

école supérieure
d'arts & médias
de Caen/Cherbourg

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ABOUT THE SCHOOL

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Born in 2011 from the merger of the école supérieure d'arts et médias de Caen (1795) and the école supérieure des beaux-arts de Cherbourg (1912) ésam Caen/Cherbourg is both a higher education institute and a cultural venue. It is one of the 45 French public Art and Design schools led by the Ministry of Culture. The school is a member of Andéa (the national French art schools' association), ComUE (the Communauté d'Universités et d'Établissements Normandie-Université), CGE (Conférence des Grandes Écoles) as well as ELIA (the European League of Institutes of the Arts).

The school's premises offer exceptional living and working conditions: a 11,000 square meters building located in downtown Caen, constructed in 2009 to meet the needs of the school's activities, and a recently refurbished 2,000 square meters site located in the heart of Cherbourg's former navy hospital.

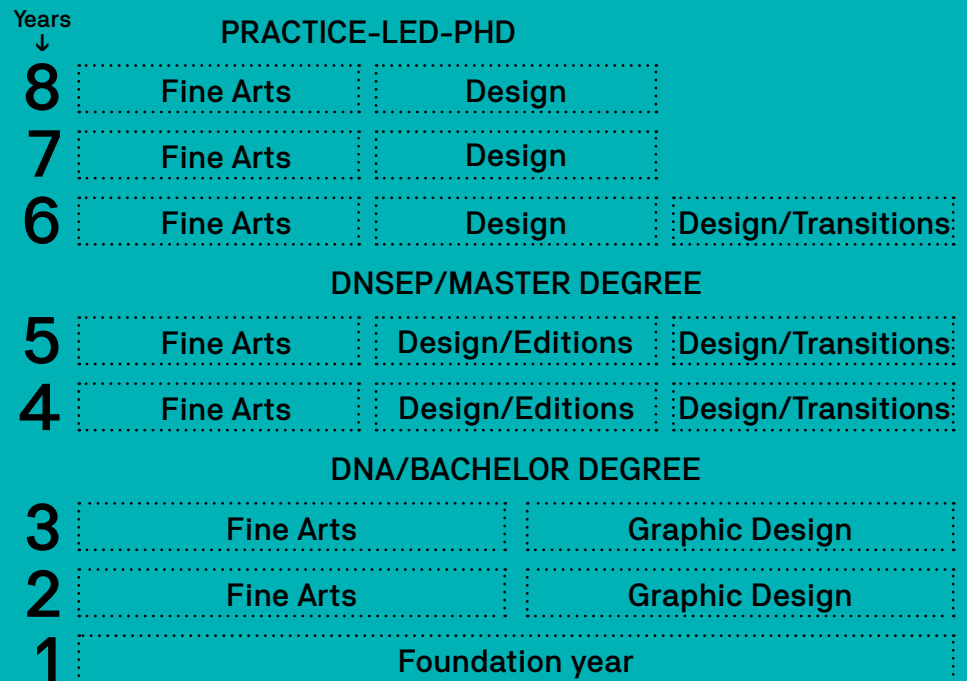
13000m² buildings
2 campuses
300 students
14 technical workshops
20% international students
2 Bachelor degrees
3 Master degrees
1 PhD

STUDIES

3

Today's art school is about embracing new approaches, fostering experimentation, and building a community of artists. It navigates the challenges of production in a time of crisis while interpreting the complexities of our era—moving beyond issues of gender or medium. At ésam Caen/Cherbourg, training is intentionally multidisciplinary and cross-disciplinary.

The school offers 300 students Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Art and Design, as well as a PhD in artistic research and creation. Education is built around a strong connection between theory and practice, with studies organized through lectures, workshops, personal research, studio work, study trips, and professional training. Our teaching staff includes 35 professors, many of whom are renowned practicing artists, alongside dedicated academics focused on teaching and research. They collaborate with 14 specialized technicians and welcome guest lecturers throughout the year for conferences, workshops, and seminars.



BACHELOR DEGREES

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Our three-year Bachelor programs provide students with essential theoretical and technical skills in artistic practice, while guiding them in the creation and development of their personal projects. After an introductory foundation year, students choose between two specialized paths: Fine Art or Graphic Design.

FINE ART

In the Fine Art option, students deepen their theoretical knowledge and engage more fully with contemporary creation, including digital tools. They begin to develop their personal practice and research, selecting from a range of workshops and learning how to present their work in a spatial context. By the third year, students prepare and present their own works to earn the National Diploma of Art (Bachelor's degree) in Fine Art.

GRAPHIC DESIGN

The Graphic Design program combines artistic and design workshops with studies in art, media, and design history and theory. This comprehensive approach encourages personal experimentation and gradually evolves into focused practical research, supported by readings, interviews, and technical practice. The curriculum includes workshops, internships, collaborative projects, and an introduction to research in design, all leading to the National Diploma of Art (Bachelor's degree) in Graphic Design.

MASTER DEGREES

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Our Master programs focus on preparing students for the National Diploma of Plastic Expression (DNSEP), offering three specialized tracks: Fine Art, Design/Editions, and Design/Transitions.

FINE ART

The Master in Fine Art represents a new phase in the development of an individual artistic journey within contemporary art. Combining experimentation and the creation of a personal project, students enrich their practice through workshops, personal research, a research seminar, and close mentorship with faculty. The second semester of the first year is dedicated to international mobility, either through an internship or a semester abroad. The final year is fully devoted to a thesis and personal artistic work, leading to the diploma.

DESIGN/EDITIONS

Building on the fundamentals of graphic design, this two-year program explores new publishing practices while engaging deeply with contemporary creation. Students take on hands-on experimentation with graphic design and publishing tools, while also exploring various artistic and design fields such as visual art, sound, digital media, moving images, literature, and poetry, as well as editorial, object, packaging, and scenography design. International mobility is also part of the curriculum, in the form of a semester mobility or an internship abroad.

DESIGN/TRANSITIONS

This dual Master, offered in collaboration with the Caen Institute of Political Sciences, brings together artists, designers, and academics to explore creative approaches to territories in transition. Through a prospective, international, and transdisciplinary curriculum, students engage in innovative thinking on public policies, while developing projects with intellectual freedom and a strong sense of social, societal, economic, and environmental responsibility.

The three-year practice-led PhD RADIANT was created in 2018, in collaboration with ESADHAR (Le Havre-Rouen School of Art) and ENSA (Normandie School of Architecture). It is open to the fields of art, design, architecture and creative writing. This doctoral program is intended for artists, architects, designers and/or authors with an established and recognized production in their field, and it allows to conduct experimental research rooted in contemporary creative practices.

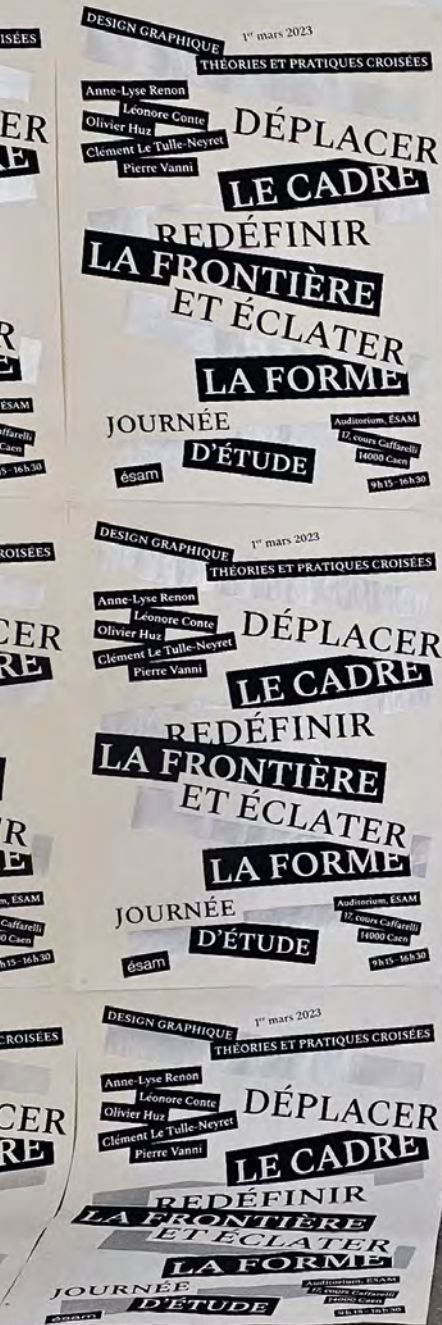
RESEARCH

The ésam Caen/Cherbourg drives an active research policy grounded in experimental processes that continuously blend theoretical reflection with artistic production. Drawing on a rich theoretical foundation—including art history, social sciences, aesthetics, semiology, and various scientific disciplines—our research evolves within the realm of artistic creation, using the processes, languages, and methods unique to artistic practices.

We believe that critical and reflective inquiry extends beyond written analysis and is best explored through art and design creation itself. Research at ésam Caen/Cherbourg is shaped by projects led by our faculty and through the innovative practice-led PhD program, RADIANT—one of the few PhDs in France that enables research through artistic creation.



ésam Caen/Cherbourg — Caen campus



Workshop with invited artist Léna Osseyran, 2023



Iris Beauvois, DNA/Bachelor Degree in Fine Arts, 2024

Julie Biré, DNA/Bachelor Degree in Graphic Design, 2023



Maïa Charbonnier, DNSEP/Master Degree in Fine Arts, 2024



Cléophrée Barazer, DNSEP/Master Degree in Fine Arts, 2024



Guilhem Marsol, DNSEP/Master Degree in Fine Arts, 2024



Mathis de Guibert, DNSEP/Master Degree in Design/Editions, 2024



Charlotte Legay, DNSEP/Master Degree in Design/Editions, 2024



Marion Bernard, DNSEP/Master Degree in Design/Editions, 2024



Nora Sardi, residency at MeetFactory Art Center in Prague (Czech Republic), 2023



DNSEP/Master Degree Design/Transitions



DNSEP/Master Degree Design/Transitions, journey from Caen to Bruxelles, 2023



Library



Lithography workshop



Metal workshop/Foundry



Tanguy Gravelais, *Dead Cat Bounce*, graduates' exhibition, 2023



Video workshop/Film set



Géraldine Longueville, *kinakina*, PhD RADIAN exhibition, 2024



Bubu Pagier & Hubert Michel, Label CC concert,]interstice[festival, 2024



Shuyin Hou & Thomas Munerel, *Rien ne va plus*, graduates' exhibition, 2024



Manon Recordon, *Roses snatched from concrete*, PhD RADIATION exhibition, 2024



RESOURCES

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ésam Caen/Cherbourg is renowned for the exceptional quality and range of its workshops and studios: volume, prints and image/sound/digital tools workshops, individual workrooms and exhibition spaces, libraries, an auditorium for theoretical classes, conferences and concerts as well as a 200 square meters exhibition gallery.

VOLUME

A ceramics workshop with moulding and sculpting, firing and glazing kilns, a wood workshop and metal workshop with forge and foundry.

PRINTS

Printmaking, silkscreen and lithography workshops, and a printing workshop with digital printing, lead type and presses, bookbinding.

IMAGE/SOUND/DIGITAL TOOLS

A photography workshop with analog and digital photography and a shooting studio, a video workshop with editing rooms and a film set, a sound workshop with fully equipped sound recording studio and editing rooms, a modular studio and an IT workshop with computer graphics, web, animation and virtual 3D.

INTERNATIONAL

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For over 30 years, ésam Caen/Cherbourg has expanded its international presence through a variety of ambitious projects that enrich its teaching and enhance its appeal. The school has forged partnerships with more than 40 higher education institutions across Europe and beyond, either through the Erasmus+ program or individual agreements.

Student mobility is a top priority: every student is required to complete an international mobility project, whether through an exchange semester or an internship. Each year, around 20% of our students come from abroad. We also promote staff exchanges for teaching and training. The school actively participates in international projects, including artist residencies, exhibitions, and workshops, fostering a global artistic community.

Since 2018, a partnership with MeetFactory Art Center in Prague (Czech Republic) helps provide a three-month residency for young Master graduates.

ésam Caen/Cherbourg is committed to helping asylum seekers. The school is involved in PAUSE, a national program dedicated to welcoming exiled scientists and artists in higher education institutes in France.

CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

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Throughout the year, ésam Caen/Cherbourg curates, co-produces, and hosts a vibrant array of cultural events open to the public. These events not only enrich our students' artistic development and career trajectories but also invite a wide audience to experience the creative work taking place at the school. Annual highlights include a publishing design fair, a film festival, art history conferences, the graduates' showcase, as well as numerous concerts and exhibitions.

Si Cinéma is an international festival of films in art schools, organized by ésam Caen/Cherbourg in partnership with Le Café des Images cinema in Hérouville-Saint-Clair and Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris. Its ambition is to give an account of the new forms of expression and the reinvention of contemporary film.

Initiated by ésam Caen/Cherbourg in 2011, Impressions Multiples fair is aimed at all lovers of literary and poetic objects of all forms. Its primary purpose is to connect the public and the students with professionals of the contemporary publishing field.

PREPARATORY SCHOOL 26

Since 2012, our school in Cherbourg has offered the only state-approved public Art preparatory class in Normandy. Every year, from September to mid-April, around 40 students refine their skills in preparation for entrance exams to the Art and Design schools of their choice. Our diverse and enriching program includes theoretical courses, hands-on workshops, guest artist sessions, conferences, study trips, personalized support, and mock exams. Join us and unleash your creativity!

COMMUNITY CLASSES

At our campuses in Caen and Cherbourg, we offer workshops and courses for art enthusiasts aged 6 and up. From mid-September to late June, 75 weekly workshops aim at sparking creativity and artistic expression, through hands-on experimentation with diverse techniques and the exploration of contemporary artists' work. Each year, around 900 children, teens, and adults interact with our students, fostering a unique environment of shared artistic growth.

We also offer short courses during school holidays, encouraging the discovery of new artistic practices. Additionally, ésam Caen/Cherbourg runs arts awareness programs in public primary schools and reaches out to special audiences, including prisoners, children with disabilities, and asylum seekers, helping bring art to everyone.

APPLICATION 27

FIRST-YEAR ENTRY

Admission to the first year is through a competitive entrance exam. Open to all secondary school graduates who have passed the Baccalauréat (or equivalent for international students), the exam consists of three parts: artistic practice, general culture, and an interview.

SECOND-YEAR AND BEYOND

Candidates who have completed at least two years of artistic studies at another higher education institution, in France or abroad, can apply starting from the second year. Admission is based on an artistic portfolio and interview. Applications can be submitted directly or via Campus Art.

EXCHANGE STUDENTS

Students from partner institutions wishing to spend one or two semesters at ésam Caen/Cherbourg must apply through the international office of their home school.

All courses at ésam Caen/Cherbourg are taught in French. A B2 level in French is required for international degree-seeking students, while exchange students are exempt from this requirement. The University of Caen offers year-round French language courses to meet various levels and needs.

CONTACT

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