

Conference Presentation:

The 55th *British Association of American Studies* (BAAS) conference.

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Panel: 'Going to the Movies'

Picture Palaces:

The American movie theatre and its love affair with old-world architecture.

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Quotations & Works Cited

"Not since the days of the forty-niners had there been such a way for the little fellow to get rich as in this new business."

~ Upton Sinclair, *Upton Sinclair Presents William Fox* (Los Angeles: Sinclair, 1933), p.37.

"*Question:* How long did it take you to get \$250,000 out of that first theatre?"

Fox: I said we made that amount during the first five years. I earned an average of \$50,000 a year."

"*Fox:* Remember this one cost only \$1,600, so that every time we got \$1,600 more, we opened another just like it. Under the law, the maximum number of chairs at that time was two hundred and ninety-nine. The minute you had more than two hundred and ninety-nine seats, you were obliged to build under certain fire regulations and you had to have a modern, fire-proof building. We kept investing our money into these two hundred and ninety-nine seat theatres until one day they passed a law permitting us to seat six hundred people in a building that was semi-fire-proof."

~ Glendon Allvine, *The Greatest Fox of Them All* (New York: Lyle Stuart, 1969), p.104.

"...the movies were quintessentially American while the men who made them were not..."

~ Neal Gabler, *An Empire of Their Own: How the Jews Invented Hollywood* (New York: Anchor Books, 1988), p.7.

"We sell tickets to theaters, not movies."

~ Marcus Loew, quoted in David Naylor, *Great American Movie Theaters* (Washington DC: The Preservation Press, 1987), back cover.

"In a sense, these theatres are social safety valves in that the public can partake of the same luxuries as the rich and use them to the same full extent."

~ Harold W. Rambusch in 'American Theatres of Today', 1929, quoted in Ben M. Hall, *ibid.*

"The show begins on the sidewalk."

~ Attributed S. Charles Lee, architect of over 70 classic movie theatres.

"An Acre of Seats in a Garden of Dreams"

~ Ben M. Hall, *The Best Remaining Seats* (New York: Bramhall House, 1961 [ed.B]), p.93.

~ Robert Berger, Anne Conser and Stephen M. Silverman, *The Last Remaining Seats: Movie Palaces of Tinseltown* (Los Angeles: Balcony Press, 1997).

~ Douglas Gomery, *The Hollywood Studio System: A History* (London: BFI/Palgrave, 2008).

~ Richard Gray, *Cinemas in Britain: One Hundred Years of Cinema Architecture* (London: Lund Humphries/CTA, 1996).

~ Dennis Sharp, *The Picture Palace: and Other Buildings for the Movies* (New York and Washington: Frederick A. Praeger, 1969).

~ Barbara Stones, *America Goes to the Movies: 100 Years of Motion Picture Exhibition* (Hollywood: National Association of Theatre Owners, 1993).