



C. W. & GEO. L. RAPP
ARCHITECTS
CHICAGO, ILL.

AN ACRE OF SEATS IN A PALACE OF SPLENDOR

By Bill Peterson NUMBER 3 IN A SERIES

THE NEW YORK PARAMOUNT THEATRE

The "Mother" Paramount opened on Times Square in New York City on November 19, 1926, and was designed by C.W. and George L. Rapp. The capacity of the auditorium was 3664.

This theatre was the flagship of the Paramount Publix fleet, and was the origin of the famous Publix stage shows that went out on the circuit. The theatre occupied the lower portion of the Paramount Building, a towering office building topped by a clock tower and world globe.

Jesse Crawford designed the 4 manual 36 rank Wurlitzer organ, and was featured along with his wife Helen at the twin consoles. Subsequent organists to preside at the Paramount were Reginald Foort, Don Baker, George Wright, Bill Floyd, and Bob Mack.

In the mid-thirties, the Paramount switched to a name band policy featuring Benny Goodman, the Dorseys, et al. It became the No. 1 haven of the bobbysoxers. Frank Sinatra reached the peak of his popularity with the youngsters here.

In 1966 the Paramount was stripped out of the office building to make way for more profitable ventures. The Mighty Wurlitzer is now owned by a group of Los Angeles enthusiasts, although at present it is in storage awaiting a new home.