



**PRESS RELEASE**

**Galeries Lafayette select British architecture studio AL\_A for the transformation of its Boulevard Haussmann department store in Paris**

**Paris, March 21<sup>st</sup>, 2016**

Following a competition involving leading international architecture firms, Galeries Lafayette announce that they have selected the architecture studio AL\_A to transform the “Cupola” building of their historical flagship located on Boulevard Haussmann in Paris. AL\_A’s appointment is part of the company’s strategy to build the Department Store of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, totally designed and thought to offer a new shopping experience to its clients and of which architecture is a key component.

The practice was chosen for its bold proposal and intuitive conceptual approach that will create a visionary metamorphosis of the department store’s main building, relying on tradition and modernity. The remodeling of the 40,000 sq m store will start in early 2017.

Founded and led by Amanda Leveté, whose notable projects include the soon-to-be-completed extension of London’s Victoria and Albert Museum and the transformation of the emblematic Selfridges store in Birmingham, AL\_A is a London-based architecture firm with an international reputation across a broad spectrum of industries - including culture, retail and fashion.

Commenting on this announcement, Nicolas Houzé, CEO of Galeries Lafayette and BHV MARAIS, said: “We are delighted to start this collaboration with Amanda Leveté and her team to conduct the reinvention of this iconic “Cupola” building, which is also the soul of the Galeries Lafayette brand. Amanda has demonstrated her talent for radical thinking and reimagining built heritage, and I am confident that her innovative vision will serve our ambition to offer to our clients the department store of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.”

Amanda Leveté, Director of AL\_A, said: "This store is an institution that has a special place in the life and identity of the city of Paris. Our commission is a fantastic opportunity to build on tradition to make a living contribution to the future of Galeries Lafayette and the cultural life of Paris. The exquisite craftsmanship of the original building and its location in the heart of Haussmann’s city are both elements we seek to celebrate as we move forward."

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## About Galeries Lafayette

The French market leader in Department stores and famous all around the world, for the past 120 years Galeries Lafayette have been the undisputed experts in fashion and event shopping, designing each visit to be a unique experience, offering French and international clients a constantly renewed selection of affordable to premium brands. Present in the fashion, beauty, timepiece, jewellery, accessory, interior decoration, gourmet foods and catering service segments, Galeries Lafayette are celebrated for their network of 62 stores in France and abroad, including the flagship store on the Boulevard Haussmann in Paris, their outlet offering and their online shopping site, [galeriesslafayette.com](http://galeriesslafayette.com). More information on [Galeriesslafayette.com](http://Galeriesslafayette.com)

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## About AL\_A

AL\_A is the award-winning architecture and design studio founded in 2009 by the RIBA Stirling Prize-winning architect Amanda Levete with Directors Ho-Yin Ng, Alice Dietsch and Maximiliano Arrocet.

AL\_A's approach to design balances the intuitive with the strategic, drawing on a foundation of rigorous research, innovation, collaboration and painstaking attention to detail. The practice has completed projects around the world for clients including Sky, News Corporation, Condé Nast, Comme des Garçons, Goldman Sachs, the City of Naples Subway, Dublin Docklands, Selfridges, MPavilion and the Marylebone Cricket Club.

AL\_A is currently working on the new Museum of Art Architecture and Technology (MAAT) in Lisbon, due to open to the public in October 2016, the highly anticipated expansion of the Victoria & Albert Museum in London which will open in 2017 and a cancer care centre in Southampton for the Maggie's charity.