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RIALTO THEATER'S 90th BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION:
SCREENING OF THE LOST FILM "MINE WITH THE IRON DOOR"

SEPTEMBER 7, 2010 (TUCSON) – Downtown's historic Rialto Theater turned 90 in August, and to celebrate has partnered with the Tucson Historic Preservation Foundation to screen the newly discovered and restored silent Western movie, "THE MINE WITH THE IRON DOOR," which was filmed in the Tucson basin and premiered at the Rialto in the fall of 1924. The movie was then released internationally and became one of the biggest hits of that year.

The Rialto Theatre rolls out the red carpet for a fundraiser on Friday, October 8. The evening will include a "Prohibition Parking Lot Cocktail Party," live jazz music, and a vintage "Rancho Tucsonia" Fashion Show featuring 1920s to 1940s vintage Western wear, followed by the screening of the silent film *The Mine with the Iron Door*, based on the novel by renowned Tucson author Harold Bell Wright.

About the Film

Only ten percent of silent films have survived and *The Mine with the Iron Door* was thought to have been one of these lost cinema treasures. The Tucson Historic Preservation Foundation successfully tracked down two surviving prints in Moscow, Russia, and Paris, France. The copy of the film to be presented has been digitally restored and loaned by the "CNC - Archives françaises du film."

Harold Bell Wright was a best-selling author of his day, and lived in Tucson from about 1916 until 1935. The novel, set in the Canada del Oro area in the Santa Catalina Mountains northwest of Tucson, tells the story of two old prospectors, a young girl with a heart of cold, the hero-on-the-lam and the unique perspective of a Native American who has been educated and returns to try to help his people, becoming embroiled in the fight for gold in the Catalinas.

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About the Event

The 1920s-themed birthday celebration provides the first opportunity for the Tucson community to see this film in 86 years. A new musical accompaniment has been prepared by native Tucsonan (now New York-based) conductor and composer Brian Holman and will be performed by a live ensemble. The Western movie, “THE MINE WITH THE IRON DOOR,” is an important part of Tucson’s film history.

“This seminal film presents the first time the Tucson region was chosen by a major motion picture company as an exotic location, captured on classic nitrate film stock,” said Demion Clinco, President of the Tucson Historic Preservation Foundation. “The community understood the importance of this internationally released film in promoting the region, and were ecstatic in 1924 when the crew arrived. “The Mine With The Iron Door” was the harbinger of “Old Tucson” and the vast array of Western feature films that have become cultural centerpieces of Americana. We are thrilled to have discovered this lost cinematic treasure and bring it home,” he said.

Tickets: for the complete event: \$50; for the film only: \$20.00. Tickets are limited. For more information and tickets please call the Rialto Theater box Office 740-1000 M-F 12-6pm or purchase online at www.rialtotheatre.com

Tucson Historic Preservation Foundation and Rialto Theatre Foundation

The mission of the Tucson Historic Preservation Foundation, a 502(c)3 organization, is to preserve the city’s unique architectural environment. The non-profit organization advocates for the preservation of Tucson’s architectural resources and is working to preserve the Marist College, historic Neon Signs, and other iconic Tucson landmarks. The organization continually advocates for historic preservation in Tucson and the surrounding area. View them online at preservetucson.org or on Facebook at: facebook.com/pages/Tucson-Historic-Preservation-Foundation.

The Rialto Theatre Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to the stewardship and management of the historic Rialto Theatre. The Foundation is managed by Executive Director Douglas Biggers and Programming Director Curtis McCrary, with the support of an all-volunteer board of directors. The Theatre has become a landmark destination for music

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lovers from all over the country. View them online at rialtotheatre.com or on Facebook at: facebook.com/pages/Tucson-AZ/The-Rialto-TheatreTucson-Arizona.

Rialto Theatre turns 90

First opened in August 1920, the Rialto Theatre is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and has a storied and fascinating history as a vaudeville theatre, silent movie palace, live performance venue for theatre and famous traveling artists from the 1920s and 30s, a first-run movie theater, Spanish language film house, infamous porn theater, and much-loved live music venue. It predates the Fox Tucson Theatre and the Temple of Music and Art by nearly a decade.

Nearly 90 years after opening its doors, the Historic Rialto Theatre has truly become a Tucson treasure. Its iconic 40-foot neon marquee lights up the east end of Congress Street as a beacon for music fans of all ages and demographic profiles.

Seven months after the Rio Nuevo District acquired the Rialto in September 2004, the nonprofit Rialto Theatre Foundation completed a whirlwind \$700,000 rehabilitation of the dilapidated building that dramatically transformed the venue and set the stage for what has been a profoundly successful five year run, featuring more than 650 individual events with total attendance of more than 400,000, or nearly 90,000 patrons annually.

The number of concerts currently averages 130 per year, with additional events at other locations that are produced by the Rialto Theatre Foundation (including the Fox Tucson Theatre, UA's Centennial Hall, the TCC's Leo Rich Theatre and other venues).

The Foundation has completed more than \$1 million in improvements to the historic venue, including the marquee in June 2005, an innovative and cost-effective new HVAC system in 2006 with the help of \$377,000 in additional TIF funds from Rio Nuevo, and a \$300,000 state of the art sound system in 2008 and upgraded theatrical lighting in 2010.

The Rialto Theatre has established a local and national reputation for excellent sound, an intimate and funky historical ambience, professional management and a venue that delivers an outstanding entertainment value week after week to its patrons.

For the last five years, the Rialto Theatre was voted Best Indoor Venue in the *Tucson Weekly's* annual Best of Tucson issue.

The Rialto Theatre is an excellent example of using historic preservation to catalyze revitalization in Tucson's Downtown.

