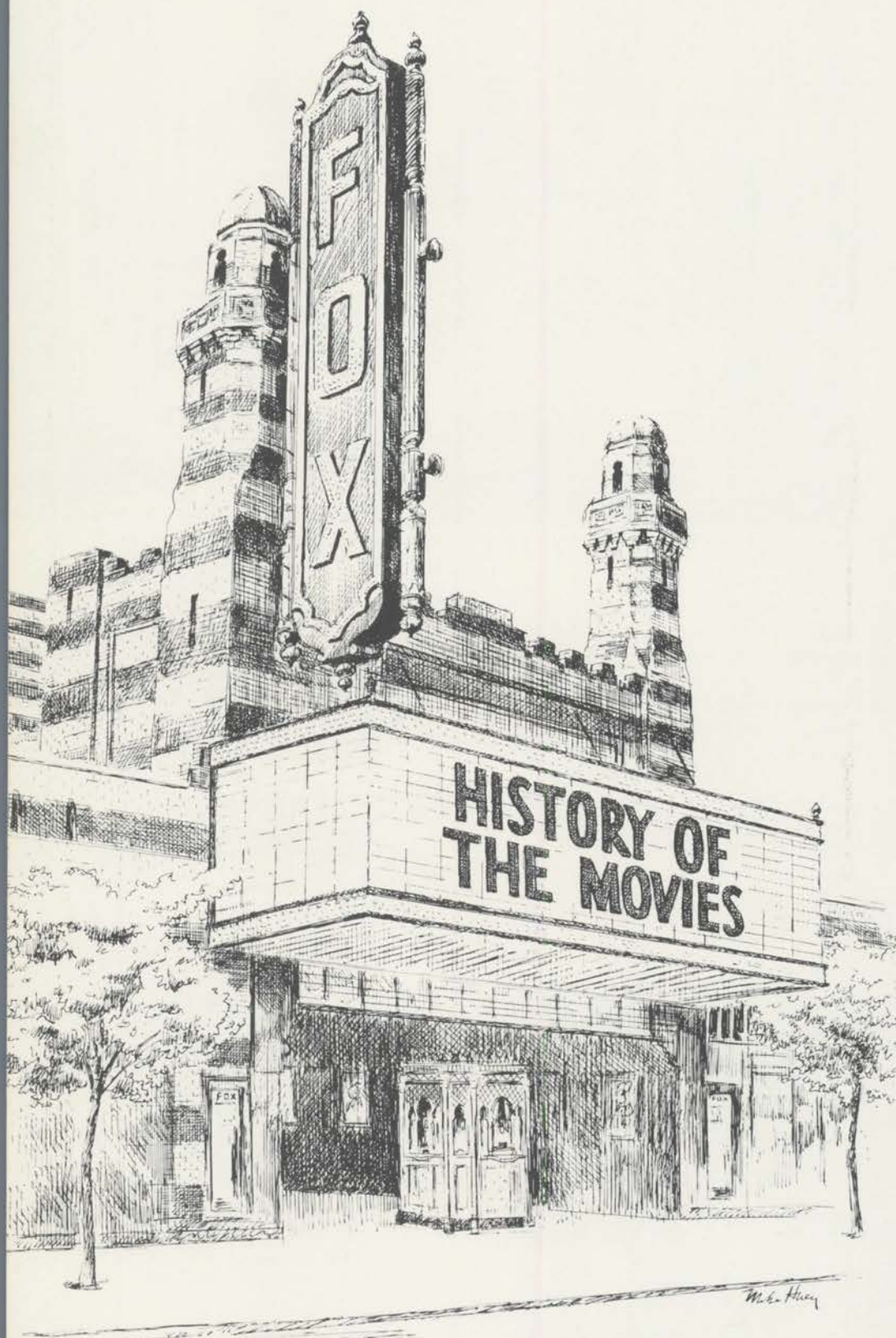


THE FOX IS SAVED



Atlanta Landmarks paid off the \$1.8 million mortgage on the Atlanta Fox Theatre at noon on February 27, 1978! The following day at 11:00 a.m. in the Salon of the Fox, the formal announcement was made to the news media.

One point eight million dollars plus floating prime interest plus administrative expenses over a 3-year span is a lot of money. It's too early to know the exact total, but interest averaged about \$10,000 monthly, which would put the cost less expenses at about \$2.2.

It's been a long and laborious task and the ATOS members can be proud that were it not for the Organ Society this great edifice and its glorious 4/42 Moller Concert Organ would already be history. The love affair between the theatre and ATOS started more than a decade ago when arrangements were worked out with the theatre management for the local chapter to restore and maintain the organ in return for the privilege of occasional use for chapter meetings. That love affair continued and blossomed into a mutually rewarding experience for the chapter and theatre management.

It was only natural, then, for ATOS members to rally round the cause when the abrupt announcement of plans for razing the building was made in 1974. They became the pushers, die-hards, the tackles and strategists who played for delays and studies — who schemed and negotiated and ultimately came up with a viable plan to preserve the building. The form the plan took was a nonprofit corporation whose first project would be to save the Fox. Technically, the corporation — Atlanta Landmarks — assembled several parcels of adjacent property and traded this newly assembled package to Southern Bell for their new office building site. In so doing, Landmarks assumed a \$1.2 million loan at floating prime interest from five Atlanta banks, the mortgage

guaranteed by the former owners. Mosque, Inc., who would remain the owner of the Fox if Landmarks should default on even one payment of interest.

Then the fun began! Chapter members got busy with petitions, publicity and scrub brushes. While some were repairing and restoring parts of the building so it could open as a live entertainment showcase, others were putting together mailing lists from among the thousands who had expressed interest in saving the Fox through signature on petitions. It was an every-night affair from the time members left one job to after midnight and full time on weekends. They begged paint and materials — then applied the elbow grease to finish the job. Some moved their cots into the nether reaches of the underground complex and virtually lived in the building until the job was done.

Once open, the theatre was self-sustaining from the start, through rental for everything from rock shows to grand opera. But behind the scenes work was still in progress to get the interest money. John Clark McCall, Jr. wrote *Atlanta Fox Album*. He donated the book to help raise funds through sales to theatre patrons and others by mail. The second, third and fourth printings were done for material cost only by another member, adding full color to the four covers of the book. Over 20,000 have been sold.

Chapter members manned the concession stands, ushered, conducted tours, cleaned up after performances — any and everything needed to keep the ship afloat and profitable. While Landmarks ran the office and received the donations, chapter members beat the bushes, sold T-shirts, scrounged supplies and materials. Lyn Larsen volunteered to appear for a chapter-sponsored benefit, which he graciously performed at no fee. This was followed by a chapter-sponsored Halloween Happening featuring Dennis James and *The Phantom of the Opera*. In December, 1976 the chapter sponsored a Christmas Organ Concert on a Sunday afternoon to a good house. Then, in April, the Keyboard Colossus was masterminded by the Georgia State University Music Department and the chapter as a benefit with gala re-

ception, followed June 10 by a chapter-sponsored benefit with the donated services of Hector Olivera at the console of the Mighty Mo. In the meantime the chapter sent a solicitation letter to the national membership and published a stereo recording from its archives of previous concerts, both projects raising additional funds for the campaign.

For all the events sponsored at the theatre, the chapter paid full commercial rates on rent and fees. In the case of the Colossus, most performers donated their fees to the Save the Fox fund. In all the activities to date, the chapter grossed about \$40,000 and netted just over \$25,000 which was turned over to Landmarks.

Lest you get the idea the chapter saved the Fox without other help — it did not. It was in the van, however, with 14,000 loyal contributors of \$5, \$10, \$25 and more on a regular basis to keep the interest paid, the doors open and provide the necessary time to find the big money. Without that time, the big money would have been of no use.

What you will read in the press

about saving the Fox is about the National Endowment for the Arts grant and the few anonymous donors who gave substantial sums restricted to payment of principal only. But because this is the ATOS Magazine directed to its members, it is important to chronicle the part ATOS played in the enterprise.

In no way do we wish to diminish the vital contributions of the National Endowment for the Arts and the various donors to this worthy cause. When the figures are available, a supplementary statement will be furnished to show where the principal sums originated.

The smell of success . . . how sweet it is! Atlanta Chapter has had an education in fund raising and we don't want it to go to waste. You see, we have found this small neighborhood theatre close-in to the heart of the city that's already equipped with a Moller — we'll call it the "Mini-Mo." The complex is about the right size for our chapter — for meetings, for special presentations and maybe some silents. We understand the owner could be influenced . . . well . . . !!



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