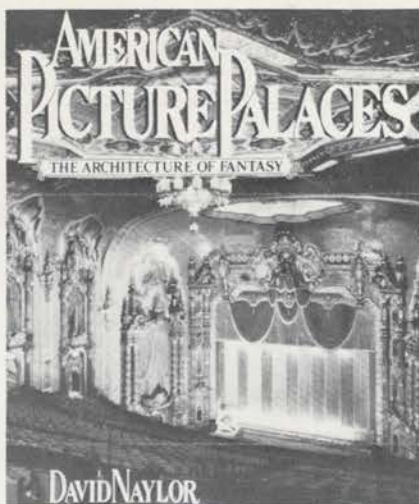


# BOOK REVIEW



**AMERICAN PICTURE PALACES — THE ARCHITECTURE OF FANTASY** by David Naylor. 224 pages. \$29.95 (plus applicable sales taxes). Van Nostrand Reinhold — Mail Order Service, Box 607, Florence, Kentucky 41042.

When Ben Hall's "Best Remaining Seats" was published in 1961, everyone thought that it was the definitive book in its field, the Moving Picture Palaces. However, David Naylor has further researched the subject and the product of his labors is a book which can be the equal if not superior to the Hall volume. "American Picture Palaces" is every bit as informative and educatingly entertaining as BRS.



Though it is predominantly a picture book (283 photos, 69 in striking color), the text concentrates on the evolution and demise of the great temples of the motion picture, the architects and the styles as promulgated by each. The contributions of the leading architects, Thomas Lamb, John Eberson, Rapp & Rapp and C. Howard Crane, are noted, but lesser known designers are given their due also.

The idea emphasized is that the movie ticket buyer, by entering one of these palatial edifices, was introduced to an entirely different world. He may have imagined his being in a garden of the Pharaohs, a temple in the Middle East, or a Pagoda in the Orient. It all added up to a feeling of escape for a couple hours for the tired housewife or the harassed businessman. One wonders if some people, being overwhelmed by the incredible atmosphere, ever saw the movies!

For the theatre organ buff, there are two pictures which highlight his favorite instrument. One shows the Moller console in the San Francisco Fox lobby. The second has Roxy posing at the five-manual keydesk of his three-console Kimball before delivery. There are 32 pictures in the book which show theatre organ consoles. A big share of the photos have never before appeared in print.

For the theatre buff, and for the theatre organ enthusiast, this excellent volume will prove an asset to grace any coffee table, and is a must for any aficionado's library.

LLOYD E. KLOS □

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