

Legacy Business Registry Staff Report

HEARING DATE JUNE 26, 2017

GREAT AMERICAN MUSIC HALL

Application No.: LBR-2016-17-086
Business Name: Great American Music Hall
Business Address: 859 O'Farrell Street
District: District 6
Applicant: Dennis Juarez, Vice-President and Secretary
Nomination Date: May 8, 2017
Nominated By: Supervisor Jane Kim
Staff Contact: Richard Kurylo
legacybusiness@sfgov.org

BUSINESS DESCRIPTION

Located in San Francisco's Tenderloin neighborhood, Great American Music Hall has served as a popular nightclub and live music performance venue since 1972. Its founders were Tom Bradshaw and Sam Duval. Designed by architect A.W. Edelman, it has continuously operated out of the same building – a post-earthquake, Renaissance/Baroque-influenced, two-story brick structure with a 5,000 square foot concert hall and elaborately decorated interior. The ornate interior features marble columns, balconies, and frescoes, while the exterior has a two-part vertical composition, pilasters at the upper level, pedimented windows, and a bracketed cornice. Purpose-built as a private men's club called Blanco's Café following the 1906 earthquake and fire, it was purchased in 1939 by famous actress and burlesque dancer Sally Rand who opened it as the Music Box from which she hosted burlesque and music shows until 1946. In the post-WWII era, the building was home to the Cotton Club, which had one of the city's earliest mixed-race house bands. A couple of restaurants and a fraternal organization called Loyal Order of the Moose also occupied the building for a period of time.

The Great American Music Hall has carried forward the building's tradition of serving as an entertainment venue. Today, it fulfills an important role as a cultural space in the Tenderloin through diverse musical and performance offerings that span genres such as bluegrass, country, pop, blues, Latin rock, indie, and singer-songwriter. The hall serves as the sole venue for a number of home-grown events including the Noise Pop Festival, a series of Country-Americana concerts produced by Shelby Ash, and a Latin Rock concert series produced by Dr. Rock. Through hosting these events and hiring local promoters, Great American Music Hall helps to cultivate and promote local talent. In addition, the venue boasts a long list of nationally and internationally famous artists who have performed there, including Duke Ellington, Sarah Vaughan, Count Basie, Van Morrison, the Grateful Dead, Arcade Fire, Patti Smith, and Godspeed You! Black Emperor.

Great American Music Hall gives back to the greater community in a number of ways, by hosting fundraisers for local charitable organizations throughout the year, lending musical equipment to other businesses in the neighborhood for use at events, and serving as a venue rental private and community events including high school proms, bar mitzvahs, and weddings. The business also contributes to the physical maintenance of its block and attracts visitors from outside of the area who regularly patronize surrounding businesses before and after shows.



CRITERION 1: Has the applicant operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years?

Yes, the applicant has operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years:

859 O'Farrell Street from 1972 to Present (45 years).

CRITERION 2: Has the applicant contributed to the neighborhood's history and/or the identity of a particular neighborhood or community?

Yes, the applicant has contributed to the Tenderloin neighborhood's history and identity.

The Historic Preservation Commission recommended the applicant as qualifying, noting the following ways the applicant contributed to the neighborhood's history and/or the identity of a particular neighborhood or community:

- Great American Music Hall is associated with the tradition of serving as an entertainment, musical, and performance venue. As such, the business is associated with music, the performance arts and comedic traditions.
- Great American Music Hall has contributed to the identity of the Tenderloin neighborhood by functioning as popular nightclub, music, and performance venue since 1972. Its 5,000 square foot hall was constructed following the 1906 earthquake to serve as an entertainment venue – a role it has consistently held in the neighborhood for over 100 years. Great American Music Hall has attracted numerous legendary music acts and comedians, as well as emerging local artists, to its venue; contributes to the identity of the Tenderloin as a nightlife destination; and serves as an anchor business in the neighborhood for the benefit of other surrounding businesses.
- 859 O'Farrell Street is considered a "Category A Property," as it has been identified as a contributor to the Uptown Tenderloin Historic District. The district "is significant under Criterion A in the area of Social History for its association with the development of hotel and apartment life in the city during a critical period of change" and for its association with "commercial activity, entertainment, and vice." The district is also significant under Criterion C in the area of architecture for its distinctive mix of building types that served a new urban population of office and retail workers that includes hotels, apartments, and non-residential buildings.
- The business is mentioned on page 262 of the LGBTQ Historic Context Statement as a venue for queer performer, Lily Tomlin.
- The business has been cited in the following publications:
 - San Francisco Examiner Magazine, 12/11/1984, "The Way We Were," by Zahid Sardar.
 - 7x7, 3/25/2014, "The Scandalous History Behind The Great American Music Hall," by Alyssa Pereira.
 - SF Weekly, 10/28/2014, "No Re-Entry: The Ghosts at Great American Don't Have to Show You Their Damn Hand Stamps," by Emma Silvers.
 - SF Weekly, 3/15/2017, "The Great American Music Hall: prostitutes, tax evasions, and the dotcom boom," by Jessie Schiewe.



CRITERION 3: Is the applicant committed to maintaining the physical features or traditions that define the business, including craft, culinary, or art forms?

Yes, Great American Music Hall is committed to maintaining the physical features or traditions that define its purpose in serving as an entertainment venue, hosting performance and musical events, and coordinating rentals of the hall for community events, fundraisers, or other private events.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

The Historic Preservation Commission recommends that Great American Music Hall qualifies for the Legacy Business Registry under Administrative Code Section 2A.242(b)(2) and recommends safeguarding of the below listed physical features and traditions.

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business:

- Function as a music, performance, and entertainment venue that attracts local, national, and international artists and groups reflecting a diversity of genres.
- Function as rental venue for local artists, schools, and community groups.
- Practice of supporting neighboring businesses in the Central Market/Tenderloin corridor.
- Tenderloin location.
- The historic exterior character-defining features of the building at 859 O'Farrell Street:
 - Outdoor marquee
 - Pilasters at the upper level
 - Pedimented windows
 - Bracketed cornice
- The historic interior character-defining features of the building at 859 O'Farrell Street:
 - Ceiling frescoes
 - Marble columns
 - Balconies
 - 5,000 square foot concert hall

CORE PHYSICAL FEATURE OR TRADITION THAT DEFINES THE BUSINESS

Following is the core physical features or tradition that defines the business that would be required for maintenance of the business on the Legacy Business Registry:

- Entertainment venue.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the San Francisco Small Business Commission include Great American Music Hall, currently located at 859 O'Farrell Street in the Legacy Business Registry as a Legacy Business under Administrative Code Section 2A.242.

Richard Kurylo, Manager
Legacy Business Program



Small Business Commission Draft Resolution

HEARING DATE JUNE 26, 2017

GREAT AMERICAN MUSIC HALL

LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY RESOLUTION NO. _____

Application No.: LBR-2016-17-086
Business Name: Great American Music Hall
Business Address: 859 O'Farrell Street
District: District 6
Applicant: Dennis Juarez, Vice-President and Secretary
Nomination Date: May 8, 2017
Nominated By: Supervisor Jane Kim
Staff Contact: Richard Kurylo
legacybusiness@sfgov.org

ADOPTING FINDINGS APPROVING THE LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY APPLICATION FOR GREAT AMERICAN MUSIC HALL, CURRENTLY LOCATED AT 859 O'FARRELL STREET.

WHEREAS, in accordance with Administrative Code Section 2A.242, the Office of Small Business maintains a registry of Legacy Businesses in San Francisco (the "Registry") to recognize that longstanding, community-serving businesses can be valuable cultural assets of the City and to be a tool for providing educational and promotional assistance to Legacy Businesses to encourage their continued viability and success; and

WHEREAS, the subject business has operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years; or

WHEREAS, the subject business has operated in San Francisco for more than 20 years but less than 30 years, has had no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years, has significantly contributed to the history or identity of a particular neighborhood or community and, if not included in the Registry, faces a significant risk of displacement; and

WHEREAS, the subject business has contributed to the neighborhood's history and identity; and

WHEREAS, the subject business is committed to maintaining the physical features and traditions that define the business; and

WHEREAS, at a duly noticed public hearing held on June 26, 2017, the San Francisco Small Business Commission reviewed documents and correspondence, and heard oral testimony on the Legacy Business Registry application; therefore





SAN FRANCISCO

OFFICE OF SMALL BUSINESS

CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO
EDWIN M. LEE, MAYOR

OFFICE OF SMALL BUSINESS
REGINA DICK-ENDRIZZI, DIRECTOR

BE IT RESOLVED that the Small Business Commission hereby includes Great American Music Hall in the Legacy Business Registry as a Legacy Business under Administrative Code Section 2A.242.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Small Business Commission recommends safeguarding the below listed physical features and traditions at Great American Music Hall:

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business:

- Function as a music, performance, and entertainment venue that attracts local, national, and international artists and groups reflecting a diversity of genres.
Function as rental venue for local artists, schools, and community groups.
Practice of supporting neighboring businesses in the Central Market/Tenderloin corridor.
Tenderloin location.
The historic exterior character-defining features of the building at 859 O'Farrell Street:
Outdoor marquee
Pilasters at the upper level
Pedimented windows
Bracketed cornice
The historic interior character-defining features of the building at 859 O'Farrell Street:
Ceiling frescoes
Marble columns
Balconies
5,000 square foot concert hall

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Small Business Commission requires maintenance of the below listed core physical feature or tradition to maintain Great American Music Hall on the Legacy Business Registry:

- Entertainment venue.

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED by the Small Business Commission on June 26, 2017.

Regina Dick-Endrizzi
Director

RESOLUTION NO. _____

- Ayes -
Nays -
Abstained -
Absent -





SAN FRANCISCO

OFFICE OF SMALL BUSINESS

CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO
EDWIN M. LEE, MAYOR

OFFICE OF SMALL BUSINESS
REGINA DICK-ENDRIZZI, DIRECTOR

**Legacy
Business
Registry**

Application Review Sheet

Application No.: LBR-2016-17-086
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Nominated By: Supervisor Jane Kim

CRITERION 1: Has the applicant has operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years? Yes No

859 O'Farrell Street from 1972 to Present (45 years)

CRITERION 2: Has the applicant contributed to the neighborhood's history and/or the identity of a particular neighborhood or community? Yes No

CRITERION 3: Is the applicant committed to maintaining the physical features or traditions that define the business, including craft, culinary, or art forms? Yes No

NOTES: NA

DELIVERY DATE TO HPC: May 10, 2017

Richard Kurylo
Manager, Legacy Business Program



Member, Board of Supervisors
District 6



City and County of San Francisco

JANE KIM
金貞妍

May 8, 2017

Regina Dick-Endrizzi, Director
San Francisco Small Business Commission
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, Room 110
San Francisco, CA 94102

Dear Regina:

I would like to formally nominate the Great American Music Hall as a candidate for the registry of Legacy Businesses in San Francisco.

The story of the Great American Music Hall is woven into the history of San Francisco for over a century, since it first opened 110 years ago following the 1906 earthquake. Initially called Blanco's, the building served as a private club for men to gamble, drink, and engage in other activities for the first few decades of the century. Then in 1936 it was purchased by actor and burlesque dancer Sally Rand, who renamed it the music box and put on unique shows consisting of her dance routines accompanied by big band music and a chorus.

Following the end of World War II, the Hall was briefly called the Cotton Club and made the bold decision to host a mixed-race house band before 1950. Then throughout the '50s, the Hall served as a meeting place for the Loyal Order of the Moose, a fraternal organization whose members include four U.S. Presidents and countless entertainers, athletes, and politicians. In the '60s an ambitious, tax-evading French restaurateur named Robert took over the Hall and is said to have served 'exquisite' medium rare lamb until the IRS caught up with him.

In 1972, the property was purchased by Tom Bradshaw and he refurbished the venue and named it the Great American Music Hall. In the following years, the Hall saw a myriad of legendary acts from Dizzie Gillespie to The Grateful Dead and a young Robin Williams. In the early 2000s, the Hall changed hands a couple more times and under its new ownership, has settled in as an outlet for a variety of indie bands and singers/songwriters.

Throughout the Great American Music Hall's rich history in San Francisco, it has seen all sides of life in the city. Countless legendary performers have graced the stage at the Hall, many of whom are no longer with us today. The Hall's enduring presence over a century is an invaluable piece of San Francisco's history.

I am proud to nominate Great American Music Hall as a candidate for the San Francisco Legacy Businesses Registry.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in purple ink, appearing to read "Jane Kim".

Jane Kim

Section One:

Business / Applicant Information. Provide the following information:

- The name, mailing address, and other contact information of the business;
- The name of the person who owns the business. For businesses with multiple owners, identify the person(s) with the highest ownership stake in the business;
- The name, title, and contact information of the applicant;
- The business's San Francisco Business Account Number and entity number with the Secretary of State, if applicable.

NAME OF BUSINESS:		
GREAT AMERICAN MUSIC HALL		
BUSINESS OWNER(S) (identify the person(s) with the highest ownership stake in the business)		
WILLIAM (BOZ) SCAGGS FRANK CAUFIELD		
CURRENT BUSINESS ADDRESS:		TELEPHONE:
859 O'FARRELL ST. SAN FRANCISCO, CA. 94109		(415) 255-0333
		EMAIL:
		DENNIS@SLIMS-SF.COM
WEBSITE:	FACEBOOK PAGE:	YELP PAGE:
WWW.SLIMSPRESENTS.COM	GREAT AMERICAN MUSIC HALL	GREAT AMERICAN MUSIC HALL

APPLICANT'S NAME	
DENNIS JUAREZ	Same as Business
APPLICANT'S TITLE	
VICE-PRESIDENT, SECRETARY	
APPLICANT'S ADDRESS:	TELEPHONE:
333 11TH ST S.F. CA. 94103	(415) 255-0333
	EMAIL:
	DENNIS@SLIMS-SF.COM

SAN FRANCISCO BUSINESS ACCOUNT NUMBER:	SECRETARY OF STATE ENTITY NUMBER (if applicable):
0358240	200201710101

OFFICIAL USE Completed by OSE Staff	
NAME OF NOMINATOR:	DATE OF NOMINATION:
SUPERVISOR JANE KIM	

Section Two:

Business Location(s).

List the business address of the original San Francisco location, the start date of business, and the dates of operation at the original location. Check the box indicating whether the original location of the business in San Francisco is the founding location of the business. If the business moved from its original location and has had additional addresses in San Francisco, identify all other addresses and the dates of operation at each address. For businesses with more than one location, list the additional locations in section three of the narrative.

ORIGINAL SAN FRANCISCO ADDRESS:	ZIP CODE:	START DATE OF BUSINESS
859 O'FARRELL ST. SF. CA. 94109	94109	1972
IS THIS LOCATION THE FOUNDING LOCATION OF THE BUSINESS?	DATES OF OPERATION AT THIS LOCATON	
<input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes		

OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION
		Start:
		End:

OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION
		Start:
		End:

OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION
		Start:
		End:

OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION
		Start:
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OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION
		Start:
		End:

OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION
		Start:
		End:

Section Three:

Disclosure Statement.

San Francisco Taxes, Business Registration, Licenses, Labor Laws and Public Information Release.

This section is verification that all San Francisco taxes, business registration, and licenses are current and complete, and there are no current violations of San Francisco labor laws. This information will be verified and a business deemed not current in with all San Francisco taxes, business registration, and licenses, or has current violations of San Francisco labor laws, will not be eligible to apply for the Business Assistance Grant.

In addition, we are required to inform you that all information provided in the application will become subject to disclosure under the California Public Records Act.

Please read the following statements and check each to indicate that you agree with the statement. Then sign below in the space provided.

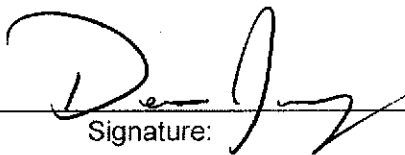
- I am authorized to submit this application on behalf of the business.
- I attest that the business is current on all of its San Francisco tax obligations.
- I attest that the business's business registration and any applicable regulatory license(s) are current.
- I attest that the Office of Labor Standards and Enforcement (OLSE) has not determined that the business is currently in violation of any of the City's labor laws, and that the business does not owe any outstanding penalties or payments ordered by the OLSE.
- I understand that documents submitted with this application may be made available to the public for inspection and copying pursuant to the California Public Records Act and San Francisco Sunshine Ordinance.
- I hereby acknowledge and authorize that all photographs and images submitted as part of the application may be used by the City without compensation.
- I understand that the Small Business Commission may revoke the placement of the business on the Registry if it finds that the business no longer qualifies, and that placement on the Registry does not entitle the business to a grant of City funds.

DENNIS JUAREZ

Name (Print):

4/28/17

Date:



Signature:

GREAT AMERICAN MUSIC HALL

Section 4: Written Historical Narrative

CRITERION 1

a. Provide a short history of the business from the date the business opened in San Francisco to the present day, including the ownership history. For businesses with multiple locations, include the history of the original location in San Francisco (including whether it was the business's founding and or headquartered location) and the opening dates and locations of all other locations.

Voted #6 in the Best Clubs in America list by Rolling Stone magazine in 2013, San Francisco's oldest and grandest nightclub, the Great American Music Hall, carries guests back to an earlier, more elegant era, with its ornate balconies, soaring marble columns and elaborate ceiling frescoes. Long-time customers and newcomers alike feel at home in the 5,000-square-foot concert hall that symbolized renewal and optimism when it opened in 1907 during the period of rebuilding that followed the 1906 earthquake. Its interior was designed by a French architect. It was originally called Blanco's, after a notorious Barbary Coast house of prostitution.

In 1936, local favorite Sally Rand, known for her extravagant and elaborate fan dances and bubble dance acts, acquired the property and brought new life to the dark building. She called it the Music Box, and swanky city dwellers would dance the night away there for the next decade. After the end of World War II, the Music Box turned out its lights.

The building reopened in 1948 as a jazz club that reused the name Blanco's.

In the 1950s, the premises were taken over by members of the Moose Lodge. The venue went into an ignominious decline that hit bottom when the building was condemned by city building inspectors. A last-minute reprieve saved it from demolition, and the tarnished interior was revamped as a short-lived French restaurant named Charles (after the proprietor, Robert Charles).

In 1972, the venue was purchased by Tom Bradshaw. Newly refurbished and painted, the building was renamed the Great American Music Hall. Happy music lovers filled the hall once more.

Since then, the Great American Music Hall has hosted artists ranging from Duke Ellington, Sarah Vaughan and Count Basie to Van Morrison, the Grateful Dead, Arcade Fire, Patti Smith and Godspeed You! Black Emperor.

Today, a professional sound and lighting system, two full bars, a modern kitchen and a spacious oak dance floor help to blend contemporary quality with turn-of-the-century graciousness.

b. Describe any circumstances that required the business to cease operations in San Francisco for more than six months?

The business has not ceased operations for more than six months since it was established as Great American Music Hall in 1972.

c. Is the business a family-owned business? If so, give the generational history of the business.

Great American Music Hall is not a family-owned business.

d. Describe the ownership history when the business ownership is not the original owner or a family-owned business.

Great American Music Hall was opened in 1972 by Tom Bradshaw and Sam Duval. The club was purchased in 1992 by Kurt Brouwer. In May 2000, during the dot com boom, the club was purchased by music website Riffage.com and went to Diablo Management Group when Riffage ceased operations in December 2000.

Two year later, Great American Music Hall was purchased in 2002 by Big Billy Inc. (also owners of the club Slim's) from Diablo Management Group. At this point several minority owners came in including Warren Hellman, Nion McAvoy, Roger McNamee, Joe Tobin, Jonathan Nelson, William Hearst, Larry Brilliant, and several others. There is also a Board of Directors in which includes Dennis Juarez, Vice President and Secretary, and Dana Smith, President and Treasurer, who oversee the management of the venue.

e. When the current ownership is not the original owner and has owned the business for less than 30 years, the applicant will need to provide documentation of the existence of the business prior to current ownership to verify it has been in operation for 30+ years. Please use the list of supplemental documents and/or materials as a guide to help demonstrate the existence of the business prior to current ownership.

News articles documenting the existence of the business since 1972 are included in the application.

f. Note any other special features of the business location, such as, if the property associated with the business is listed on a local, state, or federal historic resources registry.

The building at 859 O'Farrell Street is considered a "Category A Property," indicating the presence of a historic resource. It is a contributor to the National and California Register-eligible Uptown Tenderloin Historic District. It was also identified on page 262 of the LGBTQ Historic Context Statement for its association with Lily Tomlin, who performed here.

CRITERION 2

a. Describe the business's contribution to the history and/or identity of the neighborhood, community or San Francisco.

The Great American Music Hall is a longstanding fixture in the Tenderloin neighborhood. Because of its location in the neighborhood, many of the small business in the surrounding area benefit from having the venue in the area due to the nightly crowds attending shows. The venue also is dedicated to maintaining the block of O'Farrell Street and the adjacent alleyway by keeping it clear of garbage and refuse. The business also is not hesitant to lend out equipment to neighboring businesses such as Mitchell Brothers. The venue staff also patronizes local businesses by paying for parking spaces at adjacent buildings, and utilizing some of the late night restaurants and delis in the neighborhood.

b. Is the business (or has been) associated with significant events in the neighborhood, the city, or the business industry?

The Great American Music Hall is associated with many local events as well as industry events. The venue hosts a series of locally promoted shows with Shelby Ash (Country-Americana genre), Dr. Rock (Latin-based rock promoter), as well as larger festivals such as the Noise Pop Festival.

The venue also hosts a number of locally-oriented fundraisers for groups such as Bread and Roses, Huckleberry Youth, Little Kids Rock, Blue Bear School of Music, City of Hope, and the Mission Dolores Academy. Great American Music Hall has also hosted a number of memorials, some for major members of the music industry such as former Santana members Armando Peraza and Raul Rekow, as well as Chet Helms (Chet Fest) and others.

c. Has the business ever been referenced in an historical context? Such as in a business trade publication, media, or historical documents?

As a major venue in San Francisco, Great American Music Hall has been referenced in innumerable publications over the years. In 2013, the venue was voted #6 Best Clubs in America by Rolling Stone Magazine. Other publications Great American Music Hall has been referenced in include: Pollstar, Consequence of Sound, Spin, SF Gate, The Bay Guardian, San Francisco Chronicle, Oakland Tribune, San Francisco Examiner, SF Weekly, and local radio and television stations KFOG, KPOO, and Live 105, KRON, KTVU, and ABC 7.

d. Is the business associated with a significant or historical person?

The most noteworthy person associated with Great American Music Hall is owner Boz Scaggs however, over the years the club has played host to many significant figures in the music and entertainment industry. Some of those names include: Duke Ellington, Sarah Vaughan, Count Basie, Van Morrison, the Grateful Dead, Arcade Fire, Patti Smith, Godspeed You! Black

Emperor, Prince, Vanessa Carlton, Cheap Trick and BB King. The Comedy Tonight series on PBS, which was filmed at Great American Music Hall also introduced large audiences to entertainment figures such as Robin Williams, Whoopi Goldberg and Steve Martin.

e. How does the business demonstrate its commitment to the community?

The Great American Music Hall has been a long-standing fixture in the Tenderloin community. Over the years it has hosted many events for the local community such as high school proms, bar mitzvahs, many of the aforementioned local fundraisers, as well as make the venue available for local artists to perform. The club also utilizes a number of local promoters who book local artists to shows giving them greater exposure and helping promote and expand the local music scene.

Also, as a business located in the Tenderloin, a notoriously gritty part of San Francisco, the club has always maintained the surrounding area by keeping it clean and providing a cultural space. The staff utilizes many local businesses in the area and has effectively become part of the character of the Tenderloin neighborhood.

f. Provide a description of the community the business serves.

The Great American Music Hall serves an extremely diverse community at its venue, with crowds ranging from all parts of the Bay Area as well as all ages. In a given week, Great American Music Hall can host an extremely wide variety of acts including bluegrass, country, pop, blues and singer-songwriter folks. Events at the Great American Music Hall are largely focused on the band/performer that is scheduled for the night and provide for a very diverse array of patrons from San Francisco and beyond.

g. Is the business associated with a culturally significant building/structure/site/object/interior?

The Great American Music Hall is located at 859 O'Farrell Street and was designed by French architect, originally as a restaurant called Blanco's Café. The location is part of the Uptown Tenderloin Historic District and was a popular entertainment spot known for its food, gambling, and "fancy women." After the Great Depression led to the closing of Blanco's, the space reopened as the Music Box in 1936 where burlesque performances and fan dances featuring Sally Rand were the main ticket until 1940 when the Music Box closed.

h. How would the community be diminished if the business were to be sold, relocated, shut down, etc.?

The Great American Music Hall provides the Tenderloin community with a myriad of different services and is a key business in the Central Market/Tenderloin corridor. Aside from hosting shows, the Great American Music Hall also attracts patrons to other local businesses including Bread & Butter Deli, the AMC Parking Lot, Brenda's French Soul Food and The Phoenix Hotel,

where most of the bands performing at the venue stay. It is also a performance space that attracts musicians and bands nationally and internationally, as it is an extremely popular venue and nightclub. Without such a space, many touring artists would have to compete for limited space at other venues throughout the Bay Area. This type of venue that caters to such a diverse crowd can be seen as an invaluable asset to the Tenderloin community and San Francisco as a whole, as it provides performance space and gathering space for a myriad of different communities that otherwise might not have a place to convene.

CRITERION 3

a. Describe the business and the essential features that define its character.

Great American Music Hall is a performance space that attracts musicians and bands nationally and internationally, as it is an extremely popular venue and nightclub. In addition to bands, the space hosts burlesque, comedy and other performances. In 2013, the Great American Music Hall was named the sixth-best rock club in America in a Rolling Stone poll of artists and managers.

b. How does the business demonstrate a commitment to maintaining the historical traditions that define the business, and which of these traditions should not be changed in order to retain the businesses historical character? (e.g., business model, goods and services, craft, culinary, or art forms)

The Great American Music Hall's commitment to the performance community is part tradition part pragmatism. As a performance venue, Great American Music Hall is dedicated to maintaining the traditions of a classic music venue, however it also follows current music trends in order to attract new crowds and expand its portfolio of performers. The club has hosted over the years acts ranging from blues to bluegrass, punk, folk, pop, country, and jazz music. This healthy mix of performers ensures that the Great American Music Hall has a varied and diverse crowd, extending across various ages, genders and ethnicities, as well as provides a space for performers to display their talents, which is the definition of a true music venue.

c. How has the business demonstrated a commitment to maintaining the special physical features that define the business? Describe any special exterior and interior physical characteristics of the space occupied by the business (e.g. signage, murals, architectural details, neon signs, etc.).

The remarkable interior design came from an unlikely duo: a French architect who designed the building in 1907 and Chris Buckley, a political mover and shaker who wanted to erect a grand structure after the devastating 1906 earthquake. The result was Blanco's, characterized as one of the most popular entertainment spots during San Francisco's notorious Barbary Coast Era. The restaurant/bordello offered fine food, gambling and fast women right up until the dark days of the Great Depression in the 1930s.

d. When the current ownership is not the original owner and has owned the business for less than 30years; the applicant will need to provide documentation that demonstrates the current owner has maintained the physical features or traditions that define the business, including craft, culinary, or art forms. Please use the list of supplemental documents and/or materials as a guide to help demonstrate the existence of the business prior to current ownership.

The Great American Music Hall has maintained the physical features and traditions that define the business as performance venue.











FREE Apartment Rental Service
sfrent.net
415-292-2222

The Great AMERICAN MUSIC HALL
COSA BRAMA
EX 'O' THE CLOCK

AMERICAN MUSIC HALL
885-0750







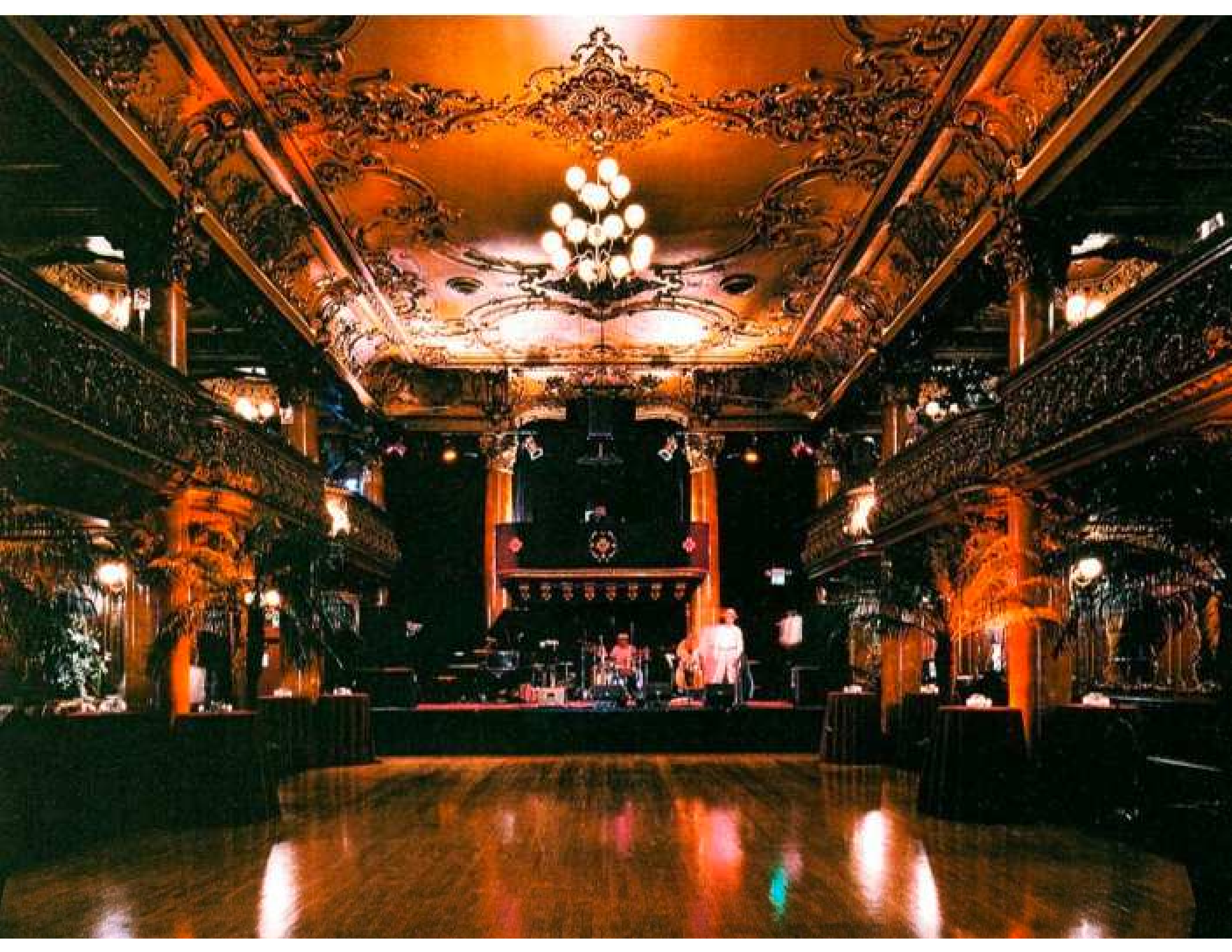
The Great
AMERICAN MUSIC HALL
THE
CULANN'S
HOURS

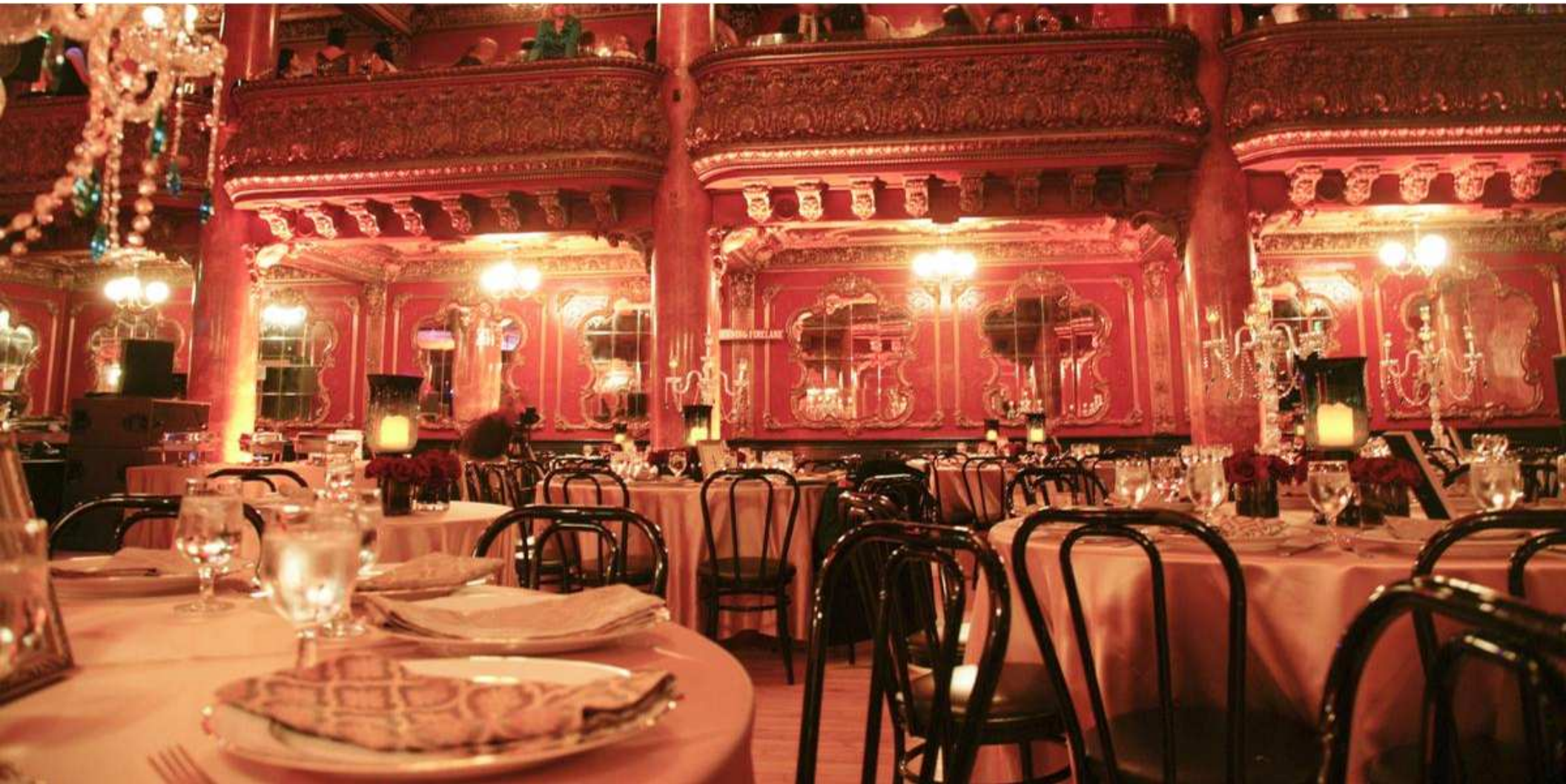
BOX OFFICE



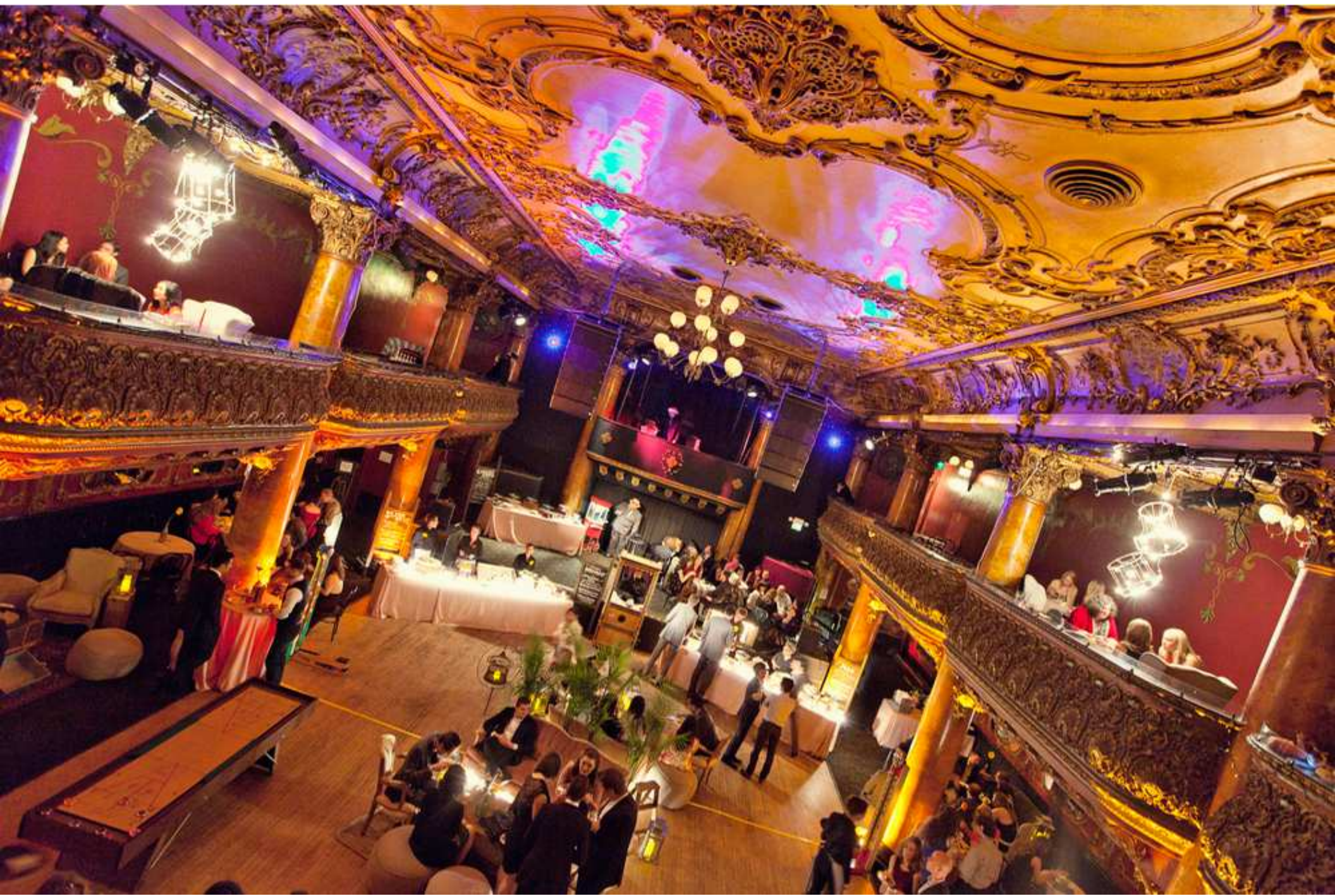


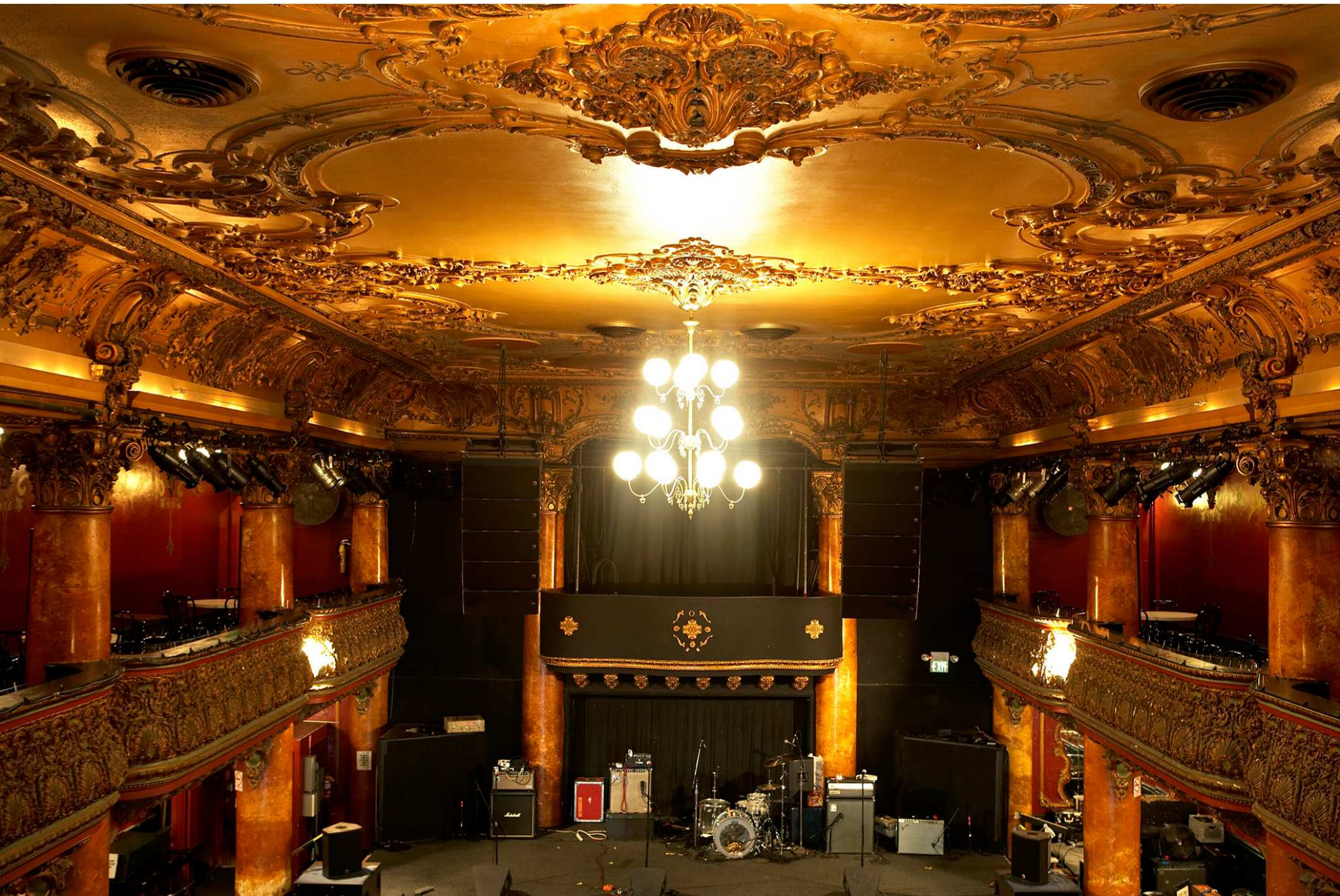






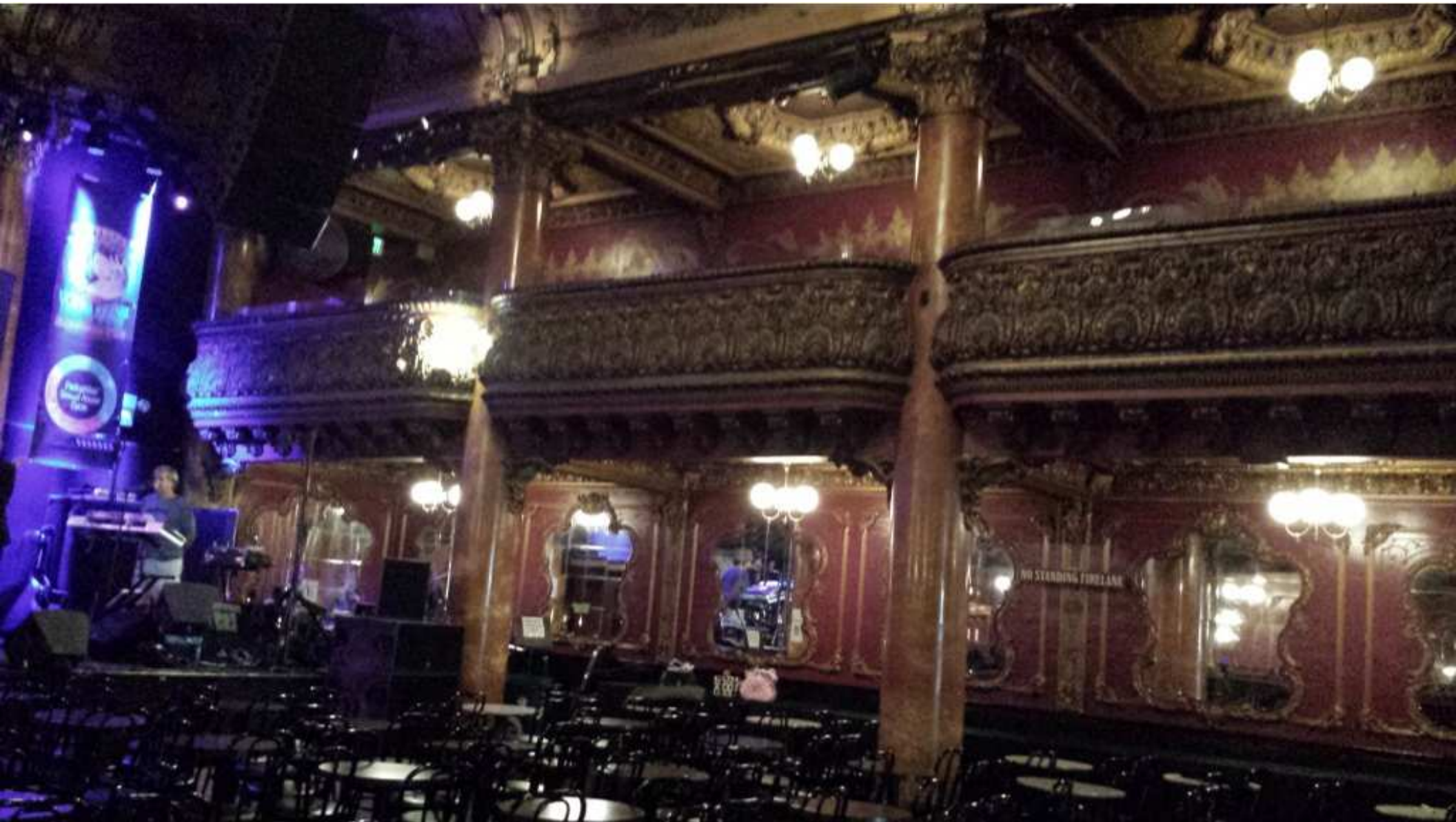
















NO STANDING FIRELANE





859 ~~667~~ O'Farrell

717

15

2

street address

block number

lot number

summary

Great American Theater Hall/Museum / 2 floors

building type/use/number of floors

landmark number

RELATIONSHIP WITH SURROUNDING BUILDINGS

Relationship of setting to building -2 -1 0 1 2 3 4 5

Importance as contribution to a cluster/streetscape -2 -1 0 1 2 3 4 5

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN VALUATION

Facade proportions -2 -1 0 1 2 3 4 5

Richness/Excellence of detailing/decoration -2 -1 0 1 2 3 4 5

Unique visual feature of interest 0 1 2 3 4 5

Example of a rare or unusual style or design 0 1 2 3 4 5

Overall architectural quality -2 -1 0 1 2 3 4 5

PROPOSED FOR FURTHER INVESTIGATION

CORNICE, PARAPET, APPENDAGE

Importance of cornice to building design -2 -1 0 1 2 3 4 5

Cornice contribution to streetscape -2 -1 0 1 2 3 4 5

FACADE CONDITION

Physical condition -2 -1 0 1 2 3 4 5

Paint/Material color -2 -1 0 1 2 3 4 5

REMODELING

Appropriateness of improvements -2 -1 0 1 2 3 4 5

1/10/75

date

Field Notes

Review Notes

Junior League Listing

text index file

Northern California Guide

Other Listing _____



photo D-25



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Typed Drawing

Word Mark GREAT AMERICAN MUSIC HALL

Goods and Services IC 041. US 107. G & S: entertainment services; namely, sponsoring, producing and presenting musical and comedy performances. FIRST USE: 19721100. FIRST USE IN COMMERCE: 19721100

Mark Drawing Code (1) TYPED DRAWING

Serial Number 74277745

Filing Date May 20, 1992

Current Basis 1A

Original Filing Basis 1A

Published for Opposition December 1, 1992

Registration Number 1754294

Registration Date February 23, 1993

Owner (REGISTRANT) Great American Music Hall, Inc. CORPORATION CALIFORNIA 859 O'Farrell Street San Francisco CALIFORNIA 94109

(LAST LISTED OWNER) MUSIC HALL, LLC LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY BY ASSIGNMENT CALIFORNIA 859 O'FARRELL STREET SAN FRANCISCO CALIFORNIA 94109

Assignment Recorded ASSIGNMENT RECORDED

Disclaimer NO CLAIM IS MADE TO THE EXCLUSIVE RIGHT TO USE "MUSIC HALL" APART FROM THE MARK AS SHOWN

Type of Mark SERVICE MARK

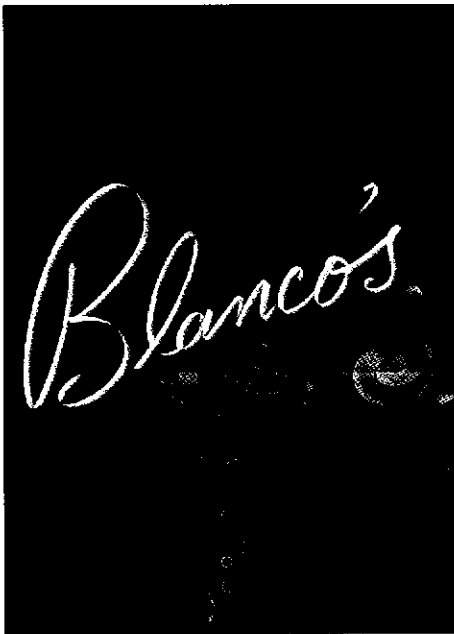
Register PRINCIPAL

Affidavit Text SECT 15. SECT 8 (6-YR). SECTION 8(10-YR) 20121228.

Renewal 2ND RENEWAL 20121228

The Way We Were

Two decades ago, when The Great American Music Hall opened in an opulent, gilded dance hall in San Francisco's notorious Tenderloin District, it revived a giddy Barbary Coast tradition.



Il paper trail chronicles the adventures of a pleasure palace. Photo above, rare view of Music Box patrons during a '30s performance; to the left, menu cover for Blanco's where patrons could buy fine French food and entertainment; pamphlet cover for the Music Box, a cabaret which replaced Blanco's; to the right, menu cover issued during the notorious fan twirling Sally Rand's reign at the Music Box.

Few buildings such as the great pleasure palace built in 1907 at 859 O'Farrell St. in San Francisco have remained so true to their nature. But this ornate \$250,000 interior (which has housed The Great American Music Hall since 1972) was built under the auspices of one of the original City heavyweights, "Blind Boss (Chris) Buckley," as a night club and has remained in continuous use (despite the Depression) for most of the century as an entertainment venue.

It opened during San Francisco's heady renaissance after the Quake, as a fashionable French restaurant-bordello called Blanco's. Blanco's built a somewhat genteel reputation for its uptown audiences, but, as one '30s chronicler from *The News* suggests, after hours it was open season. Barbary Coast types from the waterfront bars who included "table girls, hootchie-kootchie entertainers, toughs, drunks and other riffraff ... moved bodily up to the Tenderloin after 1 a.m. and frolicked until dawn. Up to that time, the uptown cafes and cabarets filled with tourists, beaux and their girls maintained a fair degree of order ... though anyone looking for a fight could find one pronto, at all hours." Legend has it that such uptown caravansaries as Blanco's even had discreet parlor, bedroom and bath suites for gentlemen to retire to. It's hard to find any suites today at The Great American Music Hall but Blanco's might have had a secret doorway to an adjacent building, recently uncovered after the 1989 quake.

Between the World Wars an enterprising danseuse named Sally Rand took hold of the club, now called The Music Box where a bevy of her skimpily dressed girls danced for a delirious audience. Miss Rand herself became famous for her finale, a fan-twirling dance, which she rendered in the buff. But when challenged in court by upright citizens, she claimed that her audience never saw a thing because "the Rand is faster than the eye."

After the War, the cabaret was reopened as Blanco's — a jazz club until the mid-'50s when it was occupied by Moose Lodge members. In '68 it had a brief run as restaurant Charles.

Sadly, the original baroque facade and entranceway detailed in 1906 by architect A.M. Edelman were altered to make way for an awning and marquee. But the grand hall, which in recent years has held the likes of Van Morrison, Duke Ellington, Joan Baez, Robin Williams and Etta James, still retains its splendor. When the houselights come up, the gilded, gaudy show still goes on. ★





The Scandalous History Behind The Great American Music Hall

By

[Alyssa Pereira](#)

Mar 25, 2014

The space at 859 O'Farrell Street has a past ripened by prostitution, crooked politicians, jazz musicians, and a rather enterprising burlesque dancer—not that anyone would be surprised to hear that. San Francisco has never been short on colorful characters, and taking one look at the spiraling rococo influences and towering, gilded columns adorning the interior of the Great American, well, it's pretty obvious that this place enabled those sorts of scandalous visitors. These walls are surely holding on to *lots* of secrets.

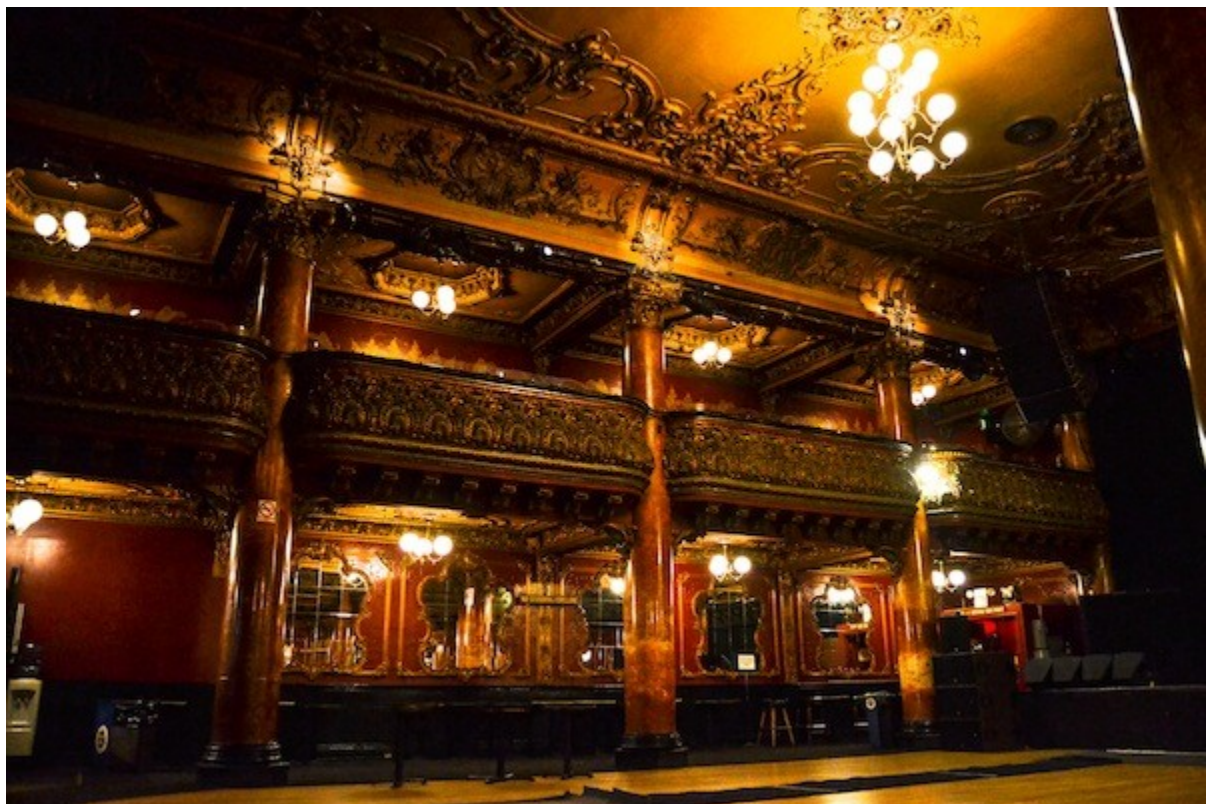


Photo by Alyssa Pereira

The Great American Music Hall's story began in 1907, when Chris "Blind Boss" Buckley, a crooked political organizer who manipulated the Democratic Party in San Francisco in the 1880s, opened it as Blanco's Café. Blanco's catered to the hedonistic whims of the developing metro—prostitution, gambling, and drinking—and the space's ornate balconies and embellished walls ensured its reception as an elegant bordello amidst the urban, post-earthquake roughage. They did, however, hold refined gatherings as well (supposedly).



Photo courtesy of the Great American Music Hall

Some years later, a spunky, bushy-tailed burlesque dancer calling herself Sally Rand (which was not her real name) bought the space and renamed it The Music Box. Though she was a businesswoman, Rand had been arrested several times *during* performances in San Francisco for lewdness (all of which were always thrown out in court).



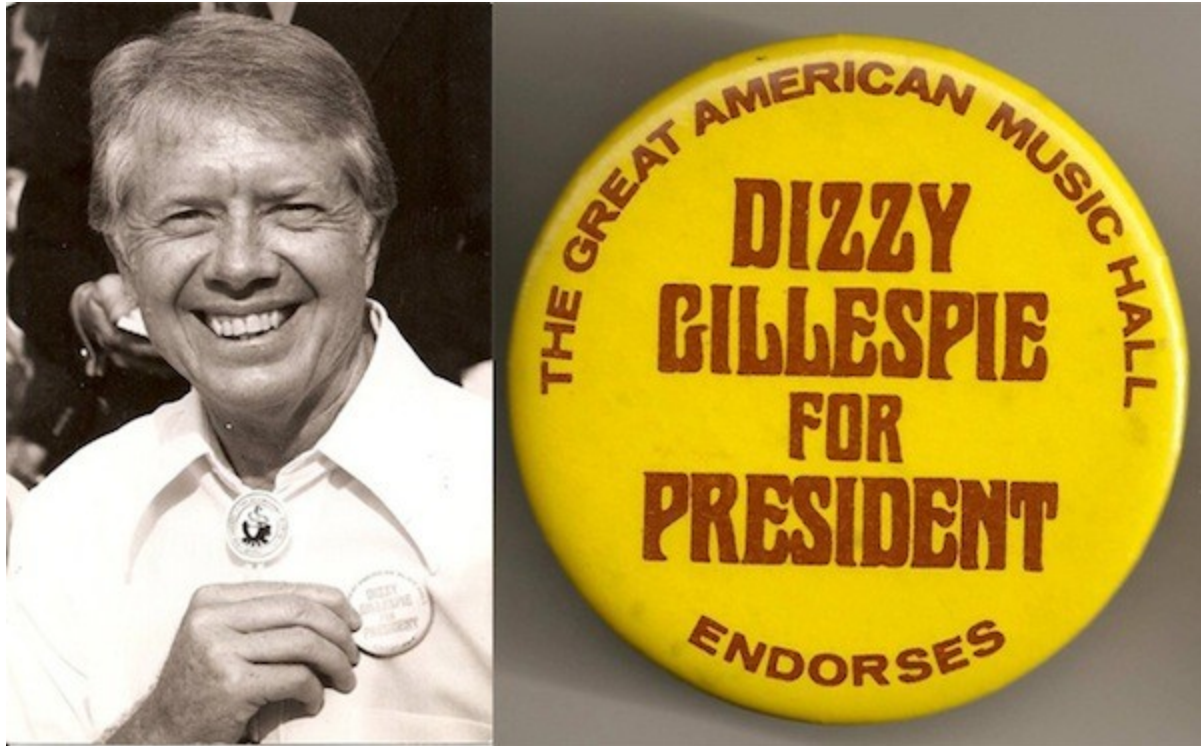
Image via FoundSF.org

She was brilliant, irreverent, and she clearly knew how to throw a good party. Eventually she sold the space, and in 1948, the club reopened as the sadly short-lived Blanco's Cotton Club, the city's first (relatively) desegregated venue and house of jazz, attracting acts like SF local and regular player Allen Smith.



Photo courtesy of the Great American Music Hall

The club was renovated and dubbed The Great American Music Hall in 1972, after a short stint as a French restaurant called Charles (you can even still make out the “C” in each corner of the main room’s ceiling to mark that time). Since then, it has housed everyone from Dizzy Gillespie to John Lee Hooker to Count Basie to upcoming acts, like the Black Lips and The Soft White Sixties. They have always catered to an eclectic pick of emerging acts, and the roster of past talent is so incredible, even Jimmy Carter was a fan.



Photos courtesy of the Great American Music Hall

Despite its long existence, the Great American Music Hall retains many of its original detailing: the two ceiling murals have never been retouched, for instance (though they've been cleaned since indoor smoking was banned), and the marquee outside the building has been around since long before the tech boom.



Photo courtesy of the Great American Music Hall

Stepping into the palatial, mildly haunted (allegedly by the Blind Boss himself) Great American is to revere the city's history and to continue to help preserve local music. Going to a show here is ensuring spaces like these continue to exist, and attending means you can take part in its history too.



Photo by Alyssa Pereira

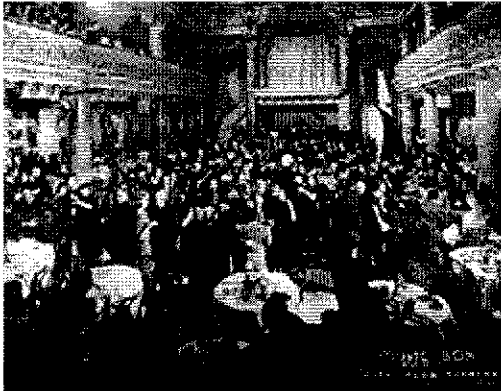
Want to visit the Great American Hall? Here are some things to remember, straight from one of the Hall's longest working employees: If you don't live in San Francisco, try to drive in (or potentially leave early to catch BART). The closest Parking Garage is at 1000 Van Ness Avenue at O'Farrell. If you are taking public transportation, take BART to the Montgomery station, and catch the 38 or 38L Geary outbound to Geary and Van Ness. You can browse their upcoming shows on their website—most shows cost between \$10-35 and finish around midnight. Take a look at the website's [information section](#), and check out their schedule of upcoming shows [right here](#). Don't forget to keep an eye out for the Blind Boss!

SF WEEKLY

No Re-Entry: The Ghosts at Great American Don't Have to Show You Their Damn Hand Stamps

By *Emma Silvers*

Tuesday, Oct 28 2014



*Photo courtesy of Slim's Presents
The Music Box in the 1930s*

San Francisco has always had its ghosts.

There's the legacy left behind by family man Charles Manson, of course, and the Zodiac Killer. If you grew up here, you may have been lucky enough to go on a field trip to Mission Dolores as a small child in the '90s and have your docent deliver a detailed examination of every aspect of the church's historical and cultural significance, followed by a curiously brief and vague explanation of the small graveyard out back full of tombstones bearing Native American names. Any questions, kids?

As of this writing, news is circulating in sad emoticon-filled Facebook posts that the Lexington Club, one of San Francisco's last standing lesbian bars, will soon be closing — joining Cafe du Nord, Esta Noche, and a slew of other homey, now-glorified neighborhood bars and venues that have fallen victim to a changing San Francisco, casualties in the ongoing rent explosion.

Claire Brouwer, an owner and general manager, swore to *SF Weekly* in 1999 that a ghost had triggered the security alarm, then picked up and moved her purse and briefcase while she was working alone early on a Sunday morning. That same year, she and other staff members decided to consult a psychic, who reported that there were 30 to 40 spirits who called the place home — including one who dreamed of being a rock star and was hanging around the GAMH to, you know, break into the biz.

One theory goes that construction happened so quickly after the earthquake and fire in 1906 that dead bodies were never recovered from the wreckage of the saloon that had previously stood there. A caretaker who lived in the building in the year prior to GAMH opening in its current form — around 1970, after 859 O'Farrell's short-lived stint as a French restaurant, which was eventually taken over by the feds and padlocked because of failure to pay taxes — was said to have slept in the dumbwaiter because he was so terrified of the voices and figures that appeared at night.

"We know it was a gentlemen's club of some kind with a secret entrance in the back for carriages to come in. Who knows what may have happened in that building?" says house manager Fred Barnes, whose eeriest story took place when he was downstairs after a show at about 3:30 in the morning. Certain that he was alone, he suddenly saw a man in a long blue coat walk out of one of the dressing rooms and toward the bathroom. "I watched him go down the hall for about eight seconds, and I remember thinking, 'Well, if this is a band member or something, I'm not going to confront them in the bathroom. So I waited a while, and eventually went in there — nobody at all.'"

Barnes doesn't sound quite as spooked as some of his colleagues. But when you're there late by yourself and you're the one who has to turn all the lights off and walk through the darkened room to leave — yeah, things feel a little unsettled. "Let alone the fact that when you get outside," he adds, "you're in the Tenderloin."

Then there are the Duke Ellington stories, most of which revolve around a storage space Ellington used as his dressing room during his April 1973 run at the club — the normal green room is only accessible by the stairway at the back, and on the advice of his doctor, the bandleader, then 74, was to avoid steep places where he might fall, says Brenkman, who's been behind the board at GAMH since 1972.

"[Ellington] was immediately booked for a return engagement the next year, but he died before the scheduled replay," he explains. "After that, people 'saw' or sensed his presence in that room several times. One employee said they saw his face in front of them when they first came into the club, but it turned out no one was actually there."

(He notes that Count Basie also used that room when, in his later years, he was using a motorized scooter. However, he says, "To my knowledge, the spirit of the Count has yet to make an appearance.")

Meanwhile, Brenkman laments that while he's heard all the stories in his 42 years and counting at GAMH, he hasn't had any run-ins with dead people himself.

<http://www.sfweekly.com/music/feature-music/the-great-american-music-hall/>

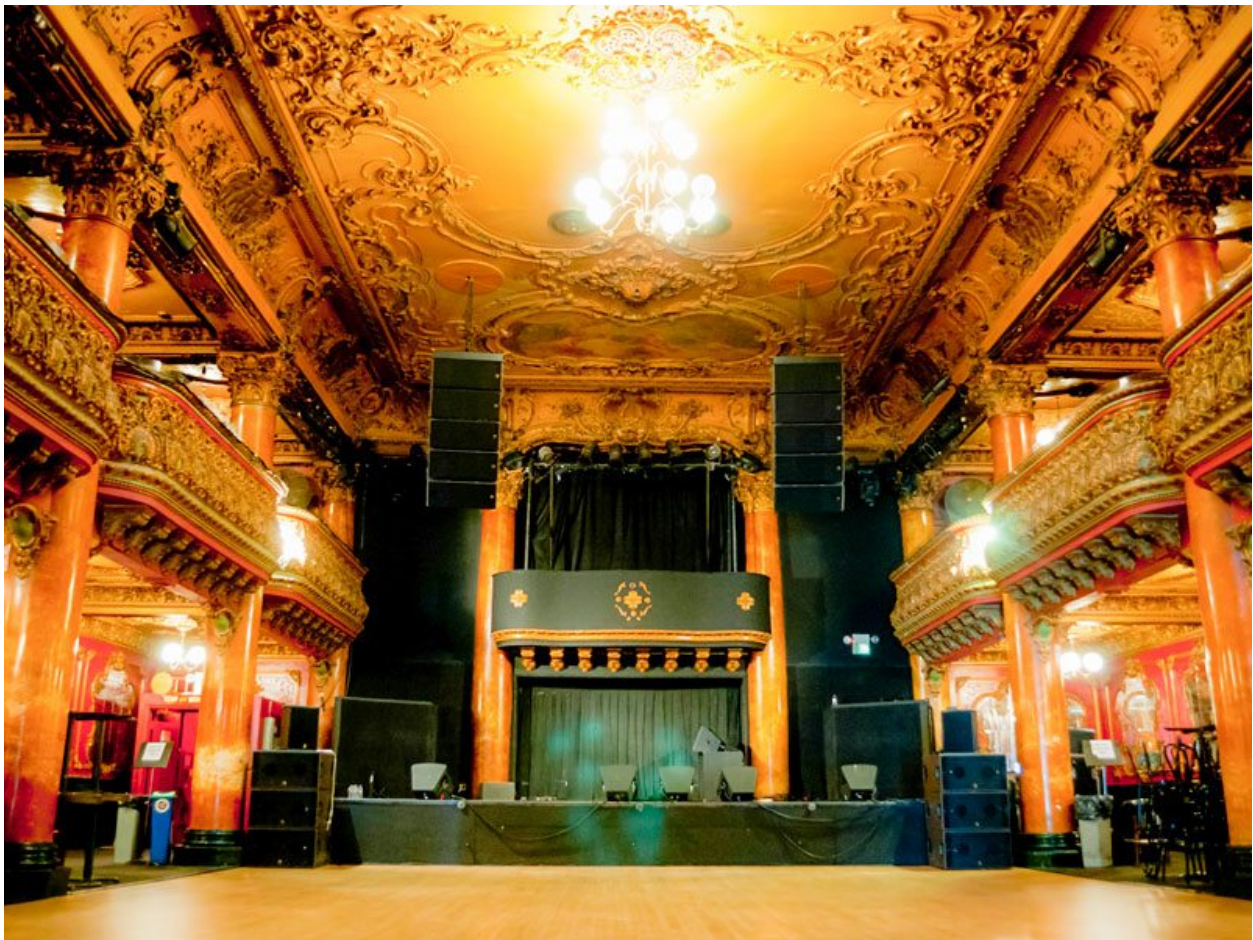
SF WEEKLY

The Great American Music Hall

Prostitutes, tax evasions, and the dotcom boom.

Jessie Schiewe

Wed Mar 15th, 2017 5:51pm



The molding and Italianate decor are all-original and in tip-top condition at Great American Music Hall. (Photo by Eric Pratt)

The Great American Music Hall has a long history of being what sound engineer Lee Brenkman calls “a fairly disreputable place.”

A crooked politician named Chris “Blind Boss” Buckley, who also owned the hotel next door, opened the venue in 1907. He named it Blanco’s after a notorious Barbary Coast bordello, and operated it as a gathering space for men looking to gamble, drink, hear live jazz, and hire prostitutes.

“It was a cafe for gentleman, which pretty much means the same thing as a gentleman’s club does now,” says Brenkman, who has worked at Great American since 1972. “If young gentlemen of means came in without a date, one could be provided and added to the check.”

In fact, in recent years, during a heavy-duty cleaning, wallpaper etchings of ancient women of Pompeii doing what Brenkman calls “the nasty” were found on the ceiling of an old smoking room.

The Hall’s next owner, Sally Rand, was as ribald as Buckley. A burlesque dancer made famous by her erotic feather and bubble routines, Rand renamed it the Music Box and performed her lascivious dances at the venue. Back then, the dance floor was recessed and there was a small platform elevated above the main stage with curved staircases on either end connecting to the floor. Rand would dance on top, the band would play on the main stage below her, and the chorus girls would fan out along the stairwells. There was also a secret lounge upstairs called the Blue Room, where you had to know someone to get in.

After World War II, the Hall changed hands a few times. For a while, it was a jazz venue called the Cotton Club that made what was then a groundbreaking decision to have a mixed-race house band. In the ’50s, it was a meeting house for the Loyal Order of Moose.

Things started to spice up in the ’60s, when a French restaurateur named Charles Robert bought the space. Already the owner of a restaurant near the Embarcadero that was named Charles, Robert had high ambitions for his second eatery, installing a wine cellar below ground and expanding the size of the kitchen to include a stove top big enough to make 50 gallons of soup stock at a time.

Robert was also intent on making his new restaurant as exclusive as possible. The business had an unlisted phone number, and you either had to personally know Robert or the head barman to make a reservation. Lamb, another focal point for Robert, was the only red meat on the menu.

“He believed that Americans didn’t eat enough lamb, and that they overcooked it when they did,” Brenkman says. “If you ordered it any other way than medium-rare, he’d throw you out.”

Robert’s reign ended when the government began investigating him for tax evasion, and he simply disappeared one day, never to return. The venue was shuttered, and eventually new owners bought it through an IRS auction. Years later, Brenkman says,

the Feds finally caught up with Robert, who, at the time, was working as a dishwasher at a casino in Tahoe.

Like its previous owners, the Hall's new owners wanted to run it as a jazz club, but the dwindling number of attendees who came soon forced them to broaden their musical scope. Folk singers and rock bands were added to the bill, and the venue was able to nab acts like Journey, B.B. King, and Van Morrison. Dozens of live albums were recorded there during that time, including the Grateful Dead's *One From the Vault*. A young Robin Williams also made some of his earliest stand-up comedy appearances there. Brenkman recalls seeing a cheetah on a leash during a private party in the '80s, and rabid concertgoers scaling fire escapes and breaking through the building's skylight to get into what they believed was a secret Grateful Dead show. (It was not.)



Picture 1 of 8

Tinted postcards from the days when Great American Music Hall was a gentleman's club called Blanco's.



Picture 2 of 8

The molding, detailing, and lighting fixtures at Great American are all original.

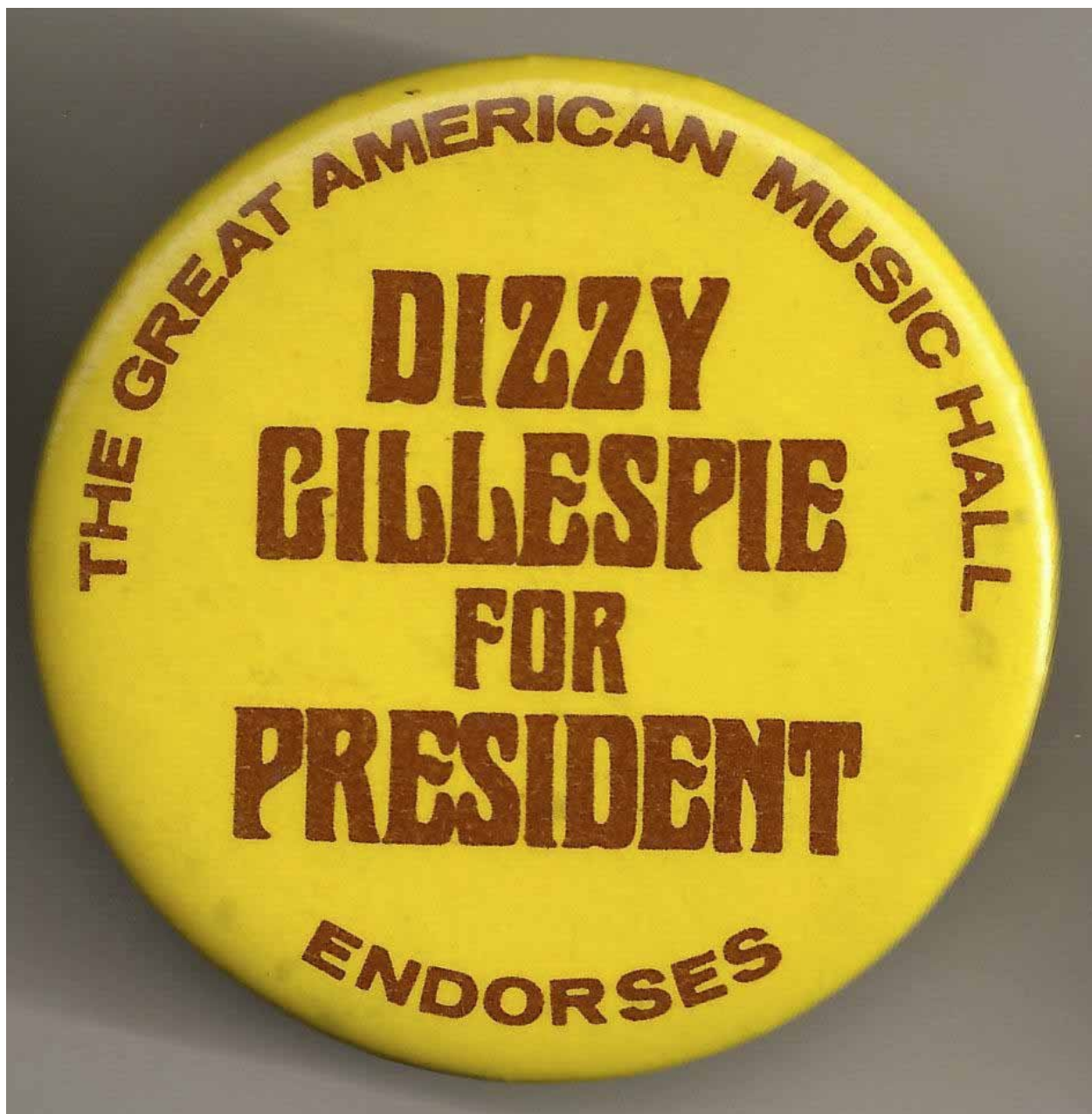


Picture 3 of 8

Charles Robert, a restaurateur who ran a French restaurant in the space in the '60s, added 'C's throughout the venue.



Picture 4 of 8
Vintage wallpaper found in the downstairs gambling room depicting turn-of-the-century San Francisco.



Picture 5 of 8

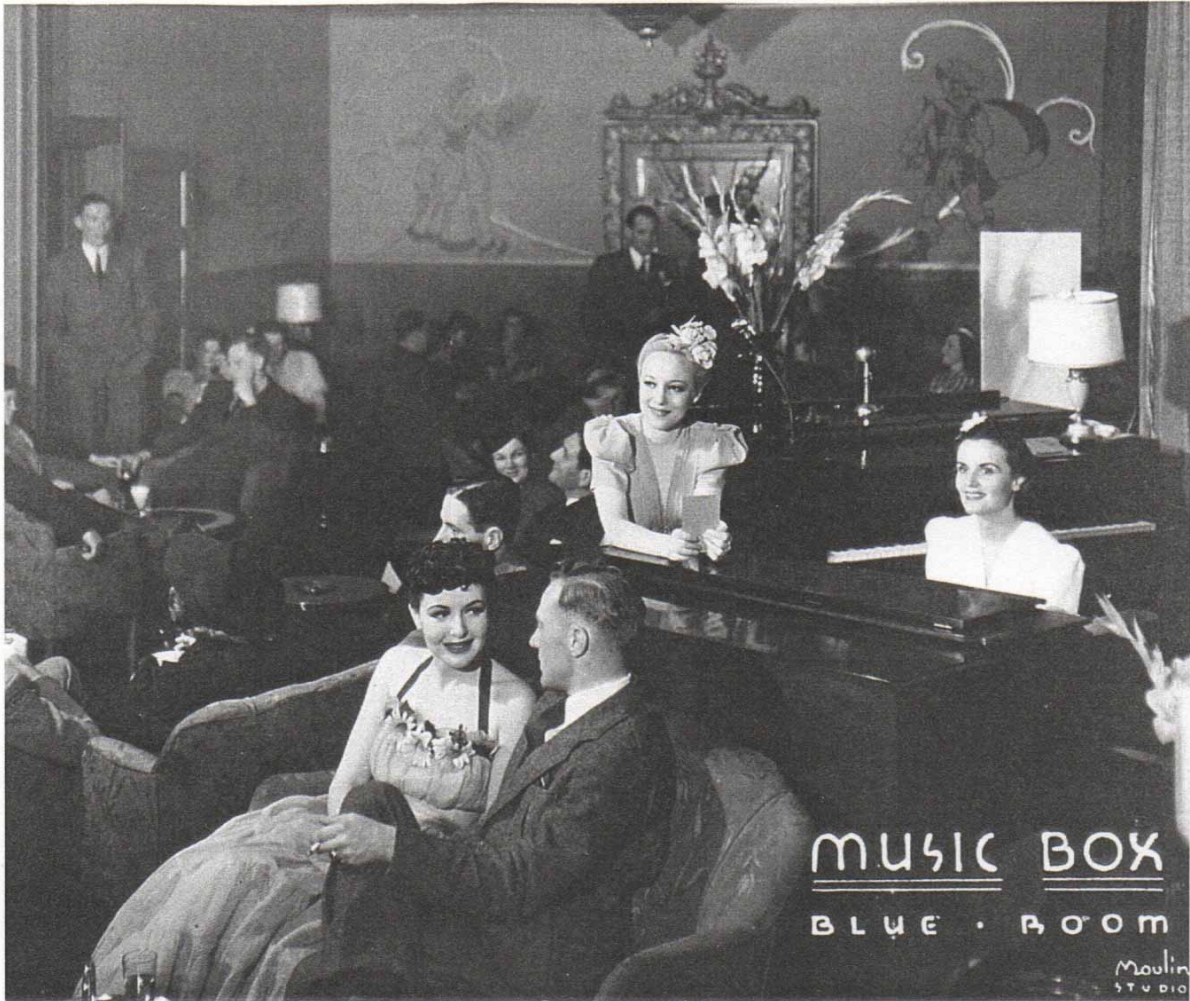
Dizzy Gillespie was a regular performer at Great American.



Picture 6 of 8

Lee Brenkman, Great American's longest-working employee who has been handling the venue's sound system since the early 1970s.

SAN FRANCISCO



Picture 7 of 8

In the 20s and 30s, the Blue Room was a private club. Now it's Slim's offices.

*The Most Talked of Girl
in America Today!*

Yvette Dare
and her
**SARONG-STEALING
PARROT!**

MUSIC BOX

859
O'FARRELL
PR. 3633

Picture 8 of 8

When Sally Rand owned the venue (then called the Music Box), exotic, risqué performers of all ilk performed at the venue.

After a lengthy divorce and roughly three decades of running the place, the owners sold the venue in 2000 to a music startup called Riffage.com for a purported seven-figure sum. Thanks to the dotcom boom and Riffage's grandiose plans — which included starting a website, producing and streaming live shows, and forming a record label — the company ran through its money in a matter of months and went bankrupt.

Great American Music Hall wasn't on the market for long. Although House of Blues came and looked at the property, it was Slim's who eventually purchased it in 2002.

Today, its nefarious past is all but forgotten, and it is now a hub for indie outfits and singer-songwriters. Bands like The Black Lips, Arcade Fire, Bastille, and The Soft White Sixties have played there, as well as solo acts like FKA Twigs, Dev Hynes (of Blood Orange), and St. Vincent.

Other than that, little else has changed. The Blue Room is still there, although now it houses Slim's offices, and the murals on the ceiling and the outdoor marquee are still in their original condition. In fact, if you look closely enough, you can even still see the blue Cs that Charles Robert painted in the corners of the ballroom, way back when.



SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Legacy Business Registry Case Report

HEARING DATE: JUNE 6, 2017

Filing Date: May 10, 2017
Case No.: 2017-006201LBR
Business Name: Great American Music Hall
Business Address: 859 O'Farrell Street
Zoning: NC-3 (Neighborhood Commercial, Moderate Scale)/
130-E Height and Bulk District
Block/Lot: 0717/015
Applicant: Dennis Juarez, Vice President and Secretary
859 O'Farrell Street
San Francisco, CA 94109
Nominated By: Supervisor Jane Kim, District 6
Staff Contact: Desiree Smith - (415) 575-9093
desiree.smith@sfgov.org
Reviewed By: Tim Frye - (415) 575-6822
tim.frye@sfgov.org

1650 Mission St.
Suite 400
San Francisco,
CA 94103-2479

Reception:
415.558.6378

Fax:
415.558.6409

Planning
Information:
415.558.6377

BUSINESS DESCRIPTION

Located on O'Farrell Street between Polk and Larkin Streets in San Francisco's Tenderloin neighborhood, Great American Music Hall has served as a popular nightclub and live music performance venue since 1972. Its founders were Tom Bradshaw and Sam Duval. Designed by architect A.W. Edelman, it has continuously operated out of the same building – a post-earthquake, Renaissance/Baroque-influenced, two-story brick structure with a 5,000 square foot concert hall and elaborately decorated interior. The ornate interior features marble columns, balconies, and frescoes, while the exterior has a two-part vertical composition, pilasters at the upper level, pedimented windows, and a bracketed cornice. Purpose-built as a private men's club called Blanco's Café following the 1906 earthquake and fire, it was purchased in 1939 by famous actress and burlesque dancer, Sally Rand, who opened the Music Box from which she hosted burlesque and music shows until 1946. In the post-WWII era, the building was home to the Cotton Club, which had one of the city's earliest mixed-race house bands. A couple of restaurants and a fraternal organization called Loyal Order of the Moose also occupied the building for a period of time.

The Great American Music Hall has carried forward the building's tradition of serving as an entertainment venue. Today, it fulfills an important role as a cultural space in the Tenderloin through diverse musical and performance offerings that span genres such as bluegrass, country, pop, blues, latin rock, indie, and singer-songwriter. The hall serves as the sole venue for a number of home-grown events including the Noise Pop Festival, a series of Country-Americana concerts produced by Shelby Ash, and a Latin Rock concert series produced by Dr. Rock. Through hosting these events and hiring local promoters, Great American Music Hall helps to cultivate and promote local talent. In addition, the venue boasts a long list of nationally and internationally famous artists who have performed there, including Duke Ellington, Sarah Vaughan, Count Basie, Van Morrison, the Grateful Dead, Arcade Fire, Patti Smith, and Godspeed You! Black Emperor.

Great American Music Hall gives back to the greater community in a number of ways, by hosting fundraisers for local charitable organizations throughout the year, lending musical equipment to other businesses in the neighborhood for use at events, and serving as a venue rental private and community events including high school proms, bar mitzvahs, and weddings. The business also contributes to the physical maintenance of its block (O'Farrell Street) and attracts visitors from outside of the area who regularly patronize surrounding businesses before and after shows.

STAFF ANALYSIS

Review Criteria

1. *When was business founded?*

1972.

2. *Does the business qualify for listing on the Legacy Business Registry? If so, how?*

Yes, Great American Music Hall qualifies for listing on the Legacy Business Registry because it meets all of the eligibility Criteria:

- i. Great American Music Hall has operated for 45 years and has made significant contributions to the Tenderloin neighborhood and San Francisco's music scene.
 - ii. Great American Music Hall has contributed to the identity of the Tenderloin neighborhood by functioning as popular nightclub, music, and performance venue since 1972. Its 5,000 square foot hall was constructed following the 1906 earthquake to serve as an entertainment venue – a role it has consistently held in the neighborhood for over 100 years. Great American Music Hall has attracted numerous legendary music acts and comedians, as well as emerging local artists, to its venue; contributes to the identity of the Tenderloin as a nightlife destination; and serves as an anchor business in the neighborhood for the benefit of other surrounding businesses.
 - iii. Great American Music Hall is committed to maintaining the physical features or traditions that define its purpose in serving as an entertainment venue, hosting performance and musical events, and coordinating rentals of the hall for community events, fundraisers, or other private events.
3. *Is the business associated with a culturally significant art/craft/cuisine/tradition?*

The business is associated with the tradition of serving as an entertainment, musical, and performance venue. As such, Great American Music Hall is associated with music, the performance arts, and comedic traditions.

4. *Is the business or its building associated with significant events, persons, and/or architecture?*

859 O'Farrell Street is considered a "Category A Property," as it has been identified as a contributor to the Uptown Tenderloin Historic District. The district "is significant under Criterion A in the area of Social History for its association with the development of hotel and apartment life in the city during a critical period of change" and for its association with

“commercial activity, entertainment, and vice.” The district is also significant under Criterion C in the area of architecture for its distinctive mix of building types that served a new urban population of office and retail workers that includes hotels, apartments, and non-residential buildings.

5. *Is the property associated with the business listed on a local, state, or federal historic resource registry?*

Yes, it is a contributor to the Uptown Tenderloin Historic District. See above for more information.

6. *Is the business mentioned in a local historic context statement?*

Yes. The business is mentioned on page 262 of the *LGBTQ Historic Context Statement* as a venue for queer performer, Lily Tomlin.

7. *Has the business been cited in published literature, newspapers, journals, etc.?*

Yes. Great American Music Hall has been cited in numerous publications including, but not limited to:

San Francisco Examiner Magazine, 12/11/1984, “The Way We Were,” by Zahid Sardar; 7x7, 3/25/2014, “The Scandalous History Behind The Great American Music Hall,” by Alyssa Pereira; SF Weekly, 10/28/2014, “No Re-Entry: The Ghosts at Great American Don’t Have to Show You Their Damn Hand Stamps,” by Emma Silvers; SF Weekly, 3/15/2017, “The Great American Music Hall: prostitutes, tax evasions, and the dotcom boom,” by Jessie Schiewe.

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business

Location(s) associated with the business:

- 859 O’Farrell Street

Recommended by Applicant

- Function as a music, performance, and entertainment venue that attracts local, national, and international artists and groups reflecting a diversity of genres
- Function as rental venue for local artists, schools, and community groups
- Practice of supporting neighboring businesses in the Central Market/Tenderloin corridor

Additional Recommended by Staff

- Tenderloin location
- The historic exterior character-defining features of the building at 859 O’Farrell Street:
 - Outdoor marquee
 - Pilasters at the upper level
 - Pedimented windows
 - Bracketed cornice
- The historic interior character-defining features of the building at 859 O’Farrell Street:
 - Ceiling frescoes
 - Marble columns
 - Balconies
 - 5,000 square foot concert hall



SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Historic Preservation Commission Draft Resolution

HEARING DATE JUNE 6, 2017

Case No.: 2017-006201LBR
Business Name: Great American Music Hall
Business Address: 859 O'Farrell Street
Zoning: NC-3 (Neighborhood Commercial, Moderate Scale)/
130-E Height and Bulk District
Block/Lot: 0717/015
Applicant: Dennis Juarez, Vice President and Secretary
859 O'Farrell Street
San Francisco, CA 94109
Nominated By: Supervisor Jane Kim, District 6
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ADOPTING FINDINGS RECOMMENDING TO THE SMALL BUSINESS COMMISSION APPROVAL OF THE LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY NOMINATION FOR GREAT AMERICAN MUSIC HALL, CURRENTLY LOCATED AT 859 O'FARRELL STREET (BLOCK/LOT 0717/015).

WHEREAS, in accordance with Administrative Code Section 2A.242, the Office of Small Business maintains a registry of Legacy Businesses in San Francisco (the "Registry") to recognize that longstanding, community-serving businesses can be valuable cultural assets of the City and to be a tool for providing educational and promotional assistance to Legacy Businesses to encourage their continued viability and success; and

WHEREAS, the subject business has operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years; and

WHEREAS, the subject business has contributed to the identity of San Francisco's Tenderloin neighborhood and the city's local music scene; and

WHEREAS, the subject business is committed to maintaining the physical features and traditions that define the business; and

WHEREAS, at a duly noticed public hearing held on June 6, 2017, the Historic Preservation Commission reviewed documents, correspondence and heard oral testimony on the Legacy Business Registry nomination.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the **Historic Preservation Commission hereby recommends** that the Great American Music Hall qualifies for the Legacy Business Registry under Administrative Code Section 2A.242(b)(2) as it has operated for 30 or more years and has continued to contribute to the community.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the **Historic Preservation Commission hereby recommends** safeguarding of the below listed physical features and traditions for Great American Music Hall:

Location (if applicable)

- 859 O'Farrell Street

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business

- *Function as a music, performance, and entertainment venue that attracts local, national, and international artists and groups reflecting a diversity of genres*
- *Function as rental venue for local artists, schools, and community groups*
- *Practice of supporting neighboring businesses in the Central Market/Tenderloin corridor*
- *Tenderloin location*
- *The historic exterior character-defining features of the building at 859 O'Farrell Street:*
 - *Outdoor marquee*
 - *Pilasters at the upper level*
 - *Pedimented windows*
 - *Bracketed cornice*
- *The historic interior character-defining features of the building at 859 O'Farrell Street:*
 - *Ceiling frescoes*
 - *Marble columns*
 - *Balconies*
 - *5,000 square foot concert hall*

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the **Historic Preservation Commission's findings and recommendations** are made solely for the purpose of evaluating the subject business's eligibility for the Legacy Business Registry, and the Historic Preservation Commission makes no finding that the subject property or any of its features constitutes a historical resource pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(a).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the **Historic Preservation Commission hereby directs** its Commission Secretary to transmit this Resolution and other pertinent materials in the case file 2017-006201LBR to the Office of Small Business.

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED by the Historic Preservation Commission on June 6, 2017.

Jonas P. Ionin
Commission Secretary

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT

ADOPTED: