



**étienne+robial**  
**graphisme & collection**  
de futuropolis à canal+

musée  
des arts décoratifs  
10 novembre 2022  
11 juin 2023

**MAD**  
MUSÉE DES ARTS  
DÉCORATIFS

english

## Introduction (1)

Graphic designer, editor, artistic director, font designer, collector... for the past 50 years, Etienne Robial has been leaving his mark on the landscape of French visual communication. With his company **on-off** he invented the concept of audio-visual branding, designed numerous logos and created the templates for numerous magazines. By founding the **Futuropolis** publishing house with **Florence Cestac**, he was also instrumental in the recognition of the comic book "auteur".

A prolific creator, at once modernist and close to counter-culture movements, his graphic style is based on three pillars: form, colour, font. Each of which is associated with the fundamental elements that structure his work: design grid and layout key. His graphic world is displayed here amidst his immense collection of books and objects that bring together designs from the modernist and functionalist movements of the early 20th Century, as well as expected and unexpected tools of the trade. In this dialogue between professional projects and pieces from his personal collection, Robial's work comes to life.



exhibition map

## Futuropolis (2)

In the beginning, Futuropolis was a bookstore. In 1972, **Futuropolis** was the first bookstore in the world to specialize in international art cartoons – books for adults, as opposed to for kids. The bookshop closed in 1977 as publishing became the primary focus of the group. Very quickly **Futuropolis** became known in the publishing world for its alternative comics whether it be its publication of enduring classics, finding new talents and young authors, or in the quality of the books it printed.



## Library (3)

"During a trip to New York in 1973, at Strand Book, I discovered **Pioneers of Modern Typography**, by **Herbert Spencer**. The acquisition of this work became a decisive turning point for me. The Futurists, Dadaists, Suprematists, Constructivists, the Bauhaus and De Stijl. The list of forty-eight names was a guide for me and directed all my future research."

## Modernist influences (4)

"I find reassurance in the images and objects that surround me, that I collect. I get obsessed by **Malevich's** black and red squares; they give me courage. Likewise, **Gerrit Rietveld**, **Theo van Doesburg**, and **Piet Mondrian's** work with De Stijl, and **Walter Gropius** at the Bauhaus who united in one school the greatest designers working with form, material, and colour of the day."

## Layout keys and Design grids (5)

The layout key allows the designer to structure the elements of a composition in a balanced and coherent way using straight and curved lines. The page layout template allows the designer to organize format, it is the structure in which text and images are rationally organized in order to create a harmonious proportion between all the elements on the page.

## Colour and Form (6)

The perception of colour is essential in identifying and decoding signs. A colour never works alone and must always be associated with another to create a duo, or with two others to create a trio. Each colour is formed by white light's decomposition. Colours are ordered around what we call a chromatic circle.

## Teaching (7)

Since 1996, Etienne Robial has taught at **Penninghen**, école de direction artistique, de communication et d'architecture intérieure (Paris). His course on graphic and visual conception is constructed around four notions: format, the chromatic circle, the physical and aesthetic management of a space, and the association of the three codes of identification – form, colour and typography – with sound. For Etienne Robial, teaching is an integral part of a graphic designer's job in the sense that being able to discuss a mission clearly and precisely with a client will make it much easier for the designer to deliver a response and impose the proposed idea.

## Alphabets (8/9)

Etienne Robial's fonts have diverse and sometimes unexpected origins. From among these varied sources, Etienne Robial finds new ways of playing with letters and numbers. He manipulates them, transforms their intended purpose, makes them dance or jump, fattens them, and plays with their spacing and alignment, yet he never distorts them. He constructs his own title fonts using grids, frameworks and formatted templates.



## Workshops "Brico mots"

> 7-10 and 11-14 years old  
As the graphic artist Etienne Robial is doing it, young visitors explore the elementary forms and colors of the color wheel. Using a variety of objects, they find and discover new combinations to build and dance the letters of the alphabet.

## Guided tours "étienne+robial graphisme & collection, de futuropolis à canal+"

> Adults, 15 years old and +  
The tour offers to enter the world of Etienne Robial, a key figure in the history of graphic design and publishing, by putting his graphic projects in dialogue with the pieces in his collection, while revealing his sources and influences.

## Conferences

Program available on [madparis.fr](http://madparis.fr).

## Dates and booking



## Groups

Guided tours and workshops for schools, universities, associations, and businesses can be arranged in French, German or English at convenient times.

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For further information please contact us on + 33 (0) 1 44 55 59 78 or [mecenat@madparis.fr](mailto:mecenat@madparis.fr).

## Gift store-bookshop

+33 (0)1 42 60 64 94  
Open Tuesday to Sunday from 11 am – 6.30 pm.  
Closed on Monday.  
Late night Thursday 6 – 9 pm.

## LOULOU restaurant

107 rue de Rivoli 75001 Paris  
+ 33 (0)1 42 60 41 96  
Open daily from 12 am to 11 pm.

## Musée des Arts décoratifs

107 rue de Rivoli 75001 Paris  
Tickets on [madparis.fr](http://madparis.fr)

## #ExpoRobial



## L'Œil Le Journal des Arts étapes:

With the support of **Penninghen** and in collaboration with the **LEGO®** brand

Credits **Alphabet NT Cutter**/  
logotype **on-off productions** © Etienne Robial, Tardi,  
collection 30x40, Futuropolis © Tardi

Graphic design **Maxime Barbier**  
([www.therebootstudio.com](http://www.therebootstudio.com))