



## Bruno Erpicum

### ERPICUM

Kraainem, Belgium  
www.ericum.org

Studies of Architecture at the ISASLB (1983)\_ Rewarded at the Architectural BIFSA Awards 1984 - RSA\_ Rewarded at the Eric Lion Architectural Awards 1986 - England\_ Mention in Architectural Belgian Awards 1994 - Belgium\_ Rewarded at the Prix de l'Urbanisme 2004 - Belgium\_ Participation CDICV - Congreso CIPAI - Valencia - Spain\_ Nominated and/or rewarded at GPAW 2010 / 2015 / 2017 / 2021 - Belgium\_ Rewarded at the Big Mat International Architecture Awards 2013 - Europe\_ Rewarded at the International Space Design Awards IDEA-TOPS 2013 - Villa category - Shenzhen, China\_ Twice rewarded at the "RE-THINKING THE FUTURE SUSTAINABILITY AWARDS 2014" - "Residential Building Built" - Villa category\_ Biennale di Venezia 2016 - Mostra Internazionale di Architettura - Participating Architect, Italy\_ Architect Top 50 2017\_ Architect of the Year for Belgium 2017\_ Rewarded at the GBA Insight Awards 2018 - Best Architecture Firm\_ Rewarded at the Innovative Architecture Iconic Awards 2018 - "Best of Best" with "ORBITAL" \_ Iconic Awards 2018 - Innovative Architecture - Best of Best : Orbital by Tal\_ Rewarded at the I-Novo Awards 2018 - Opus by CEA\_ Ones to Watch for Belgium 2018\_ Global Bussiness Insight Awards 2018 - Best Architect firm\_ Best in Energy Architecture Services - Belgium - 2018\_ Rat für Formgebung - German design Concil : Innovation Award 2021 : Gold\_ Red Dot Award : Winner Product Design 2021\_ Saffca.eu : Membre actif et représentant auprès de le Fondation Roi Baudouin

Estudió en la "Architecture at the ISASLB" (1983)\_ Fue premiado en la "Architectural BIFSA Awards" 1984 - RSA\_ Premiado en el "Eric Lion Architectural Awards" 1986 - Inglaterra\_ Obtuvo una mención en el "Architectural Belgian Awards" 1994 - Bélgica\_ Premiado en el "Prix de l'Urbanisme" 2004 - Bélgica\_ Participó en "CDICV - Congreso CIPAI - Valencia - España\_ Nominado y premiado en la "GPAW" 2010 / 2015 / 2017 / 2021 - Bélgica\_ Galardonado en la "Big Mat International Architecture Awards" 2013 - Europa\_ Premiado en la "International Space Design Awards IDEA-TOPS" 2013 - en la categoría de Villas - Shenzhen, China\_ Dos premios en la "RE-THINKING THE FUTURE SUSTAINABILITY AWARDS" 2014 - "Residential Building Built" - en la categoría de Villas\_ "Biennale di Venezia" 2016 - "Mostra Internazionale di Architettura" - Participación, Italia\_ Arquitecto "Top 50 2017" \_ Arquitecto del año en 2017\_ Premiado en la "GBA Insight Awards" 2018 - como Mejor Estudio de arquitectura\_ Premiado en la "Innovative Architecture Iconic Awards" 2018 - "Best of Best" en "ORBITAL" \_ "Iconic Awards" 2018 - Innovación Arquitectónica - "Best of Best" : "Orbital" por "Tal" \_ Galardonado en la "I-Novo Awards" 2018 - "Opus by CEA" \_ "Ones to Watch for Belgium" 2018\_ "Global Bussiness Insight Awards" 2018 - Mejor Estudio de Arquitectura\_ Mejor en servicios energéticos arquitectónicos - Bélgica - 2018\_ Consejo de Diseño en la "German design Concil : Innovation Award" 2021 : Oro\_ Ganador del Premio Punto Rojo en 2021\_ "Saffca.eu" : Miembro y Representante activo ante la "Fondation Roi Baudouin".



**Forana**  
France  
**374**



**Hifi**  
Belgium  
**378**

“ Architecture is without limits... starting with the initial design up until the development of the smallest details of an object ”

Bruno Erpicum



### Forana

Type: Private House

Total Area: -

Year: 2009

Photographer: Jean Luc Laloux

Design: Bruno Erpicum

Team: ERPICUM



In France, for example, we added tuff, a dust from some Bonifacio stone, to a mixture of cement, sand and stone, so that the resulting colour of the concrete would blend in with the surrounding nature. We also poured this concrete into moulds fitted with wooden planks of different thicknesses. This resulted in a grooved effect and also created flat horizontal parts where vegetation debris and marine sediments could be deposited.

This process gave the impression that the material was alive, with a certain "dirtiness" reflecting the rocks encompassing this enormous structure. We no longer speak of "aging" or "deterioration", but of "patina" and "authenticity". Simply put, an ode to time passing...

En Francia, por ejemplo, incorporamos toba, un polvo de algunas piedras de Bonifacio, a una mezcla de cemento, arena y piedra, de modo que el color resultante del hormigón se fundiera con la naturaleza circundante. También vertimos dicho hormigón en moldes provistos de tablonnes de madera de diferentes grosores. De esta manera se consiguió un efecto acanalado y se crearon partes horizontales planas en las que se podían depositar restos de vegetación y sedimentos marinos.

Este proceso daba la impresión de que el material estaba vivo, con una cierta "suciedad" que reflejaba las rocas que rodeaban esta enorme estructura. Ya no se habla de "envejecimiento" o "deterioro", sino de "pátina" y "autenticidad". Simplemente, una oda al paso del tiempo...

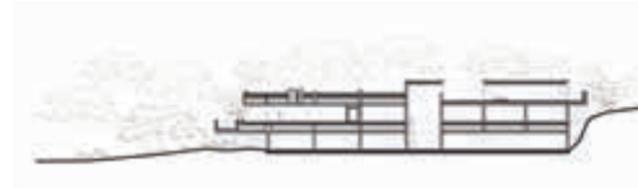


“ Throughout this process, one single objective is kept in mind: eliminate superfluous elements to retain only what is essential ”

Bruno Erpicum



FRONT ELEVATION



CROSS SECTION



CROSS SECTION



GROUND FLOOR PLAN



FIRST FLOOR PLAN



“ Architecture is a question of the reading of the surrounding, not less, not more ”

Bruno Erpicum



### Hifi

**Type:** Private House

**Total Area:** 300 sqm.

**Year:** 2010

**Photographer:** Jean Luc Laloux

**Design:** Bruno Erpicum

**Team:** ERPICUM



The HIFI house is as much a product of nature as it is of human beings. The house is the result of its natural environment and, in particular, a tremendous tree, an oak worthy of the most magical fairy tales.

The coarseness of the oak's bark is reflected in the material of the house, made of unvibrated shuttered concrete in which the aggregates can be seen. Each 30-centimeter layer of concrete has been crafted in a manner similar to sculpting stone to an ideal texture.

The architecture projects us into a fundamental dimension of our experience as a living being as part of nature that surpasses us and embraces us at the same time. It reconnects us to our roots and our deep-seated essence.

La casa HIFI es producto tanto de la naturaleza como del ser humano. La casa es el resultado de su entorno natural y, especialmente, de un tremendo árbol, un roble digno de los más mágicos cuentos de hadas.

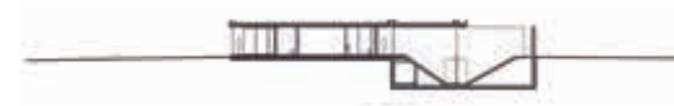
La rugosidad de la corteza del roble se refleja en el material de la casa, hecho de hormigón encofrado no vibrado en el que se aprecian los áridos. Cada capa de 30 centímetros de hormigón ha sido elaborada de forma similar a la escultura de la piedra hasta conseguir la textura ideal.

La arquitectura nos proyecta a una dimensión esencial de nuestra experiencia como seres vivos, como parte de la naturaleza que nos sobrepasa y nos abarca al mismo tiempo. Nos reconecta con nuestras raíces y nuestra esencia profunda.



“ Once finished, nature recovers its rights ”

Bruno Erpicum



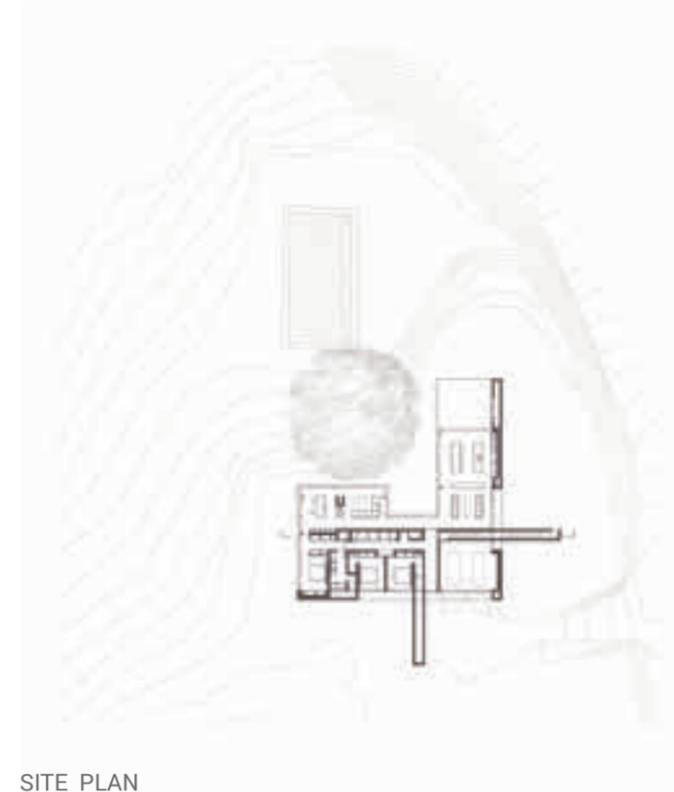
CROSS SECTION



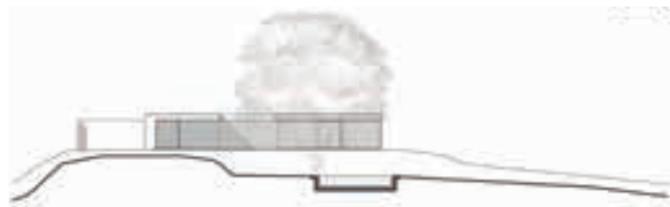
FACADE WEST



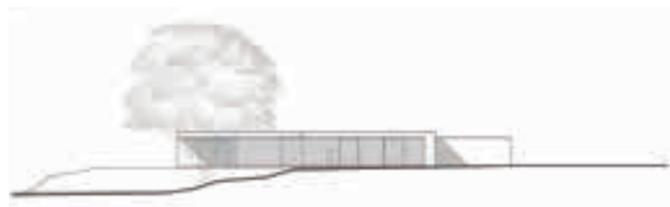
FACADE NORTH



SITE PLAN



FACADE SOUTH



FACADE EAST



## » Bruno Erpicum

### When did you decide that you wanted to be an architect?

When I was very young, I was lucky enough to be able to travel with my dad, a navigator at “Sabena”. I was jumping on planes. Sometimes I was even stuck in a city or airport, which allowed me to be very curious and to live a time in contact with a foreign culture. On these occasions, I visited many of Frank Lloyd Wright’s buildings in the United States – the work of this architect is one of my key inspirations – as well as the famous Mies van der Rohe Pavilion in Barcelona, originally designed in 1929 and reconstructed in 1986. Later, I learned from pioneers of Belgian Modern Architecture such as Louis Herman De Koning, Henry Van de Velde or Marcel Leborgne.

What have I learned from those Masters? Architecture must be essential, it must be beautiful on all levels, from the design of the building to the development of every single detail such as a tap or a switch...

### How is an idea born? Through inspiration? Brainstorming?

The answer comes from a strong reading of the surrounding. I keep the subject in my head, and the idea comes without any doubt, this might take one or ten weeks, it’s not a matter of time nor work, it’s a matter accuracy, of correctness.

### Ecological awareness drives architecture and multidisciplinary design towards sustainable materials, how do you assimilate this new trend?

I’ve always paid a lot of attention to detail so that I can make the most of techniques available and really bring out proportions. But there’s something else that’s recently begun to influence my approach: after five or ten years, many modern constructions that were initially pristine lose their brilliance. And so I decided to turn more and more to materials that wouldn’t suffer the ravages of time, but would instead take on a patina. My colleagues and I have turned our Brussels workshop into a type of laboratory, where we work through different solutions, before taking the final ones to building sites in a dozen or so countries throughout the world. Each time, we compare in particular the benefits of different woods, stones as well as smooth and granular concrete. For the concrete skin of the Casa Forana, for example, we added local tuff to a mixture of sand, water and stone, so that the resulting

colour of the concrete would blend into the surrounding nature. We also poured this concrete into forms fitted with planks of wood of different thicknesses. This resulted in a grooved effect and also created flat horizontal parts where vegetation debris and marine sediments could be deposited. Ultimately, it’s about freeing oneself from all forms of decoration, including the facing of facades and walls – notably cement works –, so that we can continue working unconstrained.

### What would you say your architecture is about?

To project what will be built, it is before any being with listening of the whole of the components of the place called to receive construction. With the manner of a sculpture, construction occupies space; it will have, moreover, the to be lived privilege the interior one. It consequently rests with to us to orchestrate forces, matters, volumes and lights so that, in more than one right response to the needs which guided the composition, is born an emotion from the practice of space.

### The Hifi project it a very open site with many possibilities. Could you talk about the design process?

The coarseness of the bark of the oak tree is reflected in the material of the house, made of unvibrated shuttered concrete where the aggregates can be seen. Each concrete layer of 30 centimetres has been crafted in a manner that is similar to sculpting stone to an ideal texture. This results in a surface that is alternatively smooth and coarse, just like the bark of the tree. These rough-textured walls spread out between two huge smooth concrete surfaces, the floor and the ceiling. This contrast is fundamental and has a balancing effect. Other materials alternate with the robustness of the concrete: the glass of the windows and the polished oak of the furnishings. The house is literally inhabited by material. The result is a powerful structure in which every graft and element contributes to the overall energy that it exudes. The materials used do not deteriorate, they mature. This house brings to mind a grotto and a return to our roots but with the advantage of modern comfort. Living here is an experience that is both physical and spiritual. The architecture projects us into a fundamental dimension of our experience as a living being as part of nature that surpasses and embraces us at the same time. It reconnects us to our roots and our deep-seated essence.



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