

Steven Leprizé

Cabinetmaker, inventor, founder and manager of ARCA cabinetmaking

Workshop for Research and Creation in Furniture

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Creation :

Workshop : www.arcaebenisterie.com

Since 2011, teacher in cabinet making at the BOULLE school in Paris



Biography

Grandson of a carpenter and Son of an agricultural mechanic, Steven Leprizé spent his entire childhood surrounded by craftsmanship, spending his days in his father's museum workshop, in the sawmill, with his scientist biologist grand brother and in his mother's restaurant. His relationship with materials and engineering became visceral. He trained as a cabinetmaker, among others at the Ecole Boulle Paris, from which he graduated top of his class in 2008. He began his professional career as a cabinetmaker in Paris. He began also to create new esthetics and to develop new materials inspired by movement, surrealism art the traditional craftsmanship and the scientist's innovations. To be free to make herself pieces, in 2009 he created the ARCA (Workshop of Research and Creation in Furniture), specialising in cabinet making and developing innovative wood derivatives such as flexible marquetry and thermoformable wood. But also hybrids of wood and metal developed with scientists during theses, or like the Bois Larmé of the KellyWood bag by Hermès.

Education

2001-2008 BEP in carpentry. CAP (vocational training certificate) in cabinet making at the Lycée du Bâtiment in Rennes, CAP in cabinet making at the Lycée des Métiers d'Art in Vitry.

BMA in cabinetmaking at the Auray art trades school.

DMA in cabinet making at the Boulle school. Top of the class.

Professional background

End of 2022: Artistic residency at Villa Albertine New York Brooklyn

2011- Today: Machine and cabinet making teacher at the BOULLE school 8 hours a week

2009- Today : Manager and founder of ARCA cabinet making

2008- 2009 : Workshop manager at Avenel L. in Paris. Cabinetmaker and draughtsman. Design office.

Manufacture of top-of-the-range contemporary furniture. Manufacture of fittings. Creation of unique pieces.

2005: Manufacture of fittings by Patrick LHERMITTE. Production of kitchens and bathrooms

Contest

2022: Villa Albertine Artistic Residency New York end of 2022.
2022 : Winner of the EDIDA / Elle Décoration International Design Award «Savoir Faire».
2021 : «National winner of the RMC SME Artisanal competition».
2020 : Winner / Remy Cointreau Foundation.
2018 : Laureate / Banque Populaire Foundation for ongoing Research and Development projects.
2018 : Winners of the Stars et Métiers CMA Innovation Grand Prize
2017 : Laureate Talents of exception of the prize for the intelligence of the hand- Bettencourt Schueller Foundation.
2017 : CMA 94 Innovative Craft Company Award.
2017 : Star of the Craft Industry Observateur Design.
2016 : Laureate / Banque Populaire Foundation for ongoing Research and Development projects.
2015 : Laureate / Banque Populaire Foundation for ongoing Research and Development projects.
2012 : Winner / Ernst & Young Foundation.
2011 : 1st prize / Grand prix de la création de la ville de Paris- Category crafts.
2010 : 1st prize / Chambre régionale des métiers et de l'artisanat d'île-de-france- «vive la relève» competition.
2009 : 1st prize / Young Creators Competition- Ateliers d'art de France.

Credentials

- November 2022 : Lecture and Workshop at RISD Rhode Island Design school USA.
- Development of 5 innovative wood-based materials (AirWood / WooWood / Bois Larmé / C°-Wood / SchoopWood) with his ARCA workshop.
- Participated in a thesis at the ESPCI on the «controlled bimetal» effect with his flexible marquetry panels. New pieces under design under the name Baromophe, 3D animation and prototype realised.
- New process developed with scientists thanks to the completion of a thesis at the Ecole des Mines on plasma projection on wood and during several years, work started in 2016. Realization of objects of the art of the table with this process «SchoopWood» with his friend designer Alexandre Echasseriau.
- Creation of a Wood Eagle motorbike with these innovative processes
- WooWood showcase for Cartier at Watch and Wonders
- Piasa auction: Plot bench sold to a collector
- Creation and production of a concrete 3D printing and wood, staircase for a villa in Belgium.
- Production of prototypes for House of Hermès , unique pieces with Hermès Horizon, series of 500 wooden handbags for Hermès Sellier, 200 of which were made with our innovative material «Bois Larmé».
- Design of a CL furniture line based on a new assembly principle
- Technical development, small range and prototyping for Hermès Sellier, House of Hermès , Hermès Horizon
- WooWood interior for the Renault MORPHOZ concept car
- Monumental Citroën logo in Airwood for car shows.
- Monumental logo in Airwood for NIKO at the Kortrijk Biennale
- Frieze of hearts in AirWood for Compagnie De Phalbourg in Lyon
- Monumental sculpture with our C°-Wood for AW² on Grenada Island, Galerie Lafayette
- Design of a series of innovative wooden floors for Les Ateliers du Lys
- Series of 4 pieces of furniture in ebony from Gabon for a big businessman
- Design of a line of baby furniture for Charlie Crane

Major exhibitions

2022 : Series of exhibitions in China «Revelations 2023» Beijing, Chengdu, Shanghai
2021 : «Matières à l'oeuvre» at the Mobilier National Paris
2019 : «L'esprit commence et finit au bout des doigts» at Palais de Tokyo
2018 : «AD Matières d'Art» Palais Léna Paris.
2018 : «For the intelligence of the hand». Homo Faber in Venice with the Bettencourt Foundation
2018 : Inflatable wooden work created for the exhibition «Another banana day for the dream fish» at the Palais de Tokyo co-created with Clément Cogitore.
2016 : «Wood Furniture» exhibitions in Japan
2015 : Exhibition «L'usage des formes» at the Palais de Tokyo
Salon Révélations at the Grand Palais in 2022- 2019- 2017- 2015
Stands at the Maison et Objets show in 2011- 2010- 2009

History

The inflatable wood technology called AirWood was born at the Ecole Boulle in 2007, in the cabinet making workshop. A former founder of ARCA started the development of this flexible wood inspired by illusion and imperceptible movements for his diploma project

The two of us continued to develop this material to make it viable and improve its strength, composition, working with an adhesive engineer, looking for applications and especially customers.

By creating our cabinet making company in 2009 and winning competitions we were able to produce our first works: decorative mannerist walls, logo, table, ceiling lights, light fixtures, shape changing displays...

We also know how to inflate leather, PVC, non-ferrous metals, cork, ceramics...

The panels are composed of a natural rubber membrane holding structure, then the chiselled wood is glued on the whole surface. We use high-tech CNC machining to cut the veneer, but also to animate and automate these walls with complex pneumatic systems. But all this is only possible through a very high standard and a perfect mastery of traditional gestures. Moreover, one of the production stages is the same as that used in marquetry restoration.

Since 2014 I have been developing this material on my own, I have continued to make it evolve by changing its structure, certain components, and the pneumatic mechanisms, finding new designs, new functions. In particular, I won the 2017 Bettencourt Foundation Talent d'exception hand intelligence prize with an evolution of this material whose pockets I opened and reinforced the interior with a textile, thus allowing it to be manipulated and objects to be placed inside. With this WooWood, a little brother of the AirWood, it is the objects that deform the pockets and no longer the injected air, the objects thus resist gravity. We have thus been able to develop handbags, wall consoles, furniture without openings, cable grommets, lighting and other exceptional objects such as concept cars... For the moment, very few objects have been made with these materials. We live by special orders in high-end cabinet making, design and interior architecture.

In 2018 and 2019, we created a 4D AirWood with a very talented PhD student from the ESPCI CNRS allowing us to manage the deformations of the panels over their entire thickness and not just one skin, as is the case with inflatable wood. A toy storage table was created and unveiled at the Salon Révélations at the Grand Palais in May 2019.

ARCA is known for its flexible materials. We have created a very innovative Thermoformable Wood that allows to bend already varnished wood without having to make a mould! Of our 4 materials, this innovation is the most promising economically and ecologically.

But we are also looking for extreme rigidity, and a large part of our current R&D is dedicated to this.

We have invented a new marquetry technique called Bois Larmé: working by «perse» by superimposing grids and veneer, thus obtaining new patterns quickly and above all a resistance to friction that is far superior to a classic veneer. Since 2017, we have been co-financing and participating in a thesis at the Ecole des Mines to develop thermal spraying on wood, using cold spray and plasma nanoparticles. The assembly of wood and metals or ceramics thus becomes possible, without glue, bombarded on wood surfaces or on wood and metal at the same time. As the particles are agglomerated in this way, the marriage between the two materials does not require any additives, therefore no fumes and no aging. The idea is to create innovative objects in terms of function and form. And in terms of production, alternatives to gluing, varnishing and other surface treatments will then be available. We are currently producing objects in partnership with a designer and Saint Gobain.

We are currently developing designs on biodegradable and compostable panels with Kairlin and RDAI.

To be continued ...

