

◀ LOEWE'S CREATIVE DIRECTOR BODO SPERLEIN WAS INSPIRED BY BAUHAUS AND THE GOLDEN TWENTIES IN STYLING THE STUNNING BILD 9 SERIES, WITH ITS THREE OPTIONS OF WALL, BENCH OR FLOOR MOUNTING.

LOEWE BILD 9.65 OLED BILD 7.77 OLED

OLED TELEVISIONS

Loewe today is most famous for making perhaps the world's most desirable televisions, melding magnificent aesthetics with the highest of technologies for both picture and sound. Here in Australia the brand has recently come under the distribution of Indi Imports, which prides itself on delivering hi-fi at prices near parity with Europe or the States, where possible. Customers over there benefit from the economies of scale available in their larger, more dense markets, so when it happens here, the result really is a win — world-class equipment without the tariff from our tyranny of distance.

GOING OLED

And where television panel quality is concerned, recent years have seen OLED technology take an unassailable lead over the incumbent LCD panels. In contrast to the LED backlights of LCD panels, OLED shines from the front surface, its self-illuminating pixels allowing infinitive contrast, with the secondary effect of lifting OLED's amazing colours to a thrilling level. By contrast LCD backlights are never fully off, just blocked by tiny holes in the front panel, so that 'absolute' blacks are never achieved. Hence OLED has lifted television to a new level.

So it was perhaps inevitable that Loewe would deliver OLED televisions — how could it not, when it promises the very best! Enter the Loewe bild 7.77 OLED, and the bild 9.65 OLED. The first of these uses the latest 77-inch panel size to deliver a huge television (that's a 195cm diagonal), yet one that

Loewe has nevertheless succeeded in making look elegant, with many of Loewe's classic design marks — the central circle and the slim built-in soundbar below, but here only revealed when the screen slides upwards to reveal it, and to deliver a sound backed by 120 watts of internal amplification.

The bild 9 series goes into extraordinary new design territory, as the images here show. Inspired by Bauhaus and Art Deco, Loewe's London-based Creative Director Bodo Sperlein has placed the OLED televisions of the bild 9 range within warm matte-gold or graphite-grey steel stands, creating sculpture that complements the technology.

For each design, Loewe has fashioned a set of mounting options, allowing these super-thin near bezel-less frames to sit oh-so-flush to the wall, or to sit benchtop, or on floor-stands which really do present these televisions as artworks in themselves, coming to life with dazzling images. Again the bild 9's soundbar is hidden until required, while a fabric cover conceals all connections and cables behind.

These Ultra-HD OLED panels support High Dynamic Range in not only the base-level HDR 10, but Dolby Vision and the broadcast HLG standard too, along with all the UHD benefits of wider colour gamuts and high resolution. And as Loewe's Ulf Kaempfer emphasises overleaf, even if the panels are sourced (all the world's TV-sized OLED panels currently come from LG.Display), the final result is still dominantly Loewe, from the image processing 'engine' and software to the supporting components and power supplies. Both ranges here also come with a terabyte of internal storage,



so you can record as well as watch TV. And there are matching sound systems — *klang* — with Loewe's Digital Audiolink ensuring best possible quality and an app which links with the likes of Tidal and Spotify to make Loewe TVs also the heart and control centre of a complete audio system. Loewe's user interfaces have long been praised as intuitive demonstrations of the company's software expertise.

“THE INVENTOR OF TELEVISION”

Such longstanding expertise indeed, that Loewe claims a position as the inventor of television. We have to say ‘claims’ because they're not entirely alone in doing so — indeed some Scottish, or Japanese, or Russian, or even American readers may have leapt from their reading chairs to hear this, since each of these countries has a foot in the door of this particular Hall of Fame. We can at least elaborate on the Loewe claim, which dates back to 1931, only eight years after Loewe was founded in Berlin by the Loewe brothers Siegmund and David L. They first developed radios, and entrepreneur Sigmund took under his wing one Manfred von Ardenne, who had already made the significant development of the triple tube, which can be considered a contender for the world's first integrated circuit. Loewe bought the patent, and used the multi-tube in the inexpensive Loewe-Ortsempfänger OE333 radio receiver.

Von Ardenne continued to collaborate with and receive royalties from Loewe, as well

as going on to found his own research institute, developing the first electron microscope — and Europe's first all-electronic TV system.

The first public demonstration of this television system, using a cathode ray tube for both transmission and reception, took place on the Loewe stand at the 8th Berlin Radio Show in 1931. Ardenne achieved his first transmission of television pictures on 24 December 1933, followed by test runs for a public television service in 1934, after which the first commercially-made electronic CRT televisions were manufactured in Germany by Telefunken in 1934. (Mechanical televisions called Televisors had been commercially sold by Baird from 1928, though these were more akin to radios with an add-on neon tube, the output of which was moderated by a front-mounted spinning disc.) Ardenne was involved with the world's first electronically scanned television service in Berlin from 1935, culminating in the live broadcast of the 1936 Summer Olympic Games from Berlin to public places all over Germany.

So whether that is enough for Loewe to own the role of inventor of the television, we shall leave to the judgement of history! What is in no doubt at all is the continued ability of Loewe to reinvent the television ever since. The amazing sculptural design of the bild 9 models pictured on these pages — and the exceptional technology within — shows how that art of reinvention continues to this day. 

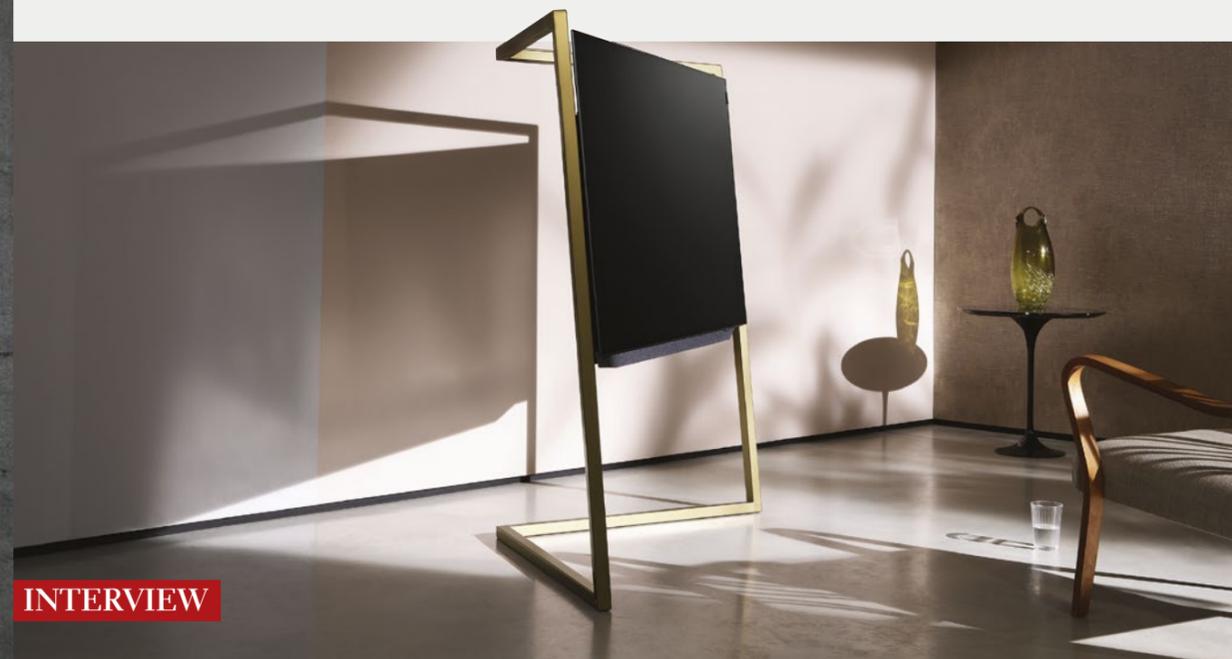


△ MANFRED VON ARDENNE WITH HIS IMPROVED TV TUBE IN 1933. IMAGE: DAS BUNDESARCHIV

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INTERVIEW

ULF KAEMPFER of Loewe Technologies GmbH speaks to *Audio Esoterica's* Jez Ford regarding what makes Loewe different, and why the company has adopted OLED for its latest premium models.

Audio Esoterica: *What do you feel makes a Loewe different to other TVs?*

Ulf Kaempfer: At Loewe we have a history like no other TV in the world. We invented TV, we have been renowned as having the very best tuners and processors. Our dedication to quality has never changed in nearly 100 years... and we are 100% made in Germany. No other brand can claim this.

AE: *What were the design and technical goals for the bild 9 and 7 series? How was Bodo Sperlein involved?*

UK: Bodo is our special designer, we believe in him and we know whatever he touches turns to a class winner. His style extends throughout the design world and everyone respects him and his foresight. We wanted the bild 9 to be exactly that... Class. We also wanted something that reflects Loewe's desire to forever push the look and feel of TV further forward. We didn't want just a TV – we wanted a masterpiece. And we believe we have achieved this.

AE: *And why OLED?*

UK: We always believed in OLED and we have a strong partnership with LG. Loewe and LG go back to even the tube era. OLED is by far the very best in panel technology, and we also believe we have perfected this by implementing VANTA VISION, the truest black, utilising nano technology.

AE: *The bild 9 has a built-in soundbar but also works wirelessly with the klang 9 — can you explain what*

audio configurations this makes possible? And how does your Digital Audiolink operate?

UK: Yes this is correct, the sound system is brilliant on its own, however add the klang 9 and you can get yourself a true 5.1 surround sound system with Dolby HD and DTS HD. You have a choice of either 2.0, 3.0, 4.0 — or 5.0 and 5.1 for full surround. The Loewe Digital Audiolink is configured to suit our klang systems plus with the ability to stream any music from Tidal or Spotify etc... so the TV can become your sound system too.

AE: *I was at Loewe's Berlin press conference at IFA in 2013 — at that time you were looking for investors and announced a cooperative relationship with Hisense. Can you briefly bring us up to date on what has happened since then, and how Loewe currently works with different partners?*

UK: Hisense is a partner with Loewe only in a small way, and only in the bild 1. However the bild 1 is 80% made by Loewe and Loewe only. We only use their panel, while the engine, power supply, chassis and circuitry is all Loewe proprietary, the software utilises the Loewe OS software which provides seamless connectivity to all Loewe products. Loewe had many offers — including Apple — however Loewe had to be owned 100% under German influence. The heritage and the history must be kept the same for it to be successful and to remain true to its word. We are very proud of this. So since then Mark Huesgues our CEO and his investors have the growth plan to propel Loewe to once more become that brand that consumers believe in and trust, and our partner in Australia, Indi Imports, is already moving with the passion and drive that we have here in Kronach, Germany.