

**ornateinteriors**

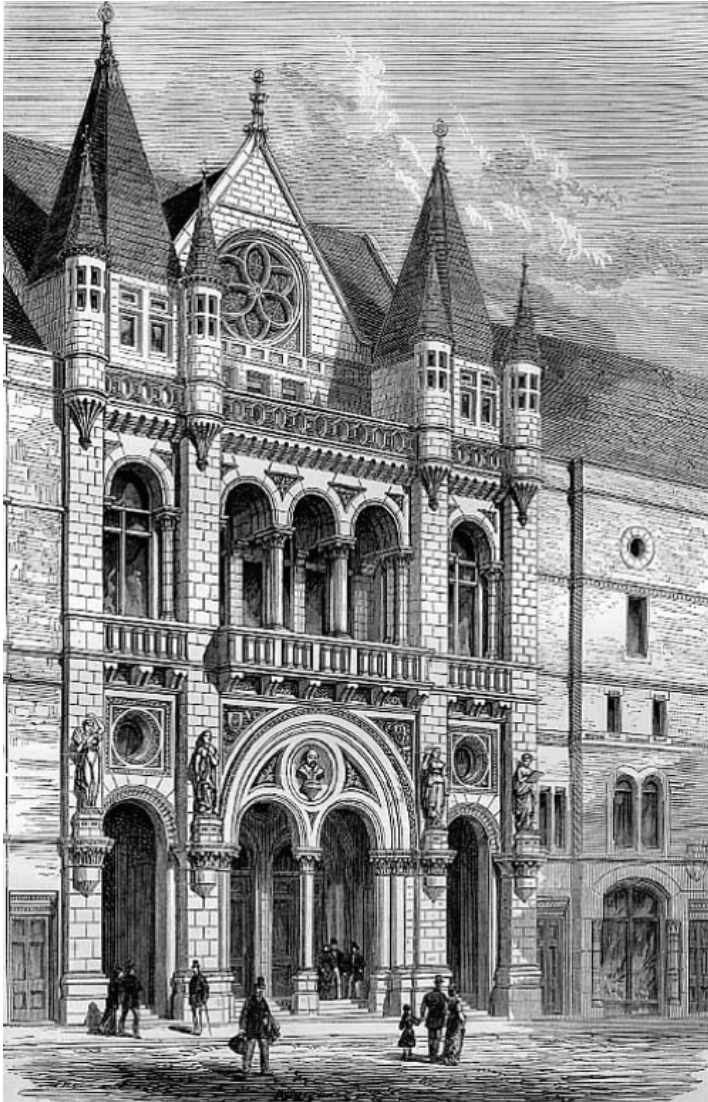
Specialists in Traditional Lime, Heritage and Fibrous Plasterwork

# Project: **The Grand Theatre, Leeds**





## Project: The Grand Theatre, Leeds



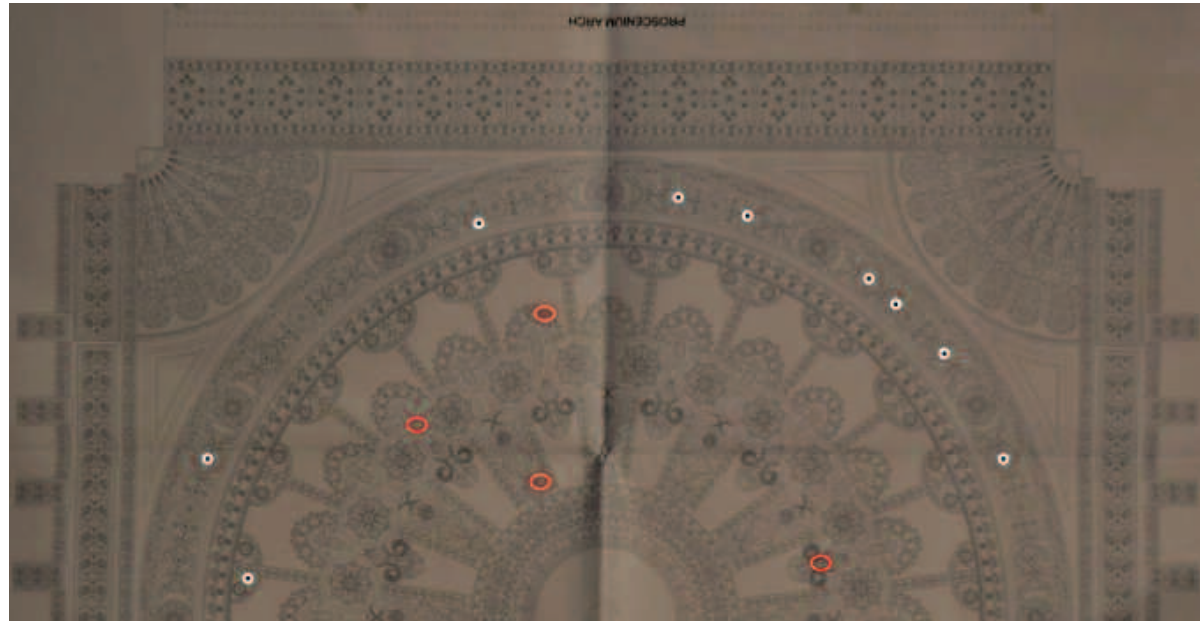
The grade II listed Leeds Grand Theatre and Opera House was built in 1878 on a  $\frac{3}{4}$  acre site on New Briggate, one of the city's main streets, at a cost of £62,000 (equivalent to about £8 million today).

The architects, George Corson and James Robert Watson, were strongly influenced by continental ideas – hence the distinctive gothic ecclesiastical spires of the exterior and the fan vaulting and clustered columns of the interior. The Leeds Grand is regarded as a prime example of Victorian theatre building.

Ornate Interiors have worked on hundreds of the nation's prized historic buildings, including theatres such as Hammersmith Apollo, Stockport Plaza and Wolverhampton's Grand Theatre.

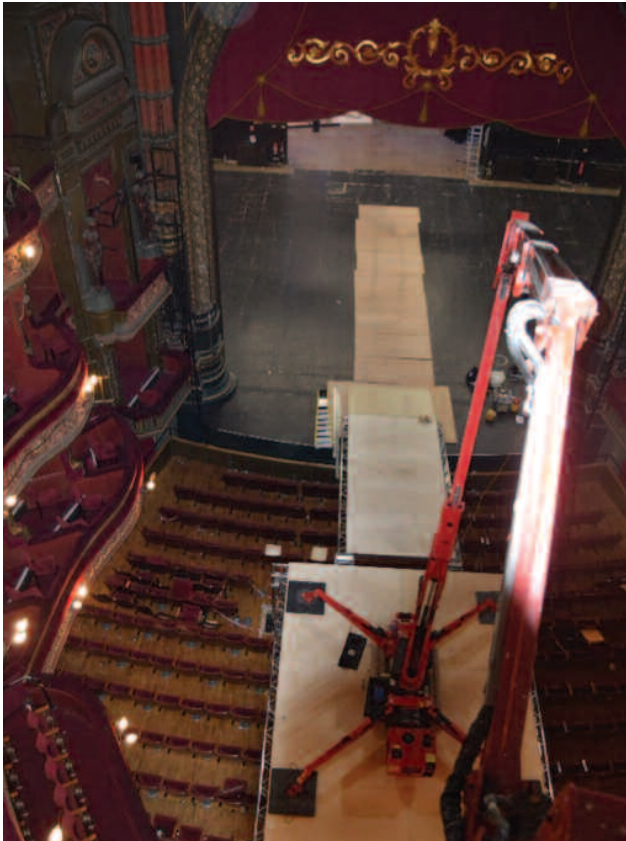
## Project: The Grand Theatre, Leeds

An increasing part of Ornate Interior's business activity is raising awareness of the duty of care that managers of historic buildings have to ensure all suspended ceilings are inspected and certified at least every five years, and, working in conjunction with an appointed structural engineer and a timber treatment specialist, providing detailed reports and recommended solutions for any problems discovered.





## Project: **The Grand Theatre, Leeds**



Carrying out the survey was made easier because a load-bearing structure designed to carry a mobile elevated platform had previously been installed. This enabled a full inspection of the ceiling from below. It was still necessary to inspect other areas using harnesses, ropes and pulleys.

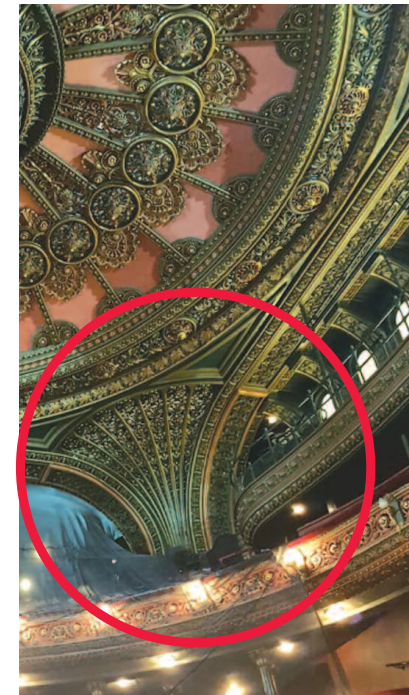




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## Project: **The Grand Theatre, Leeds**



Paul from Ornate Interiors checking 1878 open fret work cast plaster panels forming Gothic FanVaults at the corners of theatre ceiling.

## Project: **The Grand Theatre, Leeds**



Shaun checking the Gothic Fan Vaults.





## Project: The Grand Theatre, Leeds



Walkway prior to reinforcement.

The main finding was that following a major refurbishment in 2005 a state-of-the-art automated flying system had been installed so that the theatre could meet the production needs of major West End musicals and plays, the first of these being *The Phantom of the Opera*. Leeds Grand Theatre is also now home to Opera North. Regular usage of the new system increased the number of staff working above the ceiling and added to the load of equipment stored there. Walkways had been directly supported on the ceiling structure, weakening it.



Safer reinforced walkway.

The solution was to remove the old walkways and replace them with a form of support that shifted the load from the ceiling itself. New metal channels were installed behind the ceiling and wire supports were attached to these. Ornate Interiors then carried out remedial works to the plaster areas affected by the removal of the old walkways.

## Project: The Grand Theatre, Leeds



Reinforced walkway  
and new wadding  
for enrichment fixings.



Loose plasterwork  
was re-secured  
and missing or damaged  
mouldings were replaced.





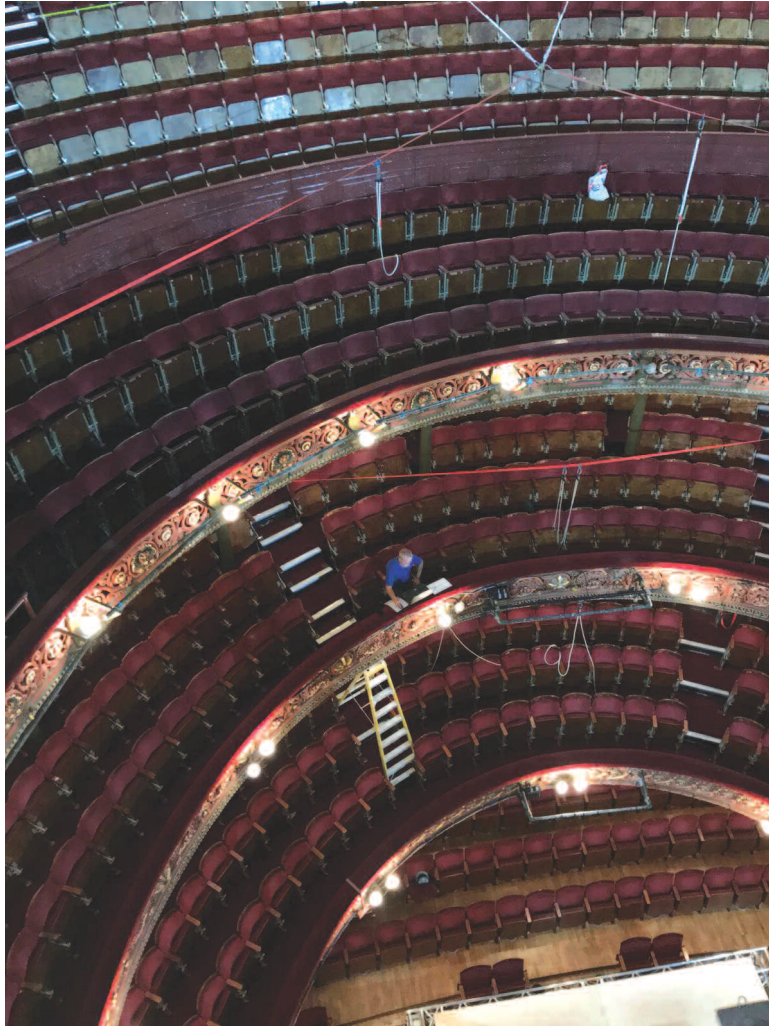
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Balcony detail.

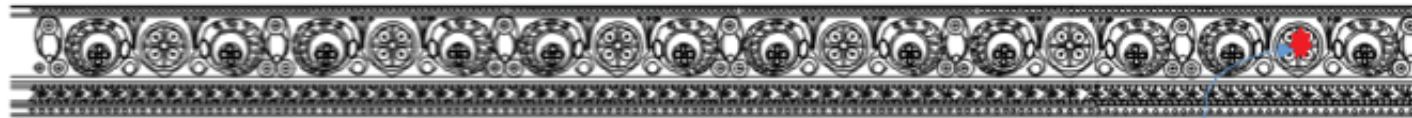
# Project: The Grand Theatre, Leeds

Repairs to Second Level, Balcony Front, Upper Circle



Below boxes stage left

Drop and cracked junction to next balcony

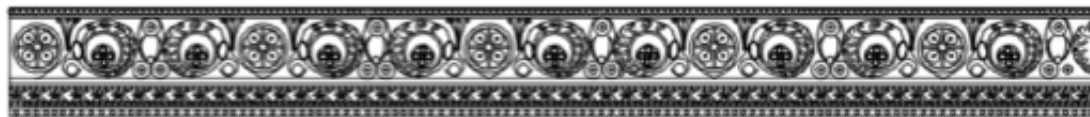


Central balcony stage left

Light secured back to weak plaster



Below boxes stage right



Central balcony stage right



## Project: The Grand Theatre, Leeds



In the Balcony areas lights had been inadequately supported off the timber framework, causing damage to the plasterwork they were sitting on. Some cracks were also evident. Ornate Interiors used screws to fix back loose and cracked plasterwork, repaired cracks and dropped junctions, and removed wires from plasterwork and re-secured these to the timber.



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Various public areas including ladies and gents toilets, some stairway walls and the bar were found to have been affected by water ingress, mostly from high-level original cast iron guttering that could not cope with the volume of rainfall but some from other penetration of the building fabric. There were also places where internal plumbing was leaking, causing accumulated damage to comparatively small areas of walls and ceilings and in some places to underlying timber or steel supports. Water had also damaged the moulding around the Upper Light Well to the front steps.

## Project: The Grand Theatre, Leeds



“ We have been working with Ornate Interiors for several years in maintaining and preserving our 140 year old ornate plaster ceiling.

To gain access from both below and above, clean, inspect and carry out any repairs to our auditorium ceiling is a two week undertaking.

Ornate Interiors also inspect all other ceilings in public areas and work with us around our busy programme.

The confidence and service we receive from Ronnie and his team in maintaining this Historic Grade II\* listed building is second to none. ”

**Alan Dawson**

Head of Technical and Property

**Leeds Grand Theatre and Opera House Ltd**



# Project: The Grand Theatre, Leeds

**Our thanks go to our skilled team who worked very hard on delivering a high standard for this project**

Jim Dodd - Contracts Manager

Lisa Hesson - Administrative Assistant

Liz Walton - Project Finance Management

## **On Site:**

Paul Malyon

Shaun Chamberlain

Iain Clifford

Ameha Shewaye Bantiwerd

Steve Glynn

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