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# PANTAGES THEATRE

*Toronto, Ontario, Canada*

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*Solutions  
with a  
Focus on  
Cultural  
& Natural  
Heritage*

Toronto's spectacular Pantages Theatre - the largest theatre in Canada - was built in 1920 to designs by the celebrated New York theatre architect, Thomas Lamb. After presenting vaudeville and cinema for several decades, the theatre was divided into six small cinemas and much of its spectacular ornament was destroyed.

Cineplex Odeon Corporation restored the Pantages to its historic splendour, deviating from the original design only to meet safety and code requirements and to improve its function as a contemporary venue. Commonwealth was the restoration consultant for the project, working with Cineplex Odeon's architect and engineers. As a first step, we prepared a restoration brief setting out the approach and clarifying the appropriate levels of intervention. Research into historic drawings and photographs provided much of the source information for an accurate restoration. One of the most challenging tasks was determining the original colours and textures, all of which had been obscured by later finishes. Some 1,500 paint samples from the auditorium, lobby, and entrance link were taken and analyzed.

The restored Pantages Theatre opened in the fall of 1988 with Andrew Lloyd Webber's *The Phantom of the Opera*.

