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Press Release

Emerson College, Boston, Mass., Receives A National Trust National Preservation Honor Award

Louisville, Ky. (Sept. 30, 2004) Today, the National Trust for Historic Preservation presented Emerson College in Boston, Mass., with its prestigious National Preservation Honor Award. Emerson was one of 22 national award winners honored by the National Trust at its week-long 2004 National Preservation Conference in Louisville, Ky.

Located in Boston's bustling Theater District, the newly restored Majestic Theatre is an elegant centerpiece and catalyst in the revitalization of this cultural hub. Built in 1903, this innovative 1,200-seat Beaux Arts venue was one of the finest playhouses of its time. In the 1950s, however, new ownership converted the Majestic into the Saxon movie theater, with attendant alterations that transformed the lobby and covered much of the original Beaux Arts splendor. By 1983, when Emerson College purchased the Majestic, she had fallen into severe physical decline.

Envisioning a 21st century theater in a 19th century landmark building, Emerson set out on an extensive campaign. The school enlisted hundreds of volunteers, dozens of private donors, foundations, corporations and city and federal government to embark on this \$14.8 million 20-year restoration effort. The first phase of the restoration, completed in 1989, brought the building up to modern standards along with repairing the terra-cotta façade and rebuilding the stage floor. After reopening its doors in April of 1989, the new Majestic Theatre encouraged the development of restaurants, hotels, housing and retail business in the surrounding area.

In the second phase of restoration in 1993, the Majestic lobby murals were restored and a more extensive restoration of the terra-cotta façade was concluded. In April 2002, the Majestic Theatre closed for 13 months to allow the completion of the restoration project. A generous gift from the Cutler family and fund raising efforts enabled the college to increase seating, expand restrooms and lobby areas and improve amenities. The restoration also uncovered the stunning marble, brass, tile, stained glass, scagliola, marmo, carpeting and light fixtures that had suffered decades of neglect.

In May 2003, the Majestic Theatre reopened its doors as the Cutler Majestic Theatre. It houses several of Boston's finest not-for-profit arts organizations, plays host to special productions by leading Boston-area arts groups and serves both as a laboratory for Emerson College students to gain experience in the arts and crafts of live communication and as a key production facility for the Division of Performing Arts' Emerson Stage. The sparkling result of this stunning renovation has greatly contributed to the

economic re-birth and vitality of the Boston Theater District and the Emerson community.

The restoration of the Majestic Theatre is a tremendously successful effort that has increased the vitality of the Boston Theater District, said Richard Moe, president of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Emerson College and the many people involved with this magnificent revival of one of the country's finest theatres have gone above and beyond expectations.

Co-nominees honored today for the renovation of the Majestic Theatre were Emerson College; Ted and Joan Cutler; and Elkus/Manfredi Architects.

The National Preservation Honor Awards are bestowed on distinguished individuals, nonprofit organizations, public agencies and corporations whose skill and determination have given new meaning to their communities through preservation of our architectural and cultural heritage. These efforts include citizen attempts to save and maintain important landmarks; companies and craftsmen whose work restores the richness of the past; the vision of public officials who support preservation projects and legislation in their communities; and educators and journalists who help Americans understand the value of preservation. As a part of the Restore America: A Salute to Preservation partnership between the National Trust and Home & Garden Television, HGTV is the presenting sponsor of this year's awards ceremony.

Media interested in learning more about the National Trust's 2004 National Preservation Award Winners or in attending future conference events should contact the National Trust Communications Office at 202-588-6141. Registration is free to the media, as are the Awards Ceremony, field sessions, educational sessions, and special events. For more information and images of the 2004 National Preservation Award winners, visit <http://www.nationaltrust.org/>.