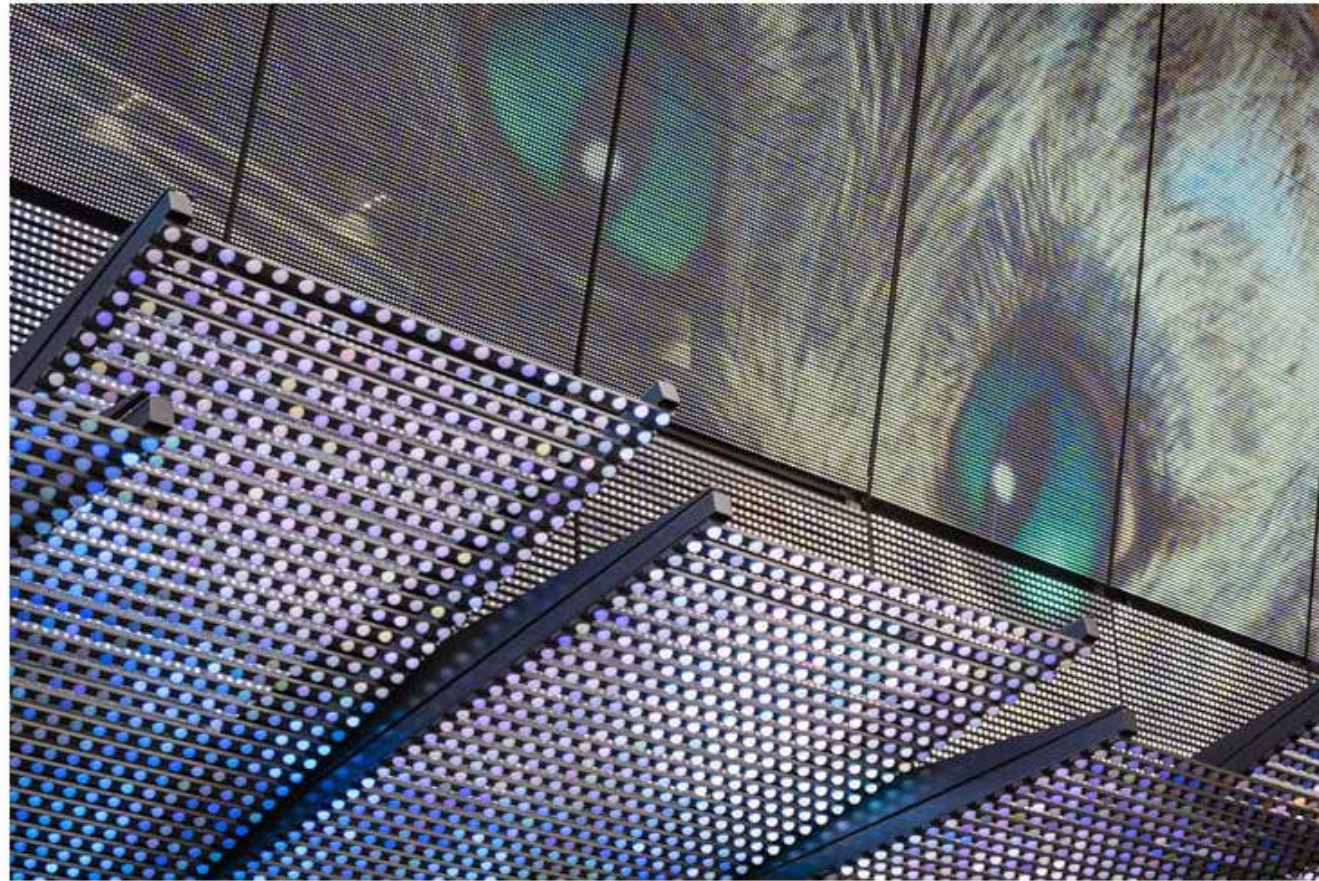




The restoration bestows a visual grandeur to the cinema-going experience, expressed through its pixelated façade of pleated LED panels. The new building thus celebrates cinema as an art form, not only through the physical spatiality of its theatres, but also by casting an external impression of what it holds, enabling the public to engage with cinema, within and without.



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Fact File:  
 Project: Renovation of the 'Alésia' cinema, Paris.  
 Programme: Eight film theatres with a total of 1380 seats, ticket hall, atrium space, offices.  
 Architect: Manuelle Gautrand Architecture  
 Client: Gaumont-pathé  
 Design team:  
 Lighting design: ON  
 Facades: T/E/S/S  
 Structure: Khephren Ingenierie  
 Acoustics: Peutz  
 Building Gross surface area: 3,600 sq.m.  
 Number of LED pixel clusters: 229 500  
 Number of bars: 3730.

By FinchD

Photography: Courtesy Manuelle Gautrand Architecture

Read Time: 2 mins



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Manuelle Gautrand Architecture ameliorates the Alésia Cinema in Paris, transforming it into a conspicuous *mise en scène* of cultural interaction, whilst simultaneously conferring a vivid identity to the building.

Originally built around the 1930s, when the medium of films became popular, the theatre has now been upgraded to an eight screen multiplex, with modern amenities. Located in the central part of boulevard du Général-Leclerc - characterized by an eclectic mix of architectural styles – the unassuming form of the original building is camouflaged within this context.

Reworking on the existing layout, the space is organised around eight distinct volumes, one for each room of the theatre. The profile of the tiered steps of the auditorium is reflected on the soffit of the level below it and consequently extends out to accommodate common spaces like the lobby, circulation spaces, cafes and smaller amphitheatres.







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This simple gesture of accentuating the stepped silhouette goes a long way towards breaking the monotony in what would otherwise have been a vast, endless space, and in fact affords an identity to the interiors of the cinema as an arrangement of interlocked volumes around a triple-height atrium.



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The cinematic experience is augmented via the pleated curtain of LEDs that forms the façade of the building, distinguishing it in its immediate context. Divided into strips along its vertical axis, the façade appears like a multi-faceted surface, alternately folded upwards and downwards. The grid in the centre, composed of glass panels and superimposed with LEDs, projects a range of associative imagery, while the opaque metal grid on the periphery harmonises this interface between the street and the interiors.



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The central translucent section also illuminates the interior spaces with diffused colours of the animated screen. Furthermore, the plates at the bottom fold upwards, to create an almost horizontal canopy at the entrance.

