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watchmaking industry*

**THE REVERSO,  
UNIQUE FOR 80 YEARS**

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Ladies First Chronograph Ref. 7071R  
in rose gold with sapphire crystal caseback  
revealing the movement caliber CH 29-535 PS



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Thierry Stern  
President, Patek Philippe



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## GRANDE REVERSO ULTRA THIN TRIBUTE TO 1931 by Jaeger-LeCoultre

The Reverso is one of the rare true icons of luxury watch-making. It is the legendary reversible watch invented in the 1930s for polo players who wanted to be able to protect the crystals of their watches, which featured pure, geometric silhouettes inspired by the Art Deco movement. The Grande Reverso Ultra Thin Tribute to 1931 featured on the cover is equipped with a hand-winding movement with a 45-hour power reserve, a black dial, luminescent numerals and hour markers, and is water resistant to 30 metres.

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# Retro-engineering and re-innovation

EDITORIAL



› Pierre M. Maillard  
Editor-in-Chief  
Europa Star

In China, a goal has been officially declared, and it is ‘re-innovation’. To attain this goal, the tools are furnished by ‘retro-engineering’. This ‘re-innovation’ passes by a series of phases that detail the very official *PRC medium to long-term plan, 2006–2020 of China’s Minister of Science\**: “importation, absorption, assimilation, and re-innovation of foreign savoir-faire.” To put it plainly, this is an institutionalized plan to gradually acquire foreign know-how, not only to copy it as was currently practiced at the beginning of the great Chinese resurgence, but quite simply to also absorb and assimilate it in order to improve upon this know-how and then to reinvent it.

Using the techniques of retro-engineering, the functioning of such and such an object can be understood in detail. It can then be analyzed in depth, so that a new one with either the same or more advanced, if possible, functionalities can be created. This predatory process may come as the result of industrial espionage, ‘technology poaching’, student networks, or researchers who have been ‘converted to spies’. But, it can also come from perfectly legal means—technology transfers that have been duly approved and that do not violate any patents.

According to a Western diplomat posted in Beijing\*, the illegal espionage methods used to obtain information account for only “a small part of the ways information is captured, since nearly eighty per cent of technological savoir-faire is transferred by legal means—solicitations for offers, cooperation, partnerships”. In terms of industrial espionage, the Western nations are no saints either. In the same article\*, Jacques Follorou writes that the DGSE (Direction Générale de la Sécurité Extérieure de la France) “has placed at the disposition of large French firms, in a secured location in its headquarters in Paris, confidential commercial documents, including Chinese, that were surreptitiously obtained using satellite technology”.

So, who exactly is spying on whom? The question has become more complex than ever. Today, globalization and industrial espionage resemble

a hall of mirrors where everyone spies on everyone else (under the overall surveillance of the Americans who undoubtedly have the world’s most sophisticated network for ‘capturing’ information). When reading the article by Jean-Luc Adam, our correspondent in China, in this issue, in which he talks about the very discreet Beijing Watch Factory, we discover—admittedly with some amazement—the double tourbillon, the minute repeater tourbillon, and the orbital tourbillon, which this brand has created. It is a programme of ‘retro-engineering’, initiated in 1996 by the Chinese master watchmaker, Xu Yaonan, the designer of the first tourbillon made in continental China. It was introduced in 2003 under the victorious name ‘Hong Jin’, which means ‘red gold’. (In passing, we would like to pay homage to the pioneer, Xiu Tai Yu, who unfortunately had to stop his watch activities due to health concerns, and to whom we owe the first ‘Mystery Tourbillon’, made in Hong Kong ten years earlier, in 1993.)

It would be wrong to unilaterally protest this demonstration of retro-engineering prowess. History teaches us, and it must never be forgotten, that the watchmakers of Geneva, Vaud and Neuchâtel practiced retro-engineering, which let them assimilate and then improve upon—thus ‘re-inventing’—the great timekeeping of France and Britain.

Retro-engineering is as old as the hills. In 260 BC, the Romans, after having seized an enemy ship, copied the standardization processes employed by the Carthaginians in the construction of their warships, and then made a few technical improvements (such as gangplanks). They succeeded in only forty days to construct a flotilla of eighty ships, allowing them to set up the base of their domination of Mediterranean waters.

Also, in regards to what we here could call ‘re-innovation’, we need only to cite the recent example (anonymous to avoid offending anyone) of a young consumer who complained to me that he was incensed that a famous brand had ‘copied’ the model of another famous brand. In reality, it was exactly the opposite and the ‘copy’—much more visible than the ‘original’—that had become the reference. Clearly, one is always the retro-engineer of the other.

\* Source: *Le Monde*, ‘L’oeil de Pékin’ (The Eye of Beijing), Jacques Follorou, June 14, 2011.



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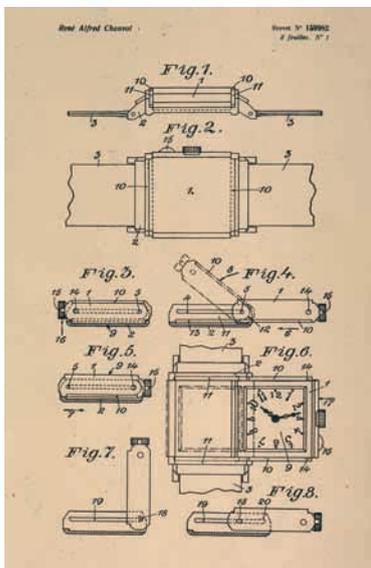
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# THE REVERSO, UNIQUE FOR 80 YEARS



REVERSO 1931



## 1931

Thomas Edison passed away, the Empire State Building in New York was finally finished (at a cost of \$40 million), Al Capone was sentenced to 17 years in prison, Josephine Baker sang *J'ai deux amours*, Charlie Chaplin presented *City Lights*, and Marconi, inventor of the radio, provided Radio Vatican with the most powerful short-wave radio in the world.

In British India, which had at the time a little more than 350 million inhabitants, Mahatma Gandhi signed an agreement with the viceroy, Lord Irwin, giving the subcontinent's poor the right to collect salt themselves. At the same time, also in Bombay, officers in the British army, adept at polo, were wearing a new and completely amazing watch—the Reverso.

As its name indicates, it was a revolutionary and elegant construction that allowed the case of the watch to be swivelled in order to protect the dial from possible shocks and hits received during their rigorous games. A small detail quickly became very important—the back of this rotated

case offered not only impeccable protection for the watch but it also had a lovely polished surface that allowed for personalization in any number of ways. The man who presented this Reverso with its Art Déco styling was named César de Trey—a wealthy Swiss businessman who recently became involved in the promotion of fine watches. One year earlier, while travelling in India, one of the English officers gave him his watch that had sadly been broken

during a furious polo match. The officer challenged César de Trey to try and find a timekeeper that would be resistant to such shocks and breakage during the game.

Upon his return to Switzerland, de Trey made contact with a watchmaker that he knew well, Jacques-David LeCoultre. The manufacture that LeCoultre directed was one of the most complete and modern in existence, and designed and produced already nearly 200 different chronograph

calibres, in addition to being responsible for many technical innovations in the domain of mechanical timekeepers and production. Jacques-David LeCoultre generally worked with a Parisian brand called Jaeger. Together, they had already designed, in 1925, the revolutionary Duoplan watch. This timepiece combined extreme miniaturization and technical excellence, thanks to the construction of the movement on two stepped planes, which let the designers keep a large balance in spite of the small size of the piece. Working together, LeCoultre and Jaeger met the requirements of César de Trey with a case capable of swivelling into itself so that only bare metal would be exposed to any potential shocks.

On March 4, 1931, the engineer Alfred Chauvet, to whom they entrusted the realization of the project, submitted a patent for a watch "able to pivot on itself by sliding into its support".

A legend was born—the Reverso. But in 1931, no one yet knew that these first steps would be the start of a great saga. Rapidly, this watch attracted a lot of attention, which went way beyond that of the polo-playing British officers. In fact, the Reverso, while it perfectly protects the watch—the reason for its invention—it is also a magnificent object in itself. Its pure and geometric forms embodied the modern spirit of Art Déco, the style movement that would give birth to what we today call 'design'.

The Reverso would go on to enjoy extraordinary success, greatly enhanced by the infinite possibilities to personalize the case. Associated with both technology and elegant sophistication, the Reverso is also an 'emotional' watch. The steel or gold back of the timepiece is like a 'clean slate', which anyone can engrave or decorate according to his or her own wishes. Already in the first years of existence, the Reverso was used in this way and, for millions of its loyal fans, it became a truly unique piece.

### TESTIMONIALS

At the beginning of the 1930s, King Edward VIII of Britain had his family crest engraved on his Reverso, as did the Prince of Denmark who, in a letter dated 1934, declared that his Reverso "had always given great satisfaction even after being subjected to all the bad weather in southern Morocco". The famous American aviator, Amelia Earhart, had engraved upon her Reverso the itinerary of her first flight from Mexico to New York, which she made on May 8, 1935. British gentlemen decorated their watches with the coat of arms of the very select British Racing Drivers' Club. The Reverso watches belonging to the elite Ghurkha Rifles, the personal guards of the Maharajah of Jaipur, as well as those belonging to the Royal Sussex Regiment and the students at Cranwell College of the Royal Air Force, all were decorated with the colours of their units. Young English students also wore their Reverso pieces, engraved with the coats of arms of Eton College, Harrow School, or Saint Andrews University. Other owners of the famous watch opted for engravings that represented more personal choices, such as a hut on a desert island, the map of a favourite country, or even erotic scenes.



2011

Eighty years (and 50 dedicated mechanical calibres) later, it would be an understatement to say that the Reverso is alive and as well as ever. Elevated to a cult object, in other words, anchored in history but never stopping to be a contemporary timepiece, it gave birth to a branch of watchmaking with totally unique characteristics. From the original art of reversing itself, it has created more than a thousand uses, marrying all its functions and combining several faces on the same 'body'. It is associated with the grand mastery of watch complications and with the jewellery arts. It has passed between the hands of creative artisans; it has been illuminated with miniature painting; and it has been enhanced with enamel. Yet, the Reverso has never forgotten its sporty origins and its collection has expanded with robust chronographs driven by high performance movements adaptable to all conditions, even the most extreme. In 2006, in the archives of the brand, a second drawing of the case was found—a square one—that was registered at the same time as the famous rectangular case. Designed in 1931, the square case was never made until the Jaeger-LeCoultre Manufacture launched it under the title of Reverso Squadra, a resolutely sporty name.

Among all the watches that were specifically created for this year's anniversary, two models offer special testimony to the exceptional forms followed during the Reverso chronicle: the latest timepiece, and the faithful re-edition of the very first timepiece.

### Reverso Répétition Minutes à Rideau

All by itself this exceptional timekeeper sums up the fabulous history of the brand as it remarkably condenses the mastery of the watch complication (in this case the minute repeater), refined technical prowess (a totally unique 'curtain'), and stylistic excellence (timeless elegance in its design). Not only can we pivot this watch and hide one of its dials, but we can also conceal one of the dials by sliding a curtain over it made up of 16 slats in 18-carat white gold, each measuring 2.34 mm in width. And—it is here that the decorative arts join *Haute Horlogerie*—when the curtain is moved, it directly winds and activates the minute repeater. At the moment when the watch stops the musical countdown of the hours, quarter-hours and minutes on the gongs, the curtain returns to its original position and conceals the dial once more. Clearly, behind the beauty and poetry of this mechanism is a high degree of complexity: the set of 16 slats functions as a chain directly acting on the minute repeater mechanism.



REVERSO RÉPÉTITION MINUTES À RIDEAU

The sliding of the curtain winds the spring for the repeater and activates the chime, thus transforming a lateral motion into a rotational motion.

To this highly sophisticated model, incorporating both the case design (comprised of 270 component parts) and the micro-mechanical curtain, can be added the high complexity of the watch itself. The new Jaeger-LeCoultre 944 Calibre that equips the Reverso Répétition Minutes à Rideau is the latest example in a long line of sounding watches created by the brand—in fact, more than 200 different versions have been developed by Jaeger-LeCoultre in its history. This calibre stems from the first rectangular repeater watch, a Reverso dating to 1994, which was particularly difficult to develop. It is equipped with all the advances, many of them spectacular, during the brand's experience in this delicate domain.

Whether it is about the design of the gong itself (it has a square cross-section, contrary to the normal round gongs, and is made of a very special alloy; it is produced entirely in



GRANDE REVERSO ULTRA THIN TRIBUTE TO 1931



one piece from the heel to the finely ending wire), or the dual-axis system of hammers with a special joint on a movable arm that increases the energy delivered, or the centrifugal governor fitted with a flywheel to control the timing of the mechanical operations throughout the striking action, or finally the original system for activating the repeater by opening the curtain, everything comes together to make this Reverso a summary of the brand's *savoir-faire* and timekeeping mastery.

The team's designers, managed by Janek Deleskiewicz, an undeniable expert in all the stylistic evolutions of the Reverso, chose a very contemporary dial for the minute repeater side, one that underscores the high technology of the case, with its undulating lines, that reveals nearly the entire mechanism. The other side of the watch, which also displays hours and minutes, has an open-worked dial whose bridges are decorated with wave motifs while the second side is engraved with geometric motifs, inspired by the famous Doge's Palace in Venice, one of the chosen cities of the Reverso.



### Grande Reverso Ultra Thin Tribute to 1931

Paying direct tribute to the first in a proud lineage of Reverso timekeepers, Jaeger-LeCoultre is also offering a limited series model for its 80th anniversary—the Grande Reverso Ultra Thin Tribute to 1931. A veritable re-edition of the first and legendary model, it faithfully reproduces the appearance while adopting the new and larger dimensions of the Grande Reverso Ultra Thin.

Created in 888 pieces for the steel version with a black dial, and in only 388 pieces for the rose gold model with a white dial, the Grande Reverso Ultra Thin Tribute to 1931 has a dial on which, like in the original, appears only the term 'Reverso', with the initials of Jaeger-LeCoultre discretely engraved on the base of the watch cradle. Hours and minutes run along the famous minute track rimming the dial, giving this model a clearly identifiable Art Déco purity like no other.



### New options or personalization

Also to celebrate the Reverso's 80th anniversary, the Jaeger-LeCoultre Manufacture is proposing new options for personalizing the timepieces in accordance with the desires of the owner, from a simple engraving of initials or a favourite number or symbol to the reproduction of a more complex motif, and even including enamelling or stone-setting. New character fonts are offered besides the English and Art Déco letters and even touches of colour can be added. Thanks to a new personalization tool that is available online (<http://personalisation.jaeger-lecoultre.com>), anyone can easily personalize his own Reverso—or can personalize it for someone else, to whom he would like to offer a timeless and transmissible object, one evoking a splendid history but available for use in the present. ■





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## SHADES OF GREY

Grey market. Secondary market. Parallel market. Black market.

It can be pretty confusing. What do these mean and what is the difference? And what is the impact to the watch industry in general, to brands, to retailers, to final customers?

There are many different definitions of these terms. The secondary (often also called the parallel market, but sometimes parallel also refers to the black market) is when a brand sells discontinued or older products into distribution methods other than authorized retailers (discounters, outlets, etc.) – this is done above board, without any attempt to hide where the watches are coming from. The grey market is when watches end up in other markets without the acknowledged authorization (from brands, retailers or independent distributors).

“The primary market is when you buy from authorized retailers,” explains Maurice Goldberger, owner of Chiron, Inc., a company that finds alternative distribution channels for discontinued goods. “The secondary market is not novelties, but goods that have been discontinued, and it depends here on what channel you are buying it from as to whether the brand backs it or not. In the States, I demand a letter from the brand authorizing my customers to sell the merchandise. There are some retailers, like Costco, who don’t care whether they are authorized.”

The black market is illegal trading in goods to avoid customs duties, taxes and more. Counterfeit watches are

**If a certain model of a watch doesn't sell in one distribution channel, no one can expect a brand, a distributor or a retailer to just take a loss.**

*(continued on page 11)*

## NEW MOVEMENTS

## Urban Jürgensen: the first detent escapement made for a wristwatch

**A**mong all of the so-called ‘free’ escapements, the detent escapement, which appeared during the 18th century, is considered one of the Grails of chronometric precision. Historically, the role of the detent escapement in the search for chronometry is more important even than that played by the tourbillon. Yet, we find it mostly in marine chronometers, where it is mounted on gimbals since one of its major weak points, or more precisely its primary weak point, is its great sensitivity to shocks. This is undoubtedly one of the reasons why this historical escapement had been confined to marine chronometers until now.

And now, a new version of the detent escapement has been designed specifically

for a wristwatch: the Chronometer UJS08, by Urban Jürgensen & Söhner.

### Exceptional chronometry to make smaller...

In comparison to the traditional Swiss lever escapement, the detent escapement has a few notable differences, which allow it to have the best mechanical performance of all the free escapements. Contrary to the lever escapement, the detent escapement does not have a palette-stone lever but a pivoted, equilibrated detent with reduced inertia and, in the specific case of the UJS08, a smaller size. This detent acts solely on the stoppage of the escape wheel, while in the lever escapement, the action of the fork allows the stoppage of the escape wheel as well

as transmits the energy of the driving force to the balance.

Thus, the latter normally receives two impulses per oscillation, while in the detent escapement, the balance only receives one impulse per oscillation. In the same manner, in the lever escapement, the transmission of the impulse to the regulator organ is carried out directly by the escape wheel. These different particularities are easily observable, both from an auditory point of view because the sound of the watch (its tic tac) is quite different, and from a visual point of view because the tic by tic advance of the seconds hand is clearly visible. (...)



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## NEWCOMER

## Revelation's surprising revelation

**I**t is often said that a ‘revelation’ happens suddenly, like a bolt of lightning. Sometimes, however, ‘revelations’ take their own sweet time. This is the case of Revelation, the brand, founded by Anouk Danthe and Olivier Leu. The two met in 1991 at the Art Centre College of Design in La Tour-de-Peilz, on the shores of the Lac Léman, not far from Montreux. At first, the two founders had totally different careers. Anouk Danthe, passionate for watches right from the start, worked at Jaeger-LeCoultre on the Atmos clocks, at Omega on the Constellations and the DeVilles, and then for a long time at Audemars Piguet. At AP, she was Product Manager during the launch of the Royal Oak Concept, where she worked alongside Giulio Papi. As for Olivier Leu, he worked at Jörg Hysek before creating his own company specializing in design-focused en-



vironments ‘surrounding the watch’, such as displays, boutiques, accessories, and so forth. In 2006, the pair decided to move to the next step and create their own brand. Their initial concept came to fruition after a detailed analysis of the market at the time, which seemed dominated, at least from a media point of view, by many newcomers and independents that were competing with each other in a sort of technical one-

upmanship. While their results were certainly spectacular, their new timepieces often had difficulties in reading the time.

Wanting to combine ‘the best of both worlds’, in other words, technical prowess and good readability, Danthe and Leu developed an original concept that would provide the name of the brand: Revelation. Their idea was to combine two possible visions of the same watch: an apparently simple dial that, when manipulated, would reveal the complex movement that drives the piece. To achieve this, they looked at techniques involving polarized filters. The solution was to place one polarized disc on top of another. When combined, the two discs gave the impression of a totally opaque surface. (...)

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## NEW MOVEMENTS

# “We talk about mathematics and physics, but also about vibratory mechanics, tribology...”



*Europa Star wanted to return in more detail to the Mikrotimer Flying 1000 Concept Chronograph that was presented this spring at Basel-World. To do so, we met with Guy Semon, head of R&D at TAG Heuer.*

**Europa Star:** Without going into detail on the long history of TAG Heuer and its chronographs, tell us how the idea—at first glance a little crazy—to create the first mechanical chronograph capable of counting a 1000th of a second came about?

**Guy Semon:** On my arrival three years ago, we launched the production of the chronograph 1887. But we wanted to push the limits further. Among the existing chronographs, the El Primero was the fastest, with its 36,000 vibrations per hour. We then asked ourselves what we could improve upon. The COSC, which bases its measurements on the second hand, does not certify the chronograph itself but rather the entire watch. Now, when one “connects” a chronograph to a watch, it draws energy and automatically reduces the precision of the watch, notably the coupling, whether this is by an oscillating or vertical pinion.

The chronograph and the watch are there-

fore accepting cohabitation more or less well. The idea then came to separate the watch and the chronograph in an integrated movement by creating two distinct chains, each possessing its own regulating organ and its own source of energy, thus opening the way to a double certification. The different chains also had the advantage of being able to have the energy adapted to the function thanks to specifically designed barrels.

This approach was used for the first time in the Heuer Carrera Mikrograph chronograph, the first mechanical chronograph wrist-watch with an integrated column wheel equipped with a central foudroyante hand and offering a precision of 1/100th of a second. It had two assortments oscillating at 28,800 and 360,000 vibrations per hour, or in other words, 5 Hz for the watch and 50 Hz for the chronograph, with a 90-minute working reserve.

**ES:** How, then, do you go from a 50 Hz to a 500 Hz chronograph, which has a frequency of 3,600,000 vibrations per hour—definitely a quantum leap?

**G.S.:** We now are entering, of course, into the domains of mathematics and physics, but also the domains of vibratory mechan-

ics, tribology, etc. All of this becomes very advanced. The “watch” part rotates at 28,800 vibrations per hour and is equipped with the index-assembly of the Monaco V4, with a smaller balance spring and a smaller balance, but with normal pallets and pallets wheel. For the chronograph, the patented launch hub break system commanded by the column wheel was perfectly adapted to 50 Hz, but the question then was how to go up to 500 Hz?

Traditionally, the balance is there to move the spring back to its initial position but when you reach very high frequencies, the spring must be so rigid that there is practically no need of the balance to make this return. We used a spring with only four coils, about ten times more rigid than a normal spring, which allowed us to forego the balance for the first time in the history of timekeeping. But, it was necessary that the volume of the mass be the smallest possible, and that the central axis be the lightest possible [the inertia is calculated by the weight times the square of the radius]. This axis is therefore made in a particular material, an alloy of aluminium, titanium, and magnesium. Another important point—the pallets must also be the lightest possible. Normally, we use jewelled pallets against the friction, pallets that allow for adjustment. But today, we are able to make mono-block pallets. The physical contact is made at only one point. Instead of sliding, the pallets rebound to the pallets wheel. This intermittent liaison of the pallets and the pallets wheel generates, in return, a hyper-velocity impulse. (...)

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**Why does the grey market exist? Money. Simple as that. Companies have to show a profit to their shareholders, investors or owners, so they will do almost anything to make sales.**

*(continued)*

traded on the black market, as they are by definition illegal, while branded watches are traded legally on the primary, secondary or grey markets. These alternative markets are hard to define and quantify, as no one really wants to talk about watchmaking’s ‘market behind the market’. In fact, all the watch industry sources interviewed for this story requested that their names not be used. No one wants to get on the wrong side of what everyone considers a huge problem.

## The issue

The issue is an elemental one – watch manufacturers, distributors and retailers all, at the end of the day, have to make money. That means that they have to sell watches.

If a certain model of a watch doesn’t sell in one distribution channel, no one can expect a brand, a distributor or a retailer to just take a loss. A solution has to be found, and that often means that a watch ends up in an alternate distribution channel at a significant discount.

Here’s a concrete example: Brand X has a new model, the Alpha watch, that the management is sure will be a hit, so 10,000 units are produced at 1,000 CHF each, wholesale. At BaselWorld, distributors and retailers are unimpressed with the Alpha and orders only amount to 3,000 pieces, leaving Brand X with 7,000 pieces in stock. In order to recoup its money, Brand X has no choice but to discount the 7,000 Alphas, selling them into alternative channels at 500 CHF wholesale. Now, there are watches

*(continued on page 12)*

*(continued)*

in retailers' shops priced at keystone, or 2,000 CHF, while a boatload of Alphas are in the market at significantly less, let's say 750 CHF, which is lower than the wholesale price the retailers paid.

How can retailers move the product they have, when savvy customers know how much the Alpha costs in other distribution channels. Retailers can discount the Alpha, but they cannot even come close to the market price set by the brand discounting, as they would be selling at a loss, which they sometimes do to recuperate some money.

The Alpha is a model that dies, but its legacy lives on as retailers resent the brand for letting the model get into alternative, competing distribution channels. The brand resents the retailers for not fully supporting the Alpha. Consumers question the value of the brand in general, when they see the Alpha in authorized retailers at 2,000 CHF and on-line or at an unauthorized retailer at 750 CHF. If this happens too often, the brand loses all credibility throughout its distribution channel and it could be the beginning of the end. Now, let's look at another situation, without the negative impact.

Let's say Brand Y introduces the Beta watch. For the first year, Brand Y only sells the Beta into its authorized distribution. The Beta does reasonably well, but after a year, there is still stock held by the brand and its retailers. Brand Y decides to discontinue the Beta, gives its retail distribution a certain amount of time to liquidate what they have, and then proceeds to sell its remain-

**One brand representative remembers seeing pawn shops in Macau buying watches directly from a high-end brand at pennies on the retail price. The watches were in brand new packaging and from the current collection, as well.**

*(continued on page 14)*

## NEW TREND Tailored time

MAKIE WILD HORSES by Speake-Marin

*Not content with limited editions or unique pieces, an increasing number of watch collectors are now commissioning their very own timepieces, but is this trend a boon or bane for the watch industry?*

### The trend for exclusivity

It doesn't matter what a collector collects: watches, cars, paintings, first editions or marbles - the most favoured objects will always be those that are the rarest and most exclusive. In a world that appears to be growing forever smaller, there is a certain gratification in knowing that only one, or seven, or even 99 people in the whole world are walking around wearing the exact same watch.

The ladies watch brand DeLaneau has recognised this particular consumer fancy and has created a 'Pairs' collection with limited series of two timepieces. There is even the opportunity to connect to the person who purchases the twin timepiece, creating a bond between two women and their similar tastes.

The concept of limited editions has become a huge success story and it is rare to find a company today that doesn't offer some of its collections as a limited series. As this



ATAME COLIBRI by DeLaneau



passion for uniqueness has become prolific throughout the watch industry, a few watch brands have seen the opportunity to become even more exclusive with one-of-a-kind timepieces, where the probability of crossing someone with the same timepiece is reduced to zero.

Jean Dunand, is one such brand whose USP is to create unique 1/1 timepieces that combine state-of-the-art mechanisms with a variety of different Art Deco inspired crafts such as enamelling, lacquer, guilloché, engraving, gem-setting and more.

### The bespoke piece

For some aficionados who have extensive collections, or watch lovers who have a dream watch in mind, the ultimate in exclusivity is a custom-made timepiece.



TOURBILLON ORBITAL DANCING KOI by Jean Dunand

Bespoke watchmaking is not something new, as long as there have been watch collectors, there have been bespoke watches. Famous commissions include the Breguet pocket watch ordered for Queen Marie-Antoinette in 1783 by an admiring Officer of the Queen's Guard, and the more recent Patek Philippe Graves Complication, which was commissioned by Henry Graves Jr in 1930 and fetched an astounding US\$11 million at auction in 1999. With modern day production methods, a bespoke piece doesn't necessarily need a mortgage to finance either, and an increasing number of collectors are taking the plunge. Although caution should be taken as the production of a dream watch can be fraught with hazards for both the client and the watchmaker.

### Risky business

One of the problems with making a custom timepiece is that the finished result may not match what the client had in mind. "Imagine a client asks for a dragon holding a globe," explains Peter Speake-Marin, "there are a zillion potential ways it could turn out. So far none of my clients have ever been disappointed with the outcome, but the possibilities for disappointment are always there," he shares. With drawings and computer renditions, these risks can be reduced, but they can never be totally eliminated. (...)

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## BEHIND THE SCENES

# Japanese art meets Swiss mechanics

**Retailers have to be reasonable about their expectations – they can't demand that brands take back everything that doesn't sell, without knowing that it might end up at an unauthorized competitor.**

(continued)

ing stock into an alternative channel at a discount. Brand Y is protecting its brand equity by not confusing the consumer and is protecting its retailers for a period of time, giving them time to sell the Beta. Then, it cuts its losses and sells to an alternate channel.

Retailers may still complain about Scenario B, saying that it's not really fair. Brand Y did all it could to see that the retailers succeeded, giving them every chance to sell the Beta. When it was clear that the Beta would not sell through completely, Brand Y cut its losses and went to the alternative channels.

This second scenario is similar to what is the accepted practice in fashion – aged goods and last year's styles are often discounted and no one gives it a second thought. Consumers know they are buying clothing that is not in the current collection and they don't question the brand's image or quality. Now, watches are designed to be more timeless than clothing with a lifecycle that is typically quite a bit longer, but companies could approach secondary distribution like clothing. (...)

Read the full story online for answers to the following questions:

Why do it?

Where they come from?

Legal or illegal?

Who is to blame?

What can be done?

Japanese lacquer dates back to Japan's Jomon period, 5,000 BC, and like many of the Swiss watch arts (enamel, guilloché and engraving), it came very close to extinction. Today only a handful of dedicated craftsmen are keeping this ancient tradition alive, with a little help from the Swiss watch industry.

Brands such as Vacheron Constantin, Van Cleef & Arpels, Chopard, Peter Speake-Marin, Jean Dunand and Angular Momentum have become captivated by this magical Asian art and are working together with lacquer artists to create dials that are miniature works of art.



## Raw materials

Lacquerware is extremely popular in Asia and was initially developed to protect everyday objects from deteriorating. Lacquer can be found on everything from bowls to tea caddies and even furniture, but there are numerous techniques, from simple varnishes to the application of lac (a resin made from the secretions of insects) and true lacquer, which comes from the sap of the *Rhus verniciiflua* lacquer tree, better known as the *urushi* tree. (...)

Read full article on  
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## New looks and new boutiques for Bedat & Co

*Bedat & Co affirms itself in the women's watch segment with new products and an intense global expansion strategy.*

### New creations

Creating feminine, elegant and yet robust watches for today's women is no easy task. "Women are constantly transforming – they have different roles. So the watch you create must adapt and fit to all these needs. You must bring poetry as well as function to their lives through what you create," explains Dino Modolo, Bedat & Co's Creative Director. Modolo has certainly brought all his magic to the latest new models in Bedat & Co's No. 8 collection this year. The first is the Reference 827 that comes in a 26.5mm case and is fitted with a quartz movement, and the second is the Reference 828 which is housed in a 36.5mm case with an automatic movement and date display at 3 o'clock.. Both have been redesigned to include a choice of either

a steel case and hand-sewn alligator strap or a bicolour case (steel and 18-carat yellow gold) with a matching bicolour bracelet. New design elements include a revised concave bezel and a decorative border that is engraved into the caseback. The clasp depicts the famous Bedat & Co signature number '8', a symbol of luck and prosperity, as well as the shape of an hourglass, and has been refined to sit comfortably on the wrist.

### Dynamic distribution

On the distribution side, 2010 has been a dynamic year for Bedat & Co with the revitalisation of the American market that now boasts 70 points of sale (including the prestigious Bergdorf Goodman, Barneys New York and Lane Crawford). The brand is also working with a new European distributor and doors have recently opened in Spain, Portugal and Italy.

Asia remains a strong territory for the brand and its expansion continues strongly with a



staggering 50 points of sale in Japan. Three new openings took place in Hong Kong and a further three in Manila in 2010 and the brand continues to hold luxury events to reach new clients.

With great resources on the design, production and distribution side expect to be seeing more of Bedat & Co throughout the coming year.



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