

# CLEAN-UP VAUDEVILLE

— WITH THE HELP OF PLENTY OF DOUGH

**W**hen they say in Toronto that it took plenty of dough to restore one of Canada's most important theatre complexes, they mean just that.

For the original 1913 decor of the Wintergarden Theatre — part of Loew's Yonge Street vaudeville theatre — was a simulated 'fantasy English garden', with scenic paintings of a garden in full bloom, complete with butterflies. And since most of the paintwork was water-soluble paint, it was cleaned off using a traditional solvent: bread dough.

Altogether, 1,500 lbs of flour was used to form dough which was then applied to clean more than 20,000 square feet of paintwork.

Now, with the restoration completed and the new lighting system installed by Strand's Toronto dealer, Canadian Staging Projects, the Wintergarden and its associated Elgin Theatre have been designated National Historic sites, as a tribute to their contribution to Canadian theatre and architecture.

When they first opened in December 1913, the two formed Canada's first 'stacked' theatre complex, with the Wintergarden seven flights above the Elgin. They were successful Vaudeville houses for 14 years until the advent of

talking pictures. By the late 1970's, the theatres had become dowdy and neglected, until they were bought by the Ontario Heritage Foundation in 1981 and restoration work began.

Stage lighting for the project included a package of more than 130 Lekolites, 30 Fresnels and 11 Iris 4's in the initial luminaire package, supplemented by rentals to a total luminaire complement of 400.

Dimming is by way of 156 dimmers in a unique arrangement. To give both theatres maximum flexibility, CD80 dimmer packs are housed in two rolling racks, designed by CSP. Each rack can have as many as five packs placed in it, depending on the requirements of the production. Additional rolling racks and CD80 dimmer packs are available from CSP's rental stock.

Performance lighting is controlled by a Mini Light Palette in each theatre, with a Mantrix 2S backup.



■ The new-look interior of the 1500-seat Elgin Theatre.

## IRRESISTIBLE OLDSMOBILES

According to lighting designer Craig Roeder, 'The more everything sparkles, the better the chance the merchandise will sell.' And since he is one to practice what he preaches, Craig has given full rein to his philosophy in lighting this Oldsmobile showroom in Dallas, Texas, where 'sparkle' is an understatement.

Craig's restrictions in the Henry Butts Oldsmobile showroom were that only five

separate models could be displayed at any one time. His solution was to isolate each car with a pool of light — an idea made more difficult by the fact that lights had to be clamped



onto a pitched space frame which rose up to 62 feet.

His desired effect of 1500 lux on each car was achieved using five lamps on each, ranging from 120W, PAR 64 very narrow spots, to 150-watt, 120-volt PAR 38 spots, operating on a 60-second cycle automated pre-set dimming system. In addition to illuminating the cars, light bounces off the glass, highly-polished granite and brass surfaces of the showroom.

Dimmers and controls were provided by Strand Electro Controls of Salt Lake City.