

Theaters of Key West

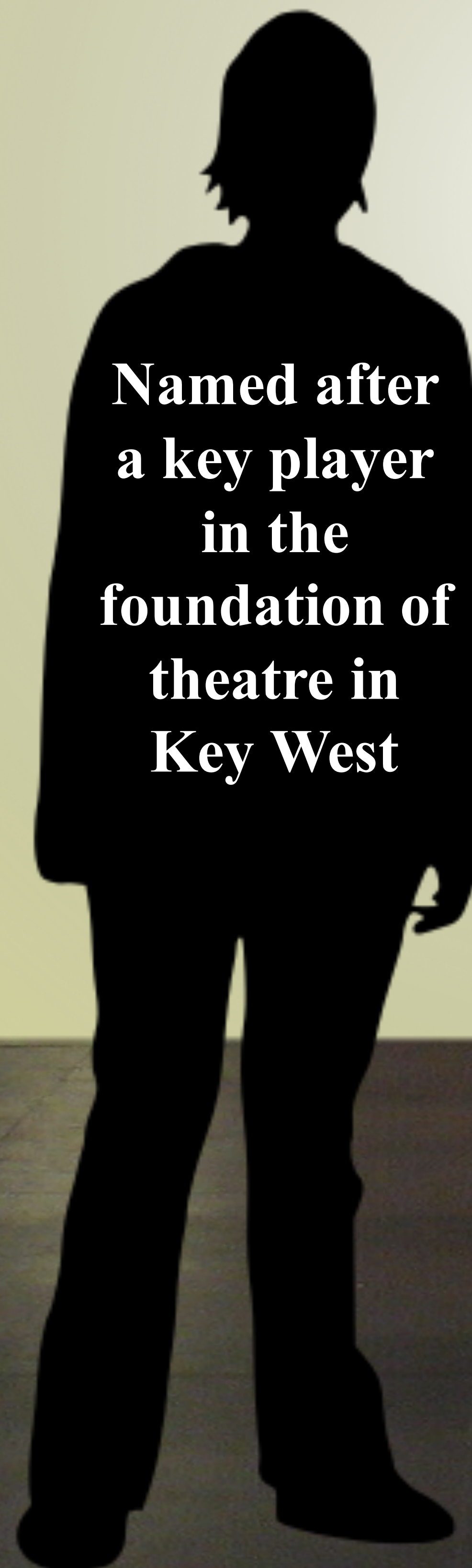
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Red Barn Theatre



Originally
a carriage
house, and
now a
hidden
treasure

Tennessee Williams Theatre



Named after
a key player
in the
foundation of
theatre in
Key West

Waterfront Playhouse



A rundown
ice
warehouse
turned into
a theater
gem

San Carlos Institute



Known as
“the cradle for
Cuba’s
independence
movement”

The Red Barn Theatre was originally a carriage house in 1829. The automobile was invented, and the house became “a barn.” In the 1940s, the Key West Players took over the stage. In the 1960s, the barn was revived through puppet shows and concerts.¹ It was renovated in 1980, and currently thrives in its secret location behind a woman’s club.

The Tennessee Williams Theatre honors Tennessee Williams’ contributions to the Florida Keys. It is located on the Florida Keys Community College Campus. For nearly 30 years, it has hosted the national tours of Broadway shows, stars such as Kristin Chenoweth, and Principal Dancers from the New York City Ballet.⁴

Theaters hold the history of their communities. A theater’s history and stories are passed down and shared in ways you can’t learn in a text book. The story comes to life.

In 1939, The Key West Players, the original producing organization, formed.³ The Key West Players were composed of locals and Navy personnel. They put on shows anywhere, including the U.S.S. Gilmore! Tennessee Williams, a Key West Player, discovered the ice warehouse, and turned it into the Waterfront Playhouse in 1960!

The San Carlos Institute was founded in 1871 by Cuban exiles. It is a museum, library, school, art gallery, and theater. It was one of the nation’s first bilingual and integrated schools². The institute moved locations a total of three times. The third move was due to a fire in 1886, which burnt down most of Key West. The institute is on Duval Street.

References

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Photos

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