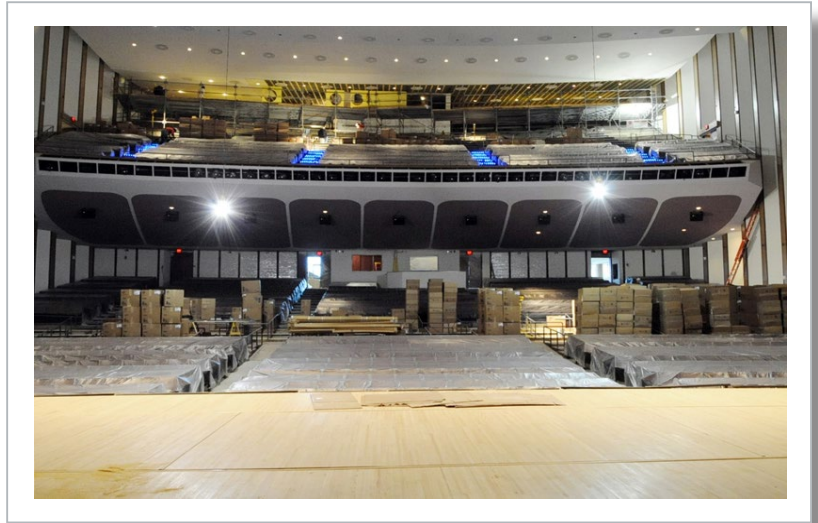


Performing Arts Theatre Falls Victim to Katrina

The Mahalia Jackson Theatre for the Performing Arts is home for the City of New Orleans' ballet, symphony orchestra, and opera. The New Orleans Opera is one of the oldest in the United States.

The Theatre was just one of the city's nearly 300 buildings damaged by Hurricane Katrina. Adjusters International assisted in damage assessment of the city's properties, including the Theatre.



DESCRIPTION

Hurricane Katrina brought over \$10 million in damage to The Mahalia Jackson Theatre. The flood waters wreaked havoc, completely destroying the stage and orchestra lift systems, flooding the Theatre's mechanical and electrical systems, and washing over portions of the seating.

ISSUES

The Theatre's stage lifts were so heavily damaged that they had to be replaced. Initially FEMA denied that need, suggesting instead the use of used parts for repair of the lifts.

FEMA's original Project Worksheet did not anticipate any eligible funding due to the renovation work underway at the Theatre at the time of the storm.

In addition, the Theatre's roof had been patched after the storm to mitigate further damage. As a result of this temporary fix, FEMA did not see the need for its replacement.

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SOLUTIONS APPLIED

New stage and orchestra lift systems were approved by FEMA, after Adjusters International demonstrated that the replacement costs were comparable to the repair costs, as the original system controls parts were obsolete.

Adjusters International worked with officials from the City of New Orleans, State of Louisiana, and FEMA to reach an agreement that the construction work being done before the storm was limited in scope. The limited work in progress was deemed ineligible, but all other qualifying work necessary to bring The Mahalia Jackson Theatre for the Performing Arts back to pre-Katrina condition was deemed to be eligible.

Adjusters International recommended that the city obtain a thermal image of the roof to identify unseen damages. Results showed that the damage exceeded 25 percent of the total roof area. As per the city's code, the roof needed to be replaced.

OUTCOME

The Mahalia Jackson Theatre for the Performing Arts returned to full function in 2008. In the end, Adjusters International's work contributed significantly to the Theatre's re-opening by securing \$10 million in FEMA funding, ensuring that the show will go on.

