

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

DRAFT

Historic name: Royal Theater

Other names/site number: Royal Theatre; Guadalupe Royal Theatre; Cine Royal

Name of related multiple property listing:
Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in California, 1850-1970

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & number: 848 Guadalupe Street

City or town: Guadalupe State: California County: Santa Barbara

Not For Publication: Vicinity:

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this ___ nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national ___ statewide ___ local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

___A ___B ___C ___D

<p>_____ Signature of certifying official/Title:</p>	<p>_____ Date</p>
<p>_____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</p>	

<p>In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.</p>	
<p>_____ Signature of commenting official:</p>	<p>_____ Date</p>
<p>_____ Title: State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</p>	

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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MODERN MOVEMENT: Moderne

MODERN MOVEMENT: Art Deco

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Brick, Stucco, Rolled Asphalt Roofing

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The Royal Theater is located within the former Japanese enclave at the south end of Guadalupe's historic commercial business district. The rectangular-shaped two-story building with a one-story lobby is at the east side of Guadalupe Street, where the road bends. The theater is a 5,084 square foot two-part commercial block building, 124 feet long by 41 feet wide, composed of unreinforced brick masonry, with a concrete foundation and a flat roof with a parapet. The building has stucco walls on the one-story façade, and unadorned brick walls on the two-story south and east elevations. It abuts another brick building on the north side. The theater features a blend of modernistic design elements, which include an Art Moderne curved corner and smooth stucco wall surface, paired with Art Deco geometric design elements on the triangular-shaped ornate marquee. Building fenestration includes the original one 2/2 light steel-framed hopper window, three 1:1 pane steel-framed awning windows, one divided plate glass fixed window, a plate glass ticket booth window, and two sets of glass paired doors with metal-frames. Alterations made between 1943 and 1950 include removal of a window, covering a window with a movie poster case, relocating the ticket counter, and adding neon to the marquee. Vacant since 2001 and in need of rehabilitation, the building retains all aspects of historic integrity.

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Narrative Description

Exterior

The west façade features a one-story lobby with a recessed tripartite entry, consisting of a divided plate glass window with an etched stylistic *Royal* logo with a fan on the top pane, flanked by metal-framed paired doors with clear glass panels and topped with a set of transom lights. The plate glass ticket booth is on the south wall of the recessed entry, and the north and south exterior walls of the façade exhibit boarded-up movie poster cases. The lower portion of the wall has a gritty stucco finish. A prominent triangular-shaped marquee is fastened on cables secured on the two-story portion of the building. The ornate Art Deco design marquee juts out several feet. It is embellished with muted pastel designs and patterns and displays letter boards on the two sides, topped with a large neon sign with a geometrical scroll, the word “Royal,” and a fan design. The two-story portion of the theater exhibits an unadorned, smooth stucco wall with the exception of drainage downspouts at each end.

The south elevation wall is solid brick, with the exception of one small, 2/2 light inset steel-framed hopper window. The brick has been laid using a common bonding system with six stretcher rows per header row. An upper band of concrete delineates the roofline from the parapet. The wall is immediately adjacent to a vacant parcel outside the property boundary, the location of a former Japanese tenement. The vacant parcel is a separate lot also owned by the City of Guadalupe.

The east elevation (rear) wall is clad with brick with a corrugated metal shed-roof addition near the center and steel double doors at each end for egress from the theater. There are drainage downspouts at each end, and air conditioner ductwork with a corrugated hood extends across the upper portion of the wall and through the addition. The shed-roof addition houses the cooling unit and mechanical and equipment. There is a wood door on the east end of the south wall and evidence of a prior entrance on the north end of the east elevation, replaced by a small window.

The north elevation features a solid brick wall, which abuts the south wall of the neighboring building at 854 Guadalupe Street. Fenestration is absent, and there are no other attributes on this elevation.

Interior

The one-story lobby features a long, pastel pink and green concession stand with Art Moderne curved corners and stylized pattern linoleum floor. There is a restroom at each end of the lobby and the projection room is accessed via a small, carpeted staircase at the north end. The projection room is equipped with two large projection stands, which appear to be original to the theater. Three small, evenly spaced 1:1 light steel-framed awning windows look out to the parapeted roof of the façade. Two sets of wood three-panel paired doors on the east wall of the lobby flank the concession stand. They provide access to the long, rectangular auditorium, which is outfitted with most of its original 530 seats. The proscenium displays a large screen framed with geometric scrolled floral design ornamentation featuring pastel shades of green, pink, rose,

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and gold. The brick walls are finished with tan colored acoustical plaster and sound-proofing Celotex tiles, painted black, are used on the ceiling.

Condition, Alterations, and Integrity

In addition to the aforementioned 1940s alterations, modifications were completed circa 1997 by architect Joseph Silvaggio of Holland Silvaggio Investments for Ron Holland, who leased the theater during Henry Garcia Jr. and Olivia Garcia's tenure. Improvements at that time consisted of a re-roof and asbestos removal, repainting, replumbing, replacement of the electrical system, placement of soundproof materials on interior walls, and the addition of new projection equipment.¹ A small portion of the wall on the south side of the auditorium shows charring from an electrical fire that occurred inside the building in 2010.² The theater was red tagged after the fire. In 2015, City Administrator Andrew Carter stated, "\$2 million will be needed to seismically retrofit the unreinforced masonry brick building... the seats need to be renovated, new sound equipment, new production equipment. Beyond that it needs an entire new front end in terms of meeting today's codes, particularly with respect with [sic] ADA accessibility and more particularly in terms of rest rooms."³ Silvaggio prepared plans for proposed handicap modifications to the lobby and auditorium as well as retrofit plans for the building, in 1997 when he completed the other modifications. No work has been done since 1997.

Despite alterations, the Royal Theater retains all aspects of integrity.

Location: The property remains in the same location as when constructed.

Design: The building reveals its origins as a theater constructed in a prominent architectural style during the pre-WWII era, and as a commercial business. It retains the majority of features representing its Modernistic design as constructed in 1939-1940. These include its Art Moderne curved corner and smooth stucco wall cladding blended with the Art Deco marquee with a geometric floral motif, chevrons, and fan design, plus the original brick walls, fenestration, and many interior design elements.

Setting: The setting has changed very little since the theater's construction. Most of the original buildings are extant and unaltered. Little new development has occurred throughout the commercial area since the 1960s.

Materials: Most of the original materials, including the building fabric and fenestration, are still evident and unchanged.

¹ Diane D. Urbani, "Royal Experience." *Santa Maria Times*, 18 Jul 1997, 7 - [Santa Maria Times at Newspapers.com](#); Alice Saucedo, City of Guadalupe. Email November 21, 2020; Shirley Boydston, personal communication, 2020.

² Reeder, Gilman & Associates, *Royal Theater Appraisal Report*, 2017; Tom Bolton, "Fire Damages Royal Theater." *Santa Maria Times*, 27 Sep 2010, A4 - [Santa Maria Times at Newspapers.com](#).

³ Andrew Carter, "Is there a future for Guadalupe's Royal Theater?" *YouTube*, January 15, 2015.

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Workmanship: The building displays very good workmanship, particularly in regard to the decorative elements.

Feeling: There are few alterations and/or removal of original materials, and the building still substantially conveys the feeling of an earlier era and aesthetic.

Association: Community residents associate the building with its past as a movie theater and venue for community events. The marquee still serves as a billboard for community events.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ETHNIC HERITAGE: ASIAN (Japanese)

ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1940-1942

Significant Dates

1940

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Fukuda, Arthur Shogo

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown (architect)

Ishii, Charles (builder)

Maino, Theo. (contractor)

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Royal Theater is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places at the local level of significance under Criteria A and B in the areas of Ethnic Heritage: Asian (Japanese) and Entertainment/Recreation for its association with theater owner Arthur Shogo Fukuda and under Criterion C in the area of Architecture as an example of an Art Deco style neighborhood movie theater. The period of significance begins in 1940 when construction was completed and closes in 1942 when Mr. Fukuda was forced to sell the building before internment at the Jerome Relocation Center in Arkansas. As a property type located in the Japanese enclave of Guadalupe—owned, built, and managed by Japanese Americans for both their immediate community and their neighbors—the Royal Theater meets the *Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in California, 1850-1970* Multiple Property Submission Registration Requirements for Property Types Associated with Community Serving Organizations.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Criteria A and B: Ethnic Heritage: Asian (Japanese), Entertainment/Recreation

After the US Congress passed the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, an influx of Japanese immigrants to Guadalupe supplanted a previous wave of Chinese immigrants, who were formerly employed during construction of the Southern Pacific Railroad. A Chinatown district had formed along Guadalupe Street south of 4th Street (later 9th Street), which later became the Japantown district for Japanese immigrants (**Figure 1**). The newcomers were drawn to opportunities in the sugar beet fields by the Union Sugar Company, who was eager to hire them for their hard work and ingenuity. Union Sugar valued the industrious Japanese workers so much that the company store stocked foods imported from Japan.⁴ Many of the Japanese workers endeavored to learn English, despite their yearning for families in their native land. Their large numbers allowed them to unionize and establish the Guadalupe Japanese Association in 1903. Its purpose was to provide assistance for Japanese laborers. In addition to supporting agricultural enterprises, the association was also responsible for establishing the Buddhist Church in 1908 and a Japanese School in 1919.⁵

By the end of 1909, the Japanese population in Guadalupe had increased to 500.⁶ As Japanese immigrants began to succeed in business, an anti-Japanese movement emerged. The Anti-Alien Land Law of 1914 prevented Japanese individuals from owning land in California. By 1920, the

⁴ Vada F. Carlson, *This is Our Valley*, compiled by the Santa Maria Valley Historical Society (Santa Maria: Santa Maria Printers and Stationery, 1977), 234;

⁵ Gassho Rev. Seijo Naomi Nakano, "Our History," <http://guadalupebuddhistchurch.org/our-history> (accessed July 30, 2021).

⁶ Shirley Contreras, "The Japanese in Guadalupe," *Ancestors West*, Vol. 28, No. 3., Santa Barbara County Genealogical Society, Spring 2002.

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State of California passed additional legislation, known as the California Alien Land Law of 1920, which specifically targeted Japanese immigrants. The law prohibited land leases by alien immigrants for three years or less and banned alien immigrants from owning stock in companies that acquired farmland.⁷ During this period, several suspicious fires burned down businesses in the Japanese district of Guadalupe and at the Buddhist Church. The lot directly south of the Royal Theater lot, which had housed a Japanese tenement, burned down in 1929. Although the theater property was vacant when Arthur Shogo Fukuda and his partner Jack Genkichi Takeuchi began construction in 1939, there is no tangible evidence of prior buildings on that parcel.⁸

The theater represents an expansion of the entertainment aspect of the local economy. Other forms of entertainment at that time included pool halls and the Japanese social hall. During the 1920s and early 1930s there were several dance halls, and the Commercial Hotel featured a movie house.⁹ Prior to the Royal Theater opening, patrons traveled to Santa Maria, ten miles east of Guadalupe, for live comedy entertainment and films at the Gaiety Theater, and movies at the Santa Maria Theatre.¹⁰

When the Royal Theater officially opened for business on August 30, 1940 it was the only movie theater in Guadalupe. Japanese American Kiyozo Noji and his family were employed by owners Arthur Fukuda and Jack Takeuchi to operate the business. It was a welcome addition to Guadalupe, for the Japanese immigrants, all residents of the community, and soldiers serving at nearby Camp Cooke. Japanese language films, as well as feature films, were shown.¹¹ The theater was used for war bond sales during World War II. It may also have been used as a meeting place for Japanese immigrants during that period. More likely they would have met in the Japanese Social Hall or the Japanese American Farmers' Association building near 8th Street.¹² The theater later served as the location for Guadalupe Junior High School graduation ceremonies, bingo activities, and community meetings.¹³ It continues to be the only theater building in the community, despite closing its doors in 2001.

⁷ United Press, "Crusade Stated in State Against 'Yellow Peril,'" *Santa Maria Daily Times*, September 24, 1920, 3; Edwin Ferguson, "The California Alien Law and the Fourteenth Amendment," 1947, *California Law Review* 35 (1): 61.

⁸ ProQuest, Digital Sanborn Maps, "Guadalupe 1929-1933" (accessed February 2021).

⁹ ProQuest, Digital Sanborn Maps, "Guadalupe 1929-1933" (accessed February 2021); Shizue Seigel and Ben Pease, "Guadalupe Japanese American Businesses of 1940," Preserving California's Japantowns, April 2007, www.californiajapantowns.org.

¹⁰ Orla M. Cannon, "New Features Are Offered By Meiklejohn's 'Pickings' at Gaiety," *Santa Maria Daily Times*, 14 Feb 1927, 3 - [Santa Maria Times at Newspapers.com](http://SantaMariaTimes.com); Ross Melnick and Patrick Crowley, "Gaiety Theatre," *Cinema Treasures*, *Gaiety Theatre in Santa Maria, CA - Cinema Treasures* (accessed July 20, 2021).

¹¹ D. Noji, "Recent Comments," *Cinema Treasures*, *Royal Theater in Guadalupe, CA - Cinema Treasures* (accessed July 2, 2021).

¹² Shizue Seigel and Ben Pease, "Guadalupe Japanese American Businesses of 1940," Preserving California's Japantowns, April 2007, www.californiajapantowns.org.

¹³ Diane D. Urbani, "Royal Experience." *Santa Maria Times*, 18 Jul 1997, 7 - [Santa Maria Times at Newspapers.com](http://SantaMariaTimes.com).

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Arthur Shogo Fukuda (1885-1968) lived in Okayama, Japan prior to moving to the United States as a student in 1903.¹⁴ As a young adult between 1905 and 1909, he was living in Hanford, where he had a talent for singing solo religious songs at the Presbyterian Church.¹⁵ As early as 1914, he began his career in the theater business.¹⁶ By 1918, he was already the proprietor of a silent movie theater. With the advent of feature sound films in 1927, Arthur Fukuda and his partner Jack Takeuchi expanded the business to include five separate movie theaters in the rural California agricultural communities of Hanford, Sangar, Delano, Corcoran, and Guadalupe over a period of fourteen years (1927-1942). The Guadalupe Royal Theater is the only one of his theaters still in existence and the only extant theater property associated with Mr. Fukuda. Further, despite a concerted effort to locate other early twentieth century Japanese American theater owners, it appears that Arthur Fukuda was the first to own movie theater businesses in California prior to World War II.¹⁷

A well-respected member of the Hanford community, Arthur Fukuda and his wife, Kikuno Okumura (1903-2000), raised five children, including three daughters Utako (1923-2013), Toni Hisako (1928-2003), June Yuriko (1931-2012), and two sons, Roy Koichi (1921-1996) and Kenji (1926-1991). His children excelled in both academics and athletics. It is notable that as early as 1905 Mr. Fukuda took an American name, which suggests his willingness to embrace life in his adopted country. Although each of his children had Japanese names, three were known by their American names.¹⁸

Arthur Fukuda was socially active in community affairs and gave charitable contributions to support worthwhile causes. In 1940, he was initiated as a new member at the YMCA's Men Club in Hanford, and he donated funds and provided support for the Kings County Chapter of the American Red Cross. He was also a charter member of the Harlow Memorial Presbyterian Church in Hanford.

He experienced apparent racial prejudice in a very personal way when he was attacked one evening in 1933 after arriving home from the theater. He was struck on the head with a monkey wrench by an assailant, who made no attempt to rob him, prior to fleeing his property.¹⁹

¹⁴ Immigration and Naturalization Service, "California, U.A. Arriving Passenger and Crew Lists, 1882-1959 for S. Fukuda." 1903, [Ancestry.com - California, U.S., Arriving Passenger and Crew Lists, 1882-1959](https://www.ancestry.com).

¹⁵ F. V. Dewey, "Japanese Mission Entertainment," *Hanford Semi-Weekly Journal*, 21 Feb 1905, 3 - [Hanford Semi-Weekly Journal at Newspapers.com](https://www.newspapers.com); F. A. Dodge and J. E. Richmond, "Epworth League Held Social," *Hanford Kings County Sentinel*, 03 Jun 1909, 7 - [Hanford Kings County Sentinel at Newspapers.com](https://www.newspapers.com).

¹⁶ G.A. Martin, "New Guadalupe Theatre Opens," *Santa Maria Times*, 30 Aug 1940, 6 - [Santa Maria Times at Newspapers.com](https://www.newspapers.com).

¹⁷ Media History Digital Library [MHDL: Year Books Collection \(mediahistoryproject.org\)](https://www.mediahistoryproject.org); Moving Picture Exhibitors' Association, "The Moving Picture World," New York: The World Photographic Publishing Company - 1907-1928, [The Moving picture world: Moving Picture Exhibitors' Association](https://www.movingpictureexhibitors.org).

¹⁸ United States Census Bureau, "Hanford, California Census Records for Arthur Fukuda, 1910, 1920, 1930, 1940," [Ancestry.com](https://www.ancestry.com) (accessed July 20, 2021).

¹⁹ J.H. Richmond, "Theater Man Hit with Wrench and Gashed in Dark," 19 Jan 1933, 6 - [The Hanford Sentinel at Newspapers.com](https://www.newspapers.com).

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Immediately after the bombing of Pearl Harbor in 1941, numerous government raids detained Japanese American men. When President Roosevelt issued Executive Order 9066 on February 18, 1942, it led to internment of all individuals of Japanese ancestry living on the West Coast. As war bonds were being sold at the Royal Theater in Guadalupe in 1942 (**Figure 2**), families and individuals of Japanese descent were rounded up and placed in detention camps.

Before their movie theater businesses in Hanford and Sanger were taken away by the government, Mr. Fukuda and Mr. Takeuchi were able to sell the contents and equipment to movie theater mogul Robert Lippert on April 20, 1942, although for a fraction of their worth. Mr. Lippert also obtained their other theater businesses, including the Royal Theater in Guadalupe. Given the uncertainty of when they would be interned, they turned over power-of-attorney for their businesses to Shiro Omata on March 29, 1942.²⁰ Mr. Omata had inherited the building from his father, George Omata. Mr. Fukuda and Mr. Takeuchi may have incorrectly thought Mr. Omata—who was born in California, had attended two years of college, and was trustee of the Royal Theater building in Hanford—would be exempt from detention. Both Arthur Fukuda and his family, and business partner, Jack Takeuchi had a close relationship with the Omata family. They were some of the most prominent citizens in Hanford, having owned the Omata Supermarket since 1902. According to U.S. Alien Land Ownership Records, prior to January 31, 1921, Omata family members owned several properties in Kings County, California.²¹

By May 13, 1942, the last of the Japanese American residents from Hanford were taken away on buses to the induction center in Fresno. The Omata family and Mr. Takeuchi, who was recovering from a broken back after a fall from the balcony of the theater, later joined the group from Sanger.²² They were then all sent to the internment camp in Jerome, Arkansas. As described by Brian Niiya in his portrayal of life at “Densho: The Japanese American Legacy Project,”

The euphemistically named “Jerome Relocation Center” in Arkansas was one of ten concentration camps administered by the War Relocation Authority (WRA) to house Japanese Americans forcibly removed from the West Coast during World War II. Along with the nearby Rohwer camp, Jerome was the easternmost of the WRA camps, and they were the only ones located in the Jim Crow South. The last of the WRA camps to open and the first to close, Jerome was in operation for less than two years.²³

Within days of Shiro Omata and his wife Teruko (Patsy)’s internment in the Jerome Relocation Center November 3, 1942, he enlisted as a Private in the U.S. Army, at which time he served as a warrant officer (National Guardsman) in Chicot, Arkansas. He was transferred to Minnesota on

²⁰ John F. Pryor, Notary Public, “Notice of Intended Sale,” *The Hanford Sentinel*, 10 Apr 1942, 7 - [The Hanford Sentinel at Newspapers.com](#); J.H. Styles Service, “Power of Attorney,” Office of the Recorder, *Hanford Morning Journal*, 29 Mar 1942, 7 - [Hanford Morning Journal at Newspapers.com](#).

²¹ California State Archive, “California, U.S., Alien Land Ownership Records, 1921-1952,” [Omata - California, U.S., Alien Land Ownership Records, 1921-1952 - Ancestry.com](#) (accessed July 30, 2021).

²² Mary Jane Johnson, “Orientals Depart – Japanese Say Goodbye to Hanford, Face an Uncertain Future,” *The Hanford Sentinel*, 14 May 1942, 1 - [The Hanford Sentinel at Newspapers.com](#).

²³ Brian Niiya, “Jerome,” *Densho Encyclopedia*, <https://encyclopedia.densho.org/Jerome/> (accessed July 20, 2021).

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November 1, 1942, and by 1943 he served in the U.S. Army Intelligence Corps. Mr. Omata became a lieutenant in the U.S. Army where he served as General Douglas McArthur's personal interpreter for five years.²⁴

After release from internment, Arthur Fukuda and his family moved back to their former home at 226 E. 8th Street in Hanford where he resided until his death on March 27, 1968. He no longer owned or managed any of his former theaters; instead, he made a living as a farmer.²⁵

After Jack Takeuchi was released, he moved to Minneapolis where he worked for a short time in a grocery store owned by the Omata family until his death on June 10, 1945 at the age of 60.²⁶ Sadly, because he had no heir or a will, the State of California recouped his estate, estimated to be worth \$10,420.96.²⁷

Criterion C: Architecture

On June 2, 1939, Arthur Fukuda and Jack Takeuchi sold the West Theater on lots 20 and 21 in Block 50 in Delano to Frank Panero et al.²⁸ It was then that they planned Royal Theaters in both Guadalupe and Sanger in 1939-1940. Theodore C. Maino (1913-1997) served as the construction contractor for the Royal Theater in Guadalupe. From 1935 to 1943, Mr. Maino served as construction supervisor for his family's business in San Luis Obispo, Maino Construction Company founded in 1882. The company was well-known for construction of commercial buildings throughout the central coast of California. Mr. Maino was promoted to vice president and general supervisor of the company from 1946 to 1954, and in 1954 he became president of the company. Among his other accomplishments was his ownership of Maino Properties Commercial Rentals 1954-1981, and he served as chairman of the board for Swift Air Lines, Inc. from 1969 to 1980. Other important roles included president of San Luis Obispo Savings and Loan Association from 1967 to 1975 and director of the Central Savings and Loan Association from 1946 to 1967. In 1982, President Ronald Regan nominated Mr. Maino to be United States Ambassador to Botswana. Mr. Maino had previously visited Africa many times as a big game

²⁴ National Archives and Records Administration, "Oshiro Omata," [U.S., World War II Draft Cards Young Men, 1940-1947 - Ancestry.com](#) (accessed July 30, 2021); National Archives and Records Administration, "Shiro Omata," [U.S., Final Accountability Rosters of Evacuees at Relocation Centers, 1942-1946 - Ancestry.com](#) (accessed July 30, 2021); "Obituary for Shiro Omata," *The Hanford Sentinel*, 20 Oct 1988, 4 - The Hanford Sentinel at Newspapers.com.

²⁵ Social Security Administration, "Arthur Fukuda," [U.S., Social Security Death Index, 1935-2014 - Ancestry.com](#) (accessed January 28, 2021); R. L. Polk & Co., "U.S. City Directory – Hanford, California – Arthur S. Fukuda," [Ancestry.com - U.S., City Directories, 1822-1995](#) (accessed July 30, 2021).

²⁶ "Takeuchi, Ex-Hanford Business Man Dead in Midwest," *Hanford Morning Journal*, June 12, 1945; Minnesota, U.S. Death Index, 1908-2017.

²⁷ "Semi-Annual Report of Public Administrator of the County of Kings, State of California," *Hanford Sentinel*, March 8, 1947.

²⁸ "Notices," *Bakersfield Californian*, 27 May 1939, Page 13 - The Bakersfield Californian at Newspapers.com.

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hunter and was also an occasional golfing partner of the president. He served as Ambassador until 1985.²⁹

Although Maino Construction Company served as the contractor, it was businessman Charles Ishii of Santa Maria who hired Japanese American workers to build the Royal Theater. As early as 1931, Ishii became owner of El Amigo Store in Santa Maria and he dabbled in real estate throughout the area. As a well-regarded community member, in 1935 he became a trustee for the Japanese Language School and employed Japanese Americans for his many construction projects.³⁰ Japanese American workers under Ishii's direction constructed the brick theater, which broke ground in 1939 and officially opened for business on August 30, 1940.³¹ It is likely that Fukuda and Takeuchi specifically sought out Ishii and his Japanese American workforce for the theater building in Guadalupe. During the same period, other commercial brick buildings were constructed in Guadalupe and Santa Maria, at least some of which employed Japanese American labor. Given his position in 1941 as President of the American Japanese Association of Santa Maria, Charles Ishii was targeted and seized by the FBI within twelve hours of Japan's declaration of war.³²

The Royal Theater was designed in the Art Moderne style with specific Art Deco elements still extant on the marquee and inside the building. The building's prominent marquee exhibits a geometric floral motif, chevrons, and linear horizontal design elements. For a small agricultural community like Guadalupe, the building represented the town's finest construction. The theater boasted seating for 530 individuals. The loges were green in color, while tan seats were for general admission. The interior walls were finished with acoustical plaster and Celotex tiles were used on the ceiling. The theater catered to families with young children by providing a sound-proof "cry room" with a view screen.³³

Post Period of Significance

On March 27, 1942, all three Royal Theaters in Hanford, Sanger, and Guadalupe closed when Japanese Americans were issued a dusk-to-dawn curfew. Robert Lippert, head of Statewide

²⁹ Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, "[Nomination of Theodore C. Maino To Be United States Ambassador to Botswana | The American Presidency Project \(ucsb.edu\)](#)." The American Presidency Project - UC Santa Barbara - Office of the Historian - [Theodore C. Maino - People - Department History - Office of the Historian \(state.gov\)](#).

³⁰ Ernest L. Peterson, "Certificate of Individual Doing Business Under Fictitious Name." *Santa Maria Times*. 11 Apr 1931, 5 - [Santa Maria Times at Newspapers.com](#)

³¹ G.A. Martin, "Pioneering the Santa Maria Valley Sponsored by the Following:." *Santa Maria Times*, 30 Apr 1936, 6 - [Santa Maria Times at Newspapers.com](#)

³² United Press, "U.S. Picking Up More Aliens." *Santa Maria Times*. 09 Dec 1941, 1 - [Santa Maria Times at Newspapers.com](#).

³³ G.A. Martin, "New Guadalupe Theatre Opens." *Santa Maria Times*, 30 Aug 1940, 6 - [Santa Maria Times at Newspapers.com](#).

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Theatres, Inc. of San Francisco, took over operations in April 1942.³⁴ At the time of his death on November 16, 1976, Lippert “operated 120 theaters around the country.”³⁵

In June 1949, Robert and Ruth Lippert and partners Albert H. and Esther Kessler and Leslie and Fannie Kessler sold the Guadalupe Royal Theater to Mr. and Mrs. Moses Gonzalez Hernandez.³⁶ Hernandez sold the theater to Hendrick “Henry” Garcia in July 1962.³⁷ After World War II, immigrants from Mexico and other Spanish speaking countries gradually supplanted the Japanese American agricultural work force in Guadalupe. Garcia featured movies in Spanish that were appealing to the substantial Latino population.³⁸ The theater was renamed Cine Royal and regularly advertised its variety of films in the local newspaper, including movies in English and Spanish or with Spanish subtitles, Filipino films, and by the mid-1960s, technicolor movies and cartoons (**Figure 4**). Garcia was involved with the community and public events, including promotion of a talent search for singers, dancers, and musicians by the Liga Protectora de Guadalupe for a show held on April 9, 1969.³⁹

On September 13, 1993, the theater building—vacant since the mid-1980s—was still referred to as Cine Royal when General Telephone Company used it as a backdrop for a television commercial.⁴⁰ The building was renamed the Royal Theater in the mid-1990s after a remodel with fresh paint and a new neon sign on the marquee (**Figure 5**). At that time, Henry Garcia Jr. (Hendrick’s son) and Olivia Garcia leased the theater to Joe and Lorilee Silvaggio leased the theater as a dance studio offering ballet and other dance lessons for youth. They also showed art films and presented *The Nutcracker*.⁴¹

On January 16, 2001, the Guadalupe Community Development Agency obtained deed to the Guadalupe Royal Theater property from Henry Garcia Jr. and Olivia Garcia Trustees. The theater has stood vacant since.⁴² Mihoko Yoshihara ceded the two vacant lots (APNs 115-101-011 and 115-113-001) on the south and east sides of the building to the Guadalupe Community Development Agency.

³⁴ Joe Vogel, “Royal Theatre in Sanger, CA.” Accessed August 12, 2021, *Cinema Treasures*, 2009; Joe Vogel, “Flick Adult Theatre in Hanford, CA.” Accessed August 12, 2021, *Cinema Treasures*, 2009.

³⁵ The San Francisco Examiner, “Deaths -Robert L. Lippert.” *The San Francisco Examiner*, 16 Nov 1976, 34 - [The San Francisco Examiner at Newspapers.com](#).

³⁶ Stanley G. Stauffer, “Guadalupe’s Theater Selling.” *Santa Maria Times*, 09 Jun 1949, 3 - [Santa Maria Times at Newspapers.com](#).

³⁷ Robert S. McGee, “Obituaries – Moses G. Hernandez.” *Santa Maria Times*, 22 Sep 1970, 2 - [Santa Maria Times at Newspapers.com](#); County of Santa Barbara, “Grant Deed 31164.” 1943-739.

³⁸ Ken C. McIntyre, “Royal Theater.” *Cinema Treasures*, [Comments about Royal Theater in Guadalupe, CA - Cinema Treasures](#), 1980.

³⁹ Robert S. McGee, “Guadalupe Group Seeks Show Talent.” March 12, 1969. *Santa Maria Times*. 12 Mar 1969, 2 - [Santa Maria Times at Newspapers.com](#)

⁴⁰ Carlos Lemus, “Hollywood Brings Moviemaking to Town.” *Santa Maria Times*. 15 Sep 1993, 6 - [Santa Maria Times at Newspapers.com](#)

⁴¹ Shirley Boydston, personal communication, 2020.

⁴² County of Santa Barbara, “Grant Deed,” Document 3339.

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Residents still regard the Royal Theater as one of Guadalupe's most treasured buildings, and adaptive reuse is anticipated. Guadalupe is planning City revitalization efforts, and there is much agreement that a refurbished Royal Theater would be a draw to the community and enhance Guadalupe's financial stability.

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
 - Other State agency
 - Federal agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other
- Name of repository: Provenience Group, Inc.

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 0.61 acre

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 34.969186 Longitude: -120.573501

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The property at 848 Guadalupe Street is bounded on the north by a brick commercial building at 858 Guadalupe Street and on the west by Guadalupe Street. There are empty lots on the east and south sides of the property.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary, historically associated with the property, is based on the legal description according to the City of Guadalupe's Assessor's Map Book for APN 113-101-011.

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11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Carole Denardo, M.A., RPA/ Principal
organization: Provenience Group, Inc.
street & number: 1552 N Refugio Road
city or town: Santa Ynez state: CA zip code: 93460
e-mail: cdenardo@proveniencegroup.com
telephone: (805) 350-3134
date: June 2021; Revised July 2021, October 2021

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Royal Theater
City or Vicinity: Guadalupe
County: Santa Barbara
State: California
Photographer: Carole Denardo
Date Photographed: October 14, 2020; September 17, 2021

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- 1 of 27 Overview, facing northeast (2021)
2 of 27 West façade, facing northeast (2021)
3 of 27 Marquee, facing northeast (2021)

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- 4 of 27 West façade, facing east (2021)
- 5 of 27 West façade, facing southeast (2021)
- 6 of 27 West façade, facing south (2021)
- 7 of 27 Marquee, facing south (2021)
- 8 of 27 Poster frame on north end of west façade, facing southeast (2021)
- 9 of 27 Ticket booth, facing south (2021)
- 10 of 27 Etched Royal Theater logo on plate glass window, facing east (2021)
- 11 of 27 South elevation brick wall, taken from adjacent vacant lot, facing north (2021)
- 12 of 27 South and east elevations, facing northwest (2021)
- 13 of 27 East elevation, facing west (2021)
- 14 of 27 East and north elevations, facing west (2021)
- 15 of 27 Moderne lobby counter with curved corners, facing northeast (2020)
- 16 of 27 Decorative lobby floor design, men's restroom and stairs to projection room in background, facing northeast (2020)
- 17 of 27 South side of lobby, ticket booth and ladies' restroom in background, facing south (2020)
- 18 of 27 Ladies' restroom, facing south (2020)
- 19 of 27 2/2-light hopper window in ladies' room, facing south (2020)
- 20 of 27 Staircase to second floor projection room, facing north (2020)
- 21 of 27 Projection room with two projector stands, facing southeast (2020)
- 22 of 27 View of marquee from window in projection room, facing west (2020)
- 23 of 27 One of two sets of double doors to theater auditorium, facing east (2020)
- 24 of 27 Theater auditorium and screen, facing east, seats are covered with plastic (2020)

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- 25 of 27 Geometric floral design framing the stage, facing east (2020)
- 26 of 27 Example of an original theater seat, facing south (2020)
- 27 of 27 Charred wall in auditorium from electrical fire, facing south (2020)

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for nominations to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.). We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for each response using this form is estimated to be between the Tier 1 and Tier 4 levels with the estimate of the time for each tier as follows:

- Tier 1 – 60-100 hours
- Tier 2 – 120 hours
- Tier 3 – 230 hours
- Tier 4 – 280 hours

The above estimates include time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and preparing and transmitting nominations. Send comments regarding these estimates or any other aspect of the requirement(s) to the Service Information Collection Clearance Officer, National Park Service, 1201 Oakridge Drive Fort Collins, CO 80525.

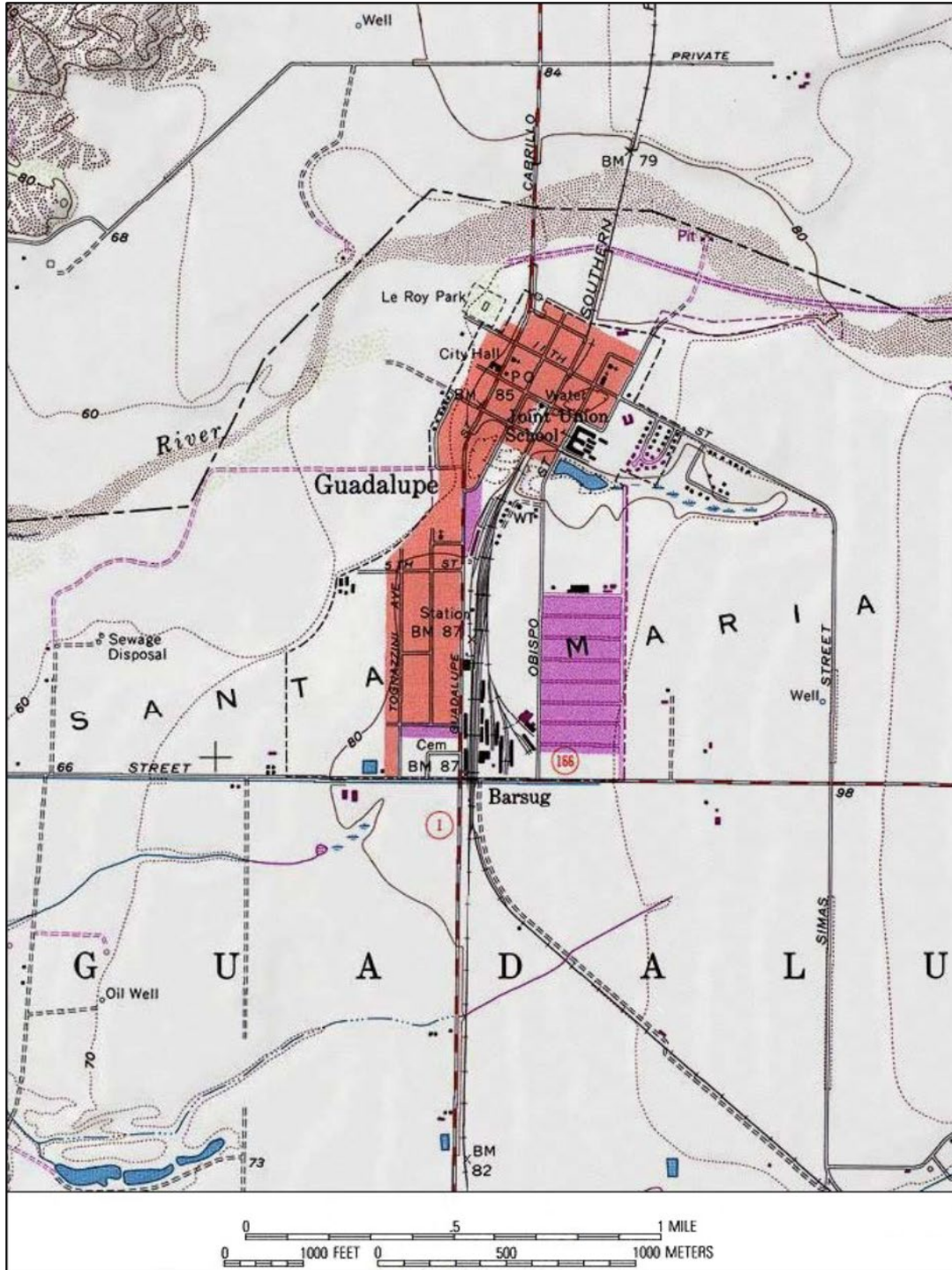
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Location Map

Latitude: 34.969186

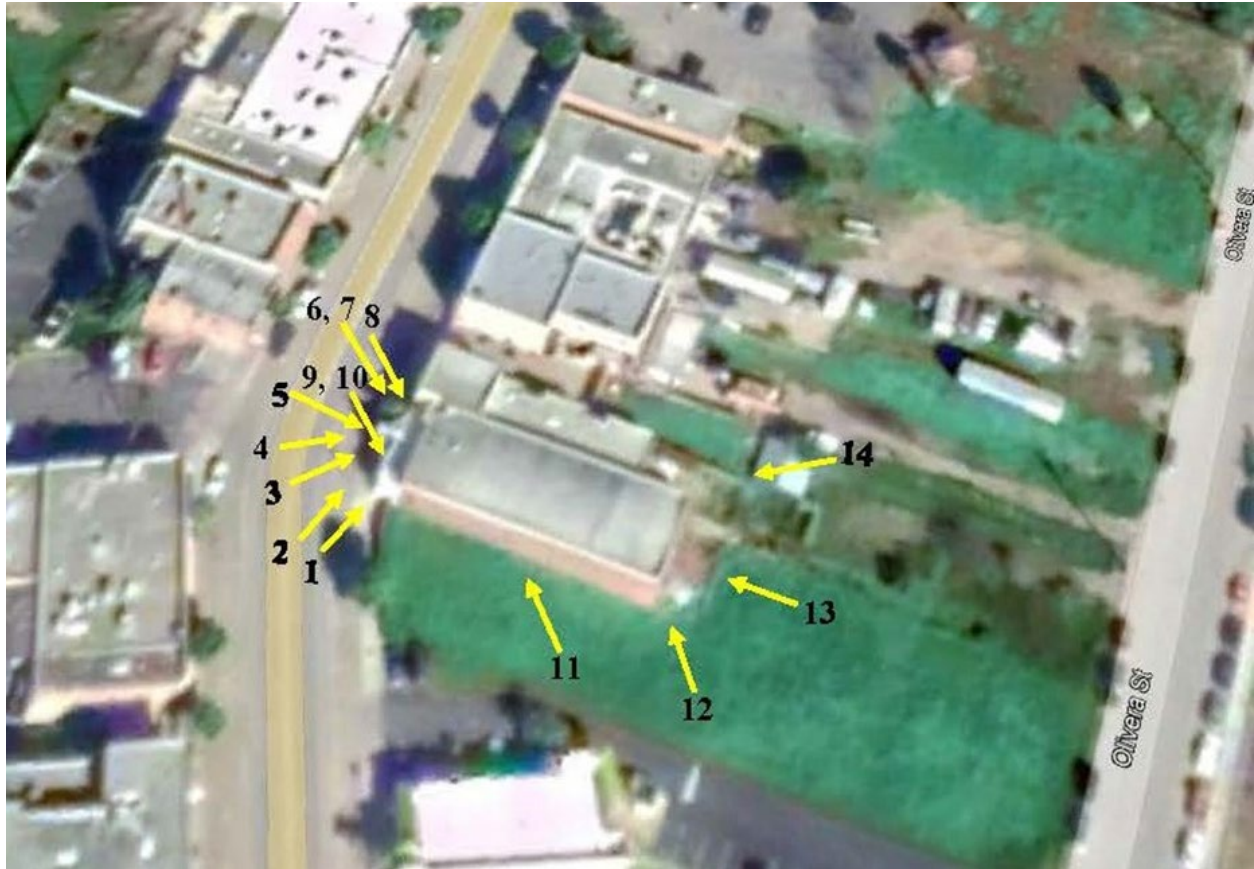
Longitude: -120.573501



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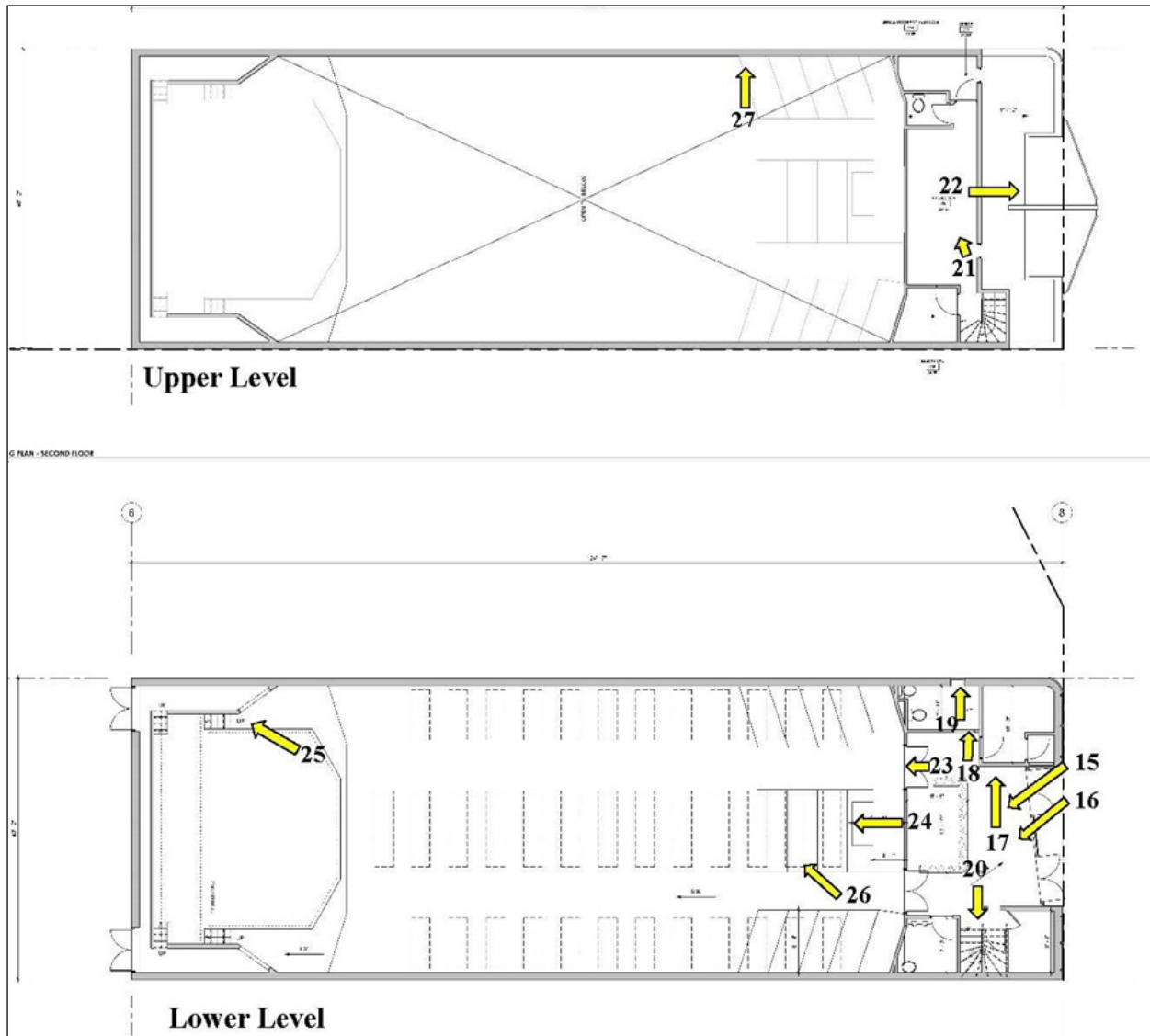
Sketch Map/Photo Key—Exterior



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Sketch Map/Photo Key—Interior



Building plans courtesy of Andrew Goodwin Architects

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Figure 2 During World War II, marquee advertising war bonds for sale; Courtesy of Doug Jenzen, Guadalupe Dune Center.



Figure 3 Fiesta de la Patrias (Mexican Independence Day) parade circa September 1955, theater at left. Courtesy of Rancho de Guadalupe Historical Society.



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Figure 4 As the Cine Royal, featuring Spanish language movies in 1980;
<https://americanclassicimages.com/>, 1980.



Figure 5 Identified as Royal Theater again, October 2007; Cinema Treasures – Photographer
Ken C. McIntyre <http://tinyurl.com/39b69r>.



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Photo 1 Overview, facing northeast (2021)



Photo 2 West façade, facing northeast (2021)



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Photo 3 Marquee, facing northeast (2021)



Photo 4 West façade, facing east (2021)



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Photo 5 West façade, facing southeast (2021)



Photo 6 West façade, facing south (2021)



Royal Theater
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Photo 7 Marquee, facing south (2021)



Photo 8 Poster frame on north end of west façade, facing southeast (2021)



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Photo 9 Ticket booth, facing south (2021)



Photo 10 Etched Royal Theater logo on plate glass window, facing east (2021)



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Photo 11 South elevation brick wall, taken from adjacent vacant lot, facing north (2021)



Photo 12 South and east elevations, facing northwest (2021)



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Photo 13 East elevation, facing west (2021)



Photo 14 East and north elevations, facing west (2021)



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Photo 15 Moderne lobby counter with curved corners, facing northeast (2020)



Photo 16 Decorative lobby floor design, men's restroom and stairs to projection room in background, facing northeast (2020)



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Photo 17 South side of lobby, ticket booth and ladies' restroom in background, facing south (2020)



Photo 18 Ladies' restroom, facing south (2020)



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Photo 19 2/2-light hopper window in ladies' room, facing south (2020)



Photo 20 Staircase to second floor projection room, facing north (2020)



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Photo 21 Projection room with two projector stands, facing southeast (2020)



Photo 22 View of marquee from window in projection room, facing west (2020)



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Photo 23 One of two sets of double doors to theater auditorium, facing east (2020)



Photo 24 Theater auditorium and screen, facing east, seats are covered with plastic (2020)



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Photo 25 Geometric floral design framing the stage, facing east (2020)

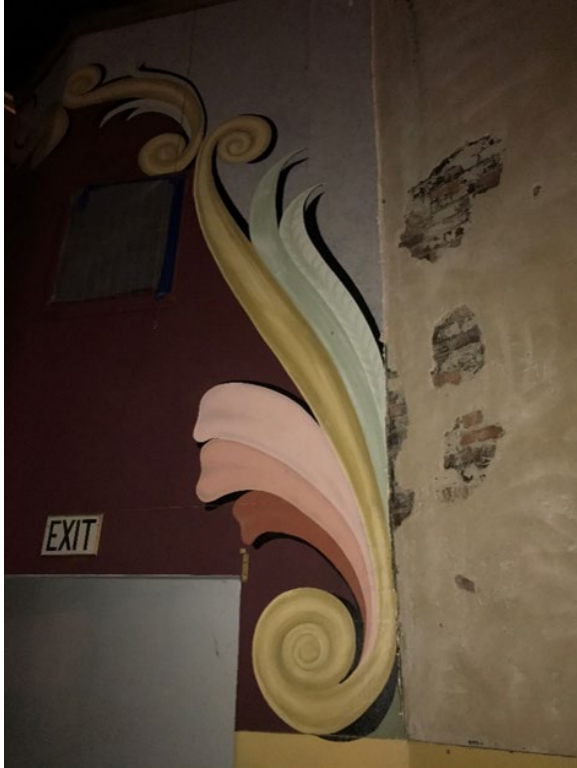


Photo 26 Example of an original theater seat, facing south (2020)



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Photo 27 Charred wall in auditorium from electrical fire, facing south (2020)

