



THE **Agora**

The Rebirth of a Rock & Roll Legend
Cleveland, OH

The World Famous Agora Theatre and Ballroom is a Cleveland institution and one of the most storied venues in Rock & Roll history. The Agora helped launch the arc of Rock & Roll and has played host to legendary performances from iconic artists like Bruce Springsteen, Iggy Pop, Patti Smith and The Cars, alternative pioneers like Soundgarden, Primus, and Blind Melon, metal and hardcore artists like Metallica, Pantera, Slayer, Volbeat and Mastodon, and the best of today's artists like Modest Mouse, Fleet Foxes, Greta Van Fleet and Highly Suspect.

In July of 2017,

AEG Presents and its partner Chris Zitterbart, acquired the venue with a mission to preserve both the legacy of the Agora and the history of the building at 5000 Euclid Avenue. Paying particular attention to the history of the venue, the building started telling its own story. Peeling back decades of gritty layers, the original pre-deco tiled entry way was revealed and preserved leaving scars and imperfections that hinted at the stories held by the 105-year old venue. Also discovered and preserved were the WHK radio station call letters indelibly incorporated into the terrazzo entry way.

The central theme to the renovation quickly became clear – stay true to the past by uncovering and celebrating the history of the room as authentically as possible. Leave some of the character left by the people that patronized the venue, fingerprints of the artists & patrons that sewed the Agora into the fabric of Cleveland. Be good stewards of a building and a reputation owned by the people. Find the story in the history.

A new chapter in the Agora's history is being written – come be part of the story.



Henry LoConti Sr., outside the venue on Euclid Avenue that became the third and final home of the Cleveland Agora.

Bruce Springsteen & The E Street Band played an iconic show at The Agora on August 9th, 1978. The show was recorded and broadcast live and while bootleg recordings were widely circulated, the completely restored and remastered version wasn't released until December 2014. "The Agora, Cleveland 1978" is considered, by most critics, to be the greatest and most essential live recording ever released by Bruce Springsteen & The E Street Band.



Mike Watt, left, and Dave Grohl (Nirvana, Foo Fighters) in concert together at the Agora in 1995. (Photo: Plain Dealer)

The theatre itself became known as WHK's Studio One Auditorium and, except for a brief stint as the Cleveland Grande in the late 60's, operated as such until the early 1980's when it briefly reopened as 'The New Hippodrome'.



During the 1930's, with a tumbling national economy, the venue became a vaudeville and burlesque club known as 'The Gayety' which featured mostly strip-tease performances, dancers and comics.

The Metropolitan Theatre opened on March 31, 1913 and featured stage shows, comedies and musicals.



Among various uses, the Metropolitan was home to Cleveland's Yiddish Theatre Troupe in 1927. This brief episode in its history came to an end a few months later in 1928 after the troupe was involved in a bus accident on the way to a performance in Youngstown.

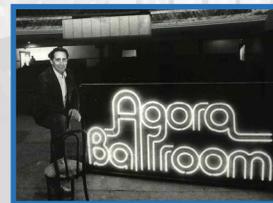
By the late 1940's, after several more fleeting incarnations, all stage productions had ceased and the theatre offices became home to the first radio station to broadcast from Ohio, WHK – 1420AM where Pete "Mad Daddy" Meyers, an early iconic DJ, helped to brand WHK nationally as a pioneer of rock & roll music.

Founded by club owner and impresario Hank LoConti, Sr., The Agora "Alpha" first opened in 1966 on Cornell Road in Little Italy near the campus of Case Western Reserve University. The club moved just a year later to East 24th Street where it was known, familiarly, as The Agora "Beta".

Following a fire in 1984 that damaged the East 24th Street location, The Agora moved once again and landed finally in its current home on Euclid Avenue in 1986 in what was originally the Metropolitan Theatre.



The original Agora sign that Agora founder Henry LoConti Sr., who passed away in 2014, donated to the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum. (David I. Andersen/The Plain Dealer)



Henry LoConti Sr. at the Agora on Euclid Avenue in the 1980s. (Photo: Plain Dealer)



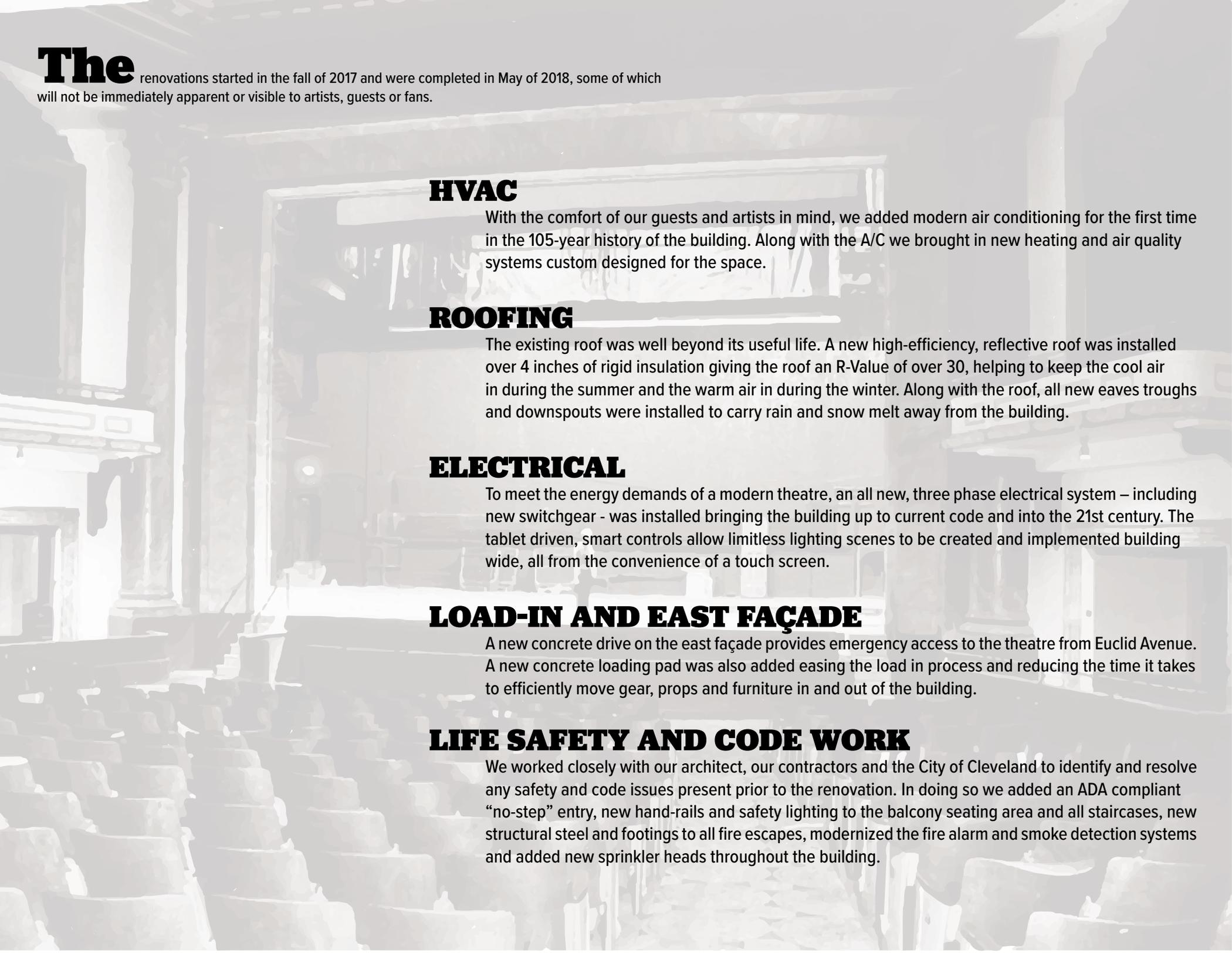
Justin Timberlake, performing in 2003 at the Agora. (Chuck Crow/The Plain Dealer)



Machine Gun Kelly performs for his hometown crowd at the Agora, June 9, 2012. (Joshua Gunter/The Plain Dealer)



The Flaming Lips Wayne Coyne plays guitar at the Agora on Sept. 30, 2007. (Scott Shaw / The Plain Dealer)



The renovations started in the fall of 2017 and were completed in May of 2018, some of which will not be immediately apparent or visible to artists, guests or fans.

HVAC

With the comfort of our guests and artists in mind, we added modern air conditioning for the first time in the 105-year history of the building. Along with the A/C we brought in new heating and air quality systems custom designed for the space.

ROOFING

The existing roof was well beyond its useful life. A new high-efficiency, reflective roof was installed over 4 inches of rigid insulation giving the roof an R-Value of over 30, helping to keep the cool air in during the summer and the warm air in during the winter. Along with the roof, all new eaves troughs and downspouts were installed to carry rain and snow melt away from the building.

ELECTRICAL

To meet the energy demands of a modern theatre, an all new, three phase electrical system – including new switchgear - was installed bringing the building up to current code and into the 21st century. The tablet driven, smart controls allow limitless lighting scenes to be created and implemented building wide, all from the convenience of a touch screen.

LOAD-IN AND EAST FAÇADE

A new concrete drive on the east façade provides emergency access to the theatre from Euclid Avenue. A new concrete loading pad was also added easing the load in process and reducing the time it takes to efficiently move gear, props and furniture in and out of the building.

LIFE SAFETY AND CODE WORK

We worked closely with our architect, our contractors and the City of Cleveland to identify and resolve any safety and code issues present prior to the renovation. In doing so we added an ADA compliant “no-step” entry, new hand-rails and safety lighting to the balcony seating area and all staircases, new structural steel and footings to all fire escapes, modernized the fire alarm and smoke detection systems and added new sprinkler heads throughout the building.



The iconic World Famous Agora marquee has been restored to its original glory.





Bar

Before



After

The hand-glazed ceramic tile that adorns the floors and walls of the original lobby was crafted in 1912 by the Grueby Faience Company of Boston, Massachusetts, which was renowned for producing tile in the French matte style. The design motif in the lobby features cherub, angel and wolf scenes along with the company's signature matte green tile.



Before



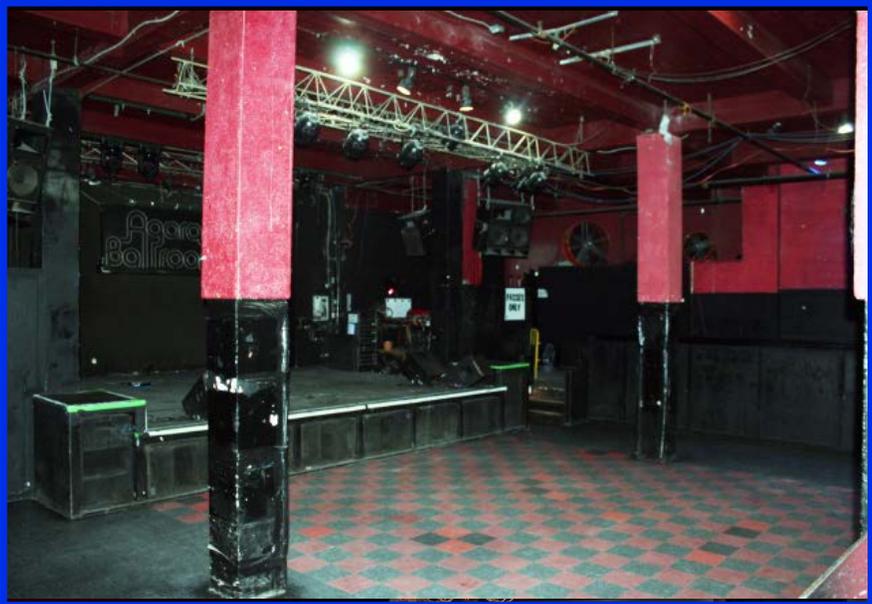
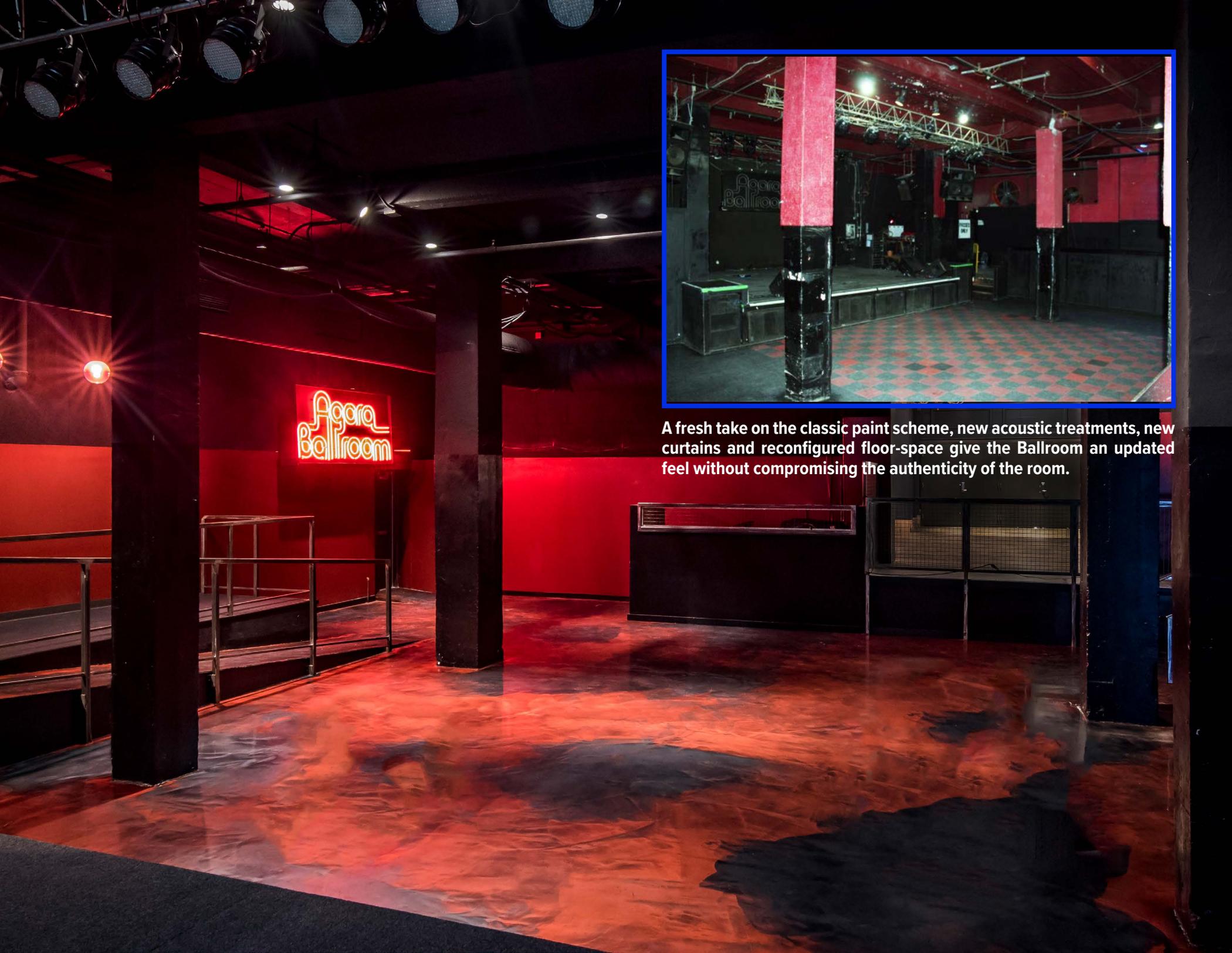
After

An all new central draft system was installed and services all four full service bars. The bars themselves were redesigned and, in some instances, relocated to better accommodate increased bar traffic.

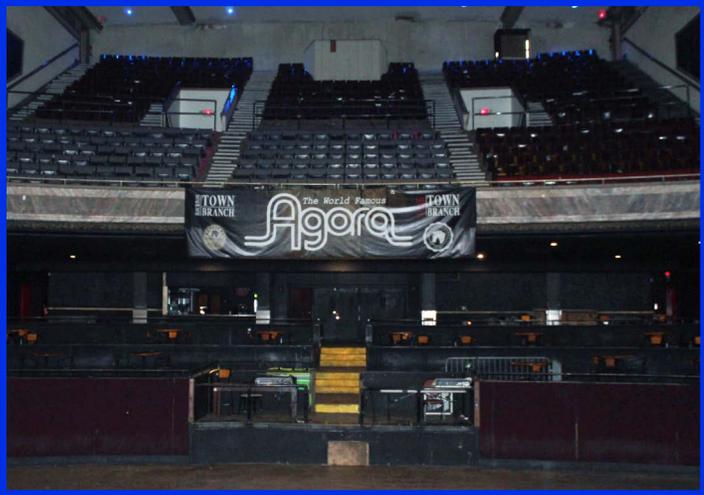


New and expanded Mens' and Womens' restrooms.





A fresh take on the classic paint scheme, new acoustic treatments, new curtains and reconfigured floor-space give the Ballroom an updated feel without compromising the authenticity of the room.



The auditorium platforms were reconfigured to offer better sight-lines and an improved patron experience.



The ceiling of the theatre was repaired and painted.



All new seating was installed in the balcony along with new curtains and acoustic treatments.

All new solid-surface stage decking was installed on the historic Agora stage. New three phase power distribution and upgraded state-of-the-art sound and lights were installed on stage to meet the needs of today's touring artists, including :

- 16 - Adamson iS10n main speakers 4 - Adamson iS10 main speakers
- 6 - E219 subwoofers
- 4 - iS7p front fill loudspeakers
- 2 - amp racks each containing:
 - 3 - Lab.gruppen D120 amplifiers 1 - Lab.gruppen D200 amplifier
- 1 - 100amp 3 phase distro with outputs for amp racks and cam-lok pass through
- 8 - Platinum HFX Elation fixtures 8 Fuze Z350 Elation fixtures





The artist dressing rooms were renovated but the history was preserved. The brick signature wall remains, encouraging artists to continue the tradition and add their mark to the legacy of The Agora.

