

SurveyLA

Los Angeles Historic Resources Survey

LOS ANGELES CITYWIDE HISTORIC CONTEXT STATEMENT

Context: Entertainment Industry, 1908-1980

Theme: Commercial Properties Associated with the Entertainment Industry, 1908-1980



Prepared for:

City of Los Angeles
Department of City Planning
Office of Historic Resources

January 2020



TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE	1
CONTRIBUTORS	1
INTRODUCTION	1
HISTORIC CONTEXT	2
Office Buildings Associated with the Entertainment Industry	2
Movie Theaters Associated with the Entertainment Industry	6
Awards Ceremonies Associated with the Entertainment Industry	10
Social Scene Associated with the Entertainment Industry, 1908-1980	15
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY	20

PREFACE

This theme is a component of SurveyLA’s citywide historic context statement and provides guidance to field surveyors in identifying and evaluating potential historic resources relating to commercial properties that have a specific association with the entertainment industry. Refer to www.historicplacesla.org for information on designated resources associated with this context (or themes) as well as those identified through SurveyLA and other historic resources surveys.

CONTRIBUTORS

This context was prepared by Christine Lazzaretto, Molly Iker-Johnson, and Morgan Quirk, Historic Resources Group, with significant guidance and input from Christy Johnson McAvoy. Christy is the founding principal of Historic Resources Group, with over thirty years of experience in historic preservation in Southern California. Christine is a Principal at HRG; she earned her Master of Historic Preservation degree from the University of Southern California, and has been a practicing professional since 2005. Molly is an Associate Architectural Historian at HRG; she earned her Master of Arts in Historic Preservation degree from the University of Delaware, and has been practicing in the field since 2014. Morgan Quirk is an Associate Preservation Planner at HRG; she earned her Master of Science in Historic Preservation from the University of Texas at Austin and has been practicing in the field since 2017.

INTRODUCTION

This theme, “Commercial Properties Associated with the Entertainment Industry,” was developed to record commercial resources that have a specific association with the entertainment industry, and are not captured under any of the other entertainment industry related themes. The sites evaluated under this theme are limited to those commercial resources that are located outside of the motion picture studio lots, and developed in response to the entertainment industry. These are generally related to the distribution and performance of entertainment products, as well as venues that catered to entertainers, such as restaurants that developed adjacent to studios. Properties that are specifically related to the creation of entertainment-related products are evaluated under the entertainment industry support services or other industrial themes. The narrative history of the development of the entertainment industry in Los Angeles is included in the “Industrial Properties Associated with the Entertainment Industry” theme; this theme is intended to supplement the information included there to assist in the identification and evaluation of specific commercial property types. Extant sites within the boundaries of the city of Los Angeles discussed in the narrative are noted with their address and formal designation.

Evaluation Considerations:

This theme may overlap with other SurveyLA contexts and themes as follows:

- Properties significant for their architectural quality may also be evaluated under themes within the “Architecture and Engineering” context.

- Properties may also be significant under other themes within the “Entertainment Industry” context.
- Properties significant for ethnic and cultural history are also discussed within the ethnic/cultural contexts of the citywide context statement. In particular, relevant themes are included in the “African Americans in Los Angeles” historic context, “Chinese Americans in Los Angeles” historic context and the “LGBT Historic Context.”

HISTORIC CONTEXT

This theme focuses on the commercial establishments that capitalized on and drove the economic development of Los Angeles’ main entertainment centers, particularly from the Downtown theatre district to Hollywood Boulevard. The advent of the motion picture industry at the turn of the twentieth century helped transform Hollywood from a sleepy, agricultural suburb into a vibrant commercial center. Hollywood was no longer just a physical location, but a symbol of fame, wealth, and innovation. Existing businesses in the Hollywood area were overtaken by an influx of industry professionals flocking to the area from the East Coast. Over time, the businesses were transformed into informal offices and makeshift gathering spaces for the growing class of industry moguls and celebrities in Hollywood, and new establishments cropped up with celebrity endorsements and investments.

By 1920, “movies had established themselves as the most accessible, and therefore dominant, form of mass entertainment in America, pushing aside the vaudeville acts, concert singers, and stage plays that toured the country.”¹ Hollywood-adjacent businesses, which served civilians and celebrities alike, became as well-known as their famous clientele. Mass media brought these sites to the forefront as radio shows, televised awards ceremonies, and print magazines captured the allure and fantasy of Hollywood, placing stars and executives against the backdrop of their favorite commercial establishments. In turn, the entertainment landscape was defined by the wave of tourism and industry hopefuls who packed venues in an attempt to be cast in the next big hit or rub elbows with their favorite stars. Many industry titans and stars themselves invested in commercial establishments, blurring the line between their private persona and more public role as commodified household names. Particular commercial centers developed along Hollywood Boulevard, Sunset Boulevard, and Vine Street, in Westwood Village, and in downtown Los Angeles.

Office Buildings Associated with the Entertainment Industry

In 1929, Sid Grauman stated that “‘The future of Hollywood is the future of California.’ The movie business, it seemed, now owned the name and had separated from the district. However, the huge amount of capital invested in Hollywood included movie money. Locals were not the only one’s betting on future fortunes to be made from the district’s mystique.”² Entertainment moguls constructed office buildings specifically for entertainment-related uses. These included executive offices on studio lots, as

¹ Bruce Torrence, *Hollywood: The First 100 Years* (Hollywood Chamber of Commerce: 1979), 87.

² Gregory Paul Williams, *The Story of Hollywood: An Illustrated History* (BL Press, 2011), 170.

well as corporate office buildings along the commercial corridors of Hollywood and the adjacent neighborhoods.

Although many entertainment offices were located in pre-existing commercial buildings, as the industry expanded, prosperous companies began to construct prominent office buildings. From December 1922 to January 1923 Warner Brothers invested \$250,000 into rebuilding and enlarging the offices and stages. This expansion included the Executive Office Building, a “rambling structure with a line of imposing columns in the front,”³ to house producers’ offices. Another early entertainment-related office building was the Hollywood Western Building (5500 Hollywood Boulevard; City Historic-Cultural Monument No. 336). It was constructed by Louis B. Mayer and Irving Thalberg in 1928, during the most intense period of commercial and residential development in Hollywood, which lasted from 1924-1929.⁴ Designed by architect S. Charles Lee, the Art Deco building was in proximity to the Hollywood studios it served, including the Columbia Pictures Corporation, Warner Brothers, and Paramount Pictures.



Hollywood Western Building, 5550 Hollywood Boulevard, City Historic-Cultural Monument No. 336 (Office of Historic Resources)

After a hiatus in construction during the Great Depression and throughout World War II, the entertainment industry exuberantly began to construct new office buildings in the postwar period. In the mid-1950s, a west coast headquarters building was constructed for Capitol Records on the east side of Vine Street mid-block between Hollywood Boulevard and Yucca Street. Capitol Records was founded in 1942 as the first West Coast based record label. The building was commissioned by British music conglomerate EMI after its acquisition of Capitol Records in 1955; the building was completed in April 1956 (1740-



Aerial view of the Capitol Records building, Vine and Yucca Streets, 1956. (Los Angeles Public Library)

³ Charles Higham, *Warner Brothers: A History of the Studio* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1975), 10.

⁴ Information about the Hollywood Western building adapted from “The Hollywood Western Building,” National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, prepared by Elizabeth W. Hilton and Erica Kachmarsky, ICF International, September 2014.

SurveyLA Citywide Historic Context Statement

Entertainment Industry/Commercial Properties Associated with the Entertainment Industry, 1908-1980

1750 North Vine Street; City Historic-Cultural Monument No. 857). Designed by Louis Naidorf, a young architect working for the firm of Welton Becket and Associates, the Capitol Records Tower is considered the world's first circular office building. It was also the first large office building to be constructed in Hollywood in over two decades. Other postwar entertainment-related office buildings include the RCA West Coast Headquarters (6363 Sunset Boulevard), constructed in 1963, and the Ray Charles Worldwide Offices and Studios (2107 W Washington Boulevard, City Historic-Cultural Monument No. 776). These and other office buildings constructed in the area resulted from the West Coast expansion of the recording industry in the postwar period, and the continued success of motion picture and television studios.

ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS FOR OFFICE BUILDINGS ASSOCIATED WITH THE ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY

Summary Statement of Significance:	Los Angeles' identity is inextricably tied to its role in the entertainment industry. The well-known advertising slogan, "The Entertainment Capital of the World" reflects the city's central place in the motion picture, radio, television, and recording/music industries. As the entertainment industry expanded, successful companies commissioned purpose-built buildings to house their operations. Commercial office buildings built for entertainment-related uses, including corporate headquarters, are significant under the areas of Entertainment, Commerce, and/or Social History.
Period of Significance:	1908 - 1980
Period of Significance Justification:	The period of significance begins in 1908, the origin of the motion picture industry in Los Angeles (though resources from this period associated with the entertainment industry are rare), and ends in 1980, the end date for SurveyLA. The end date may be extended over time.
Geographic Location:	Hollywood, West Los Angeles
Area(s) of Significance:	Entertainment, Commerce, Social History
Criteria:	NR: A CR: 1 Local: 1
Associated Property Types:	Commercial – Office Building

SurveyLA Citywide Historic Context Statement

Entertainment Industry/Commercial Properties Associated with the Entertainment Industry, 1908-1980

Property Type Description: Office building originally constructed to accommodate entertainment-related office uses. These include properties built by entertainment moguls; built specifically to house entertainment-related businesses; and/or entertainment-related corporate headquarters.

Property Type Significance: See Summary Statement of Significance above.

Eligibility Standards:

- Must be proven to have played a significant role in the entertainment industry
- Originally constructed to accommodate entertainment-related office uses
- Was constructed during the period of significance

Character Defining/Associative Features:

- Often intended to be the public face of an entertainment-related company or corporation
- Retains most of the essential character defining features of the style
- Typically architecturally distinctive
- Sited in a prominent location
- May include production facilities in addition to offices
- May also be significant as a good example of an architectural style from its period and/or the work of a significant architect or builder

Integrity Considerations:

- Original use may have changed
- Should retain integrity of Location, Feeling, and Association from the period of significance
- Retains sufficient integrity to convey significance
- Setting may have changed (surrounding buildings and land uses)

Movie Theaters Associated with the Entertainment Industry⁵

With the rapid expansion of regional population and the growth of the motion picture industry in Southern California in the early twentieth century, there was a commensurate increase in demand for entertainment services. This generated dramatic changes in the number and quality of entertainment facilities in Los Angeles, particularly Downtown. Because Angelenos were increasingly self-conscious about how their city measured up against its rivals, each new theater facility was celebrated as being equal to those of San Francisco or New York – the ultimate standard against which all American cities were measured.

When film began to replace vaudeville as the primary form of popular culture entertainment, showman Sidney Grauman set about to create on Broadway in Los Angeles the movie palace counterpart of the legitimate theater district of New York. Beginning with the New Grauman Theater at 3rd Street and Broadway (1918, now the Million Dollar Theater, listed in the National Register of Historic Places) these theaters created progressively elaborate environments, pushing architectural exactitude to the point of fantastic pageant. They were often designed in Fantasy architectural styles, and generally featured expansive forecourts to accommodate crowds and arriving stars. One critic described the New Grauman Theater as “a dream worth building,” which succinctly expressed the sophisticated subliminal statements Grauman directed his team of architects and designers to carefully implant into the murals, statues, friezes, carpets, and furnishings of the new facility.⁶ There are twelve movie palaces, constructed between 1910 and 1931, located along a six-block stretch of Broadway (between 3rd and 9th Streets). This grouping of theaters made Broadway the hub of the Los Angeles entertainment scene. The National Register Broadway Theater and Commercial Historic District and encompasses the largest concentration of movie palaces remaining in the country.

Although many movie palaces were initially constructed along Broadway in downtown Los Angeles, Sid Grauman led the migration of movie palaces into Hollywood and other Los Angeles neighborhoods. Two of the more distinctive and fanciful examples of the movie palace during this period include the Egyptian Theatre (6706-6712 Hollywood Boulevard, City Historic-Cultural Monument No. 584), which opened in 1922, and the



Grauman's Egyptian Theatre, City Historic-Cultural Monument No. 584, 1922. (Los Angeles Public Library)

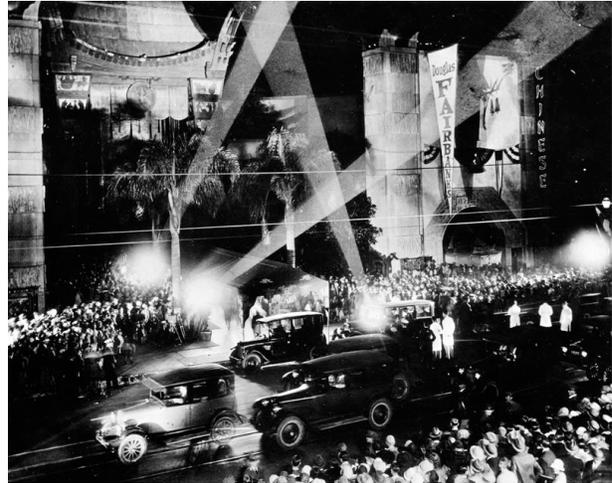
⁵ Movie theaters developed during the Major Studio Era constructed specifically to exhibit films are commonly referred to as movie palaces; Neighborhood theaters are a different property type and are discussed within the Commercial Development historic context under the Neighborhood Commercial Development theme. Refer to “Guidelines for Evaluating Resources Associated with Significant Persons in Los Angeles” to evaluate movie palaces potentially significant for their association with entertainment figures.

⁶ Jo Neely, “A Dream Come True,” *AEC*, 53, May 1918. (80-86) Quoted in Kevin Starr, *Material Dreams: Southern California through the 1920s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 99.

SurveyLA Citywide Historic Context Statement

Entertainment Industry/Commercial Properties Associated with the Entertainment Industry, 1908-1980

Chinese Theatre (6911-6927 Hollywood Boulevard, City Historic-Cultural Monument No. 55), which opened in 1927. Both were developed by Sid Grauman and represent excellent examples of the Exotic Revival styles of architecture which were popularized during the 1920s.



Grauman's Chinese Theatre, City Historic-Cultural Monument No. 55, 1927. (Water & Power Associates)

Motion picture studios quickly realized that “owning theatres guaranteed an outlet for [the] studio’s films.”⁷ Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer owned a theatre at 314 W. 7th Street (1921, Weeks & Day; City Historic-Cultural Monument No. 522). Fox owned several theaters, including the Fox La Brea Theatre at 847 S. La Brea Avenue (1926, Richard King), the Fox Village Theatre at 959 S. Broxton Avenue (1931, Percy Parke Lewis, City Historic-Cultural Monument No. 362), and the Fox Bruin Theatre at 926 S. Broxton Avenue (1937, S. Charles Lee, City Historic-Cultural Monument No. 361). Warner Brothers owned multiple theaters in Los Angeles, including the Warner Brothers Hollywood Theater Building at 6433 Hollywood Boulevard (1928, G. Albert Lansburgh, City Historic-Cultural Monument No. 572) and the Warner Brothers Theatre at 478 W. 6th Street (1931, Benjamin Marcus Priteca and Anthony Heinsbergen, City Historic-Cultural Monument No. 251, listed in the National Register of Historic Places). The Downtown United Artists Theatre was opened in 1927 by Charlie Chaplin, Douglas Fairbanks, and Mary Pickford, who used the massive Spanish Gothic style movie palace as a venue for world premieres of their films.



Warner Brothers Hollywood Theater, City Historic-Cultural Monument No. 572, 1928. (Water & Power Associates)

⁷ Williams, *The Story of Hollywood*, 159.

ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS FOR MOVIE THEATERS ASSOCIATED WITH THE ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY

Summary Statement of Significance:	Los Angeles' identity is inextricably tied to its role in the entertainment industry. The well-known advertising slogan, "The Entertainment Capital of the World" reflects the city's central place in the motion picture, radio, television, and recording/music industries. As film replaced vaudeville as the chief form of entertainment, and through the Major Studio Era, grand movie theaters, also known as movie palaces, were constructed in elaborate architectural styles specifically to exhibit films. Movie theaters evaluated under this sub-theme are significant in the areas of Entertainment, Social History, and Commerce; and do not include vaudeville theaters converted for the motion picture industry or neighborhood theaters.
Period of Significance:	1918 - 1949
Period of Significance Justification:	The period of significance begins in 1918, when the first theater built specifically to exhibit films was constructed (Grauman's/Million Dollar Theater), and ends in 1949, the end of the Major Studio Era.
Geographic Location:	Central City, Hollywood
Area(s) of Significance:	Entertainment, Social History, Commerce
Criteria:	NR: A CR: 1 Local: 1
Associated Property Types:	Commercial - Movie Theater
Property Type Description:	Theater that was originally constructed for the exhibition of motion pictures between 1918 and 1949. These theaters were constructed specifically to exhibit films, and were generally designed as a showcase for the motion picture industry, or as the flagship theater for a particular motion picture studio.
Property Type Significance:	See Summary Statement of Significance above.

Eligibility Standards:

- Designed as a showcase for the motion picture industry, or as the flagship theater for a particular motion picture studio
- Historically used for the exhibition of motion pictures over an extended period of time
- Originally constructed to exhibit films
- Must be proven to have played a significant role in the entertainment industry
- Was constructed during the period of significance

Character Defining /Associative Features:

- Elaborate design, often featuring an expansive forecourt to accommodate crowds and arriving stars
- Some were also designed to accommodate movie premieres and other major entertainment industry events
- Most of the significant examples were constructed in the 1920s
- May be located in proximity to a major motion picture studio
- May include first-floor commercial storefronts
- May include marquee and/or ticket booth
- May also be significant as a good example of an architectural style from its period (particularly Fantasy architectural styles) and/or the work of a significant architect or builder
- Retains most of the essential character-defining features of its type

Integrity Considerations:

- Original use may have changed
- Should retain integrity of Location, Design, and Association from the period of significance
- Retains sufficient integrity to convey significance
- Setting may have changed (surrounding buildings and land uses)
- First floor storefronts may have been altered
- Marquee and/or ticket booth may have been altered

Awards Ceremonies Associated with the Entertainment Industry

Beginning in the 1920s, professional organizations in the entertainment industry held awards ceremonies and banquets to recognize significant achievements within their respective fields. “The movie industry [...] made Hollywood its banquet capital,” underscoring the fact that Los Angeles was the center of the entertainment industry.⁸

The Wampas Frolics, the Western Association of Motion Picture Advertisers’ yearly annual ballroom dance, was a precursor to the Academy Awards. The event “presented starlets like debutantes” at the Ambassador Hotel, 3400 Wilshire Boulevard (not extant).⁹

Academy Awards

Soon after the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences was founded in 1927, a committee of seven members was given the task of creating an Academy Awards presentation. Though the idea was shelved for nearly a year due to other pressing Academy issues, the plans for an awards ceremony presented by the Awards committee were accepted in May 1928. It was decided that all films released from August 1, 1927 through July 31, 1928 would be eligible for the first Academy Awards. The first Academy Awards ceremony was held at the Roosevelt Hotel, 7000 Hollywood Boulevard (1926, Fisher, Lake & Traver; City Historic-Cultural Monument No. 545) on May 16, 1929.¹⁰

Between 1930 and 1943, the ceremony was held alternately at the Ambassador Hotel and the Biltmore Hotel, 506 S. Grand Avenue (1923, Schultze and Weaver; City Historic-Cultural Monument No. 60).¹¹ Grauman’s Chinese Theatre hosted the awards ceremony from 1944 to 1946, and the Shrine Auditorium, 649 Jefferson Boulevard (1925, John C. Austin; City Historic-Cultural Monument No. 139) in 1947 and 1948.¹²

In 1949, the ceremony was held at the Academy’s headquarters, the Marquis Theater. However, the ceremony moved to the RKO Pantages Theatre (6233 Hollywood Boulevard; B. Marcus Priteca, 1930, City Historic-Cultural Monument No. 193) the following year, where it was held from until 1960. To accommodate larger audiences, the Academy Awards ceremony was moved to the city of Santa Monica’s Civic Auditorium



Chauffeurs watching the Academy Awards outside the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, 1979. (Los Angeles Public Library)

⁸ Williams, *The Story of Hollywood*, 144.

⁹ Williams, *The Story of Hollywood*, 122.

¹⁰ Robert Osborne, *85 Years of the Oscar: The Official History of the Academy Awards* (New York: Abbeville Press Publishers, 2013), 408.

¹¹ The Academy Awards were held twice in 1930; once in April, and once in November.

¹² The Academy Awards were sporadically held at the Shrine Auditorium after 1988.

from 1961 to 1968. The ceremony was moved to the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion (135 N. Grand Avenue; Welton Becket, 1964) in 1969, where it remained until 1987.¹³

Emmy Awards

The first Emmy Awards ceremony, devoted solely to local Los Angeles programming, was held at the Hollywood Athletic Club (6525 W Sunset Boulevard) on January 25, 1949.¹⁴ In 1965, the Television Academy staged its first morning nominations announcement event at the Brown Derby restaurant (not extant). At 10 a.m. in the American Room at the Brown Derby, a release was handed out and the press was able to interview Television Academy president Lewine about the nominees and upcoming awards ceremony.¹⁵ Later iterations of the event were held at locations such as the Los Angeles Press Club (4773 Hollywood Boulevard), the Pasadena Civic Auditorium, and Preview House (7655 Sunset Boulevard).

From 1954 through 1970, the Emmys originated from both Los Angeles and New York City. New York's inclusion was important, because the West Coast-based Television Academy was looking to build the Emmys into a national TV event. In the early days of television, a significant amount of production was done in New York, but as production shifted to Los Angeles in the 1960s, the emphasis of the Emmy shifted as well.¹⁶

Beginning in the early 1960s, tensions began to brew between the Los Angeles and New York chapters of the National Academy of Television Arts & Sciences.¹⁷ In May 1976, just after the Emmy Awards ceremony at the Schubert Theatre in Century City, the Los Angeles chapter filed a lawsuit to dissolve the organization. The New York chapter promptly countersued to take over the entire Television Academy.¹⁸ The two groups agreed to sever ties in 1977. According to the terms of the dissolution, both would retain their national status, with the group in Los Angeles retaining its original name, the Academy of Television Arts & Sciences, and the New York body retaining the name of National Academy of Television Arts & Sciences.¹⁹ Each group would also control specific award shows: the Los Angeles-based Television Academy kept the Primetime Emmys, and jurisdiction over the Los Angeles chapter; the New York entity retained the Daytime, News, Documentary and Sports Emmys, as well as jurisdiction over the 19 chapters throughout the U.S. that produced their own local Emmy events.

¹³ "Academy Story," accessed December 20, 2019, <https://www.oscars.org/academy-story>; "Academy Awards Show Venues," accessed August 22, 2019, <http://www.hollywoodgoldenguy.com/AcademyAwardsVenues1.html>; Hadley Meares, "How the Oscars Spent 73 Years Looking for a Home: A journey through the many venues of the Academy Awards," *Curbed Los Angeles* (February 24, 2017), accessed August 22, 2019, <http://la.curbed.com/2016/2/23/11075170/oscar-theaters-history>. The Academy Awards periodically returned to the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion until 1999.

¹⁴ "History of the Television Academy," Television Academy: Emmys, accessed August 22, 2019, <http://www.emmys.com/academy/about/history>.

¹⁵ "History of the Television Academy," Academy of Television Arts & Sciences, accessed February 2017, <http://www.emmys.com/academy/about/history>.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

Golden Globes

Founded in October 1943 by 21 foreign journalists, the Hollywood Foreign Press Association (HFPA) was originally called the Hollywood Foreign Correspondents Association. The group's first awards ceremony was held during a luncheon at 20th Century Fox. The next year the ceremony was held at the Beverly Hills Hotel, but the fledgling group's funds were so tight that Joan Bennett's gardener was tapped to supply the flowers for the tables. The actual Golden Globe award came about in 1946, when Association president Marina Cisternas came up with the idea of using a statuette of a "golden globe" on a pedestal.²⁰

In conjunction with the Golden Globes presentation, the Hollywood Foreign Correspondents Association held its first gala social event in 1945 with a formal banquet at the Beverly Hills Hotel. *Going My Way* won for Best Picture, while Ingrid Bergman and Alexander Knox were named Best Actress and Best Actor for their performances in *The Bells of St. Mary* and *President Wilson*, respectively.²¹

The Golden Globes were given out by journalists in the association until 1958, when Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin, and Sammy Davis, Jr. stormed the stage and took over the show, to the delight of the audience. They repeated their performance the following year (this time at the request of the HFPA) and since then, the stars have reigned supreme at the Globes.

Grammy Awards

The Grammy Awards (originally called the Gramophone Awards), presented by the National Academy of Recording Arts & Sciences, recognize achievement in the music industry. The first award ceremony was held at the Beverly Hilton in May 1959.²² The following awards ceremonies shifted locations every year between Los Angeles, Chicago, Nashville, and New York, sometimes taking place in multiple cities on the same night. When held in Los Angeles, the ceremony was located variously at the Beverly Hilton, the Beverly Hills Hotel, the Hollywood Palladium (6201 W Sunset Boulevard; City Historic-Cultural Monument No. 1130), and the Shrine Auditorium (3216 Royal Street; City Historic-Cultural Monument No. 139).

²⁰ "Trivia," Golden Globe Awards, Hollywood Foreign Press Association, accessed February 2017, <http://www.goldenglobes.com/trivia-0>.

²¹ "History of the Golden Globes," Golden Globe Awards, Hollywood Foreign Press Association, accessed February 2017, <http://www.goldenglobes.com/history-golden-globes>.

²² "Grammy Award," Encyclopedia Britannica, accessed November 2019, <https://www.britannica.com/art/Grammy-Award>; "Grammys history and winners through the years," *Los Angeles Times*, January 28, 2015.

ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS FOR PROPERTIES ASSOCIATED WITH AWARDS CEREMONIES

Summary Statement of Significance:	Los Angeles’ identity is inextricably tied to its role in the entertainment industry. The well-known advertising slogan, “The Entertainment Capital of the World” reflects the city’s central place in the motion picture, radio, television, and recording/music industries. Since the 1920s, the entertainment industry’s professional organizations have held awards ceremonies and banquets to recognize achievements and advancements. Commercial properties, including auditoriums, theaters, and hotels, among others have served as venues for these entertainment industry events. Properties evaluated under this sub-theme are the site of the first, or the long-term home of a significant award ceremony and/or banquet associated with the entertainment industry, and are significant in the areas of Entertainment, Social History, and/or Commerce.
Period of Significance:	1929 - 1980
Period of Significance Justification:	The period of significance begins in 1929, the date of the first entertainment industry awards ceremony event (Academy Awards), and ends in 1980, the end date for SurveyLA. The end date may be extended over time.
Geographic Location:	Citywide
Area(s) of Significance:	Entertainment, Social History, Commerce
Criteria:	NR: A CR: 1 Local: 1
Associated Property Types:	Commercial – Auditorium Commercial – Hotel Commercial – Theater Commercial – Other
Property Types Description:	Commercial hotel, theater, auditorium, or other event venue that is the site of a significant entertainment industry-related award ceremony (Academy Awards, Primetime Emmys, Grammys, and the Golden Globes).
Property Type Significance:	See Summary Statement of Significance above.

SurveyLA Citywide Historic Context Statement

Entertainment Industry/Commercial Properties Associated with the Entertainment Industry, 1908-1980

Eligibility Standards:

- Site of a significant entertainment industry-related award ceremony
- Must be proven to have played a significant role in the entertainment industry

Character Defining / Associative Features:

- May be the site of the first significant entertainment industry-related award ceremony
- May be the long-term home of a significant entertainment industry-related award ceremony
- Many of these sites continue to host significant entertainment industry-related award ceremonies
- Significant entertainment industry-related award ceremonies include the Academy Awards, Primetime Emmys, Grammys, and the Golden Globes
- May also be significant as a good example of an architectural style from its period and/or the work of a significant architect or builder
- Retains most of the essential character-defining features of the type

Integrity Considerations:

- Should retain integrity of Location, Design, and Association from the period of significance
- Original use may have changed
- Setting may have changed (surrounding building and land uses)

Social Scene Associated with the Entertainment Industry, 1908-1980

The operation of recreation and entertainment venues played a significant role in Hollywood's growth and development during from the early 1920s through the 1950s. Some venues were specifically used for promotional purposes by the motion picture studios and became known venues where fans would congregate to see their favorite stars. However, there were other venues that functioned as industry hangouts, where celebrities could go when they wanted a night out away from the bustling crowds. The blocks surrounding Sunset Boulevard and Vine Street were the core of motion picture filmmaking from 1912 until the mid-1920s. In the late 1920s and early 1930s uses in the area shifted from motion picture making to radio, television, and entertainment venues. The operation of these recreation and entertainment venues in the heart of Hollywood are linked with the entertainers and entertainment industry and played a significant role in the growth and development of the area.

Significant motion picture, radio, and television facilities, along with numerous entertainment venues were located along Sunset Boulevard. These included the NBC Radio City building, which was located at the corner of Vine Street and Sunset Boulevard; the former CBS Columbia Square complex on Sunset Boulevard and Gower Street; ABC facilities just south of Sunset Boulevard on Vine Street; and Sunset/Gower Studios. These entertainment industry facilities were joined by night clubs such as the Hollywood Palladium (6215 Sunset Blvd, City Historic-Cultural Monument No. 1130, listed in the National Register of Historic Places), the Earl Carroll Theatre (6220-6230 Sunset Boulevard, City Historic-Cultural Monument No. 1136), and Florentine Gardens (5951 Hollywood Boulevard). Nearby restaurants and clubs included the Montmartre (6757 Hollywood Boulevard), Sardi's (6313 Hollywood Boulevard), the Embassy Club (6773 Hollywood Boulevard), and Hollywood Brown Derby (1628 N. Vine Street, not extant); along with the Cocoanut Grove located inside the Ambassador Hotel (3400 Wilshire Boulevard, not extant), these venues were the prominent destinations for entertainment, dining, and dancing that furthered Hollywood's glamorous, star-studded reputation.



Left: Hollywood Palladium, 6215 Sunset Blvd, City Historic-Cultural Monument No. 1130 (Water & Power Associates);
Right: Dinner theater at the Earl Carroll Theater, 6220-6230 Sunset Blvd, City Historic-Cultural Monument No. 1136,
(Los Angeles Public Library)



Florentine Gardens, 5951 Hollywood Blvd (Los Angeles Public Library)

As a group, these buildings provided the public face of Hollywood and were used by studios and publicists to promote motion picture stars. Many of these venues no longer exist either in Hollywood or on the associated Sunset Strip in West Hollywood; therefore, those that do remain are rare and figure prominently in the context of the built environment of Hollywood. They belong to a special property type of entertainment venues capable of holding large numbers of patrons for social

activities that were specifically developed to capitalize on the proximity to major motion picture studios and other related entertainment industry resources in Hollywood. Tourists arrived in Hollywood in droves hoping to attend a live radio broadcast, visit one of the legendary nightclubs, or catch a glimpse of the stars.

Alongside these venues were the restaurants that catered specifically to the Hollywood elite when they wanted a night out away from the crowds. John's Café, located in Wilcox Hall at Hollywood and Cahuenga Boulevards (6380 Hollywood Blvd, not extant), was "Hollywood's first celebrity restaurant."²³ The restaurant was unpretentious with "oilcloth-covered tables and a long lunch counter."²⁴ It became a key meeting place for early movie executives. Other restaurants including Musso & Frank's (6667 Hollywood Boulevard, listed in the National Register of Historic Places) and the Tam O'Shanter Inn (2980 Los Feliz Boulevard) drew crowds from the film studios. The Tam O'Shanter, in particular, "was so favored by the film community that it was referred to as the 'other' Disney studio commissary."²⁵ Musso & Frank's



Tam O'Shanter Inn, 2980 Los Feliz Blvd (HistoricPlacesLA)

²³ Williams, *The Story of Hollywood*, 79.

²⁴ Williams, *The Story of Hollywood*, 79.

²⁵ George Geary, *L.A.'s Legendary Restaurants: Celebrating the Famous Places Where Hollywood Ate, Drank, and Played* (Solana Beach: Santa Monica Press LLC, 2016), 12.

included a space called the “Back Room,’ a legendary private space reserved for the Hollywood elite.”²⁶ The restaurant was frequented by stars like Charlie Chaplin, Elizabeth Taylor, Al Pacino, and Orson Welles. It was also known as a writer’s café, popular with the likes of Nathanael West, F. Scott Fitzgerald, and Bill Lippman.²⁷



Musso and Frank's Grill, 6663 Hollywood Blvd, listed in the National Register of Historic Places, c. 1930 (Water and Power Associates)

ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS FOR PROPERTIES ASSOCIATED WITH THE SOCIAL SCENE ASSOCIATED WITH THE ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY

Summary Statement of Significance:

Los Angeles’ identity is inextricably tied to its role in the entertainment industry. The well-known advertising slogan, “The Entertainment Capital of the World” reflects the city’s central place in the motion picture, radio, television, and recording/music industries. Key recreation and entertainment venues linked to entertainers and the entertainment industry played a significant role in the growth and development of Los Angeles as the “Entertainment Capital.” Significant property types include music/night clubs, bars, restaurants, and hotels among others frequented by and directly associated with people in the entertainment industry. Entertainment venues evaluated under this sub-theme are significant in the areas of Entertainment, Social History, and Commerce.

Period of Significance:

1908 – 1980

Period of Significance Justification:

The period of significance begins in 1908, the origin of the motion picture industry in Los Angeles (though resources from

²⁶ Geary, L.A.’s *Legendary Restaurants*, 27

²⁷ Geary, L.A.’s *Legendary Restaurants*, 27

SurveyLA Citywide Historic Context Statement

Entertainment Industry/Commercial Properties Associated with the Entertainment Industry, 1908-1980

this period associated with the entertainment industry are rare), and ends in 1980, the end date for SurveyLA. The end date may be extended over time.

Geographic Location:

Hollywood (with specific concentrations on Hollywood Boulevard and Sunset Boulevard), South Los Angeles (with a specific concentration on Central Avenue)

Area(s) of Significance:

Entertainment, Social History, Commerce

Criteria:

NR: A

CR: 1

Local: 1

Associated Property Type:

Commercial – Music Club/Night Club
Commercial – Bar
Commercial – Restaurant
Commercial – Hotel
Commercial – Other

Property Type Description:

Entertainment or social venue with a significant relationship to the entertainment industry. This includes music and night clubs, bars, restaurants, hotels, and others frequented by people in the entertainment industry.

Property Type Significance:

See Summary Statement of Significance above.

Eligibility Standards:

- Entertainment or social venue with a significant relationship to the entertainment industry

Character Defining/Associative Features:

- Retains most of the essential character-defining features of the type
- Includes music and dance clubs; comedy clubs; bars, restaurants, and dinner clubs; hotels; and private social clubs frequented by people in the entertainment industry
- Public venues were often used by studios and publicists to promote their stars
- Private venues were typically exclusive, and provided an opportunity to socialize and network out of the public eye
- May be the long-term home of a continuously-operational commercial enterprise
- May be the site of significant performances and/or the long-term venue for a significant performer

SurveyLA Citywide Historic Context Statement

Entertainment Industry/Commercial Properties Associated with the Entertainment Industry, 1908-1980

- Significant properties will likely have been constructed between 1920 and 1960
- May be located adjacent to motion picture studios or other entertainment-related properties
- May also be significant as a good example of an architectural style from its period and/or the work of a significant architect or builder

Integrity Considerations:

- Should retain integrity of Location, Design, Feeling, and Association from the period of significance
- Retains sufficient integrity to convey significance
- Original use may have changed
- Setting may have changed (surrounding buildings and land uses)

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