

The Character Factory

A data sculpture kit
to question gendered
objects designed
for children.

BIENNALE
DE DESIGN
CHAUMONT
INTERNATIONALE
GRAPHIQUE
2023

Centre
National
du Graphisme

Pilot project exhibited from May 24 to July
15, 2023, as part of the 4th International
Graphic Design Biennial 2023

Atelier Baudelaire

A data sculpture kit to question gendered objects designed for children.

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From May 24 to July 15, 2023
Open to all

Former Sainte-Marie School,
rue Edmé Bouchardon



Prototype of a game table for associating and classifying logos from girls' and boys' toy brands..
Engraved Valchromat® and wood © Atelier Baudelaire, 2023

This project was selected by the patronage commission of the Fondation des Artistes (MABA), Hôtel Salomon de Rothschild, 9–11 rue Berryer, 75008 Paris

A la Fondation
des Artistes

To view the project online
www.atelierbaudelaire.com
www.lesigne.com

Curating, concept,
research, writing:
Camille Baudelaire
& Olivia Grandperrin

Scenography and furniture:
Atelier Baudelaire & Kilian Connan

For this fourth edition of the *International Graphic Design Biennial* and the 30th anniversary of the *Chaumont International Poster Competition*, several exhibitions curated by Jean-Michel Gériidan, director of Le Signe (National Graphic Design Center), will challenge viewers' judgment beyond simple taste. Statistics, as a medium dealing with proportion and *representativeness*, play a major role here — raising issues of balance, scale, gender representation, invisibility, the contemporary, heritage and matrimony.

Directors of Atelier Baudelaire, mothers and feminists, Camille Baudelaire and Olivia Grandperrin reflect daily on *gender determinism* and the origins of the *glass ceiling*, in the wake of current debates on equality. The evolution of their own experiences in the design field combined with the learning curve of parenting led them to question the role of toys in shaping gendered identities. An activity seen by most parents as natural, play nonetheless shapes gendered thought categories through the objects *available on the market*. Many sociological studies highlight the fact that mass-market toys heavily contribute to stigmatizing activities and interests according to a child's gender. For example, the critical analysis of toy catalogs led *Serge Chaumier*, professor and researcher at the University of Artois, to hypothesize: "more technical in their design, more closely linked to consumer society, toys are evolving but the gender divide remains impermeable." The stories told by toys do not seem to evolve much towards a fluidity between masculine and feminine activities. To this day, a *gendered division of activities and skills between men and women* is still statistically observable in adulthood. The choice of interests, professional paths, and consequently power dynamics in *social hierarchies* are still largely conditioned by gender. Do major children's brands bear responsibility in this deterministic phenomenon?

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Atelier Baudelaire

More informations
www.atelierbaudelaire.com

camille.baudelaire
@atelierbaudelaire.com
T. 06 08 56 18 76

olivia.grandperrin
@atelierbaudelaire.com
T. 06 03 15 11 60

Atelier Baudelaire has been leading *workshops* on these topics since 2018, using different data collection protocols. *La Fabrique des caractères* invites us to question the meanings carried by signs, *colors, and words*, and the gender-based conditioning they generate.

Led by *Camille Baudelaire* and *Olivia Grandperrin*, Atelier Baudelaire is a research and design studio at the crossroads of graphic design and spatial forms, rooted in both culture and academic inquiry. Camille and Olivia have been working together since 2021, balancing exploratory research with commissioned design work, where pedagogy and collective intelligence play a central role. They regularly host lectures and workshops in institutions and schools, with a particular emphasis on intergenerational transmission.

A graduate of Olivier de Serres (Ensaama), *Kilian Connan* set up his studio in a shared workshop in 2021, working as a designer and independent cabinetmaker. He explores the fields of design, drawing, and craftsmanship through a diverse practice. From object design to spatial layout, from illustration to scenography, his projects span different scales and expressive forms. Echoing his research on forests, he brings attention to the origins of the materials used in his work and develops a visual vocabulary of soft, organic shapes and kinetic principles.

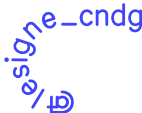
Collaborators:

Research project initiated in 2018 by Camille Baudelaire, alongside Camille Trimardeau, Lucie Soquet and with the support of Sarah Schrader. Workshops based on this research were held between 2020 and 2022 with teachers and students from: the DSAA of Ésaab in Nevers, supervised by Pascal Trutin and Simon Gréau; Télécom Paris, supervised by Samuel Huron; the DN MADE Graphic Design course at Duperré, with Magali Fossier; the ECV Master's in Typography, invited by Aaron Levin; the ENSAD 4th and 5th year DGMM students, invited by Laurent Ungerer and supported by Victoire Disderot; CIFACOM, invited by Erwann Gauthier. In 2022, Olivia Grandperrin joined the project, which received a production grant from the Fondation des Artistes. Initial reflections and research for the exhibition project were conducted with Grégoire Romanet, alongside Amélie Ramel and Mélanie Piat. Camille Baudelaire and Olivia Grandperrin designed the exhibition in collaboration with Kilian Connan (scenography) and Maria Calzolari (research).

The exhibition scenography is designed as a kit. The furniture is fully dismountable, portable, and easy to rearrange. Mobile mediation tools allow for autonomous engagement and clear understanding of the exhibition. Materials used include wood and fabric offcuts..

4^e Biennale internationale de Design graphique de Chaumont 2023

Centre
National
du Graphisme
1 Place
Émile
Goguenheim
52000
Chaumont
France
contact@cndg.
fr
03 25 35
79 01



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*Data sculpture of color palettes resulting from Google image searches for "toys for girls" and "toys for boys".
Prototype of a game table for associating and classifying logos from girls' and boys' toy brands..
Mass-dyed fabric, engraved Valchromat® and wood © Atelier Baudelaire, 2023*

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*Exhibition view at the International Graphic Design Biennial, Chaumont, France, 2023
Data sculpture of color palettes resulting from Google image searches for “toys for girls” and “toys for boys”
Prototype of a game table for associating and classifying logos from girls’ and boys’ toy brands
Mass-dyed fabric, Valchromat®, wood, cut vinyl © Atelier Baudelaire, 2023*



Exhibition view at the International Graphic Design Biennial, Chaumont, France, 2023
*Typographic data sculpture representing the most common words found on a sample of around 300 T-shirts for young girls and boys.
 Educational panels presenting the data collection processes. Mass-dyed fabric, Valchromat®, wood, cut vinyl © Atelier Baudelaire, 2023*



Exhibition view at the International Graphic Design Biennial, Chaumont, France, 2022
*Data sculpture of color palettes resulting from Google image searches for "toys for girls" and "toys for boys"
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