

ARCHITECTURAL RECORD

bnp
media

05
2017

\$9.95

www.architecturalrecord.com

Tall Buildings



perspective **interiors**

AN INNOVATIVE MOVIE THEATER DESIGNED BY ONE PLUS PARTNERSHIP LIMITED BECOMES PART OF THE SHOW. BY ALEXANDRA A. SENO

FOR A two-story movie house located inside a new mall in Guangzhou, one of China's wealthiest cities, Hong Kong interior design firm One Plus Partnership Limited found inspiration in shooting stars. Alex Law and Virginia Lung, the film-loving husband-and-wife team who founded the practice, thought that meteors had much in common with cinema. "This beautiful scene only appears in the sky for a very brief moment, and then vanishes without leaving any trace behind," says Lung.

Located in the suburban Haizhu district, the project called for something special. The multiplex operated by the Jinyi Cinema chain has a social hall, VIP rooms, and eight theaters with the latest IMAX and Dolby technology.

"A movie takes years, or even decades, to complete, comprising the hard work of a big team. We want to pay tribute to the filmmakers through the design of this cinema, to remind the audience of the passion and effort of these people," says Law.

Contrasting with the marble floors and walls of the space, long cuboid shapes of aluminum descend from the ceiling, like frozen meteor showers. "Most designs with the theme of meteor shower are presented in the form of lighting effects. As we wanted a different approach, we had to think of a new way to portray a meteor shower," explains Law.

The aluminum is treated to look like timber. Says Lung, "Not only does the meteor shower look more three-dimensional and realistic, it also appears warmer and more humane." China's strict fire-prevention regulations led to the use of metal. In China, new public spaces like cinemas generally cannot be outfitted in highly combustible materials.

With ceiling heights in the lobby ranging from 16 to 26 feet, a metal structure was put in so that the aluminum could be installed uniformly. The extra space accommodated electrical and mechanical equipment, as well as the sprinkler system. The design required even more sprinkler heads than would be normal, Lung recalls, but the client liked the aesthetics so much that the extra cost was approved.

"Cinema design is gradually changing in China," says Lung, adding that groundbreaking schemes are surpassing traditional ones. "More and more owners are looking to enrich the audience viewing experience—and attract more customers." ■

Hong Kong-based Alexandra A. Seno writes about architecture and visual arts in Asia.

The rectangular cuboids were configured via computer program to point in various directions, enhancing the three-dimensional effect of a rapid meteor shower.

