorical Exemption ENV-2023-3137-CE was prepared on August 30, 2023.