



young preservationist profiles

Drew Levinson

Drew won YPA's Preservation Video Contest in 2009. He is currently studying Motion Picture Arts at Tulane University.



In 2009, YPA sponsored the first Preservation Video Contest for young people. The contest encouraged young people to create a video about a historic building worthy of preservation. The winner that year was a young filmmaker named Drew Levinson, who created a film about the Paramount Pictures Film Exchange in Pittsburgh's Uptown neighborhood.



The Paramount Pictures Film Exchange is a storage facility for films from a bygone era. The building was part of Film Row and possessed tremendous reuse potential being close to Duquesne University and Downtown, and with sweeping views of the South Side. Drew's video highlighted its history, and the threat of possible demolition for yet another parking lot.

Immediately following the award, YPA nominated the building to be a City of Pittsburgh historic landmark. After a lengthy and creative "Save the Paramount" campaign by YPA, the building became a City Landmark in 2010. The building was subsequently sold to a preservation-minded developer, who is in the process of restoring the building.



In the spring of 2011, YPA held its annual Preservation Month Celebration in the Paramount. More than 80 people attended. Now, Pittsburgh has a new historic landmark which is currently being renovated . . . and all because a young person created a YouTube video. This story is one example of how YPA gives life to history.

