



Bayonne

École supérieure d'art Pays Basque

HIGHER EDUCATION

DIPLÔME NATIONAL D'ART BAC+3

DIPLÔME NATIONAL SUPÉRIEUR D'EXPRESSION PLASTIQUE BAC+5



Art schools are training grounds, akin to laboratories, placing art and the artist at the heart of education.

It is not always easy to describe «what is created» in these schools. This is partly because it is the students who explore and discover, and partly because the work involves the living, the «in progress». Simultaneously, there is the imperative to address contemporary issues that extend far beyond art itself.

Students create forms, guided by artist-teachers and guest artists. The regular and ongoing integration of external professionals from the art world allows the École supérieure d'art Pays Basque (ESAPB) to remain not only responsive to the continual renewal offered by the diversity of artistic fields but also alert to emerging trends. For students, these moments of engagement and collaboration are opportunities to develop critical thinking, gain a deeper understanding of what it means to be an artist today, and better grasp the professional environment in which they will evolve.

Situated at the heart of the Nouvelle-Aquitaine - Euskadi - Navarre Euroregion, ESAPB operates within a true laboratory of European construction. The uniqueness and richness of this region, in terms of sharing, diversity, and network coexistence, are major assets for an art school.

This geographic positioning and cultural context provide us with a unique identity in the national landscape of art schools, reinforcing and sustaining the influence and appeal of our institution in Nouvelle-Aquitaine and the Basque Country, on both sides of the border.

Building upon this foundation and strong identity, we are able to cultivate dynamic and relevant national and international relationships for our students and educators. Similarly, this framework supports the development of our research programme and the construction of professionalisation pathways in collaboration with partners across Europe.

Delphine Etchepare
director of École supérieure d'art Pays Basque

Workshop with Laura Gozlan,
guest artist 2023/24
January 2024

1st CYCLE

DIPLÔME NATIONAL D'ART specialisation in art

Over the span of three years, the objective of the first cycle is to provide students with a foundational artistic education that prepares them for the second cycle while being robust and coherent enough to ensure the diploma's stand-alone value.

**BAC+3
BACHELOR's degree**

Particularly in the first year, the curriculum focuses on acquiring practical and theoretical fundamentals, which serve as the groundwork for greater autonomy to emerge by the second year. In addition to cross-disciplinary teaching formats, such as the Research and Creation Workshops (ARC) starting in the third semester, and participation in specialised workshops freely chosen by the student from the fourth semester onward, the student's individual project gradually takes centre stage in their educational journey. Whether through specific technical training or theoretical and conceptual guidance, the overarching goal is to help each student develop their unique working methodology.

Each year, four guest artists — some of whom are international — are invited to contribute to the programme. During their three-year course, students encounter a guest artist every semester (from semester 2 to semester 5) for a three-week engagement. This practice, a true hallmark of ESAPB compared to other art schools in France, plays a particularly central role in the first cycle.

2nd CYCLE

DIPLÔME NATIONAL SUPÉRIEUR D'EXPRESSION PLASTIQUE specialisation in art

The second cycle, spanning two years, leads to the Diplôme National Supérieur d'Expression Plastique.

The curriculum is centred around each student's individual project, which consists of three core elements; the continuous development of their artistic practice, an academic mobility project or internship, and the writing of a thesis.

**BAC+5
MASTER's degree**

The programme includes theoretical courses, project presentation sessions, participation in a Research and Creation Workshop (ARC), and studios with guest artists. Students also participate regularly in two workshops of their choice, with the option to revise their selection each semester.

Furthermore, the entire course is designed to address research and professionalisation with equal emphasis. Dedicated educational formats aim to integrate these two aspects within the student's overall project.



THE CURRICULUM

STUDENT'S CURRICULUM

From the start of their course at ESAPB, students are encouraged to experiment with all the mediums taught: drawing, writing, digital media, painting, printmaking, performance, photography, video, and sculpture.

Beginning in the second year, and progressively thereafter, the teaching team provides guidance to help students define a direction for their practice. This includes selecting specific studios while maintaining a cross-disciplinary approach. Participation in workshops led by guest artists further enhances the pedagogical support.

The school's size and the limited number of students per cohort enable individualized attention and personalized learning of tools, techniques, and practices.

Similarly, the theoretical approach, delivered through core teachings and contributions from external partners, allows students to develop a critical and unique perspective on the world.



Cross-border educational trip
Carreras Mugica - South Basque Country
Nov. 2024

YEAR 1 - Semesters 1 and 2

In the first year, the focus is on «fundamentals,» emphasizing the acquisition of essential skills that enhance students' research, analysis, and creative abilities. The aim is to guide students in defining their own experimental space. The involvement of a guest artist during the second semester plays a pivotal role in this process.

YEAR 2 - Semesters 3 and 4

In the second year, the foundational teachings from the first year are expanded with a greater focus on methodological approaches. The significant presence of guest artists, participation in a Research and Creation Workshop (ARC), studio work beginning in the fourth semester, and a two-week external internship provide opportunities for meaningful encounters that foster the development of each student's unique artistic expression.

YEAR 3 - Semesters 5 and 6

In the third year, special attention is given to the emergence of individual distinctiveness in students' work. In-depth exploration of selected mediums in studios, participation in an ARC, and collaboration with a guest artist drive the momentum of creative development throughout the year. Beyond preparing for the diploma, the objective is to solidify the student's foundational skills in preparation for further studies in the second cycle.

DIPLÔME NATIONAL D'ART specialisation in art BAC+3 • BACHELOR's degree

YEAR 4 - Semesters 7 and 8

In the fourth year, students are encouraged to define their projects with greater autonomy. Artistic practice continues to develop in the studio through dialogue with teachers. A mobility project during the eighth semester, which may take the form of a study abroad experience or a long-term internship in a foreign country, allows students to engage with new realities. Additionally, the writing of a thesis initiates a research dynamic in which theory and practice enrich one another, strengthening the overall coherence of the student's project.

YEAR 5 - Semesters 9 and 10

The fifth year solidifies the research initiated over the previous year. The thesis reaches its final form, while artistic experimentation becomes organized around a clear and well-defined problem statement. The diploma presentation represents the culmination of a four-semester process, during which the coherence of the student's academic and creative journey has been reinforced.

DIPLÔME NATIONAL SUPÉRIEUR D'EXPRESSION PLASTIQUE specialisation in art BAC+5 • MASTER's degree

1st CYCLE

2nd CYCLE



Workshop with Loreto Martinez Troncoso,
guest artist 2023/24
March 2024

TEACHING METHOD

Teaching at ESAPB is delivered through various methods: **classroom and studio courses**, **interdisciplinary modules** such as Research and Creation Workshops (ARC), **lectures**, **seminars**, **workshops**, and **study trips**.

Each discipline is overseen by one or more teachers specializing in the respective fields, who guide students throughout their academic journey.

Studio practice becomes a central focus in the second year, starting from the fourth semester. The overall pedagogical approach **balances collective and individual guidance with independent work**.

In addition to regular attendance in studios, each student has access to a dedicated workspace within a shared area, allowing them to develop their artistic production on a daily basis.

The coherence of the student's personal project is supported by a tutoring system. Through individual meetings, at least two teachers oversee the progress of each student. This is complemented by participation in collective pedagogical formats, presentations, feedback sessions, and discussions.

The balance between individual mentoring and shared critical spaces fosters the development of a relevant perspective and discourse on one's own work.

THE TEACHINGS

- ☐ Drawing
- ☐ Writing
- ☐ History, Theory, and Contemporary Art
- ☐ Digital Art
- ☐ Painting
- ☐ Performance
- ☐ Photography
- ☐ Hanging practices and exhibition design
- ☐ Humanities
- ☐ Video
- ☐ Volume / Space
- ☐ English

THE STUDIOS

- ☐ Drawing / Painting
- ☐ Installation / Printmaking
- ☐ Digital Art
- ☐ Performance
- ☐ Photography / Video
- ☐ Volume / Space

EDUCATIONAL TRIPS

A week-long trip is organized at the start of each academic year for all students. The destination typically includes must-see contemporary art exhibitions (e.g., the Venice Biennale, Lisbon, Madrid, Barcelona, etc.).

Additional shorter «off-site» excursions allow students to explore exhibitions and institutions closer to ESAPB, on both sides of the border.



Rien n'est vrai, tout est vivant
Exhibition of 3rd year 2023/24 graduates
ESAPB Gallery, Cité des Arts - Bayonne

THE EDUCATIONAL TEAM

The pedagogical team consists of both artists and theorists who are responsible for transmitting and ensuring the understanding of essential skills, techniques, and theoretical knowledge.

While guaranteeing the progressiveness, compliance, and stability of the educational programme—particularly in accordance with current regulations regarding the organization of studies—the team designs its teachings in a way that is complementary and interconnected with the work proposals brought by guest artists.

In cases where additional support is needed for the development of a particular proposal, the teachers also take part in the supervision of these invitations. The general educational programme, created collectively, spans three or five years, covering all the necessary areas for both the DNA (Diplôme National d'Art) and the DNSEP (Diplôme National Supérieur d'Expression Plastique).

GUEST ARTISTS

Professionals from the world of contemporary creation (visual artists, authors, filmmakers, etc.), the guest artists are at the heart of the pedagogy.

A distinctive feature in the landscape of art schools in France, these invitations take place across all years, with an average of three weeks per semester in the 1st cycle through long-term workshops, and shorter periods focused on research in the 2nd cycle, also involving project follow-ups.

These encounters allow students to engage with the current state of contemporary creation and the realities of the professional world. They open up new perspectives for artistic research and encourage students to engage in experimental and often collective processes.

The diversity of the guest artists' profiles places students in various work contexts, where they learn to master constraints such as time, space, and presentation. This also helps students develop a stronger artistic voice and fosters awareness of the diversity of possibilities when it comes to being an artist today, or more broadly, how to engage professionally in the contemporary artistic and cultural sector.

In close collaboration with the guest artists, the pedagogical team actively monitors emerging modes of production and creation, fostering the understanding of new forms of artistic intervention.

EXTERNAL SPEAKERS

Other individuals (curators, theorists, technicians, etc.) are occasionally invited by the school. These professionals from contemporary creation complement the training programme based on their expertise and research fields.

Artists and professionals can also be invited to contribute in a specific pedagogical format (ARC, Economies of art seminars, workshops).

Access to research dimensions is also facilitated through lectures, seminars, and special study days.



Conference by Deborah Bowmann, nov. 2024
Duo of guest artists in 2024/25
Auditorium of the Cité des Arts - Bayonne

RESEARCH IN ART

Closely linked to the institution's project, research at ESAPB is driven by a cross-border and international dynamic.

Through projects and collaborations on a regional and European scale, it is structured around two main research areas: on one hand, a focus on the territory, driven by ecological issues related to the current crisis, and on the other hand, a reflection on the digital potential offered by emerging technologies, particularly artificial intelligence, its consequences for artistic creation, and its philosophical implications.

Research and Creation Workshops (ARC) - These multidisciplinary workshops dedicated to specific themes allow for collective knowledge and skill production. Starting in Year 2, students are introduced to research in art, with opportunities to explore and deepen these themes through to Year 5.

The writing of **a thesis** in the second cycle is supported by an introduction to research in Year 4, followed by research methodology in Year 5. This training also takes place during seminars where theoretical and practical approaches are articulated and problematised.

Research seminars, conferences, and roundtables complement the formats for transmitting and producing research in art.

PROFESSIONNALISATION

Professionalisation is regarded at ESAPB as a central and driving element of its pedagogy.

In this context, **guest artists** play a key role, providing a significant opportunity to highlight professional experience and expertise. By bringing their practice-based knowledge into the school, these external figures fulfill a different role, who ensure continuity and complementarity within the curriculum. Furthermore, the diversity of profiles, generations, and mediums introduces students to the variety of art ecosystems and ways to engage with them.

Starting in the first cycle, students are encouraged to undertake **observational or immersive internships** with artists, art and culture professionals, or institutional structures based in the Southern Basque Country or elsewhere in Europe. In the second cycle, mobility projects can focus on longer-term internships. We ensure that any mobility project aligns with a professional objective and a research trajectory.

From the third year onward, **a seminar entitled "Economies of Art"** connects research and professionalisation by reflecting on the material conditions of production and creation. It blends practical, theoretical, and historical considerations. This seminar is structured around the invitation of various figures representing the diverse actors in the art world, whether from institutional contexts or holding the status of artist-author.

Across all programmes, **the Makila Makita initiative** coordinates an annual programme dedicated to professional integration, organizing exhibitions for graduates and alumni, conferences, meetings, and professionalisation-oriented trips.

INTERNATIONAL

Inherently oriented towards the international, ESAPB promotes student mobility.

Mobility allows students to explore unfamiliar fields, deepen their personal projects, enhance their professional practice, and refine their technical skills in a completely different cultural and educational context.

Language instruction, educational trips, cultural and professional visits in the territory, international pedagogical projects and seminars, invitations of international artists, and internships in professional environments all provide students with opportunities to incorporate interregional, cross-border, and/or international mobility into their curriculum and personal projects.

The school encourages students to take full advantage of these opportunities.

To support this, specific guidance is provided from the first year onward by the international relations officer.

The second semester of the 4th year is dedicated to «off-campus» mobility. Students have the following options:

- ☞ study for **a semester at a partner institution in Europe or beyond;**
- ☞ undertake **a professional internship in Europe or beyond;**
- ☞ **combine study and internship by engaging in mobility in the cross-border region.**

As part of these «off-campus» mobility experiences, all 4th year students receive financial support provided through the European Erasmus+ programme.

Erasmus+
Enriching lives, opening minds.



Reading - debate - screening on the figure of Orlando by Virginia Woolf, march 2024
ESAPB Library, Cité des Arts - Bayonne

FACILITIES AND RESOURCES PROVIDED

The degrees' curriculum offered at the École supérieure d'art Pays Basque (ESAPB) are located at the Cité des Arts in Bayonne.

The ESAPB provides numerous creative spaces and specialised studios, including:

- ☞ **a painting studio;**
- ☞ **a sculpture and volume studio;**
- ☞ **a digital art studio;**
- ☞ **a photo/video studio** paired with **a shooting studio, an analog lab, and editing stations;**
- ☞ **a printmaking studio.**

Additionally, each year group has dedicated spaces that allow students to continue their research and experimentation outside the studios.

At the Cité des Arts, you will also find:

- ☞ **The School's Gallery:** A pedagogical space for the creation and dissemination of contemporary culture.
- ☞ **An Amphitheatre:** Primarily used for theoretical teachings.
- ☞ **The School's Library:** A place for exchange and research, housing a specialised collection on art, contemporary art, and applied arts.

> Visit the library: bibli.esa-paysbasque.fr

Finally, the ESAPB benefits from the Cité des Arts **auditorium**, which regularly hosts conferences with numerous guest artists.

 **@ESAPAYSBASQUE**

On the #ESAPB YouTube channel, you can find student productions and recordings of several years' worth of conferences.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

for 1st year enrollment via the **ENTRANCE EXAM**

Admission to the first year is through an entrance exam composed of four elements:

- ☞ a practical art test;
- ☞ a written general knowledge test ;
- ☞ a foreign language (English) test;
- ☞ an online interview with a jury of instructors, based on the candidate's submissions for the theoretical and practical tests, as well as their portfolio. During this interview, candidates are expected to select and present 4 or 5 significant works from their portfolio.

APPLICATION VIA PARCOURSUP

A single fee of €35 per session allows candidates to apply to all ESAPB programs.

Candidates must hold a baccalaureate or obtain it during the current academic year. As an exception, the school may accept applications for the entrance exam from non-baccalaureate candidates (excluding high school seniors).

> visit www.esa-paysbasque.fr under the **Admissions** section

for mid-program entry via **ADMISSION AND EQUIVALENCY COMMITTEES**

These committees facilitate the enrolment of students into ongoing courses:

- ☞ **Admission Committee:** For students who have started their studies at other art schools accredited by the Ministry of Culture.
- ☞ **Equivalency Committee:** For students from university programs in visual or applied arts (bridge between the Ministry of Higher Education and Ministry of Culture) or those who have completed one or more years of artistic studies at another higher education institution not accredited by the Ministry of Culture.

Candidates are invited to an online interview with a jury comprising the school's director and instructors, during which they must present a portfolio of personal works.

APPLICATION OUTSIDE OF PARCOURSUP

> visit www.esa-paysbasque.fr under the **Admissions** section

TUITION FEES

- ☞ from €480 to €780 for registration fee depending on grant level
- ☞ for all 1st cycle enrolments: €250 fee for the provision of a new laptop computer equipped with the software required for teaching, which the student can purchase via a buy-back option after obtaining the DNA.

STUDENT STATUS

Enrolled students are eligible for student grants and have access to CROUS services (accommodation, catering, medical care, etc.).



The École supérieure d'art Pays Basque is a public higher education establishment under the supervision of the Ministry of Culture, supported by the Communauté d'Agglomération Pays Basque and the Région Nouvelle-Aquitaine.

It awards national diplomas in higher education in the arts:

- ☞ the **DIPLÔME NATIONAL D'ART**, BAC+3 awarding the equivalent of a bachelor's degree;
- ☞ the **DIPLÔME NATIONAL SUPÉRIEUR D'EXPRESSION PLASTIQUE**, BAC+5 awarding the equivalent of a master's degree.

It also offers two preparatory courses for entrance examinations in art and design schools:

- ☞ the **PRÉPA ART**, a preparatory class for entrance to higher art and design schools;
- ☞ the **PRÉPA DESIGN**, a preparatory class for higher education in design.

In addition to its higher education mission, ESAPB also offers **AMATEUR PLASTIC ARTS WORKSHOPS** open to the public and is committed, each year, to the co-construction of projects with local communities and school groups.

ÉCOLE SUPÉRIEURE D'ART PAYS BASQUE

HIGHER EDUCATION

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