



Walking Art: Bespoke Prosthetic Limbs

Feature

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Chad Crittenden with his Bespoke fairing (Ronny Knight)

Today's artificial limbs function better than they ever did, but from an aesthetic standpoint something is lacking. A standard prosthetic leg is a jointed metal pole with a plastic foot at the end. "There's nothing wrong with the design," says industrial designer Scott Summit. "It simply looks to me like a job that's half complete."

So Summit, who had previously designed gadgets for Silicon Valley, created eye-catching covers for prostheses that he calls fairings, after the plastic shell around a motorcycle's engine. The fairings of a bike "give it kind of the sex appeal and the sense of contour and flow." Summit's company, [Bespoke Innovations](#), aims to do the same thing with a prosthetic limb. You can order a herringbone leg, or one with cut-out flower petals, or repeating geometric shapes that look like Moorish tiles.

Matt Sullivan, a veteran who lost part of his leg in Afghanistan, went with a sports theme: the San Diego Chargers' lightning bolt on one side, the Padres' "SD" embossed on the other.

Brooke Artesi's fairing has a pattern of chrome and black swirls that gives her a Terminator look. "You're not going to walk down the street in a Bespoke cover and someone go — oh that looks just like your real leg," she says. "No. It looks like a piece of artwork walking down the street."