

Montpellier,  
where the future  
is invented

# folies

architecturales  
du 21<sup>e</sup> siècle

*21<sup>st</sup>-century architectural follies*



# EDITORIAL

Relaunching the Follies means renewing our links with the city's history while helping to invent the city of the future. A city that has to break away from the current model of urban sprawl. A city that has to invent a new form of density that everyone can accept. A city of beauty, excellence and sharing.

Relaunching the Follies means inviting the world's architects and developers to come and express themselves in Montpellier, to build the heritage of the 21<sup>st</sup> century by designing works that will stand the test of time. Works of art that will be visible to everyone in the public space, the space of community. Works that will stand alongside those of Ricardo Bofill, Paul Chemetov, Sou Fujimoto, Edouard Francois, Massimiliano Fuksas, Xavier Gonzales, Zaha Hadid, Farshid Moussavi, Jean Nouvel, Rudy Ricciotti, Carmen Santana, Philippe Starck and so many others.

Relaunching the Follies by offering 13 new sites spread across the city means helping to restore its balance. It also means promoting car-free mobility and urban accessibility by building alongside tram lines and future bustram routes.

Above all, relaunching the Follies is all about reinventing them. Buildings that will always be in phase with their times and with new building uses, and that will contribute to the region's environmental and social transition, including the need for affordable social housing. Follies that will take pride of place in their new neighbourhoods and contribute to rebuilding "the city on the city", with a single guiding principle in each case: the architectural audacity of a city that aspires to be the European Capital of Culture in 2028.

Montpellier is a city that has form for Follies. Montpellier, where the future is invented.

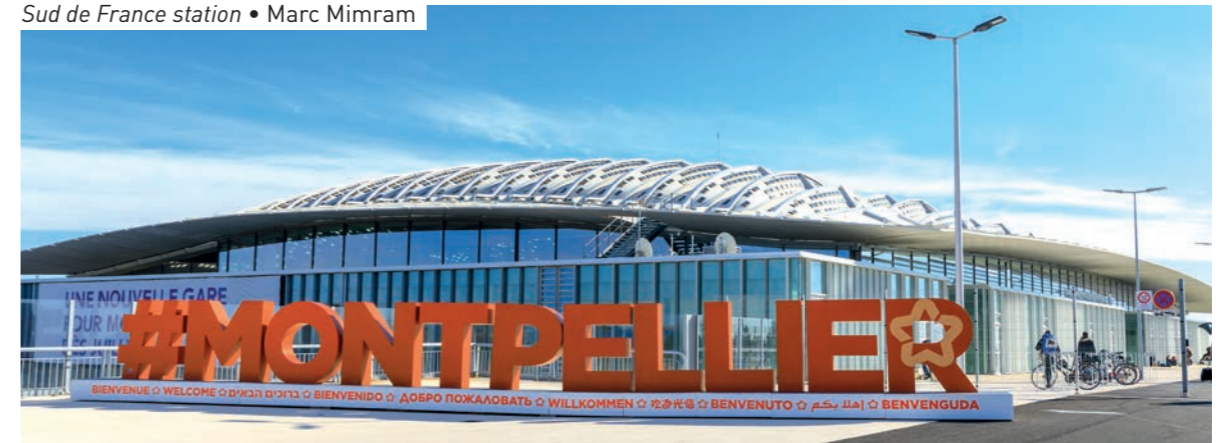


**Michael Delafosse,**  
Mayor of Montpellier  
President of Montpellier  
Méditerranée Métropole



**Maryse Faye,**  
Deputy mayor for sustainable  
planning and land management

Sud de France station • Marc Mimram



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# MONTPELLIER

an urban heritage  
of bold  
contemporary  
architecture

Montpellier, a city that welcomes contemporary architecture, has maintained an ambitious urban development project over several decades with a focus on creating exceptional contemporary built heritage within the city.

L'Arbre Blanc • Sou Fujimoto



A city in the south of France on the Mediterranean arc between Barcelona and Marseille, at the heart of an urban area with a population of 800,000 people, Montpellier offers its residents and visitors architectural experiences with ever-greater originality, improving their quality of life and residential comfort, emphasising respect for the environment and promoting the city as a prestigious urban destination. Founded in 985 CE, and highly attractive to young people (75,000 students), Montpellier is constantly being enriched with a fusion of tradition and innovation. Its successive waves of architectural development have accelerated since the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. This dynamism and creativity, encouraged by the city authorities, underline Montpellier's modern image, hand in hand with its demographic and economic growth and its **status as a metropolis**, while giving meaning to the fundamental elements of its urban development: education, health, housing,

culture and leisure, mobility, landscape, sport, innovation and research, the cultural and creative industries etc. The Architectural Follies programme and the continuation of the urban plan will give rise to **new projects**, supplementing this 21<sup>st</sup>-century architectural heritage and adding **new creations in the region**. This persistence of architectural creativity and urban development generates **attractiveness** through media coverage, tourism and social and cultural interest. It positions Montpellier as a dynamic territory, a pioneer of **new urban ambitions**, offering the very best for residents and users with regard to design, performance and quality in a spirit of sustainable, resilient urban development connected to the rest of the world. This is more than just a gesture – the architectural creativity and high standards call for an equal level of inventiveness and quality in the urban context for these creations, in terms of public spaces, landscaping, urban activity, local facilities etc.



Pierres-Vives • Zaha Hadid

# MONTPELLIER, a never ending Folly

Montpellier's Follies are the expression of 18th-century bourgeois architectural creativity – country houses in landscaped gardens on the edge of the city, since overtaken by urban spread.



Château de la Mogère • Jean Giral



Le Château d'O • Charles Gabriel Le Blanc

Through its connection to the Latin folio meaning leaf, the word links these buildings to the exuberance of nature. Expressing a certain extravagance in their scattered locations around Montpellier, they bear witness to the preoccupations of their time. Built for holidays and for entertaining, the Follies reveal Montpellier's love of architecture. This passion has never faded since the 18th century, when the Giral architectural dynasty inspired the Follies. The baton was taken up by their prestigious successors in projects that were no less audacious: Ricardo Bofill in the Antigone district, Richard Meier and Antoine Garcia-Diaz with the Espace Pitot, Christian de Portzamparc with the Jardins de la Lironde, Jean Nouvel and François Fontès with the city hall, Zaha Hadid with Pierres Vives, and so many others... Closely related to architecture, design also stands out in Montpellier, exemplified by Philippe Starck (Le Nuage), Garouste & Bonetti and Christian Lacroix with his tram designs. All these international award-winners (including four Pritzker Prizes) have earned Montpellier a place on the New York Times list of "places to go".



Antigone • Ricardo Bofill



Le Nuage • Philippe Starck



City hall • Jean Nouvel



G Frêche catering college • Massimiliano Fuksas

"Follies are the only things we never regret."

Oscar Wilde

Folie divine • Farshid Moussavi



“ I believe every building we build should be thought not in isolation but based on a vision about how to live together, and how to take care of the planet that we share in common. We are faced with many challenges such as how to ensure cities are inclusive places, and how different functions are integrated with one another to minimize waste, promote well-being, and affordability. ”

Farshid Moussavi



## 2012 the first contemporary Follies

### FOLIE DIVINE & L'ARBRE BLANC

More recently, Farshid Moussavi's Folie Divine and L'Arbre Blanc by Sou Fujimoto (with Manal Rachdi, Nicolas Laisné and Dimitri Roussel) have demonstrated once again that the power of an architectural idea can contribute equally to the city's international visibility and to the pleasure of living here day to day.

The desire to perpetuate this idea of audacity, turn a street corner into a wonder, build magnificently and accessibly, inspire the architecture of the future, invent new homes for contented lives... Is this really a Folly?

No, it's the DNA of Montpellier. A spirit that is being reinvented in the challenges of the 2020s. The city is backing new urban, environmental and social standards that will be embodied in a new series of calls for projects.

#### Media coverage:

- Over 300 articles in the national and international press
- 8 TV reports
- Instagram page @larbreblanc:
  - over 3,100 followers
  - over 400 posts
- 4,000 posts tagged #larbreblanc or #larbreblancmontpellier

L'Arbre Blanc, completed in 2019, stands beside the Lez river at the border between the Antigone (Ricardo Bofill) and Richter (Adrien Fainsilber) districts. Designed by architects Sou Fujimoto, Nicolas Laisné and Manal Rachdi, it is 56 metres tall and contains around 110 homes, two public levels at the foot of the building and a rooftop offering a panoramic bar and a shared space for the building's residents. This exemplary creation was hailed in many press articles and features. The Archdaily site awarded it the title of Building of the Year in the Housing category in 2020.



L'Arbre Blanc • Sou Fujimoto



“ The idea is creative “madness”, but in realizing it as a real project, we have sought a realistic solution through the accumulation of experience and discussions with the entire team. It wasn't a compromise, but aiming for a high-level fusion of ideals and reality. At the same time, it was important to find answers in a way unique to Montpellier to the major themes of climate change and coexistence with nature that the world is facing. It was important not just to be a solution, but also to be an invention that solves the problem and at the same time lead to people's affluent lives and hopes for an exciting future. ”

Sou Fujimoto

- 2021 – Voted Best Tall Building in Europe by the Chicago Council on Tall Buildings and Urban Habitat
- 2020 – Voted Building of the Year in the Housing category by the specialist architecture website ArchDaily
- 2019 – Shortlisted for the Équerre d'Argent prize
- 2017 – Pyramide d'Argent (regional prize) awarded by the FPI

# 2022 a new wave of Follies

TRANSCENDING  
THE CONCEPT  
of the first architectural Follies to  
adapt them to new environmental,  
social and economic standards.



Koh-I-Noor • Bernard Bühler

Relaunching the Architectural Follies in Montpellier means emphasising a set of ambitions in line with the policies deployed by the city authorities to boost Montpellier's visibility.

- **Architectural excellence and originality:** a city with spectacular contemporary heritage on display, creating an architectural discovery trail in support of Montpellier's bid for European Capital of Culture in 2028
- **Diverse, inclusive uses:** creating the housing and living spaces of tomorrow, accessible to anyone, forging social bonds, helping to create a balanced, universal, community-spirited region, contributing to the transformation of urban space, encouraging appropriation and social cohesion
- **Innovative, resilient architecture:** planning the housing and construction of the future with an emphasis on sustainable building, comfortable housing, fighting climate change, the energy transition, incorporating nature, preserving the existing environment, health and well-being, a child's-eye view of the city and alternatives to car transport for a post-Covid city.

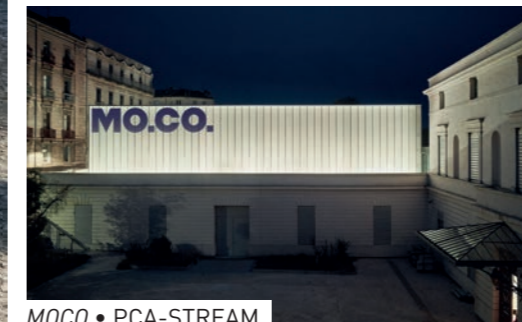


RBC • Jean Nouvel

Acting as landmarks, the Follies will provide new reference points in the city, symbolising its modernity and openness to the world, and express its diverse identity and its culture. Focal points for local pride, stakeholder mobilisation and the admiration of visitors, these Follies will act as laboratories for housing, architectural creativity and provision for new building uses. They will reflect Montpellier's desire for adaptation and resilience in the current global context, confronting and responding to social and climatic challenges.



École Malraux • Dominique Coulon



MOCO • PCA-STREAM

Ten years after the first Follies, the ambition to achieve high architectural quality and creativity, visibility and service by public transport remains undimmed. Innovation and environmental quality, already present, are now being given even greater emphasis in view of the climate emergency and the need to improve residential comfort on behalf of local populations.

— **Aligning the Follies with the creation of a desirable city:**

The city authorities have defined four cross-cutting themes – **the natural city, the city in movement, the resilient city and the inclusive city** – guiding the response to the need to create housing, combat and adapt to climate change, preserve resources, protect biodiversity and support the economy and local development, with an overarching concern for the health and well-being of the city’s residents. To achieve these goals, Montpellier proposes to draw on new paradigms for transport, housing, development, construction and consumption in order to move towards a more resource-efficient and sustainable model of society. The new Follies will contribute fully to this regional dynamism **based on the following principles:**



-  Accessible by tram
-  Architectural excellence and originality
-  Planning in line with a diverse, inclusive society
-  Innovative building in terms of urban resilience



Higher-Roch • Brenac & Gonzalez

# A CALL FOR PROJECTS

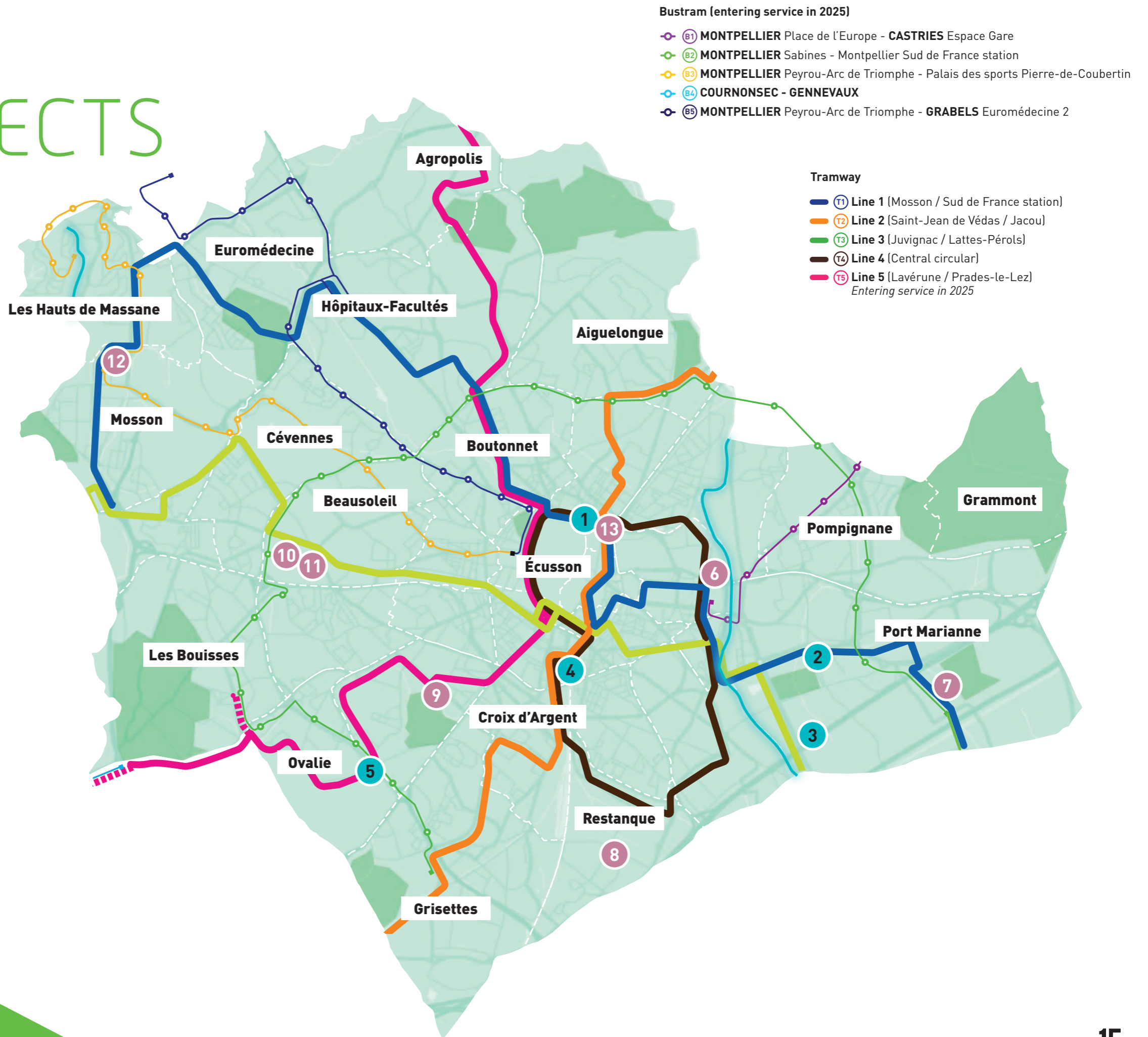
## in two stages for new Follies

1<sup>st</sup> wave of 5 Follies.  
Launch in July 2022

- 1 - Folie Vernière
- 2 - Folie Manuguerra
- 3 - Folie République
- 4 - Folie Nouveau Saint-Roch
- 5 - Folie Ovalie

2<sup>nd</sup> wave of 8 Follies  
Launch in autumn 2022

- 6 - Folie du Lez
- 7 - Folie Cambacérés
- 8 - Folie Restanque
- 9 - Folie Montcalm
- 10 - Folie Beausoleil 1
- 11 - Folie Beausoleil 2
- 12 - Folie Mosson
- 13 - Folie Corum





# PROCESSES and planning



Château le Lez • Edouard François

## TEAMS:

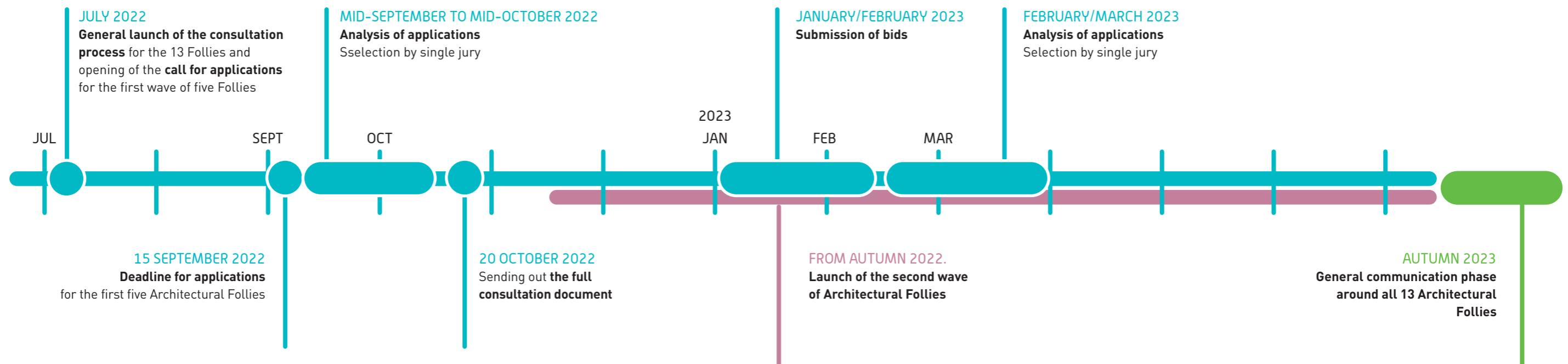
We would like to see multidisciplinary applications (developer, architect, landscape architect, sociologist etc.) for each site based on the city's needs and the proposals.

## JURIES:

– a single jury for preselecting the applications (three per site), which may call on the services of a guest expert and other figures from the worlds of architecture, construction and culture.

– different juries to choose the winners, with the composition adapted to each site.

## First wave: Folies Vernière, Manuguerra, République, Nouveau Saint-Roch, Ovalie



# APPLY

Application form downloadable from:  
[montpellier.fr/folies2022](http://montpellier.fr/folies2022)

Write to: [contact-folies2022@montpellier.fr](mailto:contact-folies2022@montpellier.fr)

## Second wave: Le Lez, Corum, Beausoleil 1, Beausoleil 2, Mosson, Montcalm, Restanque and Cambacérés Folies

# NEW FOLLIES:

## Stage 1 – Summer 2022

### 1–VERNIÈRE

City centre concession



This small plot is an unused residual space in a block of buildings in the Beaux-Arts district. Adjacent to tram lines 1 and 4, it has limited development potential, with the goal of a contemporary composition that will complement the surrounding fabric of traditional buildings. With an emphasis on tertiary uses, the project should become a space for activity and vitality in this neighbourhood close to the Corum and the Ecusson.

**SITE AREA:** 236 m<sup>2</sup>

**PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME:**

Programme open to a maximum height of 18 metres. No basement parking possible. The project must blend with the existing buildings in the block and the surrounding traditional districts.

### 2–MANUGUERRA

Parc Marianne district (Lot 27)

Chief architects of the development zone:  
Architecture Studio + Imagine



This site in the Parc Marianne development zone lies between the Avenue du Mondial 98 and the Avenue Joan Miro. The Architectural Folly project will echo the Folie Divine, Farshid Moussavi's Folly, which is also located around the Place Mattéo Manuguerra. The aim is to offer innovative housing to create a special location and a bond based on the landscape.

**SITE AREA:** Approx. 4,100 m<sup>2</sup>

**PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME:**

8,400 m<sup>2</sup> of floor space for housing, 67% free and 33% for social housing, and a ground floor for business use. The project must maintain visual access, preserve the existing trees, respect a minimum of 40% open ground and enter into a dialogue with the environment.

### 3–RÉPUBLIQUE

République district (Lot J)

Chief architects of the development zone:  
Agence ANMA + EXM



Lot J of the République development zone is open to a variety of uses but is mostly oriented towards a hybrid tertiary facility. A window into the city located along the A709 at the Port Marianne southern entrance to Montpellier, the consideration given to the landscape, infrastructure and environmental conditions constitutes a major factor for success, together with the composition of the built façade to the south of Port Marianne (succession of openings punctuating this urban fringe).

**SITE AREA:** Approx. 2,610 m<sup>2</sup>

**PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME:**

12,000 m<sup>2</sup> of floor space, mostly tertiary (hybrid programme preferred). The project must incorporate three slender forms above the skyline that can vary in height, and a protective foundation.

### 4–NOUVEAU SAINT-ROCH

Nouveau Saint-Roch district (Lot 8a-1)

Chief architects of the development zone:  
AUA P. Chemetov + Atelier Nebout



Central to the project to renew this brownfield site of former railway land and warehouses, the Nouveau Saint-Roch district is a space for contemporary architecture in the heart of Montpellier (Higher Roch, Bellaröia etc.). Various mixed programmes, social and functional diversity, urban park etc. a stone's throw from the station. Lot 8a-1 is aligned with this diversity and targets a Folly consisting of two buildings, open to the park and overlooking the public space.

**SITE AREA:** Approx. 1,600 m<sup>2</sup>

**PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME:**

Plan for two plots on the same foundation:  
Building 1: 3,000 m<sup>2</sup> floor space of offices  
Building 2: 3,000 m<sup>2</sup> of floor space, 40 socially diverse homes. The project will be rooted in a highly urban site on the edge of a public park.

### 5–OVALIE

Ovalie district (Lot 1)

Chief architects of the development zone:  
Lebunetel + Associés



To the west of Montpellier, at the entrance to the Ovalie district on a partially wooded site, the Ovalie Folly consists of two buildings, one rising above the skyline containing housing, and the other lower in height for creative and cultural activities associated with the Cité Créative de Montpellier. The buildings will be a very visible signal aiming to bring life to the district and form a connection with the current urban fabric while preserving the existing trees.

**SITE AREA:** Approx. 2,000 m<sup>2</sup>

**PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME:**

Plan for two plots:  
Building A: 4,500 m<sup>2</sup> of socially diverse housing  
Building B: 3,000 m<sup>2</sup> of offices dedicated to the creative and cultural industries  
The project must include tertiary activity associated with the creative sector to bring life to the district.

# NEW FOLLIES:

## Stage 2 - Autumn 2022

### 6-LEZ

#### Ricardo Bofill district

Chief architect of the development zone: TVK



Located near the Lez, symmetrically opposite the Arbre Blanc with respect to the axis around which the Antigone district is composed, this Folly project aims to constitute a new urban reference point at the eastern edge of the city centre, where Avenue Pierre-Mendès France meets the Pont Raymond Chauliac. Mixed plan combining housing and tertiary uses, social diversity, an urban tower at the heart of a very lively public space.

### 7-CAMBACÉRÈS

#### Cambacérés district (Lots C1, C2, C3)

Chief architect of the development zone: XDGA



This site is located along the Cours de Gare Montpellier Sud de France in a new district focused on innovation and new technology. Rooted around the Place Françoise Héritier to the south, this major project aims to offer a composition bearing witness to the quality of Montpellier's contemporary architectural heritage as soon as visitors arrive in the city, in a dialogue with the other developments (Campus Ynov, Halle de l'Innovation, Halle Nova, MBS etc.), the Mas de Brousse and the Parc de la Mogère.

### 8-RESTANQUE

#### Restanque district

Chief architect of the development zone: Bidding in progress



At the heart of a major urban renewal project, the Restanque Folly aims to play an active part in transforming the urban space by reintegrating this business and warehouse district into the global urban dynamic and offering a flagship of contemporary heritage in the south of the municipality, complementing the other major facilities being developed in the area. This Folly will contribute to the dynamic new image of the future district.

### 9-MONTCALM

#### MESS Cité Créative

Architect/landscape architect of Parc Montcalm: West 8



Linking the Montcalm public park with the Cité Créative currently being developed on former military land, this urban recycling operation involving the former officer's mess aims to offer a contemporary urban beacon with a tower overlooking the park, able to host activities associated with the Cité Créative and incorporate a further events venue. The contemporary architectural addition on top of the reused existing building constitutes one of the major challenges of this Folly.

### 10-BEAUSOLEIL 1

#### Beausoleil district (Lot 4)

Chief architect of the development zone: A+



To the west of Montpellier, on a former military site where the "city on the city" is being invented, lot 4 of the Beausoleil development zone aims to interface with the existing urban fabric and connect to a future major public space in the district at the corner of Avenue Masséna and Avenue de Lodève, served by tram line 3, as the figurehead of the Beausoleil development zone. This Folly must offer a ground level of business space to bring life to the neighbourhood square.

### 11-BEAUSOLEIL 2

#### Beausoleil district (Lot 6)

Chief architect of the development zone: A+



To the west of Montpellier, on a former military site where the "city on the city" is being invented, lot 6 of the Beausoleil development zone aims to provide a slender building in an inhabited park, linking the Avenue de Lodève, served by tram line 3, with the peaceful, landscaped centre of the block and the offices, retirement homes and medical activities for the Beausoleil district, with the goal of creating social bonds, communal living and comfortable housing.

### 12-MOSSON

#### Mosson district

ANRU project chief architect: Passagers des Villes



In a 1960s neighbourhood where the city's improvement and transformation policy is in full swing, the proposed Folly aims to create a new urban dynamic to rebalance the municipal area by providing architectural diversity, new activities and a renewed image that will generate positive emulation.

### 13-CORUM

#### Centre district

Architect: Vasconi Associés



To the north of Ecusson (the historic centre), looking out over the Beaux-Arts area from the roof terrace of the Corum building (conference centre and Berlioz opera house), the project aims to give this space a new collective dimension: recreational, festive, artistic and cultural facilities and landscaping in line with the policy of upgrading public spaces (Place de la Comédie, Esplanade Charles de Gaulle).

# MONTPELLIER

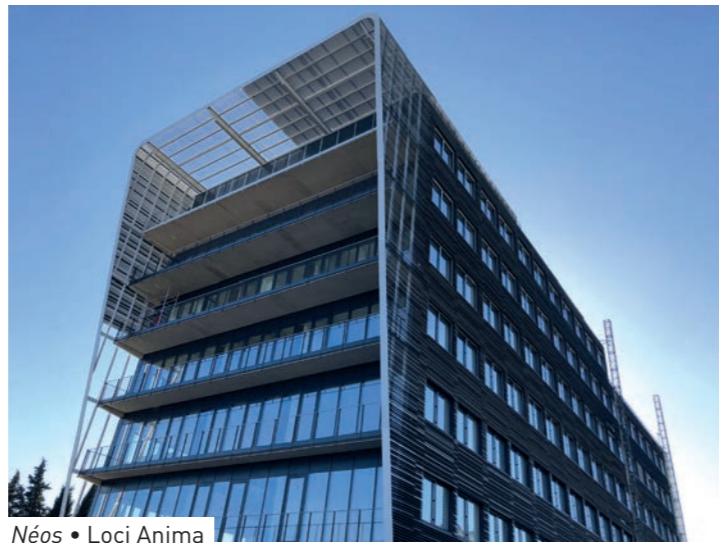
a haven for contemporary architecture



Version Rubis • Jean-Paul Viguier



Mithra • Rudy Ricciotti



Néos • Loci Anima



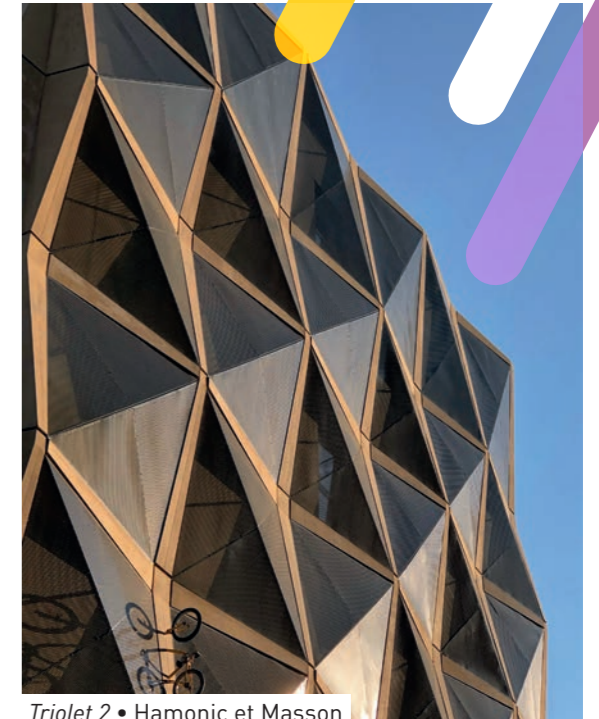
Village des Sciences • BPA Architecture



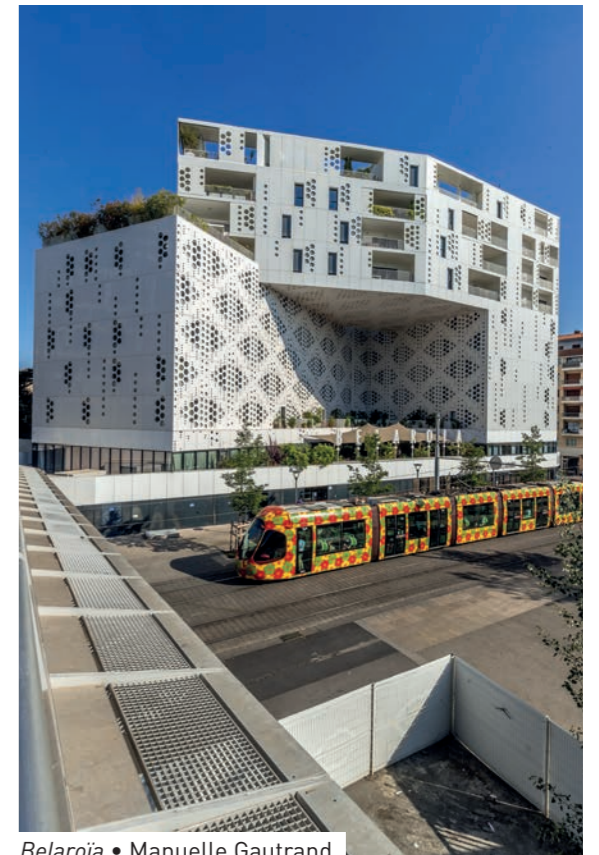
Medical faculty • François Fontès



Jean-Claude Carrière theatre • A+ Architecture



Triolet 2 • Hamonic et Masson



Belaroïa • Manuelle Gautrand



Palomaya  
• Wilmotte & Associés + Jean-Baptiste Miralles



Passage Clemenceau • Cusy Maraval



La Mantilla • Jacques Ferrier



Emile Zola library • Paul Chemetov



District sports office • Jean Chabanne



Atrium • Agence SCAU



Saint-Roch station • Jean Marie Duthilleul



I Park • NBJ-Architectes





# AT THE CROSSROADS of art and culture

Architecture tells its own story by making visible the ways in which it evolves, addresses the issues of its century, transforms cities and gives form to societies' aspirations; it is an expression of culture. Montpellier's built heritage, in all its diversity, illustrates this perfectly.

## Architecture Vives festival

Every year, the Architecture Vives festival comes to the historic town houses of central Montpellier, offering a trail of ephemeral installations designed and created by young architects. The festival spotlights the city's heritage, opening it up to as many visitors as possible. Architectures Vives has been organised every year since 2006 by the association Champ Libre, chaired by Montpellier architects Elodie Nourrigat and Jacques Brion.



FAV 2021: Soleil des jardins  
• Soto Antunez Isabel & Gonzalez Gracia Elena

## Montpellier capitale européenne de la Culture 2028



Since 1999, the European Capitals of Culture initiative has aimed to safeguard and promote the diversity of cultures in Europe, highlight what they have in common by consolidating a public feeling of belonging to a shared cultural space and reinforce culture's contribution to the long-term development of cities in economic, social and urban planning terms, taking their respective strategies and priorities into account.

The title is awarded every year to cities in two European Union countries according to a chronological list defined in advance up to 2033. France and the Czech Republic are the designated countries for 2028.

Supported by Sète, the Occitanie Region, the Hérault Department and the Sète Agglopôle, Pays de Lunel, Grand Pic-Saint-Loup, Vallée de l'Hérault and Hérault Méditerranée urban groupings, and all those who stand by them, Montpellier and Montpellier Méditerranée Métropole are excited to announce their decision to present their candidacy for the European Capital of Culture, 2028, for the very first time.

The historic built heritage, follies and contemporary architecture are an integral part of Montpellier's bid and illustrate an additional element of its cultural wealth.

## Architecture, like culture, is for sharing

Following the consultation processes, various events will be organised to highlight and bear witness to the quality of the approach. This will include Montpellier's bid to be European Capital of Culture in 2028:

- Books, films, videos
- Social networks
- Exhibitions
- Architectural Follies Day
- Project centre
- Exchanges with training organisations (ENSAM etc.), schools, stakeholders and the local population.

As a result, candidates for each wave of the Architectural Follies will be asked to take part fully in these events.



Musée Fabre • BLP&Associés + Emmanuel Nebout



MONTPELLIER CONTEMPORAIN,  
A NEW WAY TO EXPLORE THE CITY  
VIA AN APP



Supplementing the contemporary architecture trails offered by the city tourist office, the Montpellier Contemporain app provides 24 audio recordings to help you discover an inspiring aspect of the city: its contemporary architecture.



# folies

architecturales  
du 21<sup>e</sup> siècle

*21<sup>st</sup>-century architectural follies*

Application form downloadable from:  
[www.montpellier.fr/folies2022](http://www.montpellier.fr/folies2022)



 [villedemontpellier](https://www.instagram.com/villedemontpellier)

