

Guide to the **Strand Theatre Collection**

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COLLECTION DESCRIPTION

Located at 310 East State Street, the Strand Theatre (named and known using the British spelling of theater) was built by Driscoll Brothers and Company, a prominent local contracting and building firm. The theater embodied a pre-World War I style with seating for just over 1,700, a Tudor-Gothic facade, a free-classical interior, and it was one of the first theaters in New York State with electric lights. These features distinguished it from the other four theaters in Ithaca at the time: the Lyceum (1893), the Star (1911), the Crescent (1916), and the State Theater (1928). On April 23, 1917, the Strand hosted its first show “A Tale of Two Cities.”

First managed by vaudeville actor and songwriter William Dillon, the Strand, also commonly referred to as “Theater Beautiful,” featured vaudeville, pre-Broadway show tryouts, and Broadway shows with American performers such as George M. Cohan, Dorothy Gish, Helen Hayes, and Katherine Hepburn during the 1930s and 1940s. From 1950 to 1975, the theater shifted to primarily showing movies. The Strand closed in 1975; however, in March 1977, Elaine Treman Downing and Barbara Wilcox Thuesen bought the Strand with the support of the non-profit community corporation, The Tompkins County Center for Culture and the Performing Arts, Inc., whose aim was to serve the needs of the Ithaca arts community.

During the 1970s and 1980s, the Strand was used as a performance space for local and professional companies and a venue for community functions. Despite these efforts, the Strand

quickly experienced financial difficulties that persisted due to lack of funding. Additionally, other theaters, such as the State and the Hangar (which opened in 1975) were competing for donations, grants, and use. Many hoped to save the Strand, arguing for the historical value of its architecture and its multifunctional space. However, the Strand closed on July 4, 1982, and was demolished in 1993.

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The logo for The Gladys Kriebel Delmas Foundation is presented on a dark green rectangular background. The text is in a white, elegant serif font. The word "THE" is in a smaller, all-caps font at the beginning. "GLADYS KRIEBEL DELMAS" is written in a larger, all-caps font, with "GLADYS" and "DELMAS" being significantly larger than "KRIEBEL". Below this, the word "FOUNDATION" is written in a smaller, all-caps font.

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