

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY  
RECEIVED AUG 31 1977  
DATE ENTERED JAN 30 1978

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC Jefferson Theatre

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER 345 Fannin St.

NOT FOR PUBLICATION  
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

CITY, TOWN  
Beaumont

VICINITY OF

-9-

STATE  
Texas

CODE  
048

COUNTY  
Jefferson

CODE  
245

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME  
Jefferson Theatre Preservation Society

STREET & NUMBER  
P. O. Box 3150

CITY, TOWN  
Beaumont

VICINITY OF

STATE  
Texas 77704

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.  
Jefferson County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER  
1100 Pearl

CITY, TOWN  
Beaumont

STATE  
Texas

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE  
SPARE Beaumont

DATE  
January 1977

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS  
Beaumont Heritage Society

CITY, TOWN  
Beaumont

STATE  
Texas

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

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## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Jefferson Theatre is much the same today as it was when its doors opened in November of 1927. The work required to restore it to its original function as a theatre for the performing arts would consist primarily of routine maintenance and the updating of the mechanical and electrical systems.

The facade of the theatre is a typical composition for facilities of its kind and era. The design cannot be attributed to any particular style as it combines classical elements with cast relief panels and typical stone detailing in a symmetrical arrangement. The facade is unaltered with the exception of the first floor or street level. Originally, the box office was in the center of the entrance and it was flanked on either side by a pair of double doors. Today the box office is offset to the right. The four sets of double doors have been repositioned.

The facade is capped with a green Spanish tile roof and overhanging eave. The entablature consists of cast stone and panels depicting "music" (a violin and sheet music) on one end and "art" (artist palette and brushes) on the other end. In between the end reliefs, there are alternating panels of Siene marble, decorative iron insets and festooned relief panels. In the center of the entablature is an ornamented border marble panel with the name "Jefferson" inscribed into it.

On the face of the building below the entablature appear two cast stone roundels. One depicts "music" and the other "art" with representations of classical figures. At the third floor level there are four windows and three sets of double doors opening onto a small balcony with an ornamental iron railing. The central doorway is crowned with a highly ornamented cartouche while the doors to either side have gabled pediments. There exist five windows and two more cast relief panels at the second floor level. These panels depict "art" (palette and assortment of brushes) and "architecture" (T-square, triangle and plans). The sheet iron marquee and canopy is original to the structure as is the three-story illuminated sign.

The only major modifications on the interior have been the insertion of a concession counter in the center of the lobby where several sets of doors were removed that originally opened into a foyer at the rear of the theatre space. A portion of the second floor gallery that surrounds the lobby space has been enclosed. These modifications consist of the insertion of walls and counters to fill openings and have not permanently altered the original configuration of the lobby space.

The interior decoration is a Spanish-style motif with <sup>L</sup>paster ornamentation in the lobby, foyer and gallery. The 1800 seat theatre and balcony continue the motif with the ornate proscenium arch and large Spanish-styled window balconies to either side of the stage. The ceiling is beamed with ornamented corbels at the beam ends. Other decorative features include ornamental iron, decorative relief panels and molded torchieres. The seating in the double balcony is original while the ground floor seating has been replaced.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
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RECEIVED **AUG 31 1977**

DATE ENTERED

**JAN 30 1978**

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 1

Five levels of dressing rooms are located in the stage house. Other facilities include a chorus room, showers, restrooms, dressing corridors and orchestra quarters. The stage covers an area 32 by 65 feet overall. The original counterweight system, innovative for its day, is still functional and will handle as many as 50 drops.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

1927

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

Emile Weil, Inc.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The construction of the Jefferson Theatre in 1927 illustrates the pattern of cultural enlightenment and civic improvement that dominated Beaumont in the first third of the twentieth century as a result of the historic oil discoveries in the nearby petroleum fields. It is a very good representation of the multi-use entertainment facility constructed in this era and its slightly altered condition makes it an excellent candidate for restoration as a performing arts facility amidst the renewed downtown civic center complex.

The discovery of oil at the Spindletop oil field in 1901 ushered in the "petroleum age" for the United States. Its economic impact was felt not only in Beaumont but the entire country as well. The discovery of deep oil at Spindletop in 1925 precipitated another major boom for the southeast Texas community and the renewed prosperity resulted in the construction of many fine civic, cultural and educational buildings in Beaumont. One of these buildings was the Jefferson Theatre completed in November of 1927 as a movie theatre and facility for live performances.

The cost of building the theatre, which was under construction for more than 10 months, was approximately \$1,000,000. The architect who designed it, Emile Weil, Inc., of New Orleans, was an internationally known theatre designer. The area showplace was built by the Jefferson Amusement Company, who operated it until it was purchased by Gulf States Theatres, Inc., on July 11, 1968. Gulf States operated the theatre until it closed on October 17, 1972. In 1974 the Jefferson was sold to Fulka Interests of Atlanta, Georgia. Mr. Fulka then donated the theatre to the LBJ Foundation of Austin. The Junior League of Beaumont and the Beaumont Junior Forum have organized the Jefferson Theatre Preservation Society, which received the property from the LBJ Foundation in 1976, in the hope of renovating it as a theatre for the performing arts for the three-country Southeast Texas region.

When constructed, the Jefferson Theatre had the most sophisticated technical equipment available for special effects and lighting, with the star attraction being the Robert Morton Company "wonder organ" designed especially for the particular acoustical conditions of the Jefferson. This amazing instrument is capable of mimicking almost any sound, including all sorts of animal sounds, auto sirens and horns, cathedral chimes, and many musical instruments. The Organ, which has 778 pipes as well as percussion instruments connected to it, sits on a disappearing platform. It is still maintained in excellent condition.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

1. SPARE Beaumont, Beaumont Heritage Society, January, 1977.
2. Beaumont Journal, November 12, 1927. Tyrrell Public Library.

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY .5 acres  
 UTM REFERENCES

A	1 5	3 9 4 2 1 5	3 3 2 8 1 7 5	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Block 40, Lot 203.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME/TITLE Joe R. Williams, Project Director  
David Hoffman, Partner

ORGANIZATION	DATE
<u>Bell, Klein &amp; Hoffman</u>	<u>July 18, 1977</u>
STREET & NUMBER	TELEPHONE
<u>920-B Congress Avenue</u>	<u>476-3033</u>
CITY OR TOWN	STATE
<u>Austin</u>	<u>Texas</u>

# 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL  STATE  LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

*Shelley Johnson* 8-23-77

TITLE Texas State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION ATTEST: <i>Charles Adams</i>	DATE <u>1-24-78</u> KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER DATE <u>1-24-78</u>
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Property Jefferson Theatre

Jefferson

State Ill.

Working Number 8.31.77.1397

**TECHNICAL**

Photos /  
Maps /

**CONTROL**

OK 9.1.77

Good local associations, - although they could probably be presented with more strength, documentation.

**HISTORIAN**

Sheffy  
12-22-77  
accept

**ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN**

Accept  
Britt 11/2/77

**ARCHEOLOGIST**

**OTHER**

**HAER**

Inventory \_\_\_\_\_  
Review \_\_\_\_\_

**REVIEW UNIT CHIEF**

OF LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE

ACCEPT  
1/17/78

**BRANCH CHIEF**

Hunt  
1-24-78

**KEEPER**

Wm  
13078

National Register Write-up \_\_\_\_\_

Send-back \_\_\_\_\_

Entered JAN 30 1978

Federal Register Entry \_\_\_\_\_

3.7.78

Re-submit \_\_\_\_\_

INT:2106-74



Jefferson Theatre  
Beaumont, Jefferson County, Texas

David Hoffman, 1977  
Bell, Klein & Hoffman, Austin, Texas

North oblique of the main facade

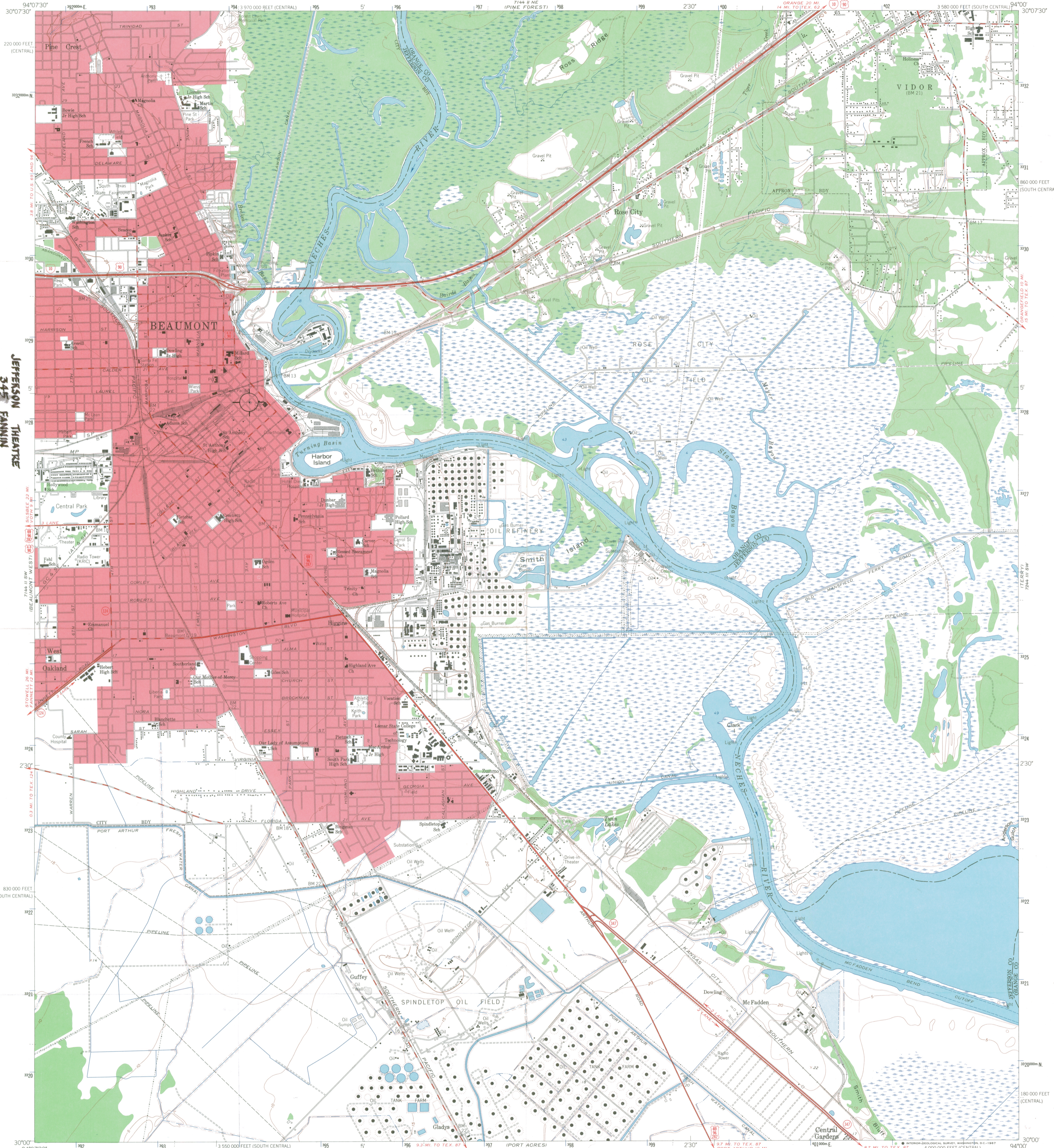
Photo #1 *ob1*

**AUG 31 1977**

*DOE*  
JAN 30 1978

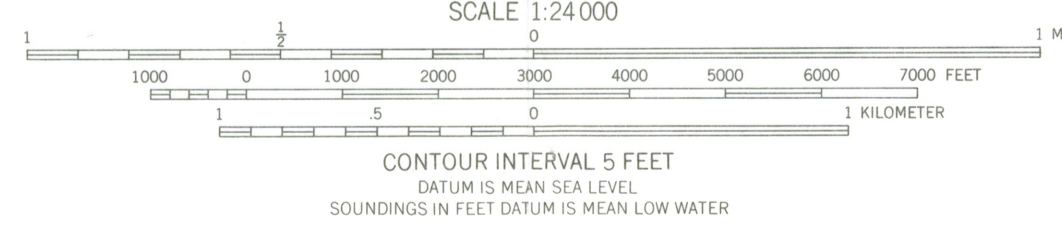
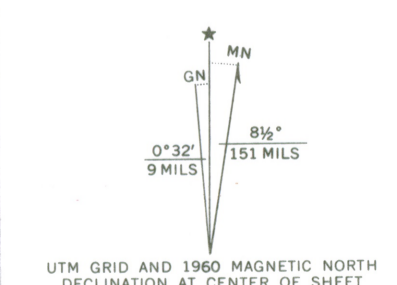
**PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER**

*2179*



JEFFERSON THEATRE  
345 FANNIN  
BEAUMONT, JEFFERSON COUNTY, TEXAS  
UTM REFERENCE: 15/394215/3328175

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey  
Control by USGS and USC&GS  
Planimetry by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1942. Topography from U.S. Corps of Engineers 1943 map. Revised from aerial photographs taken 1959. Field checked 1960  
Selected hydrographic data compiled from USC&GS chart 533 (1961). This information is not intended for navigational purposes.  
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum. 10,000-foot grid based on Texas coordinate system, south central and central zones.  
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 15, shown in blue.  
Light in shaded area in which only landmark buildings are shown.



CONTOUR INTERVAL 5 FEET  
DATUM IS MEAN SEA LEVEL  
SOUNDINGS IN FEET DATUM IS MEAN LOW WATER  
THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR WASHINGTON, D. C. 20242  
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

- Heavy-duty ———
- Light-duty ———
- Medium-duty ———
- Unimproved dirt ———
- Interstate Route ———
- U.S. Route ———
- State Route ———

RECEIVED  
AUG 31 1977  
NATIONAL REGISTER

BEAUMONT EAST, TEX.  
SE/4 BEAUMONT 15 QUADRANGLE  
N3000—W9400/7.5  
3094-111  
1960  
AMS 7144 II SE-SERIES V882

ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE      TEXAS

Date Entered      JAN 30 1978

<u>Name</u>	<u>Location</u>
Magnolia Building	Dallas Dallas County
Jefferson Theatre	Beaumont Jefferson County
Old Mercantile Building	Senora Sutton County

Also Notified

Hon. Lloyd B. Bentsen  
Hon. John G. Tower  
Hon. James A. Mattox  
Hon. Jack Brooks  
Hon. Robert C. Krueger  
Regional Director, Southwest Region

State Historic Preservation Officer  
Mr. Truett Latimer  
Executive Director  
Texas Historical Commission  
P.O. Box 12276, Capitol Station  
Austin, Texas 78711

880      Mott/js      2/2/78

# NATIONAL REGISTER DATA SHEET

① NAME as it appears on federal register: Jefferson Theatre  
 ② OTHER NAMES:  
 ③ date of entry: JAN 30 1978  
 ④ county code: 245

⑤ LOCATION street & number: 345 Fannin St.  
 city / town: Beaumont  
 vicinity of:  
 state: TX  
 county: Jefferson  
 ⑥ NPS REGION: Southwest

⑦ OWNER  PRIVATE  STATE  MUNICIPAL  COUNTY  MULTIPLE  FEDERAL (agency name):  
 ⑧ ADMINISTRATOR:

⑨ EXISTING SURVEYS  HABS  HAER  NHL  
 ⑩ FUNDED?  YES  NO  
 ⑪ CONGRESS. DISTRICT: 9th  
 ⑫ SOURCE of NOMINATION: STATE  FEDERAL

⑬ WITHIN NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICT?  YES, NAME:  NO  
 ⑭ WITHIN NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK?  YES, NAME:  NO  
 ⑮ ACREAGE: 0.5  
 LOCAL  PRIVATE ORGANIZATION

⑯ CONDITION  
 excellent  good  fair  
 deteriorated  ruins  unexposed  unexcavated  
 altered  unaltered  reconstructed  excavated  
 original site  moved  unknown

⑰ features:  
 INTERIOR:  SUBSTANTIALLY INTACT-1  NOT INTACT-0  UNKNOWN-4  NOT APPLICABLE-7  
 EXTERIOR:  SUBSTANTIALLY INTACT-2  NOT INTACT-0  UNKNOWN-5  NOT APPLICABLE-8  
 ENVIRONS:  SUBSTANTIALLY INTACT-3  NOT INTACT-0  UNKNOWN-6  NOT APPLICABLE-9

⑱ ACCESS  YES-Restricted  YES-Unrestricted  No Access  Unknown  
 ⑲ ADAPTIVE USE  YES  NO  
 ⑳ SAVED?  YES  
 ㉑ IS PROPERTY A HISTORIC DISTRICT?  yes  no

㉒ AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE:  
 ARCHEOLOGY-prehistoric-2  
 ARCHEOLOGY-historic-1  
 AGRICULTURE-3  
 ARCHITECTURE-4  
 ART-5  
 COMMERCE-6  
 COMMUNICATIONS-7  
 CONSERVATION-8  
 ECONOMICS-9  
 EDUCATION-10  
 ENGINEERING-11  
 ENTERTAINMENT-26  
 EXPLORATION-12  
 HEALTH-27  
 INDUSTRY-13  
 INVENTION-14  
 LANDSCAPE ARCH.-15  
 LAW-16  
 LITERATURE-17  
 MILITARY-18  
 MUSIC-19  
 PHILOSOPHY-20  
 POLITICS/GOVT.-21  
 RELIGION-22  
 SCIENCE-23  
 SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN-24  
 SOCIAL/CULTURAL-30  
 TRANSPORTATION-25  
 RECREATION-28  
 SETTLEMENT-29  
 URBAN PLANNING-31  
 OTHER (SPECIFY):

㉓ CLAIMS: explain  
 'first'   
 'oldest'   
 'only'

㉔ functions WHEN HISTORICALLY SIGNIFICANT: CURRENTLY:  
 ㉕ dates of initial construction: major alterations: historic events:  
 ㉖ ETHNIC GROUP ASSOCIATION:

㉗ architectural style(s):  
 ㉘ architect:  
 ㉙ master builder:  
 ㉚ engineer:

㉛ landscape architect / garden designer:  
 ㉜ interior decorator:  
 ㉝ artist:  
 ㉞ artisan:  
 ㉟ builder/contractor:

㊱ NAMES give role & date  
 PERSONAL:  
 EVENTS:  
 INSTITUTIONAL:

㊲ NATIONAL REGISTER WRITE-UP