



Renzo Piano, Richard Rogers, Gianfranco Franchini (later Piano + Rogers Architects) and Ove Arup & Partners, Project for the competition to design the Centre Beaubourg (today Centre Pompidou), facade detail on the main square with audiovisual information screens, June 1971, Archives Historiques du Politecnico di Milano (courtesy Renzo Piano and Ruth Rogers).

PRESS RELEASE | EXHIBITION

# 1971 BEAUBOURG COMPETITION

## THE CHANGING PROFESSION OF THE ARCHITECT

### 30.01 → 22.02.25

\*LE CONCOURS BEAUBOURG 1971 - LA MUTATION DU MÉTIER D'ARCHITECTE

Exhibition co-produced by Académie d'Architecture and Centre Pompidou, with support from École nationale supérieure d'architecture de Saint-Etienne

Curated by

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**ENSASE**  
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At the dawn of one of the biggest architectural renovations ever undertaken on its historic building, Centre Pompidou, in partnership with Académie d'Architecture and with special support from École nationale supérieure d'architecture de Saint-Étienne (ENSASE), is paying tribute to the *Centre Beaubourg Architecture Competition*, held in 1971. With around 100 never-before-seen archival documents – drawings, photographs, models, etc. –, the exhibition highlights the impact of this competition on the discipline of architecture and the architect's profession at the time.

Launched in 1970 and created in line with Georges Pompidou's wishes, the Beaubourg Competition was open to all architects of talent, with the aim of creating a unique site. There, in the local square of the shabby Beaubourg district in the centre of Paris, would be brought together a modern and contemporary art museum, the centre for industrial creation, the first public library in France, and multipurpose spaces for spoken word, shows, and acoustic and musical research.

The 681 projects submitted for the competition crystallised the main schools driving architecture at the time: preservers of Beaux-Arts tradition, defenders of Expressionism, emissaries of Modernism, lovers of post-war megastructures, and young representatives of avant-garde movements, ready to transform architecture into lightweight, pre-fabricated infrastructure or turn it into communicating systems.

In July 1971, the panel for the International Architecture Competition, chaired by Jean Prouvé, selected the proposal of architects Renzo Piano, Richard Rogers and Gianfranco Franchini and engineers Ove Arup & Partners from the many submissions.

The 2026 exhibition, held at Hôtel de Chaulnes, displays around forty of the submitted projects and never-before-seen drawings from the archives of Académie d'Architecture, and shows how the young winning team challenged the classic architecture of Parisian cultural sites as well as the profession of the architect, by creating a multidisciplinary team aiming to bring together architecture, engineering, construction and cutting-edge technology on the heels of what was called "Total Design".

Through the themed spaces of the exhibition, visitors will learn about the Centre Pompidou project as a third approach to architecture, between heritage and innovation, with the goal of following in the footsteps of French pioneers of metal architecture and prefabrication, from Pierre Chareau to Jean Prouvé, Eugène Beaudouin to Marcel Lods.

Thanks to the participation of students, researchers and key witnesses to the Beaubourg adventure, the exhibition will be rounded out by Centre Pompidou's Laboratoire d'Histoire Permanente, with a series of workshops open to the general public to "create dialogue" with the archives and living memory of this place.

Drawings from the archives of Académie d'Architecture and plans from the Centre Pompidou Archives have been restored and will be presented to the public for the first time, thanks to the exceptional sponsorship of Pathé and Fondation Jérôme Seydoux-Pathé, as well as Fondazione Renzo Piano and Arup.

## Académie d'Architecture

Académie d'Architecture is a academic society with charitable status, bringing together a limited number of French and foreign architects, as well as members of other professions chosen by Académie d'Architecture and elected by its members. Its missions involve promoting the quality of buildings through initiatives by various actors involved in producing and spreading architectural culture, teaching and research. To do so, the members of Académie d'Architecture seek to debate and discuss the challenges of architecture and local planning through various events, with the aim of always connecting the past, present and future. Along with the priorities of memory and conservation, there is a forward-looking goal of remaining open to the world, based on the experience and reflection of the Academy's members, all driven by the same engagement and passion for architecture, and connected by a friendship that feeds both their art and science.

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### Practical information

From January 30 to February 22, 2026  
Open daily from 12 PM to 8 PM  
Closed on Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

### Pricing

Free entry subject to availability.

### Access

Académie d'Architecture  
Hôtel de Chaulnes  
9 place des Vosges, Paris.

### Partnerships

The plans presented in this exhibition are part of an archive collection that has been processed and promoted thanks to the exceptional patronage of Pathé and the Jérôme Seydoux-Pathé Foundation, as well as the patronage of the Fondazione Renzo Piano and Arup.

