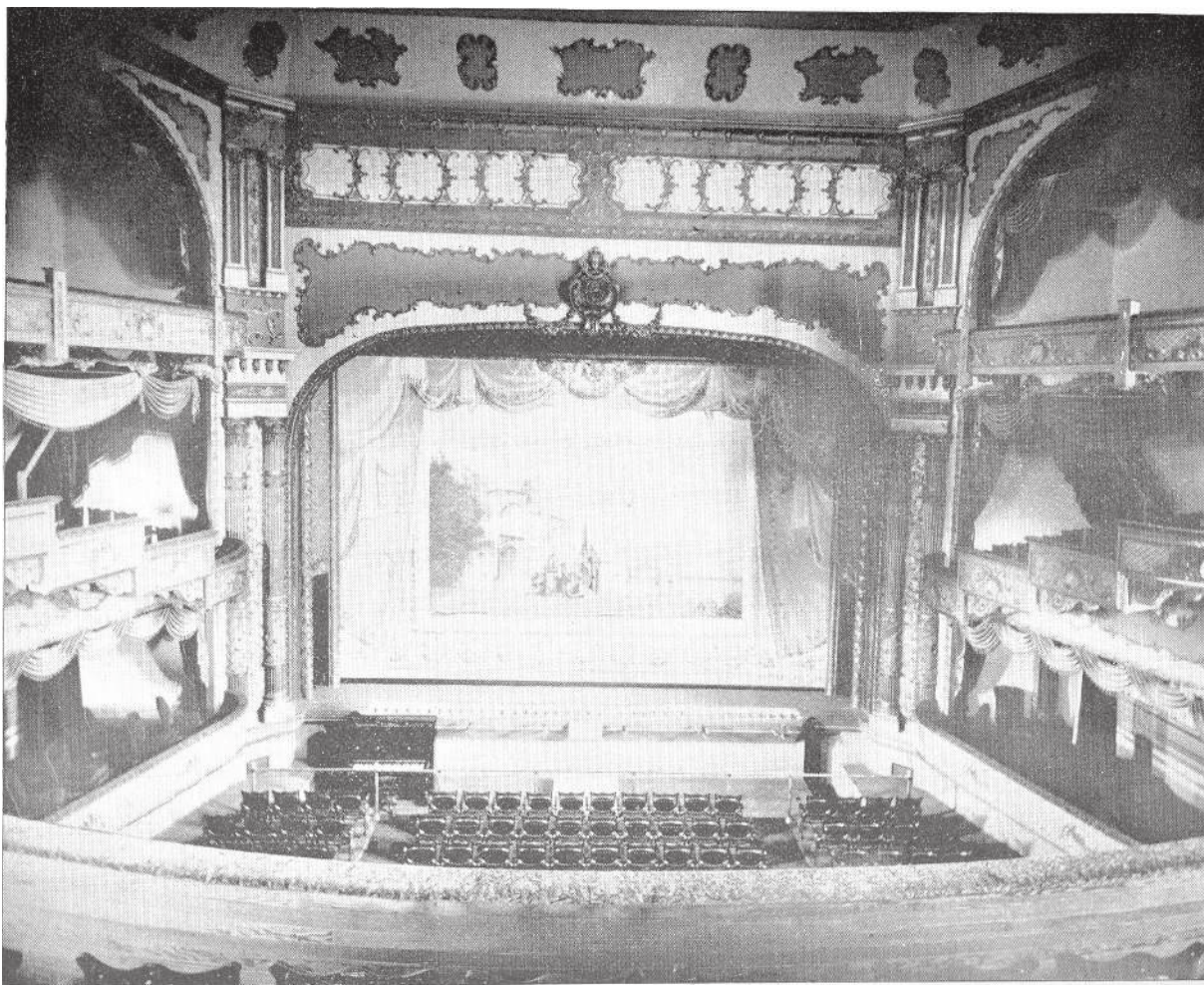


# Smith Opera House



View of the interior of Smith's Opera House in 1895. Courtesy of Historic Geneva.

**O**pened on October 29th, 1894 with a production of *The Count of Monte Cristo* 1894, the Smith Opera House was the first space in Geneva designed for music and theater. Schine's Amusement Company purchased the Smith in 1927 as well as the Temple and Regent Theatres on Exchange Street, completely renovating them into movie palaces. In the 1990s, the interior of the Smith was restored to the glamorous Schine era while the exterior was restored to its 1894 appearance. While one of the oldest operating performing arts theaters in the United States, the Smith is just one of a handful of venues in the city that played a role in Geneva's artistic history



The first performance in the Smith Opera House was *The Count of Monte Cristo* on October 29, 1894.



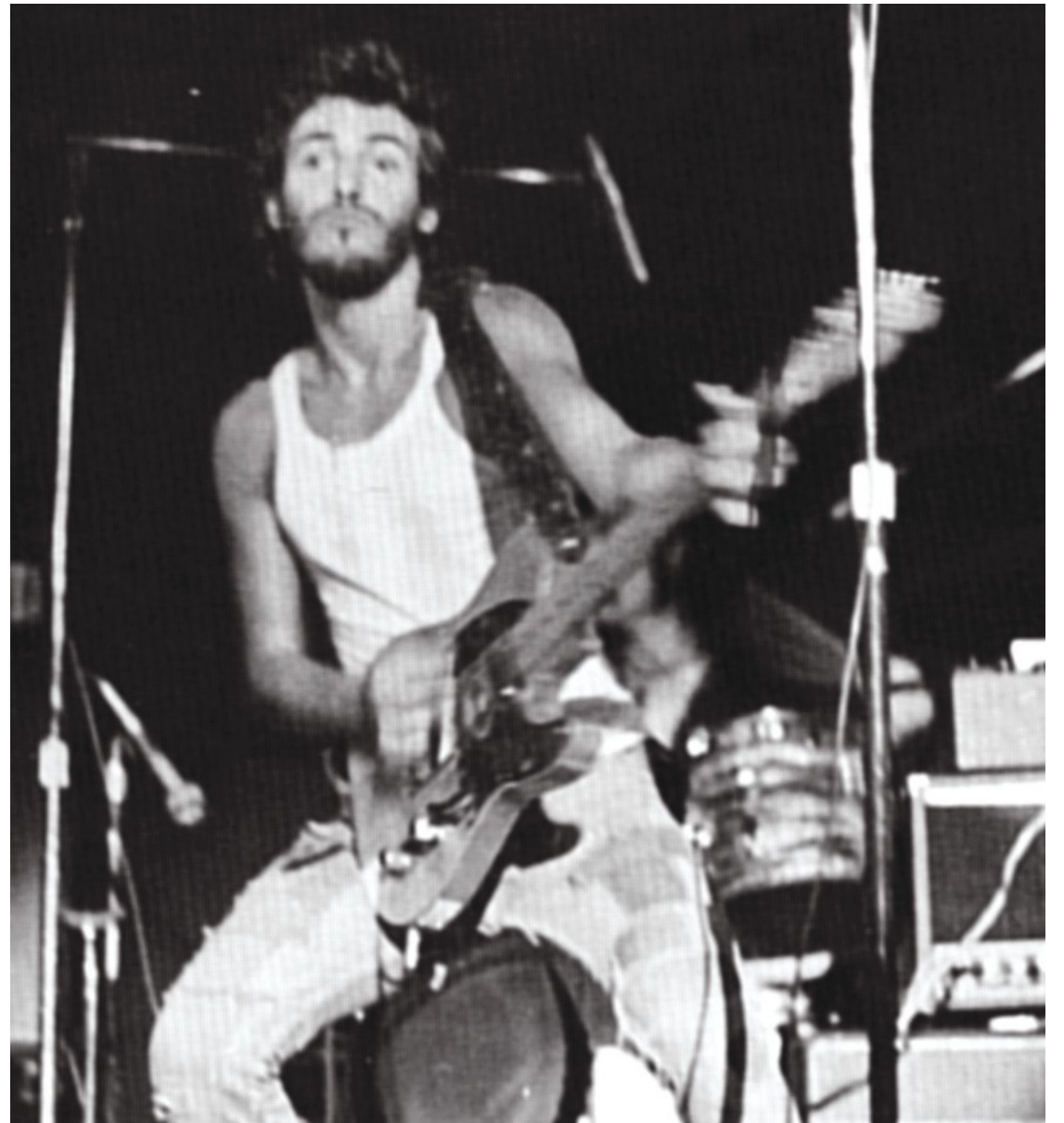
Early venues like Linden Hall (pictured above) and Dove Hall were open spaces, used for everything from concerts to balls and banquets. Linden Hall housed businesses on the first floor and the entertainment area above. Courtesy of Historic Geneva.

# Smith Opera House

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Though Geneva has produced its own homegrown artists and stars, including jazz bassist Scott LaFaro, artist Arthur Dove, and actress Lauren Holly, the city has also welcomed notable art icons. In addition to the Smith Opera House, venues like Linden Hall, Club 86, and Dove Hall hosted acts like Nat King Cole and Maria Cole, Louis Armstrong, Ignacy Paderewski, Bruce Springsteen, and Tony Bennett. Due to segregation in the city's downtown hotels, Geneva families would host visiting Black musicians of the era.

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In 1974 Bruce Springsteen played the Geneva Theater (now Smith Opera House) as an unknown musician. Courtesy of Hobart & William Smith Colleges.



Schine's Geneva Theatre was the shining star of Geneva. Its marquee would change in style every so often as seen in this 1937 photograph looking down Seneca Street. Courtesy of Historic Geneva.