

editorial events information
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editorial

Happy New Year...

Our aim for the last 18 years has been to get people to understand the link between graphic design and society. By being more concerned with meaning than with form, we help to educate the eye. A drop in the ocean of mediocrity served up over the years. The critical faculty is becoming a rarity and is thus subversive; it is essential to public debate and to publicising the ideas that brand advertising blurs. Is there any word has not been drained of substance?

Should we give up?

The challenge is considerable and the Graphic Design Centre is playing its part by relying on the social responsibility of graphic designers. Building on the international event that Graphic Design month has become, it must now go further, setting up a permanent centre on its premises with an international outlook and devoted to developing a critical perception of graphic design. With our efforts based on our experience, the Graphic Design Centre has been working every day since 2001. Cultural engineering and architectural feasibility studies were carried out between 2004 and 2006 in close liaison with the Ministry of Culture and the local authorities concerned.

After much discussion, particularly with the representatives of the ministry, the artistic and cultural proposal for the projected centre was approved in June 2007. At last, in 2008 we are entering the phase of making the idea a reality. The invitation to tender for the architectural design of the building will be issued within the next few weeks for completion of the work in 2009.

We are all hoping that public partners will provide the necessary resources to set up a permanent home for the Échirolles Graphic Design Centre and promote it.

Diego Zaccaria

The Échirolles Graphic Design Centre: an open visual arts project

The broad outline of the Graphic Design Centre's artistic and cultural project...

Graphic design plays a mediating role in the public arena and is at the heart of the problems of urban areas and their democratic processes. Responsible for conveying messages, whether for educational or marketing purposes, graphic design is, in essence, polysemous, pluralist and laden with social and political implications.

Providing permanent facilities for a critical approach

The Graphic Design Centre's primary purposes are to show and establish the social and cultural implications of graphic design, as well as its aesthetic roots in the visual arts; to clarify its artistic and historic legacies as well as the current state of a public interest graphic design.

So since 1990, Graphic Design Month has been an expression of the desire to give the public the keys to understanding graphic output; to contribute to thinking about today's visual communications and their social, educational, cultural, political and economic perspectives. It is also a way of encouraging the production and practice of a graphic design which helps the public to take a step back from the profusion of images and their passive consumption of them. The Graphic Design Centre's artistic project aims to disseminate graphic design culture of the highest quality to a mass audience, without excluding any population group.

With a permanent organisation and premises, the time has come to move from a special event mindset to longer term thinking, by developing artistic events, cultural and educational activities all through the year; events central to a citizenship issue essential to society: people's relationship with visual media and media promotion, the role of the communication of today's images in the construction of balanced social interaction.

The Graphic Design Centre association (set up in 2001), the town of Échirolles and their public and private partners are now in a position to provide this dynamic on a permanent basis and to support these activities and ambitious schemes through a project that is artistic, educational and mature, civic, pertinent and original in accordance with the broad principles outlined below.

To convey the usefulness to society of graphic design and graphic designers, to show how high quality design sets an example, to pass on knowledge in this field and to broaden thinking on this subject through the exchange of views and experience.

To meet, exchange views and experience and discuss issues with our audience, those working in the graphic design sector, commissioning clients, students and the general public. These facilities for discussion and the exchange of views and experience will promote understanding of the importance of the image and the function of graphic design.

To see, listen to and speak for activities reflecting the diversity of our audience, with a demand for quality putting the accent on the context of the work presented. Exhibitions will be emblematic of the Graphic Design Centre: the organising of open exhibitions on the history of Graphic Design and the major movements running through it.

To read and publish “centre notes” viewed as graphic design tools and more substantial works within the framework of publishing partnerships.

Cultural activities and developing awareness in school audiences and the general public... to work constantly on developing awareness in all audiences.

A meeting place and educational resource for anyone working in the graphic design sector... to facilitate contact between professionals and students, to develop awareness and educate cultural and educational liaison workers.

For these reasons, I hereby agree to sponsor the Échirolles Graphic Design Centre. I am completing the online form on the following website www.graphisme-echirolles.com/parrainage.htm (just click on the above link). The list of signatories will be published on the Graphic Design Centre website at the same address.

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