

22. THE STATE THEATER

1307 J Street (1934)



Landmark Preservation Commission Resolution: November 21, 1994
Designated by City Council: January 10, 1995

Description: The State Theater is in the Art Deco architectural style. The theater has a sans-serif marquee and a cantilevered overhang. The interior walls have the original murals intact.

Cultural Significance: The State Theater was built by contractor Harry Brown of Modesto for George Mann and Morgan Walsh of San Francisco. It opened on Christmas Day in 1934, with a performance of *Flirtation Walk*, featuring Ruby Keeler and Dick Powell with continuous performances from 9 a.m. on. The theater changed hands over the years but no major changes were made and the walls, murals, seating and sound system were preserved. In the 1980s it became the Mexico Theatre.

The State Theater was acquired by the Downtown Arts Project in the early 1990s. In June of 2005, the new non-profit State Theatre of Modesto, Inc. was created, and for the first time since its opening, the State Theatre was completely transformed by a fully-comprehensive renovation project.

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