

**Title:** Pabst Theater Collection

**Manuscript Number:** Mss-1717

**Inclusive Dates:** 1895 – ongoing

**Bulk:** 6.23 cu ft. total

**Location:** GV, Sh. 62 (2.6 cu. ft.)  
ER, Shelf 242  
RC10, Sh. 005-008 (3.4 cu. ft.)  
OS SM “P”

**Abstract:** Located at 144 E Wells in downtown Milwaukee, the Pabst Theater is on the original site of Nunnemacher’s Grand Opera House which was built in 1871. In 1890, the Nunnemacher was purchased by Captain Fred Pabst and renamed the Stadt Theater. The Stadt was burned in January of 1895 and was replaced by the Pabst Theater which was designed by Otto Strack and completed in November of 1895. The theater has undergone extensive remodeling, including work done in 1928, 1937, 1975, and 1989.

**Scope and Content:** The bulk of the collection is composed of theater programs spanning the years 1895-1930 (not inclusive), 1923-1996 (not inclusive), 18 bound books containing theater programs for the full 1895 season, and the seasons 1897-1925 (not inclusive) and several oversized handbills. Included in the collection is a small manuscript component that contains correspondence concerning Conrad Schmitt Studio’s involvement with renovation and remodeling 1928-1975; timeline chronology of theater; Historic American Buildings Survey, 1970; national Register of Historic Places nomination form (copy) 1972; The Pabst newsletter, Jan/Mar/May 1995; calendar of events, 1991-92; correspondence and information on Pabst performer Otto Rhein, 1991; Conrad Schmitt Studios promotional flyer on Pabst Theater; clippings and articles on Pabst theater, 1976, 1978; two commemorative napkins, “Pabst Theater 100 Years”; “Pabst Theater: A Self guided Walking Tour,” 1976 brochure; and a Pabst Theater Capital campaign Report to Donors, 2002.

**Access and Use:** No restrictions

**Language:** English, German

**Administrative Note:** Processed by R. Fuhrman, April 2014. Retyped October 2014 by Steve Schaffer. Reprocessed August 2022 by Michael Barera.

File Heading	Box #	File #
Theater programs, 1895-1930 (not inclusive)	1	1-30
Theater programs, 1923-1990 (not inclusive)	2	31-50
Theater programs, 1990-1999 (not inclusive)	3	51-60
Brochures and flyers, 1976-2002, undated	4	1
Correspondence, 1928-1991	4	2
Newsletters <i>The Pabst</i> , <i>Filmmakers</i> , <i>Lakeside Lites</i> , <i>LHAT Bulletin</i> , <i>Preserve Milwaukee</i> , 1991-2002	4	3
Newspaper and magazine clippings, 1961-2001, undated	4	4
Reports, 1967-1976	4	5
Miscellaneous, 1969-1995, undated	4	6

<b>Books/Scrapbooks:</b>	<b>Location</b>	
Bound theater programs for 1895 season	ER, Shelf 242	
17 bound theater programs for 1897-1925 seasons (not inclusive)	RC10, Shelves 5-8	
Handbills: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Castle House in Modern Dance At Pabst Theatre” May, 1914</li> <li>• “A Midsummer Night’s Dream” (Warner Bros.)</li> <li>• “The Rose of the Rancho” (Frances Starr) March 26-28, 1907-08 season</li> <li>• “Stars of the 1898-99 Season” (German text).</li> <li>• Milwaukee Footlights: Pabst Theater Guitar Summit and The Chieftains, 2014</li> </ul> 28 German language Pabst Theater event-newspapers, 1906-1931 (not inclusive) <i>The Wisconsin Jewish Chronicle</i> “Fine Arts” section, September 9, 1976 <i>The Milwaukee Journal “Insight”</i> magazine, September 19, 1976 Pabst Theater drawing, undated	OS SM “P”	
Photograph of Pabst Theater auditorium with crowd, undated	OS Photos	
Pabst Theater drawing, undated	OS LG “P”	