

City of Philadelphia



Council of the City of Philadelphia
Office of the Chief Clerk
Room 402, City Hall
Philadelphia

(Resolution No. 090060)

RESOLUTION

Honoring and recognizing the Walnut Street Theatre on the occasion of its 200th Anniversary.

WHEREAS, The Walnut Street Theatre, the oldest theatre in the country, first opened its doors on February 2, 1809 as an equestrian circus. The Theatre's first production, *The Rivals*, opened in 1812 with President Thomas Jefferson and the Marquis de Lafayette in attendance; and

WHEREAS, Many firsts of American theatre occurred at the Walnut – the first gas footlights in 1837, the first theatrical air conditioning system in 1855, the first copyright protection, and a nightly tradition at theatres world-wide, the first curtain call; and

WHEREAS, The Walnut produced the world premiers of many of the country's most famous Broadway shows: *A Streetcar Named Desire* starring Marlon Brando; *A Raisin in the Sun* featuring Sydney Poitier; *The Diary of Anne Frank* featuring Susan Strasberg; and Neil Simon's first Broadway play, *Come Blow Your Horn*; and

WHEREAS, Many of the country's most noted actors have performed at the Walnut throughout the 19th and 20th Centuries including Edwin Forrest, Edwin Booth, Edmund Kean, the Drews, the Barrymores, George M. Cohan, Will Rogers, The Marx Brothers, Helen Hayes, Henry Fonda, Katharine Hepburn, Marlon Brando, Jessica Tandy, Ethel Waters, Audrey Hepburn, Sidney Poitier, Lauren Bacall, George C. Scott, Jane Fonda, Robert Redford, Julie Harris, Jack Lemon, and William Shatner; and

WHEREAS, In 1964 the Walnut Street Theatre was designated a National Historic Landmark for the important role it has played in our history and for its distinguished architecture originally designed by John Haviland; and

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WHEREAS, Bernard Havard founded the Walnut Street Theatre Company, a not-for-profit, self-producing regional theatre, in 1982 and has successfully built the most subscribed to theatre in the world with over 56,000 annual subscriptions; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, THAT THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, Honors and recognizes the Walnut Street Theatre on the occasion of its 200th Anniversary.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to the Walnut Street Theatre as evidence of the sincere sentiments of this legislative body.

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CERTIFICATION: This is a true and correct copy of the original Resolution, Adopted by the Council of the City of Philadelphia on the twenty-ninth of January, 2009.

Anna C. Verna
PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL

Patricia Rafferty
CHIEF CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Introduced by: Councilmember DiCicco

Sponsored by: Councilmembers DiCicco, Reynolds Brown, Green, Goode, Jones, Greenlee, Tasco, Kenney, Rizzo, Blackwell, Clarke, Miller, Council President Verna, Councilmembers Sanchez and Krajewski