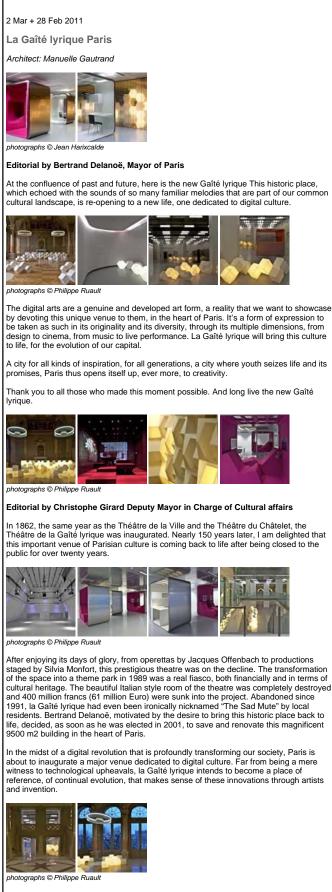
La Gaîté lyrique, Paris, France : Information + Images Contemporary Parisian culutral building by Manuelle Gautrand



The challenge facing la Gaîté lyrique, an ideal laboratory for the cultural mutations of our time, is considerable: to explore the enormous potential of digital art forms, through a stimulating mixture of music, graphic design, film, video games, design, fashion, performing arts and festivities. I can't wait to discover the latest 2.0 and 3D nuggets by virtuoso digital artists.

I invite Parisians to come and explore la Gaîté lyrique and make it their own, a place of interactive multi-sensory experiences, a place of experimentation and exchange, a place accessible to all generations. Without a doubt, a joyful effervescence waits for you there.



Forward by Patrick Zelnik President of la Gaîté lyrique & Jérôme Delormas Director of la Gaîté lyrique

Connecting the Theatre of la Gaîté lyrique to digital art forms and contemporary music may seem paradoxical, not to mention incongruous. But what about internet cafes set up in the middle of the Jordanian desert, a few kilometers away from Petra... in some countries, cell phones are available before running water is. Modernity exists only by opposition to tradition.

Japan, then China, moved violently from feudalism and traditional crafts to high end industries. In Paris, the Peï pyramid or Buren's columns have audaciously found (or imposed) their place among historical sites: the Louvre, the gardens of the Palais-Royal. As for the Centre Pompidou, it's been compared to an oil refinery.

La Gaîté lyrique Paris interior prior to works + redevelopment:



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The Theatre of Ia Gaîté lyrique is inaugurated in 1862. On this same date, Thomas Edison - the son of a used goods dealer - starts working at the telegraph office of Port Huron in Michigan (USA). While there, in 1864, he invents a duplex telegraph making it possible to send two messages on one wire in opposite ways. But above all, while working there he invents the first phonograph, in 1877, which is to the music industry what the printing press is to the book industry. Inventions, scientific discoveries, are factors in social and economic progress. But they also produce resistance, controversy and anxiety. Some people were afraid to speak into the first telephones for fear of losing their voice.



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On a more serious level, the negative effects can be dramatic. Albert Einstein, born in 1879, declared on the eve of the detonation of the first atomic bomb that his e=mc² equation was the "greatest mistake of his life". It is to be hoped that the inventors of the Internet make no such declaration in coming years. The digital language, based on binary code (0 and 1), was born in the 1960's but only began to develop in the 1980's, thanks to the mass industrialization of computers between 1980 and 2000. The digital revolution took place for certain technologies and services that use digital calculations: digital television, digital radio, digital telephones, compact discs, DVDs, etc. As for the Internet, it was conceived in the United States in the 1970's and imposed on the general public in the 1990's.

La Gaîté lyrique is interested in the digital world from a creative angle. Historically, advancements in technology have become precious tools for artists. They have also raised the stakes. George Méliès, born in 1861, was one of the originators of special effects in film. Similarly, the Lumière brothers (born in 1862 and 1864) brought about the development of the film industry. In the 1960's, the evolution of video was a significant contributing factor in the rebirth of the visual arts and pop music. The DVD, digital television or 3D create new challenges for artists: design, graphic art, film, animation, visual arts, multimedia shows, music, etc.

The history of la Gaîté lyrique coincides with the history of technological innovation. They are of the same "era". Today, the project that is bringing la Gaîté back to life is set on exploring our era. It's the era of digital revolutions that upset our lifestyles, our relationship to knowledge, our ways of thinking about the world, our social relationships. Artistic creation is also deeply transformed.

For some, new technologies produce increasingly individual behaviors, yet their usage leads to the observation that our societies have a great need for collective, group experiences. Video games can be a collective experience, the networks are vehicles for the community, the music video turns into an audiovisual concert, the portable Internet changes the way in which images and music are produced, consumed and shared.

A place to experience life, la Gaîté lyrique puts these technological upheavals to the test. La Gaîté lyrique feeds the debate about the stakes of the digital revolution in progress and thus puts into perspective some of the most innovative and exciting creative productions of our time.

