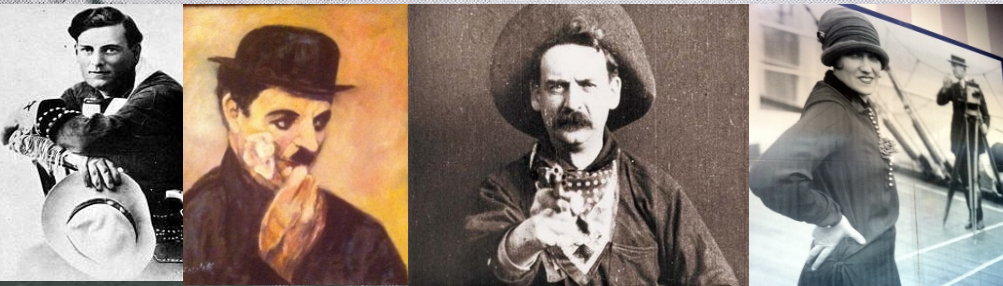


# ESSANAY STUDIOS

## HISTORIC STRUCTURES REPORT

*A PRESERVATION AND  
ADAPTIVE REUSE STUDY  
OCTOBER 2012*



Designed by John Garbani - www.garbaniart.com - "Studio" 48" x 36" acrylic on canvas

# ESSANAY STUDIOS

## A GLOBAL ICON & CHICAGO LANDMARK

GEORGE SPOOR & G.M. "BRONCHO BILLY" ANDERSON • PIONEERS IN EARLY FILM



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Essanay Studio Complex is a precious historical resource for the City. The Commission on Chicago Landmarks designated the Essanay Studios a Chicago Landmark on March 26th, 1996, acknowledging it as the most important structure connected to the city's role in the history of motion pictures. It was one of the first and finest film production studios in Chicago. The story of its founding and success reads like an applied history of the rise and development of early film technology, distribution, and entertainment in Chicago. The Essanay Studio was founded when there were only the earliest inklings that Uptown might become an entertainment hub. Indeed, Essanay's rise contributed to the successful development of the surrounding neighborhood at a large scale. The Studio was home to Charlie Chaplin, Gloria Swanson, Broncho Billy Anderson, and George K. Spoor, among other extremely important and influential names in the early film industry. Its legacy of actors and innovators contribute to this landmark's importance to the history of the City and to the film industry worldwide.



The Essanay Film Studios complex is currently owned by St. Augustine College, an independent, bilingual (dual-language) institution of higher education. The College is eager to embrace the history of their properties which are spread throughout the City at four campuses. They support a rebirth of the Essanay Film Studio as a Cultural Arts Center for the Uptown Neighborhood and as a Center for Early Film. It is the objective of the College and of the Community to plan for the continued use of the Studio for the arts and to continue to celebrate its importance locally and nationally. The Historic Structure Report and Reuse Study is the first step in this multi-tiered process.

## PRESERVATION AND REUSE

The preservation approach for treatment of the Essanay Studio Building at 1333 West Argyle Street will be categorized under "Restoration" as defined by the Secretary of the Interior. This decision was made by Johnson Lasky Architects through architectural and historical evaluations and conversation with the owner, St. Augustine College. According to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, Restoration is defined as "focusing on the retention of materials from the most significant time in a property's history, while permitting the removal of materials from other periods."



The era 1909 through 1917 is deemed to be the period of significance for this property. These years encompassed the founding of the Essanay Film Manufacturing Company, the success and growth of the Studio as a business and the expansion of the Argyle Street complex. The significant features of the building as noted in the landmark designation are all on the exterior of the building. The designation specifically lists “all exterior elevations, including the roofs, and the structural systems of the building.” The elevations along Argyle Street have been modified over time but with small repairs they can be restored to the period of significance. Other elevations have been more intensely modified and so only limited elements can be considered truly contributing to the historic character of the Studio. Regardless of the focus of the landmark designation, there are also elements at the interior of the building that are original and relate to the early use of the building. These items include fire proof film vaults, drying racks for film processing, remnants of the early light and set systems in the studio, and other miscellaneous features. These elements will be maintained as they make vital contributions to the accurate interpretation of the spaces and site.



#### **ESSANAY CENTERS FOR EARLY FILM AND CULTURAL PERFORMANCE**

The Essanay Centers for Early Film and Cultural Performance at St. Augustine College use the historic facilities of Essanay Film Manufacturing Company to educate, inform, and entertain visitors and local residents. The Essanay Centers create and sustain the multicultural use of the restored and renovated facilities for film, theatre, dance, and other performance and visual arts. The Centers will create strategic partnerships and alliances to attract funding for programs, performances, and education.

##### **The Essanay Center for Early Film (ECEP)**

The Essanay Center for Early Film (ECEP) is a historical repository of archival materials, references, and artifacts established through strategic partnerships including the Essanay Silent Film Museum in Niles, CA, private archives and other sources. The Center is space comprised for artifacts, access to digital archives and references, educational materials, training, and programs on early film. Additionally, the center uses the Charlie Chaplin Auditorium as a screening, performance and multimedia exhibition space for film related activities.

##### **The Essanay Center for Cultural Performance (ECCP)**

The Essanay Center for Cultural Performance is a space designed to accommodate the use of the historic Essanay Studios for the performing and visual arts including film, music, dance, theatre, and exhibition. The Center serves a resource for the cultural performance by community, national and global organizations and to build collaborative partnerships to educate and entertain. Additionally the Center serves as a resource for the utilization of the skills and capacity of the Culinary Arts program at St. Augustine College.



Plan Diagram: Auditorium arranged for Performance and Reception Area arranged as Film Center Gallery and flexible meeting room



Plan Diagram: Auditorium arranged for an evening event and Reception Area arranged as Film Center Gallery and Cafe



Plan Diagram showing back stage areas at 1333 Argyle lower level





Proposed restored elevation of 1333 Argyle





**Proposed south entrance of 1333 Argyle**





**The Charlie Chaplin Auditorium, location of  
The Essanay Center for Cultural Performance**





**The reception area, café, and flexible display area for  
The Essanay Center for Early Film**







**The Concord Group**

## Financial Analysis of Proposed Treatments

### Essanay Studio Complex Renovation Exclusions

Programmatic Estimate

09/20/2012

**PER ELEMENT**

<b>COST SUMMARY</b>	<b>10,300 GSF</b>	<b>\$/SF</b>	<b>BUILDING TOTAL</b>
SUPERSTRUCTURE		\$10.60	\$109,148
EXTERIOR ENCLOSURE		\$80.99	\$834,223
ROOFING		\$3.40	\$35,000
INTERIOR CONSTRUCTION		\$57.67	\$594,031
PLUMBING		\$6.35	\$65,452
HVAC		\$27.50	\$283,255
FIRE PROTECTION		\$0.00	\$0
ELECTRICAL		\$24.19	\$249,106
SITE IMPROVEMENTS		\$13.32	\$137,164
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>		<b>\$224.02</b>	<b>\$2,307,379</b>
GENERAL CONDITIONS/BOND/INSURANCE	10.0%	\$22.40	\$230,738
CONTRACTOR'S FEES	4.0%	\$9.86	\$101,525
DESIGN CONTINGENCY	10.0%	\$25.63	\$263,964
<b>TOTAL ESTIMATED CONSTRUCTION COSTS</b>		<b>\$281.90</b>	<b>\$2,903,606</b>





**The Concord Group**

## Financial Analysis of Proposed Treatments

### Essanay Studio Complex Renovation Exclusions

Programmatic Estimate

09/20/2012

**PER AREA**

<b>COST SUMMARY</b>	<b>10,300 GSF</b>	<b>\$/SF</b>	<b>BUILDING TOTAL</b>
NORTH ELEVATION		\$49.42	\$509,025
ALLEY		\$10.13	\$104,350
SOUTH ELEVATION		\$10.08	\$103,818
EAST ELEVATION		\$8.50	\$87,578
ADDITIONAL REUSE ITEMS		\$15.12	\$155,692
INTERIOR CHAPLAIN AUDITORIUM		\$77.24	\$795,571
CENTER OF FILM		\$26.30	\$270,928
TOILET ROOMS AND BASEMENT		\$15.89	\$163,692
SOUTH SIDE LANDSCAPING ETC		\$7.16	\$73,724
ROOF/CHIMNEY REMOVAL		\$4.17	\$43,000
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>		<b>\$224.02</b>	<b>\$2,307,378</b>
GENERAL CONDITIONS/BOND/INSURANCE	10.0%	\$22.40	\$230,738
CONTRACTOR'S FEES	4.0%	\$9.86	\$101,525
DESIGN CONTINGENCY	10.0%	\$25.63	\$263,964
<b>TOTAL ESTIMATED CONSTRUCTION COSTS</b>		<b>\$281.90</b>	<b>\$2,903,604</b>