

# Come Experience the Grandeur of the Rialto Square Theatre

**“When the doors of the new Rialto open tomorrow, Joliet will have one of the finest theaters in the United States, as experts say there is nothing to compare with it in any city of similar size, and it stands on even terms with the modern motion picture palaces of Chicago and New York.”**

**Joliet Sunday Herald News  
May 23, 1926**

The Rubens Rialto Square Theatre was a former Vaudeville movie palace built during the “Golden Age” of movies. Opening on May 24, 1926, the Rialto was two years in the making at an approximate cost of two million dollars. Originally conceived as a “Palace For The People” by the six Rubens brothers - George, Louis, Maurice, Jules, Harry and Claude, the Rialto is still considered one of the most beautiful theatres in the nation. The building reflects Italian Renaissance, Greek, Roman, Byzantine, Rococo, Venetian and Baroque architecture. The American Institute of Architects has it listed as one of the “150 great places in Illinois”.

The Esplanade, or inner lobby, is designed after the Hall of Mirrors in the Palace of Versailles, near Paris, France. The arch between the Esplanade and the Rotunda area has been carefully copied from the Arc de Triomphe in

Paris. The elegant Rotunda is surrounded by eighteen Corinthian-style columns and topped by a dome quite similar to the Pantheon in Rome.

There are over 100 crystal chandeliers and light fixtures throughout the Rialto. All are Czechoslovakian crystal, Steuben glass, copper and bronze. Each piece of crystal was hand-hewn by the Victor S. Perlman Company in Chicago.

The magnificent chandelier in the center of the Rotunda is called “The Duchess”. It is one of the largest hand cut crystal chandeliers in the United States. It weighs over two tons, is nearly twenty-two feet tall and has approximately 250 lights.

The Rialto closed as a movie theatre in the mid-1970’s. It was rescued from impending demolition by a grass-roots “Save the Rialto” campaign led by Dorothy Mavrich. She succeeded in getting the theatre placed on the National Register of Historic Places on July 24, 1978. The theatre was restored to its former glory in 1980 and reopened the next year as a performing arts venue.

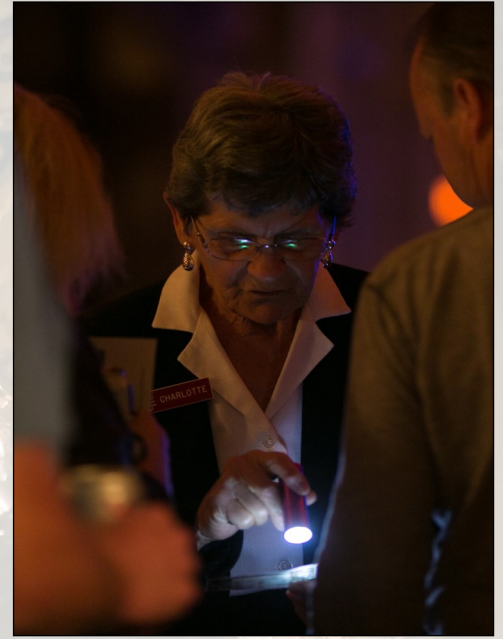
Today, “The Jewel of Joliet” is still attracting patrons from across the country and around the world. It is under the management of VenuWorks, a third-party management company based in Ames, Iowa.





## Tuesday Tours

Tour the "Jewel of Joliet", widely considered one of the ten most beautiful theatres in the country. Go behind the scenes of the Rialto Square Theatre, walk through the Esplanade and Rotunda, then go on stage and in the Green Room. Tours are led by an expert Rialto Square tour guide.



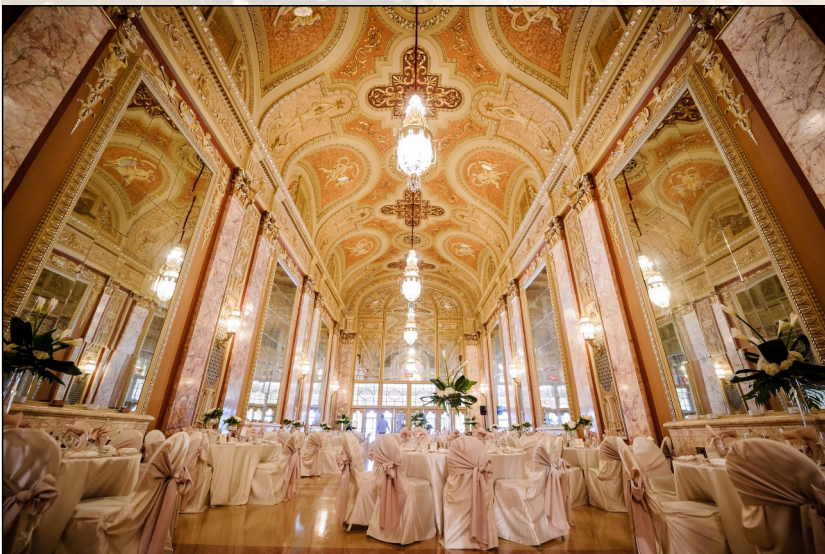
## Special Treatment at the Rialto S.T.A.R. Program

S.T.A.R. members are the philanthropic leaders of the Rialto Square Theatre. Their gifts help to maintain the theatre as well as provide special programming throughout the year. With their membership, S.T.A.R. members are granted exclusive benefits.



## Volunteer at the Rialto

Volunteering opportunities are open to people 16 years of age and older. Opportunities range from, but not limited to, ticket taking, ushering and fundraising. The primary function of the Rialto volunteers is to serve the theatre where needed.



## Weddings & Special Events

The Rialto is not only a beautiful venue for concerts, touring productions and community gatherings, it could also be the perfect venue for your once-in-a-lifetime storybook wedding or other special event. We have hosted graduations, quinceañeras, dance recitals, dance competitions, corporate meetings and photo shoots.



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