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Pantages Theater Marquee Shows True Colors as Red and Green Harken Back to 1918

Tacoma, Wash. –Tacoma’s Pantages Theater is showing signs that the first phase of Tacoma’s Historic Theater District Centennial Capital Campaign restoration is nearing completion with the painting of the signature Pantages marquee at the Broadway Center.

In consultation with the City of Tacoma’s Historic Preservation Officer Reuben McKnight and historic preservationist Michael Sullivan, Broadway Center and Korsmo Construction are painting the illuminated sign in muted tones of red and green. “When the Pantages was built in 1918, illuminated signage was meant to be bright, colorful, and eye-catching, identifying a movie house or theater as a place of liveliness and entertainment,” said Sullivan.

“Although original photos of the Pantages are in black and white, we have used our forensic skills to determine that the original marquee was painted in bright primary colors. When choosing the new color palette, we have tried to faithfully copy the original intentions of illuminated signage from 1918.”

The sign will also utilize modern improvements in energy efficiency, replacing its 450-watt fluorescent bulbs with .7-watt LEDs. “We are emphasizing energy conservation through lighting improvements and window insulation in this phase of the campaign,” said Scott Painter, Director of Operations at Broadway Center.

The Pantages marquee is expected to be completed in mid-July, and is just one of many large-scale renovation projects leading up to the celebration of the Pantages Theater’s 100th Anniversary. Other recent improvements include refurbishment of the historic Jones Building windows, cleaning, tuck-point-and-sealing, and replacement of damaged terra cotta.

Since 2006, as part of preparations for the 100th Anniversary, other completed projects have included an expansion of the Pantages Theater Lobby, an expanded stage footprint, initial seismic upgrades, new safety catwalks, an orchestra pit-lift, renovated elevators and HVAC systems, improved rehearsal halls and classrooms, additional storage space, as well as smaller modifications to the Rialto Theater and Theatre on the Square. To date, more than \$14 million from both public and private sectors have been invested in facility improvements in Tacoma’s Historic Theater District.

For interviews with Tacoma’s Historic Theater District Centennial Capital Campaign representatives, or to take photographs of the Pantages Theater exterior improvements, contact Lacey Wright at 253.573.2360 or [laceyl@broadwaycenter.org](mailto:lacey@broadwaycenter.org).

About the Broadway Center: The non-profit performing arts center brings shared joy and prosperity to downtown Tacoma and the Historic Theater District, including the crown jewel Pantages Theater, Rialto Theater, Theatre on the Square and the Tacoma Armory. The Broadway Center is recognized for its leadership in bringing both diverse and world-class performing artists to the region, as well as for providing one of the largest arts education programs in Washington state, serving more than 40,000 students, teachers and parents annually. The Broadway Center is proud to provide a home to Tacoma’s resident arts organizations that form the core of the performing arts in the South Puget Sound region: [Northwest Sinfonietta](#), [Puget](#)

[Sound Revels](#), [Tacoma City Ballet](#), [Tacoma Concert Band](#), [Tacoma Opera](#), [Tacoma Symphony Orchestra](#) and [Tacoma Youth Symphony Association](#).

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