

Hoyt Sherman Place

Past, Present and Future

Emily Roeder, Education Program Coordinator

THIS IS THE PLACE.

Hoyt Sherman Place is a vibrant cultural destination where people can connect with art, music, history, and one another. The venue offers an intimate theater experience with extraordinary acoustics, a beautiful historic mansion, and a majestic art gallery. Ever since Hoyt Sherman completed his family home in 1877, this lovely space in historic Sherman Hill has been a hub of connection. From one-of-a-kind events to sharing art and exploring history, this is the place to be in Des Moines.

Organization Statements

VISION

Hoyt Sherman Place will be a premier historic cultural center in Iowa, working with national and local partners to present outstanding performances, celebrate Iowa's history, and grow arts and culture in the region.

MISSION

Hoyt Sherman Place creates outstanding experiences for the cultural, historic, and educational benefit of Iowa's residents and communities.

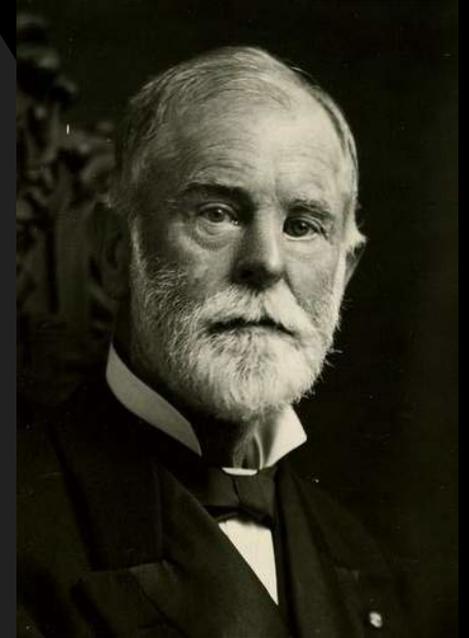
VALUES

Responsible Stewardship, Lifelong Supporters, Unique Offerings & Strong Collaboration.

Timeline



1827



- Born in 1827, Hoyt Sherman was the youngest son of eleven children. His family included older brothers, John Sherman, the writer of Sherman Anti-Trust Act, and Civil War General William Tecumseh Sherman.
- Hoyt Sherman arrived in Des Moines in 1848, and shortly thereafter, he was appointed Postmaster. He built the first post office and bank, he served on the town council, and he was very involved in local and state politics. In 1850, Hoyt purchased five acres of land for \$105. President Abraham Lincoln appointed him the Army Paymaster at the start of the Civil War, with the rank of Major.
- Upon his return, Hoyt teamed up with others and created Equitable of Iowa Insurance Company. During this time, he also gave his counsel, his time, and his money to ensure Des Moines had schools, including a college, a waterworks system, and many more facilities.

1877



- In 1877, the Sherman family home was completed with the help of architect William Foster. Almost immediately, it was noted in writings to be, "a society showplace of the grandest scale." Among its distinguished guests in history were General Sherman, General Grant, General Sheridan, and Major McKinley.
- Sherman and his wife, Sara, raised five children, Frank, Addie, Charles, Arthur, and Helen, in the home. Major Hoyt Sherman passed away in January 1904, and his estate transferred to his heirs. They later gifted the entire estate to the city of Des Moines, with the caveat that it forever be called Hoyt Sherman Place.

1893



- In 1893, Hoyt Sherman rented his home to The Sisters of Mercy from Davenport, Iowa. Within the walls of the home, the Sisters created the first Mercy Hospital. It held 52 beds and operated for nearly two years.

1907



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- Hoyt Sherman Place stood empty after Hoyt Sherman's death until 1907 when members of Des Moines Women's Club leased the home from the city for \$1 per year.
 - Des Moines Women's Club, founded in 1885, built a gallery adjacent to the mansion. The space became the first public art museum in Des Moines.
 - Hoyt Sherman Place is still home for Des Moines Women's Club. They meet every Wednesday, October through May.

1917



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- Des Moines Women's Club, always active in the community, invited many guest speakers to Hoyt Sherman Place to entertain and to educate. They began raising funds for the construction of a 1,400-seat theater in 1917. When the United States entered WWI that same year, all plans were put on hold. Construction of the theater began in 1922. Des Moines Women's Club also began construction of a second gallery called the Byers Room to house the art collection presented to them by Major S.H.M. and Margaret Byers in 1912. Major Byers served under, and became a close friend of, Hoyt Sherman's brother, General William T. Sherman.

1923



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- The 1,400-seat theater was completed. Many luminaries came to Hoyt Sherman Place to entertain. In its first two decades, honored speakers and performers included Helen Keller and Anne Sullivan (1925), Will Rogers (1925), John Philip Sousa (1925), Amelia Earhart (1933), Edna St. Vincent Millay (1938), Grant Wood (1939), and Agnes de Mille (1940).

1977



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- Hoyt Sherman Place was listed on The National Register of Historic Places, a designation given to significant buildings in American history deemed worthy of

1995



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- Hoyt Sherman Place Foundation was formed to preserve and enhance the 1877 landmark. The Foundation's mission is to create outstanding experiences for the cultural, historic and educational benefit of Iowa's residents and communities.

2004



- A \$4.7 million-dollar restoration project was completed to restore the spaces to their original grandeur. Additional enhancements include air conditioning, state-of-the-art lighting, 1,252 refurbished historical seats in the theater and interior upgrades in the art gallery.
- Restoration efforts continued as all floors on the main level of the mansion and stairway were restored to their original luster, and the faded and damaged stenciling on the stairway walls was recreated.

2015



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- Hoyt Sherman Place was inducted into the Iowa Rock 'n' Roll Music Association Hall of Fame for its continued excellence in providing a beautiful venue in which musicians can perform and for its rich history of presenting music to the masses.

2020



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- *The Hoyt Sherman Place: The Next 100 Years* Capital Campaign successfully raised \$5 million to build the Center for Artists and Education, which includes rehearsal and classroom spaces, accessible dressing rooms, a wardrobe room, a green room, private meeting spaces and an administrative office suite. The project also added a VIP donor lounge to the theater mezzanine level, and the new east wing created lobby space for lawn events and includes additional public restrooms.

2021



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- The mansion's second floor was restored, including Hoyt and Sara's bedroom and a room dedicated to the memory of their daughter, Helen Sherman Griffith. The rooms include period-appropriate lighting fixtures, original paint colors, flooring and décor. In addition to the second floor restoration, a mobility-impaired lift has been added to allow all visitors access to the second floor. A Research and Archive Library was also created to view special documents.

2023-Today



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- Today, the Des Moines Women's Club and Hoyt Sherman Place Foundation work together to keep this historic landmark alive with concerts, art exhibits, tours, weddings, and other events. For more than 100 years, Hoyt Sherman Place has been part of the community and will be for the next 100.



Theater

The theater holds more than 1,200 people, making it intimate enough to nurture personal connection. This extraordinary space offers unparalleled acoustics for both performers and audiences, and the opulent interior packs a dramatic visual punch.

Box Office

Theater

Mezzanine



Mansion 1st Floor

The historic mansion was home to Sherman and his family for many years and has been painstakingly renovated to its full glory. The house is open for self-guided tours.



Mansion 2nd Floor

The historic mansion was home to Sherman and his family for many years and has been painstakingly renovated to its full glory. The house is open for self-guided tours.



Art Gallery

The art gallery was the first public art museum in Des Moines and houses works by American and European artists, including relics dating back to 525 B.C.

Art Gallery
Byers Room

Artworks





Henri-Michel-Antoine Chapu

Jeanne D' Arc

1893

Bronze

Location **Box Office**

Three Des Moines Women's Club members, Mesdames J. R. West, James H. Windsor and E.R. Clapp, traveled to the 1893 Chicago World's Fair and purchased our first piece, a bronze statue of Joan of Arc. This was the beginning of the current collection.



Venus de Milo

1893

French Bronze

Location Theater

Nude armless torso, lower body loosely draped. Full standing figure. Signed on back of base "F. Barbedienne Fondateur" (the foundry in Paris where the casting was made")



George da Maduro Peixotto Portrait of Hoyt Sherman

1903

Oil on Canvas

On Loan from the State Historical Museum of Iowa, Des Moines

Location **Library**

Hoyt Sherman (1827 – 1904), the builder of this house that today contains the collection acquired by the Des Moines Women's Club, was an early and prominent citizen of Iowa.

Peixotto's portrait of the pioneer businessman dates from the year before Sherman's death, but shows him as a vigorous and vital figure.



Otto van Veen

Apollo and Venus

Oil on Wood

Location Art Gallery

The painting was given to the Des Moines Women's Club in 1952 by Louise Coskey from the Collins-Coskery Collection but it had been on loan to the Club in 1922-23. The 1933, 1941 and '52 Des Moines Women's Club Art Catalogues state that the painting at one time hung in the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

This Old Masters painting of Apollo and Venus is among the most rare and important works of art in Iowa. It was discovered in a storage closet in the Hoyt Sherman Place Theater. It was restored by Barry Baumann of the Chicago Institute.

The subject of this painting is from ancient Greek mythology and depicts two of its most vivid characters: the god Apollo and the goddess Venus. Both were known for their beauty, but also for their encouragement of love and art among humans. Also pictured is cherubic companion Eros (known also as Cupid) who can inflame romantic attraction.



The Repentant Magdalene

Oil on Canvas

Location Art Gallery

Attributed to Verrocchio (1435-1488), a 15th century Italian sculptor and painter. At one time this hung in the Metropolitan Museum in NYC. The painting was given in 1952 to the DMWC from the Collins-Coskery Collection, after having been on loan to the club since the 1933-34 club year.

Restoration by conservator Barry Bauman has revealed this painting to be what Mr. Bauman has called “the finest large-scale Old Master painting in Des Moines.”

The subject is from traditions established in Church lore about Mary Magdalene, one of the earliest and most devoted of Christ’s followers. Over the centuries, the symbols used in paintings to identify her evolved to reflect her beauty and then her rejection of the shallow and sinful pursuits of a worldly existence.



William Trost Richards

Children in the Wooded Landscape

1858

Oil on Canvas

Location Art Gallery

The painting was a gift from the Collins-Coskery Collection to the DMWC in 1952, having been on loan to the Club since 1933-1934. It was restored in 1982 by Margaret Randall Ash, Baltimore, MD.



David John Gue

Nantucket Beach

Oil on Wood

Location **Byers' Room**

Born in Brooklyn, New York, David John Gue followed his older brother out to the new state of Iowa in 1852 where they pioneered a farm. Not until he was in his 50s did he begin to paint and, as in all professional avenues of his life, he was self-taught. Presumably in the 1880s, Gue returned to New York, where he specialized in marine scenes.

He also painted portraits for President Ulysses S. Grant and you can find a number of his portraits at the State Historical Museum in Iowa. When the Des Moines Women's Club purchased Nantucket Beach in 1895, perhaps directly from the artist himself, they recognized the talents of their fellow Iowan.

Hoyt Sherman Place Offerings

Classes

- Weekends and weeknights
- Art, music, dance, etc.
- Adults and kids

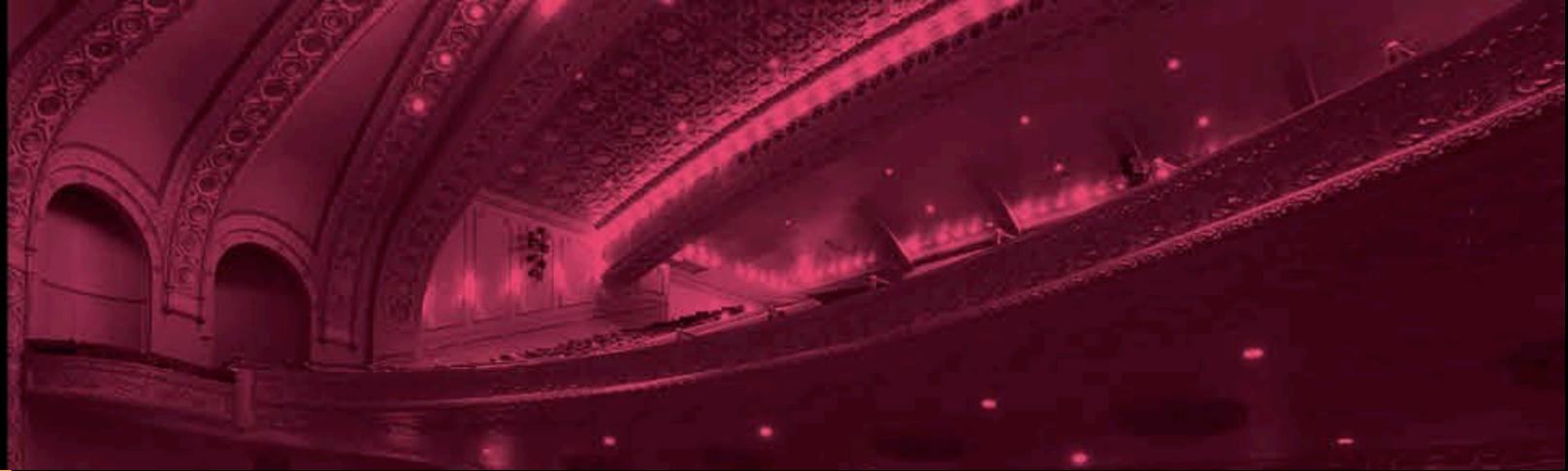
Events

- Over 100 headliners a year

Tours

- Weekly guided tours 10AM on Mondays
- Call to schedule a tour that fits your schedule
- Self-guided tours available 9:00-5:00 on weekdays

BECOME A MEMBER TODAY



**COMPLETE
THE FORM**
in the brochure



**VISIT OUR
WEBSITE**
hoys Sherman.org/membership



CALL 515.244.0507
to speak with a volunteer
or staff member

The membership program offers many great benefits, including advance ticket sales.

Continued financial support provides the resources to fund the restoration, maintenance, and preservation of the theater, art gallery, and mansion. Generous members help keep Hoyt Sherman Place a lively, engaging cultural center for current and future generations.



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