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Screens made of chestnut twigs and 3D-printed connectors are part of the Bouroullec exhibition in Tel Aviv. PHOTOS Studio Bouroullec



Ronan Bouroullec on Screens

Exhibitions for me are marvellous tools and moments. But when we were contacted by Meira Yagid from Tel Aviv Museum of Art, I was exhausted by exhibitions that looked to our past and I wanted to do a project in a quick fashion.

So this show is not a retrospective, it's more of an experiment in production, an attempt to invent new things. This was the starting point. And it was important that the only goal of this exhibition was to make pieces that weren't intended to become products afterwards.

At the beginning, I wanted to call the whole show Architecture but I think that our contribution to architecture works better as screens or as explorations into the principle of walls, hence the new title 17 Screens.

I don't know where my preoccupation with screens comes from. I always liked them, maybe because I wanted to be an architect from the beginning. But this time it was more about abstraction. It's like when I draw – I never know

what I will draw, so for this exhibition we continued to produce ideas until the end.

The project is like a reverie: a fiction of shape that mixes different principles, materials and colours. And physically, it's a very floating and light exhibition; nothing touches the floor.

The screens are assembled in different ways: one piece is a 5m tapestry, another is a 10m screen composed of 10mm diameter tubes, another is made from raw chestnut twigs with 3D-printed connections. There are a lot of materials and different techniques employed, from embroidery and tapestry, to the use of anodised aluminium and ceramics.

Now everything is packed in boxes and ready to go. It will be like a magic trick suspending the screens on site. The project has been a little like researching a new vocabulary. ●

17 Screens opens at Tel Aviv Museum of Art, 31 October 2015.

Prototypes of the
Serif television in
Studio Bouroullec
in Paris.



Erwan Bouroullec on Screens

Samsung approached us three years ago. It was clear they didn't want a product, at least not in the beginning. I think they just wanted to collect ideas and have an external point of view, a certain naivety. There was no brief, no question.

So we asked them to give us some televisions and started to dismantle them. We still have some early prototypes. They're made out of clay and wood, but the screens are still active. They're really strange objects because a rough prototype stool or chair is quite common, but a rough prototype of a TV? It's not what we are used to.

We applied exactly the same methods as we normally do to our projects. We were looking to make something with a good sensation, rather than technical performance. A good piece of furniture is comfortable to use and easy on the eye. That's linked to the fact that it is rooted in history. There is a real evolution of shape, which you can see in an almost Darwinian sense – all the shapes around us are the result of mankind.

But the current design of flat-screen TVs is un-rooted; there is no clear link with the past. This kind of thing happens sometimes when you

discover new technology, new behaviours, new things that have no reference. So, unconsciously, our design for Samsung is a way to re-root the TV, to make it more about traditional values. We wanted to make it a piece of furniture.

The base of the "I" shape is mirrored on top, but this came about by coincidence. When we built the first prototypes everyone started to put stuff on the TV, as if it were a shelf. We didn't want the TV to be on a pedestal, and as soon as we started to put things around it and on it, it began to lose this kind of pedestal approach. It was no longer something untouchable.

We covered the back with fabric because one of the strongest constraints that we gave this TV was that we wanted it to be an object that could be anywhere in a room. It doesn't need to be against a wall. And fabrics have a rootedness in TV and hi-fi systems. Fabric isn't highly technical; it more or less conjures an idea of the past. We all feel lost in the modern age sometimes. ●

The Serif TV for Samsung launches in September 2015.

Brothers **Erwan** and **Ronan Bouroullec** are industrial designers. They work from their studio in Paris.