



**For Immediate Release**

May 12, 2016

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## **Saenger Theatre enhances the patron experience with new hand rails**

PENSACOLA, Fla. – The historic Saenger Theatre opened on April 2, 1925. It was the first all-electric building in Pensacola, but it was piped for gas just in case electricity was a “passing fad.” Everything was carved by hand; like the deep curves in the columns surrounding the proscenium stage were made by the elbows of a master craftsman. The original Tiffany chandeliers still glamorously light the audience chamber. Built with all of the modern conveniences of its time, the Grand Dame of Palafox has been missing an important element for all these years—hand rails for the balcony aisles.

“Patron comfort and safety is our number one priority for events at the Saenger Theatre,” said Doug Lee, General Manager of the Saenger Theatre. He continued “The historic aisles in the balcony created a challenge for the handrail design, but these new rails are tucked behind the seats and the response that we received from our attendees has been very positive.”

The handrails were designed and created by Haute Metalworks in Pensacola and installed by Saenger Operations personnel. The entire project took about 6 weeks to complete.

Bret Barrow, Executive Director of the Pensacola Symphony Orchestra said of the hand rails, “Many of the most beloved seats in the Saenger for Pensacola Symphony concerts are in the balcony. The stadium-style seating allows for clear sightlines and the acoustics are incredible. Before having handrails, it was sometimes a bit tough to carefully traverse the steep balcony aisles. The new handrails provide a much safer experience and they are beautifully designed and fabricated. They truly remind me of similar railings retrofitted at historic venues like Carnegie Hall (NYC) or the Fox Theatre (ATL).”

**About Saenger Theatre:** The Saenger Theatre is the premier entertainment venue located in downtown Pensacola. The Theatre is home to the Broadway in Pensacola and hosts a variety of events including symphony, opera, ballet, touring concerts, family shows and community events. The Saenger Theatre is owned by the City of Pensacola and professionally managed by SMG, the world leader in venue management, marketing and development.

**About SMG:** Founded in 1977, SMG provides management services to more than 240 public assembly facilities including convention and exhibition centers, arenas, stadiums, theatres, performing arts centers, equestrian facilities, science centers and a variety of other venues. With facilities across the globe, SMG manages more than 15 million square feet of exhibition space and more than 1.5 million sports and entertainment seats. As the recognized global industry leader, SMG provides venue management, sales, marketing, event booking and programming, construction and design consulting, and pre-opening services for such landmark facilities as McCormick Place & Soldier Field in Chicago, Moscone Convention Center in San Francisco, Houston's NRG Park and the Mercedes-Benz Superdome. SMG also offers food and beverage operations through its concessions and catering company SAVOR, currently serving more than 140 accounts worldwide. For more information, visit [www.smgworld.com](http://www.smgworld.com).

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