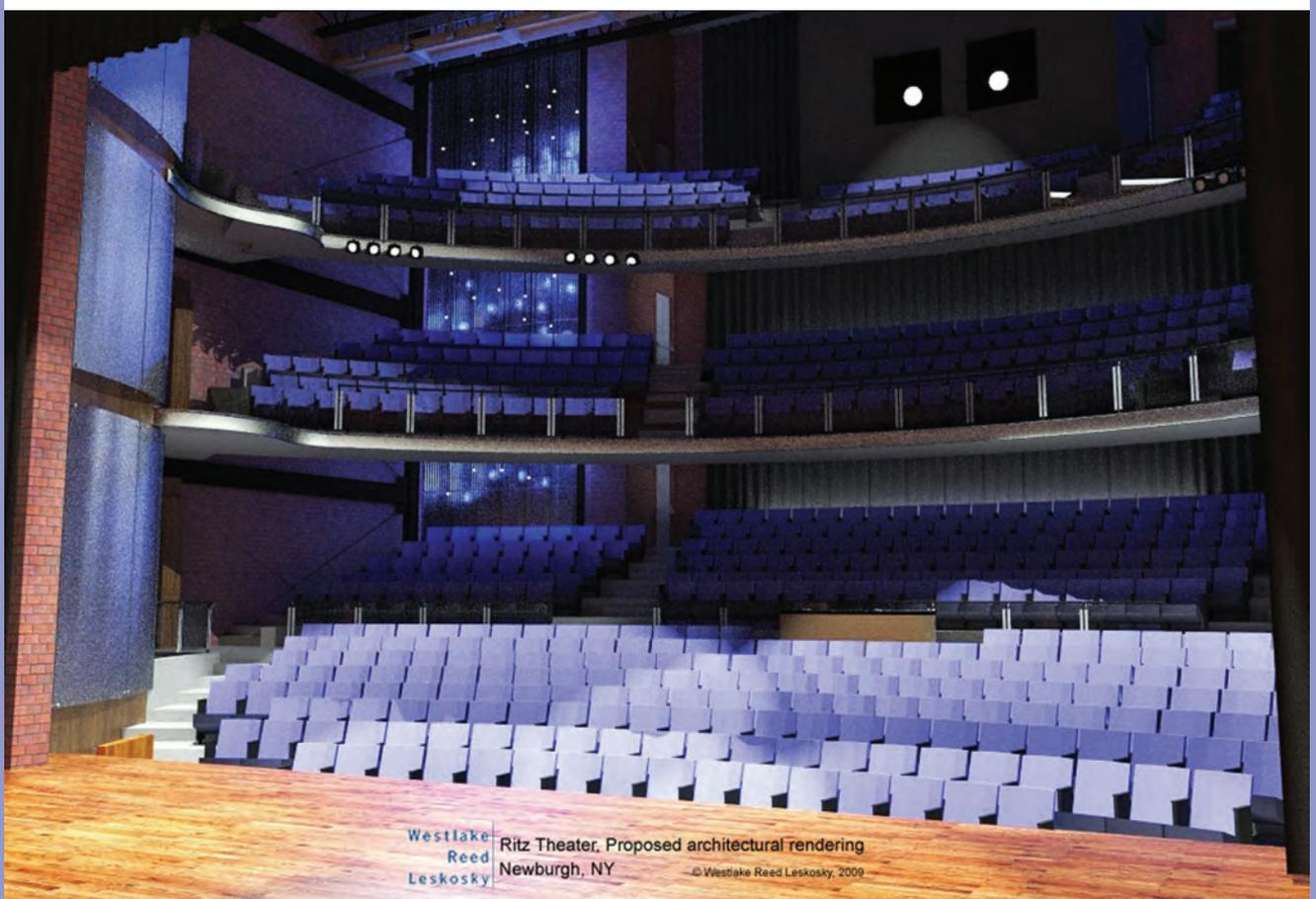




RESTORING THE LEGACY



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Leskosky | Ritz Theater, Proposed architectural rendering
Newburgh, NY | © Westlake Reed Leskosky, 2009



From One Generation...

The Ritz Theater is the last remaining historic theater in the City of Newburgh. Our goal to restore the theater is part of a unique mission to revitalize the City's lower Broadway area through historic preservation, housing, economic development and the arts.

The Ritz's history began in 1913 when Cohen's Opera House was founded, where legends of the Vaudeville era played. Renamed the Ritz in 1933, the theater began its most illustrious chapter with performances by Ella Fitzgerald, Louis Prima, Frank Sinatra and many more. On December 17, 1941, Lucille Ball made her stage debut alongside her husband, Desi Arnaz, at the Ritz. In 2007, the Ritz was one of only ten sites bestowed with a "History Happened Here" Award by *PARADE* Magazine, in recognition of its role as the birthplace of the *I Love Lucy* show.

In 1969, the Ritz's house was carved into separate movie theaters. Broadway and the City then began a steady decline that led to the theater closing its doors for good. The Ritz stage remained untouched, waiting patiently for the next chapter in its history.

To the Next...

That next chapter has arrived. The Ritz is located within The Cornerstone Residence, an award-winning supportive housing project developed by our sister organization, Safe Harbors of the Hudson, which has been transforming Newburgh since 2002. Our project is the first in the nation to combine supportive housing with the preservation of a historic theater.

The project will create a home for the performing arts as well as educational and employment opportunities. It will offer exposure to performances in all disciplines, while inspiring active tourism by creating a cultural destination in Newburgh. Through these developments, the Ritz will build and strengthen our community through the arts.

As the first step in the restoration, the original lobby was transformed into an intimate performance space. It is now the home of the Tom Humphrey Guitar Series, which has presented stellar performances by Grammy and Tony award-winning artists. Community events are also held, including a youth talent show. With sold-out performances, the Ritz has already demonstrated a need for this important project.

Theater, Housing, Arts, Culture All in One Place

Once completed, the Ritz will be an innovatively-designed 825-seat theater.

We have assembled an experienced development team and have established important community partnerships with the Bardavon 1869 Opera House, SUNY Orange and other local organizations. Initial funding for the project will be provided by state and local government, Historic and New Market Tax Credits, private foundations and individual donors.

Please help us to set the stage in presenting a bold new model for urban redevelopment in which the arts play a featured role. We're saving you a seat.



Contact Us & Visit

107 Broadway
Newburgh, NY 12550
(845) 784-1199
info@ritztheaternewburgh.org

www.ritztheaternewburgh.org

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