

Dear Ira,

Capitol Theater is one of the first air conditioned building during the American colonial period. The decaying and dilapidated shell of the once-majestic, Mesopotamian-inspired Art Deco-style, with ziggurat topped tower Capitol Theater was built and inaugurated on 8 January 1935¹; this theatre is designed by the National Artist Architect Juan Nakpil.

Capitol Theater was built in a 1,200 square meter property with a seating capacity of 800 and an unusual double balcony. Its lobby once mounted a beautiful wall mural by the late Filipino modernist and National artist Victorino C. Edades, Galo Ocampo and Carlos Francisco. Now, abandoned, it ceased operations on the late 1980s. On the face of its tower were bas-reliefs, evocative of Art Deco lines and curves, showing Filipino women (one holding a mask and the other holding a lyre) in traje de mestiza frame and set in a tropical landscape, attributed to the Italian atelier of Francesco Riccardo Monti²

¹ The Tribune, XIV Anniversary Issue, 1939, p. 38

² Layug, Benjamin. A walking tour of Escolta. Travel Business Mirror. June 20, 2013.