

Éric Jourdan, new Director of the EPCC Cité du design-ESADSE

With its new articles of association in force since 1 January 2024, the EPCC Cité du design École Supérieure d'Art et Design de Saint-Étienne (ESADSE) also starts the year with a new Director. Éric Jourdan, a designer highly regarded in France and abroad, who had already been running ESADSE since 2020, now takes the helm of the Saint-Étienne EPCC (a public institution for cultural cooperation) with the aim of making it a unique centre for creation and discovering design.



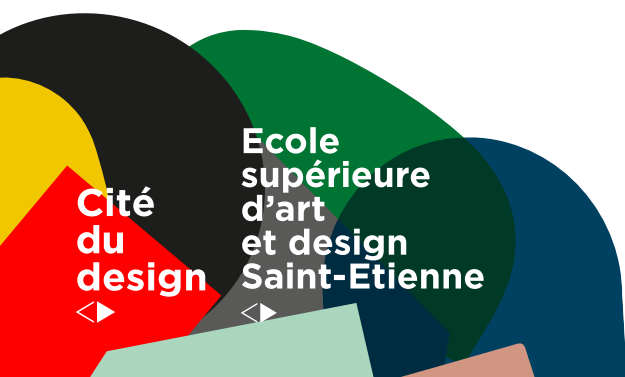
“We must place designers at the heart of the plans for the Cité du design and the Biennale, working closely with ESADSE”

Éric Jourdan, Director of the EPCC Cité du design-ESADSE

The new articles of association of the EPCC Cité du design-ESADSE, adopted at the board meeting on 29 November last, came into force on 1 January 2024. Éric Jourdan, director of ESADSE since 2020, was then appointed Director of the EPCC Cité du design-ESADSE. This institution so emblematic of Saint-Étienne, which organises the Biennale Internationale Design Saint-Étienne and has 400 French and foreign students training in art and design, will also benefit from a refocusing of its missions, the reorganisation of its governance and a more secure budget.

Éric Jourdan is a designer highly regarded in France and abroad as a furniture designer (Cinna, Ligne Roset, among others), but also for his collaboration with Philippe Starck, his work for Mobilier national, his projects in other areas such as graphics, scenography, urban planning and even signage, most notably for the Fondation Cartier and the Cité internationale universitaire de Paris. Alongside his work as a designer, he also taught in several art and design schools, including Beaux-Arts de Paris, before joining ESADSE in 1994.

In 1998, he was involved in the creation of the Biennale Internationale Design Saint-Étienne, and took on the role of General Curator for the 2nd edition in 2000. He is particularly attached to the values that have made Saint-Étienne's reputation in the design world and is now preparing, with the Cité du design-ESADSE, to write a new page in the joint institution's history at the heart of a creative district currently undergoing a major transformation.



A movement towards openness and professionalisation of student pathways at ESADSE

As Director of ESADSE (Saint-Étienne Higher School of Art and Design) since 2020, Éric Jourdan's aim has been to make it a school that is all about "making", focused first and foremost on practical experience, providing students with access to technical workshops particularly well resourced with highly skilled staff and specialist equipment. In the last few years he has been the driving force behind a movement aimed at diversifying the profile of the students and reinforcing their initiation into the professional world. A public preparatory class was opened in 2021 to allow young people who might not normally have access to this type of training, in particular those coming from vocational high schools, to make the most of their creative potential by studying art and design. This policy of openness can also be seen in the dual degree programmes run with Tongji University in Shanghai (China) and Kookmin University in Seoul (South Korea). Éric Jourdan also oversaw the creation of a sandwich course in design at ESADSE, a first in public design school in France.

Ambitious plans for the Cité du design and the Biennale Internationale Design Saint-Étienne

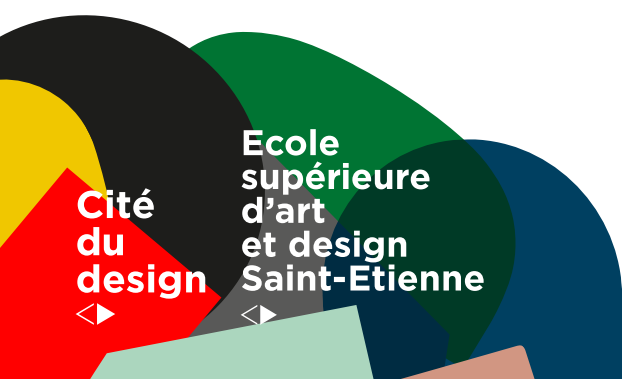
As Director of the EPCC Cité du design-ESADSE, Éric Jourdan wishes to make designers the central focus of the Saint-Étienne institution with the aim of making a venue that sits at the very heart of creation in design where designers can come for inspiration, to nurture their creativity and to make things.

"It is my firm belief that today we must place designers at the heart of the plans for the Cité du design and the Biennale, working ever more closely with ESADSE," says Éric Jourdan. "That is what we are doing thanks to the new orientations we are giving our cultural programming. Among other things, this could include residencies, new continuing education initiatives and projects involving researchers, designers and artists. We want our institution to establish itself as a place of creation with a French and international public, a place where art and design come together, which is capable of developing projects in Saint-Étienne that are both original and become parts of our everyday environment, projects that speak to everyone whether they are already familiar with design or not."

Research, a driving force for the EPCC

In 2022-2023 Éric Jourdan was involved in the transfer to ESADSE of all the EPCC's research activities.

In 2024 he wants to develop a new research field focused on industry, as part of a future-oriented approach involving companies and their R&D departments. He also intends to encourage projects that involve researchers, designers or artists from other structures. "We expect these to be very positive markers of the reinvigoration of our institution," concludes Éric Jourdan.



Solo exhibitions

- 1991 Fondation Cartier, Jouy-en-Josas
 2000 *Traversants*, Galerie Gilles Peyroulet & Cie, Paris
 2004 *Frame*, Galerie Gilles Peyroulet & Cie, Paris
 2012 *Formes*, Galerie Gosserez, Paris
 2013 *Fauves*, Galerie En Attendant les Barbares, Paris
 2020 *Constructions*, Galerie Surface, Saint-Étienne

Prizes

- 2004 Winner of a Red Dot Design Award for the Snowdonia sofa with Ligne Roset
 2013 Winner of the Artdesign prize for the Edmond daybed, in association with Galerie Domeau & Pérès
 2014 Winner of the Janus de l'industrie in the Furniture category for the Hic & Ubiq modular storage system with Menuiseries Ferreyrolles

Éric Jourdan, a highly regarded designer committed to Saint-Étienne

Éric Jourdan was born in 1961 in Chatou near Paris. He is a graduate of the **École des Beaux-Arts de Saint-Étienne** and the **École Nationale Supérieure des Arts Décoratifs** in Paris. A designer highly regarded by his peers, he has taught in a number of leading art and design schools including **Beaux-Arts de Paris**. His work features in the collections of the **Fonds National d'Art Contemporain**, the **Musée d'Art Moderne et Contemporain de Saint-Étienne Métropole** and the **Musée des Arts Décoratifs** in Paris.

After a first experience working with German designer Luigi Colani, he began a collaboration with Galerie Néotu, where he created furniture collections. In the same period, he designed the signage for the Fondation Cartier and redesigned the Cartier USA press offices in New York. From 1992 onwards, he worked on commissions from the Ministry of Culture to make furniture for the Musée des Arts Décoratifs de l'Océan Indien in Reunion, and then worked on the interior design of Musée de Nouméa in New Caledonia. In 1993, Philippe Starck invited him to join the Thomson Multimedia team to work on ranges of household appliances. He then set up his own design studio. In 1995, he was given a VIA Carte Blanche grant for a research programme on dual aspect furniture. In 1996 he worked on the redevelopment of the banks of the Seine in the Val-de-Marne.

As a member of the teaching staff at ESADSE, he was involved in the creation of the Biennale Internationale Design Saint-Étienne, the brainchild of the School's then director Jacques Bonnaval. He was appointed General Curator of the second edition in 2000. From 2002 onwards, he started to collaborate regularly with major manufacturers of design furniture: Ligne Roset, Cinna, Meublatex, Ecart international. He also worked with industrial groups like Pyram and Beaba, whilst contributing to the design of the signage for the Cité internationale universitaire de Paris alongside Ruedi Baur. After the Mobilier National commissions in 2006, in 2007 he worked on public spaces with the railway station forecourt in Saint-Étienne and the signage for the University of Rennes 2. In 2008 he won the competition to design the Première Vision trade fair in 2009: 90,000 m² of spatial layout, design of the furniture, lighting and signage. In 2013, he curated the Homework, une école stéphanoise exhibition at the Cité du design. In 2014, his work was showcased at the Pavillon des Arts et du Design in Paris. In 2017 he designed the Guest of Honour Pavilion at the Frankfurt Book Fair in Germany.

In 2020, Éric Jourdan took over as Director of ESADSE, which has been part of an EPCC (public institution for cultural cooperation) with the Cité du design since 2010. At the same time, he has continued to work as a freelance designer, designing more collections of furniture (Utopia, Alando, Karuma) as well as lamps for the Roset group. He also regularly took part in group exhibitions at the En Attendant les Barbares gallery. As Director of the EPCC Cité du design-ESADSE, the position he has held since 1 January 2024, he will be able to draw on the ties he forged as Director of ESADSE, to carry the Saint-Étienne institution's development plans forward.

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