

WHAT'S NEW & WHAT'S HOT THIS SUMMER IN PARIS

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Special issue in English





All that remains of the former Gaité Lyrique (apart from the façade), the foyer mingles 19th century ornaments with contemporary furniture by Manuelle Gautrand.

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The center has seventy mobile open access cabins.

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La Gaité lyrique invites skateboarding culture for its first major summer theme (until August 7).

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The Gaîté lyrique enters the DIGITAL AGE

After an absence of twenty years, the Gaîté Lyrique reopened its doors. Far from the operettas and ballets that forged its name, this historic theater is now dedicated to the digital arts. A surprising transformation. **Michel Doussot**



The studio, the smallest of two performance spaces, can be reconfigured to suit any event.

In its heyday, the Théâtre de la Gaîté Lyrique, built under the Second Empire, played host to Offenbach, the Ballet Russes and Luis Mariano before falling on hard times and lapsing into obscurity. Abandoned for twenty years, it is now enjoying a new lease of life as a temple to the digital arts, although you'd never guess it from the facade, which looks the same as the day it was built! Once you're through the doors, however, there's no mistaking the theater's new vocation. The architect Manuelle Gautrand had no other choice but to totally redesign the 13,000 sq.m. theater. Her aim was to create a space suitable for a wide range of artistic events. The result was seven floors (including five public floors) of large, virtually empty rooms and corridors, each painted in a uniform shade of white. Everywhere you look there are elements for hanging installations, loud speakers and RFID receivers to help visitors get closer to the works.

There are also two live performance spaces - a conventional concert hall and a "sound space" covered with sound-emitting sensor pads. The open access areas near the entrance include a media center, a space for testing video games, two cafés and a store. The theater foyer, the last remnant of the original design, now serves as a bar. All this new cultural center needs now is a flow of visitors and artists. The program is expected to be eclectic, combining music, graphic art, video, dance, fashion, design and video games. Until August 7, the Gaîté is exploring the theme of "Public domain,



skateboard culture" through a series of original creations, concerts, retrospectives and installations. And if you get the munchies, the ever-changing menu offered by Michelin-starred chef Arnaud Daguin in the foyer café includes sandwiches, hot and cold timbales and 100% vegetarian hot dogs!

Gaîté Lyrique. 3 bis, rue Papin, 3rd. Tel. 01 53 01 51 50. www.gaite-lyrique.net. Open Tuesday to Sunday, 2 pm-midnight, depending on the program.