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## Hawaii Theatre wins National Trust preservation award

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The Hawai'i Theatre, which has been the centerpiece of downtown Honolulu's arts revitalization, today won the prestigious National Trust for Historic Preservation Honor Award, the most significant laurel since its 1996 interior renovation.

"Movie palaces are all about fantasy — but the restoration of the Hawai'i Theatre has sparked a revitalization that is a vibrant reality," said Richard Moe, president of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, in a prepared statement. "The restoration of the Hawai'i is a lasting tribute to a community that refused to see a cherished icon lost forever."

Two theater officials — Sarah Richards, HTC president, and Robert R. Midkiff, chairman emeritus — were at the awards ceremony in Pittsburgh, Pa. today.

Often called "The Pride of the Pacific," the Hawai'i Theatre has had a luminous and checkered past. It once was a movie theater and the corporate headquarters of Consolidated Amusement Co., which operated numerous movie houses in the state. But the building was closed and then deteriorated, until community leaders rallied to bring back its former glory.

In singling out the Hawai'i Theatre for the award, the National Trust for Historic Preservation cited it as a "financially successful — and drop-dead glamorous — performance venue that attracts more than 100,000 patrons annually," saying its success has jump-started revitalization all over Chinatown, reversing decay and attracting reinvestment that has spruced up every building in the theater's vicinity.

The site is now home for a Hawaiian music series, hosts annual film screenings and Christmas revue, and provides out-of-town shows a reputable state-of-the-art performing space.

More than 60,000 people now live in the area, and thousands more flock to the restaurants, stores and galleries that have sprung up since the theater's reopening.

Fourteen other refurbished facilities also were recognized.

On the Web: [www.hawaiitheatre.com](http://www.hawaiitheatre.com).

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