

St James Rialto
Dunedin, New Zealand



Ref# 4488



The St James Rialto is a modern Arthouse cinema complex created within the shell of the 1916 Empire Theatre in Moray Place, Dunedin.

The challenge, working in conjunction with the Historic Places Trust, the owners, operators, and contractors, was to retain as much of the detail of the 1928 refit as possible. The result is a viable commercial project for the owner and a delightful series of experiences for the patrons.

Restoration included the upgrade of the Long Room, the marble staircase and the Upper Circle, the latter being converted into the new upper foyer. Ornate existing ceilings and columns were retained above the new concessions area.



WA 2009 ROI-1 SR

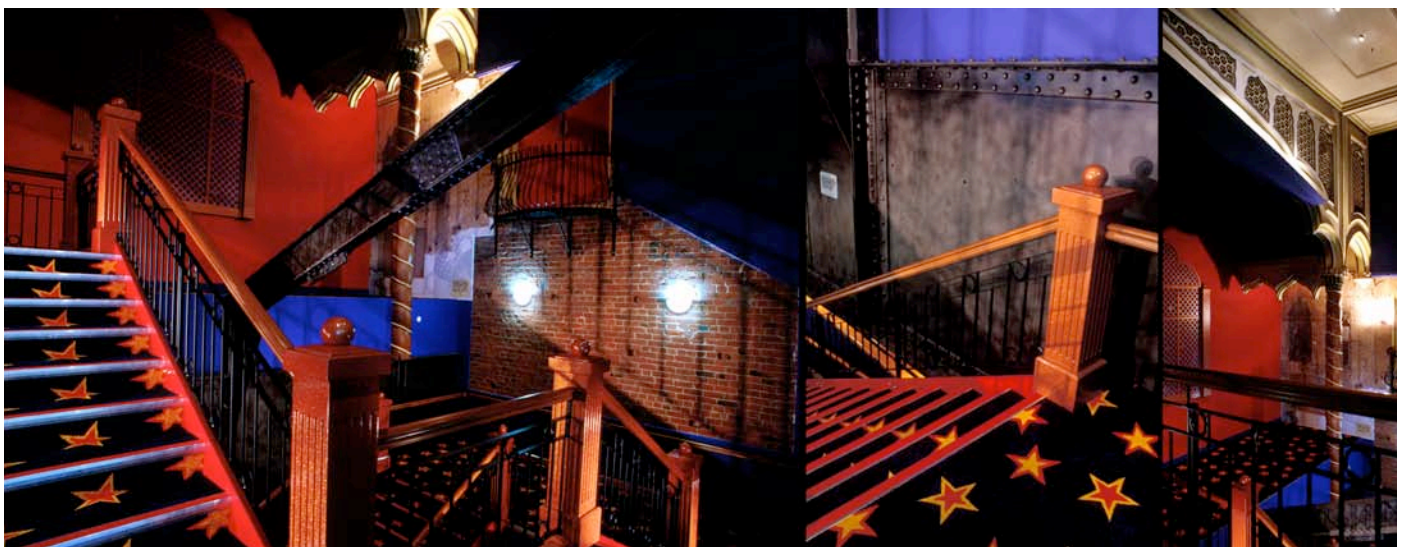
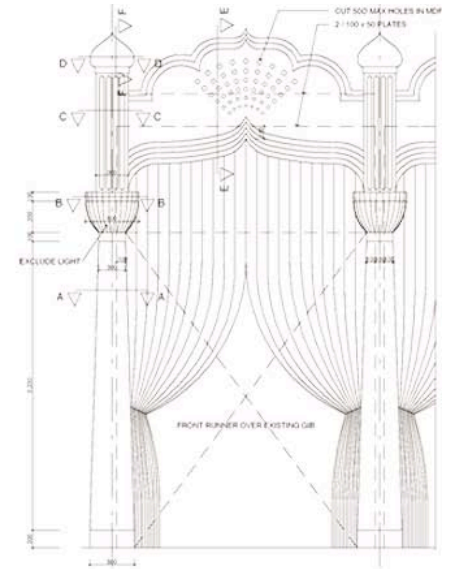
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The former 'Night Sky' theatre ceiling in the new upper cinema was reincarnated, and stripping away of the main staircase enclosure was carried out to reveal the original steelwork superstructure and reinforced brickwork walls providing an intersection between new and old.

The soft exotic shapes in creams are complimented by the new rich reds and blues which drape and shroud, revealing the ogee arched doorways, wrought iron balconies, barley twist columns, ceiling trceries... Several plaques around the interior identify the original features for visitors to appreciate the history of this fine building, an appropriate world of mystery to pass through before experiencing the world of cinematic screen.



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