

12<sup>e</sup> édition

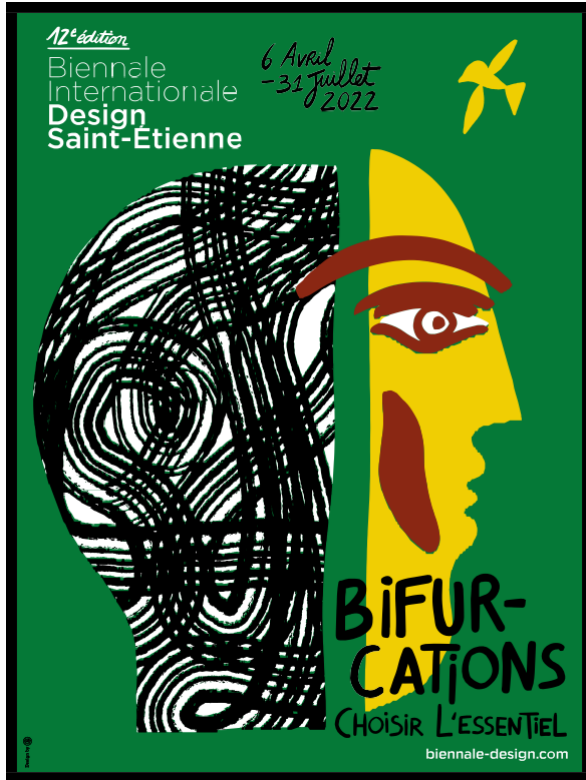
Biennale  
Internationale  
Design  
Saint-Étienne

# BiFUR- CATIONS

CHOISIR L'ESSENTIEL

Saint-Étienne, 19 October 2022

## Press release



An inspiring edition full of ideas to reshape the future, a good crop of visitors in a difficult time for cultural events

From 6 April to 31 July 2022, the Biennale Internationale Design Saint-Étienne invited the public, the international community of designers and businesses to explore "Bifurcations" through exhibitions, events and all kinds of innovative formats. **A theme that tied in with citizens' current concerns and allowed the Biennale to reach a wide audience** while providing a sounding box for the ideas and projects of different economic and institutional actors and organisations representing civil society.

Because choosing a direction when faced with a bifurcation often means taking a step sideways, changing course, this Biennale adopted a position, more than ever before, as a forward-looking tool and a laboratory for trying out new scenarios. Against this background, ESADSE students and the young generation of designers were the focus of several of the exhibitions.

In spite of a difficult context for France's cultural sites and events, the attendance figures for the 2022 Biennale 2022 reached a satisfactory level, with **127,000 visitors across the five main Biennale venues and an overall attendance of 262,000 visitors, which was achieved thanks to a strong territorial dynamic and a tight mesh of links stretching across the country** and extending the Biennale's reach.

### Key figures

**111 exhibitions** in the Saint-Étienne metropolitan district, Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes and beyond, including 7 exhibitions at the Cité du design

**396 events** in 4 months (all venues included) or an average of 4 events a day

### 262,000 visitors (overall attendance):

> **127,000 visitors to the 5 main Biennale sites**, including 74,200 visitors to the Cité du design, from 32 countries, and 52,300 visitors to the Musée d'Art et d'Industrie, the MAMC+, Puits Couriot-Musée de la Mine and the Le Corbusier site in Firminy

> **38,000 visitors\* to the other exhibitions and events organised by different actors in the Saint-Étienne district**

\* Provisional figures based on the data from 56% of the organisers available at 19 October 2022

> **97,000 visitors for the "echoes"** of the Biennale in Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes and beyond

**Over 13,000 professionals**, 12% of them from abroad

**1,600 mentions in the press**

**150 journalists** hosted

### OVERALL ATTENDANCE

Métropole Saint-Étienne

5 Biennale sites

Cité du design

262,000

164,300

126,500

74,200

Cité  
du  
design

SAINT-ÉTIENNE  
la métropole

Saint-Étienne  
Ville créative design

La Région  
Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes

PREFET  
DE LA RÉGION  
AUVERGNE-  
RHÔNE-ALPES

sonepar  
France

Weiss

unesco  
Membre du  
Réseau des Biennales



Autofiction exhibition ©DR



Guided tour of the Déplages exhibition © DR



Bifurcation Road © DR



Rocking Conversation test bench - Town hall © DR

## A Biennale anchored in the local area, which maintained its appeal in a difficult period for the culture industry

Initially planned for 2021 and postponed because of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Biennale Internationale Design Saint-Étienne took place in 2022 and, for the first time, over a period of four months instead of the usual month. **With an overall attendance figure of 262,000 visitors, including 165,000 for the Saint-Étienne district, it confirmed its place as a major cultural event on the national and international scene** (235,000 visitors in 2019), in a period where the public health crisis, successive lockdowns and a squeeze on purchasing power have had a lasting impact on cultural practices in France. Although by mid-March 2022, access to cultural venues was no longer subject to public health restrictions, the return to normal proved slow to materialise, with a notable decline in attendance at museums, festivals and concert halls.

**The beating heart of the Biennale, the Cité du design, welcomed an average of 728 visitors a day while it was on.** The origins of its 74,200 visitors bear witness to a strong local anchoring of the Biennale, but also a national reach.

Although 42% of the visitors came from the Saint-Étienne Métropole municipalities (and a total of 62.7% from the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes region), that still left one visitor in three who came from outside the region (33.8%). International visitors accounted for 3% of the total visiting the Cité du design, and came from 32 countries.

The guided tours at the Cité du design were a resounding success: over the 4 months, 16,530 people took part in 1,143 guided tours (up from 713 in 2019), members of the public and professionals and no less than 9,165 schoolchildren of all ages, from primary to senior high school.

**Four other venues covered by the Pass Biennale also ran exhibitions on the Bifurcations theme:** the Musée d'Art et d'Industrie, the Musée d'Art Moderne et Contemporain de Saint-Étienne Métropole, Puits Couriot-Musée de la Mine and the Le Corbusier site in Firminy. They welcomed **52,300 visitors** during the Biennale.

**The five main Biennale Internationale Design Saint-Étienne sites had a total of 127,000 visitors, including 75,000 paying and admission charge.**

In addition, **over 80 exhibitions and around fifty other events were organised by local organisations specifically for the Biennale. They attracted 38,000 visitors over the four months.**

This total remains a provisional figure, as only 56% of the organisers had submitted their attendance data for the exhibitions and events on the day of going to press.

Many of the Saint-Étienne Métropole municipalities got involved in the 2022 edition of the Biennale alongside the City of Saint-Étienne: Andrézieux-Bouthéon, Doizieux, La Fouillouse, La Terrasse-sur-Dorlay, Roche-la-Molière, Saint-Chamond, Saint-Galmier, Saint-Jean-Bonnefonds, Sainte-Croix-en-Jarez and Villars.

And, as with previous editions, a range of events was organised in shops and public spaces in Saint-Étienne, in particular the Banc d'essai (Test Bench, 4th edition) and Design dans les commerces (Design in Shops, 2nd edition), an exhibition of work by ESADSE Alumni displayed in the 20 shops that won prizes in the Commerce Design Saint-Étienne competition.

**In Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes and beyond, 15 exhibitions and about forty events echoed the Bifurcations theme and brought the Biennale an extra 97,000 visitors.** They were included in the Biennale Internationale Design Saint-Étienne programme and helped to extend the Biennale's reach, giving it visibility in prestigious places such as the Pompidou Centre in Paris, the FRAC Grand-Large in Dunkirk or the Musée des Confluences in Lyon.



Indoor skatepark © DR



The Cabane du design © DR



Bifurcation Road © DR



Biennale Internationale  
Design Saint-Étienne  
2022 © SZ

## An innovative Biennale: experimentation, sharing and digital technology

The 12th Biennale Internationale Design Saint-Étienne was an opportunity to experience what design is all about thanks to vibrant exhibitions and a busy programme of events: **four months with a constant stream of activities, all geared to encouraging a dialogue between designers and the public, however well-versed - or not - in design**, imagining bifurcations for individuals, collective experiments and all kinds of creative, agile and innovative actions.

**This desire to be accessible to a broad audience was reflected in the pricing policy** adopted: free for under 26s, "Happy Saturday" offer to see the Biennale's flagship exhibitions at a reduced rate, multiple free events.

**At the Cité du design, the Bifurcation Road was a free attraction that attracted over 14,500 visitors** to the site and featured events and activities that enabled everyone to take part in an experiences connected to design and the Bifurcations theme. Important to note:

- **the success of the Cabane du design as an experimental experience:** it attracted 4,500 people during the Biennale. And not just children - in fact over 70% of the visitors for experimentation over this period were adults, which demonstrates the appetite that exists among the general public.
- **the enthusiasm generated by the indoor skatepark** (3,083 people had a go), a concept the locals would like to see become a permanent fixture in their neighbourhood.
- **the diversity of the people of all ages and profiles who came to enjoy the 68 free events organised on the site:** 7,000 people attended the concerts, talks, round table debates, workshops and performances which punctuated the Biennale at the Cité du design.

Events accessible online, podcasts and replays, e-magazine: this Biennale also adapted to all the latest practices. **Digital technology was a mainstay of this 12th edition, enabling more people to be reached and facilitating knowledge sharing.**

Originally launched in 2021, when the Biennale was postponed, as the "Avant-Biennale" magazine, the **"Magazine de la Biennale"** is a **digital platform offering editorial content designed to give substance to the Bifurcations**. With over 150 articles, interviews, portraits and original editorial formats (postcards, books for sharing, contrasting perspectives, etc.), it forms a living memory of the "Bifurcations Biennale". Add to that another 520 news articles produced for the internet within a **digital ecosystem sustained by a high level of activity on social media**, which brought in 5,500 new subscribers.

### Connected researchers

- **6 talks and round table events**
- **65 speakers and 1147 attendees**, including 845 taking part online (i.e. almost 3 out of 4 participants connecting remotely)
- **1 "Radio anthropocène" programme** at the heart of the Biennale



Lycée professionnel Adrien Testud fashion show © F. Roure



Guided tour of the materials library © DR



Bifurcation Road © DR



Presenting the Laurent Charras Prize © DR

## Professionals turn out in force

More and more companies and organisations are realising that design is a way for them to improve their competitiveness and optimise their organisation. Hence a growing momentum of professionals getting actively involved in the Biennale Internationale Design Saint-Étienne.

**The 2022 Biennale hosted 13,000 professional visitors, 30% more than at the last edition (10,000 professional visitors in 2019).** Designers, entrepreneurs, researchers and managers from both the private and the institutional or voluntary sectors. A third of them took a guided tour of the Biennale, in addition to taking part in professional meetings or workshops.

**Professionals' Week, which was dedicated to collaborative innovation, drew 550 participants over 4 days.** The offering aimed specifically at professionals centred on 7 workshops, 3 *Labos* and 12 showrooms, not forgetting the *Carrefour des expériences* (Experience intersection), which consisted of 6 days of co-creation workshops with designers.

The Biennale was also punctuated by important events such as the signing of a partnership agreement between Action Logement (housing services agency) and the Cité du design, and the **1st Rencontre nationale du design Actif, an event organised with the ANCT (territorial development agency) and Paris 2024**, which brought together 23 contributors and 227 attendees from all over France. **All in all, 130 companies had a spot in the limelight** in this edition: 60 companies (including 42 French ones) through exhibitions at the Cité du design and 70 via the *Labos*, showrooms or the 4th edition of the Banc d'essai (Test Bench) operation.



First Rencontre nationale du design actif © F. Roure



UNESCO Creative Cities of Design Forum © Cité du design



Singulier Plurielles exhibition - Guided tour with dancing © Fabrice Roure

## The Biennale at the centre of international design networks

The Biennale Internationale Design Saint-Étienne is the highlight in the calendar of events organised by the international networks in the design world design that the Cité du design is actively involved with.

**The 2022 edition was attended by 1,600 international professional visitors from 24 countries**, 1,280 of whom took part in talks and workshops. They included, in particular, 44 representatives of 12 UNESCO Creative Cities of Design, 10 delegations from European partners in the Human Cities-Smoties network, the Bureau of European Design Associations (BEDA) as well as numerous international designers and researchers. As well as the International Week which hosted the UNESCO Creative Cities Forum, the Biennale was marked by events devoted to the New European Bauhaus.

**Africa, guest of honour of this 12th edition, also provided some of the high points with an international focus**, thanks especially to **two exhibitions, Singulier Plurielles at the Cité du design and Globalisto** at the Musée d'Art Moderne et Contemporain de Saint-Étienne-Métropole.

An exploration of the bifurcations ahead or already being negotiated on the African continent was also the subject of a study day entitled *Penser depuis l'Afrique (Thinking from Africa)* and numerous events and exhibitions around the Saint-Étienne district, such as the *Awazé Café* project which highlighted African cultures or an Afro-fusion culinary master class.

## Rendez-vous in 2025 for the 13th edition

In Saint-Étienne, the Manufacture-Cité du design Creative Quarter is reinventing itself as part of a Saint-Étienne Métropole project named "Cité du design 2025". The aim: to create a new neighbourhood for tomorrow, one that is full of life and open to all, an integral part of the city, forming a new leisure and cultural centre as well as an innovation-focused economic platform of international standing. The Biennale Internationale Design Saint-Étienne is a natural component of that dynamic, and everyone involved looks forward to welcoming you in 2025 for the next edition, in an entirely remodelled, but more even creative Creative Quarter.



Cité du design 2025 - Saint-Étienne Métropole © Saguez & Partners

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