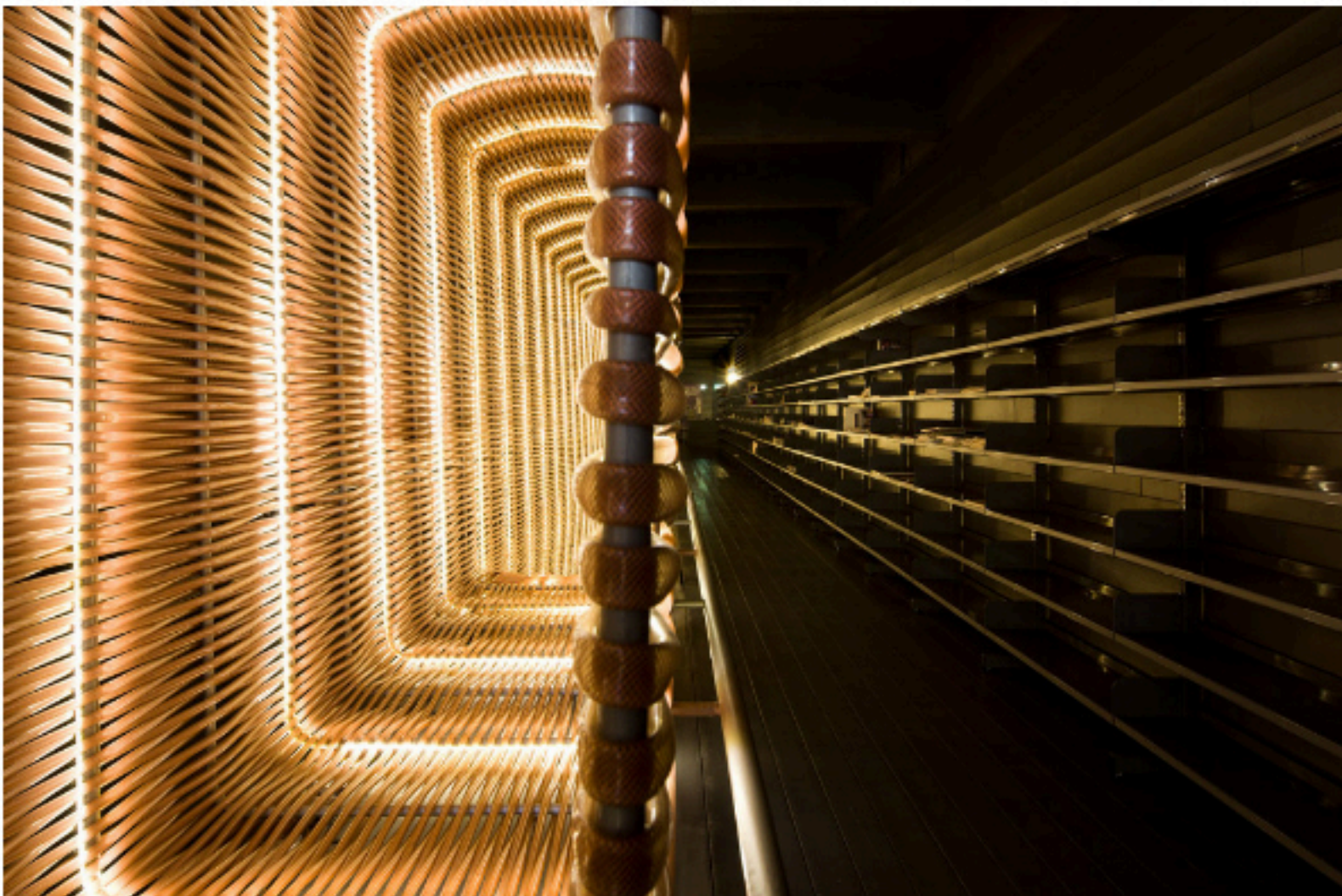


# Madrid's Killer Cinema

CULTURE, TRAVEL | By ADRIANA V. LÓPEZ | APRIL 4, 2012, 5:00 PM | Comment



The archives, which makes over 7,000 documentaries free to watch to visitors.

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The slaughterhouse-turned-arts complex **Matadero Madrid** continues to breathe new life into Madrid. Its **Cineteca**, a sleekly designed film center dedicated to nonfiction and experimental cinema, is the latest section of this century-old structure to be remade into a cultural attraction. Opened last year, the Cineteca includes two movie theaters, a movie studio and a cafe. The center's archive contains close to 7,000 documentaries from the international film festival **Documenta Madrid**, all of which are available to watch free of charge.

The Spanish architects at **ch+qs** (the husband-and-wife team Josemaría de Churtichaga and Cayetana de la Quadra-Salcedo) transformed the space into the cool cinematic laboratory it is today. As if out of a scene out of "Metropolis," the film archive is encased in a mesh of space-age hoses and gray wood paneling, and the effect is all shadows and filtered light.

The architects said they were inspired by Rembrandt's "**Carcass of Beef**," a painting that incorporates backlighting on a gored cow for dramatic effect. Churtichaga points to a plastic hose within the archive's lighted structure that, when allowing the mind to wander, could be a strand within a giant, inhabitable basket. But after the Rembrandt mention, it's morphed into cow tripe. "It wasn't a literal interpretation, but the painting was in our subconscious," Churtichaga says.

In comparison to the archive, Cineteca's larger theater is completely encased in tire tube weaving, and since each seat's black velvet number glows in the dark, you won't have to hunt blindly for your spot after a bathroom break. For about \$5, cinephiles can currently catch video art by Maya Deren, Yoko Ono and the Guerrilla Girls in the Cineteca's first "Women's Perspectives Festival." A medley of politically charged films from celebrated Spanish directors like Basilio Martín Patino, or rising ones like Raul Santos, will also be screened this spring, along with "Once Upon a Time in Anatolia," a Cannes Gran Prix co-winner.

Modern design may reign inside the Matadero, but the outside looks more like a bullring. And it seems this place has inspired cineastes long before it was turned into a cultural complex. "They used to shoot war films here when it was an abandoned lot," says Antonio Delgado, the director of Documenta Madrid. Appropriately enough, the patron saint of Spanish cinema Pedro Almodóvar shot scenes from his 1986 film "Matador" here.

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