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HAWAII THEATRE CENTER RECOGNIZED AS 2005 OUTSTANDING HISTORIC THEATRE BY LEAGUE OF HISTORIC AMERICAN THEATRES

The Hawaii Theatre Center received the 2005 Award for Outstanding Historic Theatre from the League of Historic American Theatres, which held its 29th annual conference in Kansas City, according to HTC President Sarah Richards, who was in attendance to receive the award.

Rosa Stolz of RFS Management Strategies Ltd. In Columbus, Ohio, presented the top award to the Hawaii Theatre for demonstrating “the highest standards of excellence in its vision, execution of the physical restoration, and community service.” The jury selected the Hawaii Theatre Center for its “impressive strength in all criteria categories, the impact of program service, diversity of engagement, its economic

benefit to its community and artists, excellence of management and governance, and the quality of its planning and execution of the physical restoration of the theatre.”

The distinguished 2005 jury for the Outstanding Theatre Awards included Ellen Lipsey, executive director of the Boston Landmarks Commission; Robert Silverman, vice president of administration and finance at Emerson College; and William Rawn, FAIA, principal with Rawn Architects.

The jury “applauds the theatre’s public/private partnership for fiscal support of the preservation effort,” and their “engagement with the community for fund-raising, sweat equity to clean out the theatre, educational programming, and diversity of entertainment.” The jury also noted the impact of the partnership in stimulating the economic and cultural revitalization of its area, and in saving the last remaining movie palace of its kind in Hawaii.

In accepting the award, Richards said, “Hawaii Theatre is the arts organization of the future, bringing together all segments of the community to celebrate the performing arts of our diverse population. We are honored by this extraordinary national recognition.”

The Hawaii Theatre, dubbed “The Pride of the Pacific” when it opened in 1922, has been restored to its former grandeur following a \$32 million restoration. It is a showcase for public/private partnership that included \$13.7 million from the Hawaii State Legislature, as well as individual donations and support from corporations, local and national foundations, and the efforts of countless volunteers. The project restored

the theatre as a modern, state-of-the-art performance facility that both presents and produces shows, including its popular Hawaiian Friday night series.

Among the visiting attractions that have played the Hawaii Theatre since its reopening in 1996 have been tours of such hits shows as “Stomp,” “Cookin’,” “Slava’s Snowshow,” “The Vagina Monologues,” and “Spirit of the Dance.” It has provided the venue for such local producing organizations as the Hawaii International Film Festival, Hawaii International Jazz Festival, Ballet Hawaii, Honolulu Dance Theatre, Iona Contemporary Dance and Hawaii Opera Theatre, plus countless shows by hula halau, choral organizations, barbershoppers, school theatrical groups, comedians and others. Its dance presentations have ranged from Paul Taylor to MOMIX and Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo. Other popular international attractions have been the Chinese Acrobats from Shanghai, Cirque Eloize from Canada, and the Society of Seven from Las Vegas.

The League of Historic American Theatres (LHAT) is an international not-for-profit membership association whose mission is to advocate, support, promote and facilitate the rescue, restoration, reuse and sustainability of historic theatres and other heritage buildings used for cultural assembly and endeavors. Members include theatre operators and managers, preservation activists, architects, structural engineers, design and acoustical consultants, urban planners, restorationists, vendors, booking and artist management firms and fundraising consultants.

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