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## ***Treasures of New York: St. George Theatre***

*Premieres Thursday, October 19 at 8 p.m. on WLIW21*  
*Premieres Sunday, October 22 at 7 p.m. on THIRTEEN*  
*Streams nationally on wliw.org at 7 p.m. on October 22*

### **Synopsis:**

***Treasures of New York: St. George Theatre*** takes viewers behind the curtain of a vibrant theatre and beloved community institution on Staten Island. Starting in the golden age of vaudeville, the film follows the St. George Theatre's story of survival and transformation through decades of disrepair – until a local dance teacher and her daughters step in to rescue the theatre and turn it into the thriving live performance venue it is today.

### **Notable interviewees:**

- Doreen Cugno, Co-Founder, President & CEO, St. George Theatre
- Luanne Sorrentino, Co-Founder, St. George Theatre and Co-Owner, Mrs. Rosemary's Dance Studio
- Patricia Salmon, Historian, Educator and retired curator for Staten Island Museum
- Brian Laline, Executive Editor, Staten Island Advance and Chairman, St. George Theatre Board of Directors
- The Honorable James P. Molinaro, Former Staten Island Borough President and Director, St. George Theatre Board of Directors

### **Notable Quotes from the Film:**

- “[The St. George Theatre] was sort of like a big white elephant. You had all this beautiful architectural wonder around you, but it was also starting to fail and fade and was very expensive to bring it back or maintain it.” - Patricia Salmon, Historian, Educator and retired curator for Staten Island Museum

- “My mom grew up in this theater. I loved hearing the stories that her brothers and her would come here and see movies and double features. They'd even have ballroom nights here. She loved this theater. We reached out and said ‘if we start a nonprofit, would you donate it to us?’ The rest is history.” - Doreen Cugno, Co-Founder, President & CEO, St. George Theatre
- “Our vision was to make it shine once again and bring it back to what the theatre was meant to be, a live theater.” - Luanne Sorrentino, Co-Founder, St. George Theatre
- “The motto of Staten Island for the longest time was ‘the forgotten borough.’ But the north shore is finally beginning to realize what a lot of us thought it could be and would be.” - Brian Laline, Executive Editor, Staten Island Advance and Chairman, St. George Theatre Board of Directors
- “You know a great society needs a great cultural component to it. And the St. George is that not just for St. George, but for all of Staten Island and for more and more of New York.” - Dean Thompson, Former Operator, St. George Theatre

### **Noteworthy Points:**

- Beginning October 19, the Emmy-Award winning series, *Treasures of New York*, takes viewers to the north shore of Staten Island to explore the history of a nearly 90-year-old institution: the St. George Theatre.
- Opened at the height of the stock market crash of 1929, the St. George Theatre was envisioned as a grand vaudeville and movie house. The ornate interior featured a variety of Spanish and Italian Baroque architectural styles, an advanced heating and cooling system, and one of the largest cantilevered balconies in the country.
- After the decline of the vaudeville era in the 1930s and 40s, and the rise of the multiplex theater through the 1970s, the St. George, like many lavish single-screen movie palaces, was practically forgotten. The theatre underwent several makeovers over the years, fell into disrepair and finally closed its doors in the late 1970s.
- It wasn't until a Staten Island dance teacher and her family took over the theatre in 2004 that it was brought back to life. Rosemary Cappozalo and her daughters, Doreen Cugno and Luanne Sorrentino, created a non-profit organization and began a multi-million dollar restoration process to transform the theatre into a thriving live performance venue.
- Today, the St. George Theatre has become an integral part of the cultural renaissance on Staten Island's north shore. In addition to hosting performances from stars like Tony Bennett, Liza Minelli, The Midtown Men and Louis C.K., the theatre offers youth outreach programs and serves as a popular gathering place for the community.

### **Run time:**

30 minutes

**Series Overview:**

*Treasures of New York* explores New York's cultural heritage by spotlighting its points of interest, distinguished establishments and notable figures.

**Production Credits:**

*Treasures of New York: St. George Theatre* is a production of WLIW LLC in association with [WNET](#). WNET is the parent company of [WLIW21](#) and [THIRTEEN](#), New York's public television stations and operator of [NJTV](#).

Ann Benjamin is director of *Treasures of New York: St. George Theatre*. Marisa Wong is producer. Sasha Schechter is associate producer. Ally Gimbel is senior producer of the *Treasures of New York* series. Diane Masciale is vice president and general manager of WLIW21 and executive producer of local production, including the *Treasures of New York* series.

**Underwriters:**

Funding for *Treasures of New York: St. George Theatre* is provided by The Staten Island Foundation and Friends of THIRTEEN.

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**About WNET**

WNET is America's flagship PBS station and parent company of [THIRTEEN](#) and [WLIW21](#). WNET also operates [NJTV](#), the statewide public media network in New Jersey. Through its broadcast channels, three cable services (THIRTEEN PBSKids, Create and World) and online streaming sites, WNET brings quality arts, education and public affairs programming to more than five million viewers each week. WNET produces and presents such acclaimed PBS series as [Nature](#), [Great Performances](#), [American Masters](#), [PBS NewsHour Weekend](#), [Charlie Rose](#) and a range of documentaries, children's programs, and local news and cultural offerings. WNET's groundbreaking series for children and young adults include [Get the Math](#), [Oh Noah!](#) and [Cyberchase](#) as well as [Mission US](#), the award-winning interactive history game. WNET highlights the tri-state's unique culture and diverse communities through [NYC-ARTS](#), [Theater Close-Up](#), [NJTV News with Mary Alice Williams](#) and [MetroFocus](#), the daily multi-platform news magazine focusing on the New York region. In addition, WNET produces online-only programming including the award-winning series about gender identity, [First Person](#), and an intergenerational look at tech and pop culture, [The Chatterbox with Kevin and Grandma Lill](#). In 2015, THIRTEEN launched Passport, an online streaming service which allows members to see new and archival THIRTEEN and PBS programming anytime, anywhere: [www.thirteen.org/passport](http://www.thirteen.org/passport).