

PRESS RELEASE
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ESCP Business School & Galeries Lafayette group join forces to support art and entrepreneurialism through the "Improbable" Chair

Providing access to creation by bridging the worlds of art and entrepreneurship is the stance taken by these two institutions with deeply entrepreneurial DNA.

On Tuesday, March 19th, Léon Laulusa, Dean and Executive President of ESCP, Jean-Stéphane Arcis, President of the ESCP Foundation, Philippe Houzé, Executive Chairman of the Galeries Lafayette group, and Guillaume Houzé, Image and Communications VP of Galeries Lafayette group, signed the first Chair dedicated to artistic and entrepreneurial creation.

The Improbable Chair, named after an innovative pedagogical approach called "Art Thinking," originated in France within the walls of ESCP, the prestigious European business school. This methodology borrows from the practices of contemporary art to stimulate the act of creation, aiming to create the improbable with certainty. An avant-garde pedagogy that has already trained thousands of students, entrepreneurs, executives, and employees worldwide, placing art and culture at the center of all creation. This bold approach is widely supported and shared by the Galeries Lafayette group.



The Improbable Chair is the first structure to strengthen the links between Art and Entrepreneurship by acting as an ambassador for the creative process. It supports creation by building bridges between artists and entrepreneurs, between businesses and cultural institutions, and between artistic creation and business strategy.



"The Improbable Chair is all about bringing together artists and entrepreneurs, linking art with business in a new way. It supports creative practices by connecting artists with entrepreneurs, businesses with cultural institutions, and artistic creation with business strategy. It encourages everyone to embrace the 'improbable' to think like creators. Through a unique method called 'Art Thinking', developed at ESCP, the Galeries Lafayette group and ESCP offer a way to support, encourage, and spread the act of creation."

Guillaume Houzé, Image and Communications VP of Galeries Lafayette group.

Taught at ESCP for the past 15 years, the "Art Thinking" methodology aims to provide an understanding of creation and place it at the heart of any career or path. It is taught during Improbable seminars: three-day training sessions that immerse participants in the role of contemporary artists to question and express a message through creation.

Recognised and shared by major names in contemporary art such as the Centre Pompidou and certain Parisian galleries, this approach encourages participants to create together and gain insight into their daily challenges or business strategy through the prism of contemporary art.

"The creation of this Chair marks a historic moment for our institution. It reflects our unwavering commitment to innovation, creativity, and interdisciplinary dialogue."

Léon Laulusa, Dean and Executive President of ESCP Business School.



Rével-Art-ion, Improbable, 2022

Supporting scientific research to better understand the practices of creation and disseminating the Improbable pedagogy around the world to teach the Art Thinking method are the main objectives of the Chair. This will be achieved through research and development (scientific publications, doctoral theses and dissertations, seminars bringing together researchers, artists and creative experts), teaching and events (conferences and workshops, exhibitions and openings, Improbable residencies).

“Our initial belief was simple: to make creation accessible to as many people as possible. To achieve this, we developed a method called Art Thinking, which characterises how artists, entrepreneurs, and scientists go through similar steps in the creative process, such as gift-giving, deviating, destroying and drifting. For 15 years, our Art-Thinking seminars have trained thousands of students, entrepreneurs, managers, and researchers across a dozen countries and twenty universities and schools. Partnering with Galeries Lafayette group, a company with a strong entrepreneurial DNA, our chair combines theory and practice to amplify this approach and promote creators and creation in the broadest sense.”

Sylvain Bureau, ESCP Professor, Scientific Director of the Improbable Chair, Founder of the Art Thinking methodology.

To find out more about the Improbable Chair:

<https://escp.eu/faculty-research/chairs-professorships/improbable-chair-by-Galeries-Lafayette>

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About ESCP Business School

ESCP Business School was founded in 1819. The School has chosen to teach responsible leadership, open to the world and based on European multiculturalism. Six campuses in Berlin, London, Madrid, Paris, Turin and Warsaw are the stepping stones that allow students to experience this European approach to management.

Several generations of entrepreneurs and managers have been trained in the firm belief that the business world may feed society in a positive way.

This conviction and ESCP's values - excellence, singularity, creativity and plurality - daily guide our mission and build its pedagogical vision.

Every year, ESCP welcomes 10,000+ students and 5,000 managers from 130 different nationalities. Its strength lies in its many business training programmes, both general and specialised (Bachelor, Master, MBA, Executive MBA, PhD and Executive Education), all of which include a multi-campus experience.

It all starts here. www.escp.eu

The Funeral of 4.5

Akos Piffko, Clément Ouizille, Stéphanie Haubensak, Inès Khoudja, Claire Balva

2013, Installation

The funeral of 4.5 presents the tombstone of a person who died in 2089: Li Wei. It contains his peer review (4.5/5), based on 15,572 ratings received on the multiple platforms he used throughout his life. It also contains an overall rating of his trustworthiness - the Global Trust Rank - which ranks him among the 12 billion or so human beings who will inhabit the planet in 2089.



What will trust be based on if the platform economy spreads to every sphere of our social system? This is the question posed by this 2013 work, which has since been overtaken by fiction (with the British series Black Mirror) and reality (with social credit in China).



The Shiny stream of time

**Mahita, Umberto Bergianti,
Alessandro Bo, Jana Hernandez,
Victorine Moncuy**

2023, Installation: jewellery, ice cubes

The luxury goods industry is regularly questioned for its impact on the environment. What happens to the experience of a piece of jewellery if the stones are replaced by ice cubes? Does the burn felt on your skin and the

accelerated melting of the ice cube help you to become more aware of the impact of some of the things we consume?

Fontaine Marseillaise

Alberto, Eliot, Henry and Sebastian

2018, Performance

In France, everyone flushes the toilet four times a day. The water used is exactly the same as that in our taps: it's perfectly drinkable. Under these conditions, it's hard to appreciate the value of water, the energy needed to purify it, and to use it responsibly.

La Fontaine Marseillaise illustrates the absurdity of this mode of consumption, through a playful moment over a glass of Ricard, water's best friend...



Let's experience toilets in a different way by drinking a little yellow, here's to you!



A single season

**Christine Jacquinet, Laurène Faguer,
Mélanie Vilboux, David Franchequin, Gilles
Rius**

2022, Photomontage and installation: ugly
vegetables and fruit

Of the 11 members of Groupe BPCE's General Management Committee, only one is not a graduate of a prestigious school and only 3 are women. This lack of profile diversity is reflected in the way talent is detected and assessed. Standardised selection leads to an impoverishment of resources and raises the question of how to 'value' exceptional talent.

The creators of this painting have turned Giuseppe Arcimboldo's *The Four Seasons* on its head by choosing a single vegetable, a symbol of male over-representation and uniformity of profile.

Given this reality, what happens to ugly, unselected, forgotten fruit and vegetables, destined to rot?

Optical fruits

Clément Duteil, Meliha Kara, Aneta Orlowska and Thomas Vaneph

2021, Photomontage

There are two main trends in the fruit and vegetable market. One is moving towards organic produce that needs to be as unprocessed as possible. The other is looking above all for year-round availability, aesthetics and maximum profitability, even if it means resorting to ever more advanced artificial methods: use of chemicals, genetic manipulation, soilless planting...

These apples illustrate this second trajectory, where anything is possible. The food industry has developed a range of fruit that borrows from the optical illusions of the artist Victor Vasarely. Enticing, isn't it?

