

COVER STORY:
TUDOR, A HERITAGE
TRANSFORMED



HIGH-END CRAFT STRATEGIES

CHANEL – PATEK PHILIPPE – VACHERON CONSTANTIN
HARRY WINSTON – BREGUET – BOVET – GOS – CARTIER
JULIEN COUDRAY – ANGULAR MOMENTUM – PASCAL VAUCHER
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STRATEGIC ARTISTIC CRAFTS



► **Editorial**
Pierre M. Maillard
Editor-in-chief
Europa Star

Watchmaking was born ornamental. The first wearable watches astonished and were soon taken up by the rich and the powerful. But they were most inaccurate and their value lay less in their use as an instrument and more in their ornamental richness. The artistic crafts and watchmaking have been closely linked ever since, for better, often, and sometimes for worse if we consider some monuments of rich kitsch that have been produced over the years. But this relationship between artistic crafts and technical professions has witnessed both intense and calmer periods. The birth of precision watchmaking and later the sacrosanct rules of the Bauhaus movement ("form follows function") pushed decoration into the background for a while, without it disappearing completely. But the chances of the knowledge of such crafts being passed on plummeted and entire branches disappeared, while others found themselves under threat of extinction. And yet for the past few years, the artistic crafts have made a big comeback, to such an extent that at the SIHH and BaselWorld the number of brands presenting their "Métiers d'Art" collections has increased considerably. But what are the reasons behind this? There are actually several of them and they come together to create a small phenomenon. The artistic crafts have become strategic. Through them, a number of global brands are aiming to lay claim to legitimacy at the top of the watchmaking pile, not for financial reasons (the volumes produced, which by their very nature are highly restricted, do not make them a major profit centre) but in terms of brand image and prestige.

But there are other considerations to take into account in addition to these marketing reasons. We are coming to the end of an era when mechanical watchmaking has gone from one technical breakthrough to another, directly influencing the aesthetics of the watch. To a certain extent, mechanics has spread to the dials, with a number of watches now proudly showing off their technical entrails as a new form of proud decoration. The mechanics have become a decoration in their own right, at a cost of numerous excesses. Today, owing to the crisis, we are witnessing a return to moderation and classicism. The ultra-thin, uncluttered watch is gaining ground. By the same token, the tradition of the artistic crafts is also experiencing a revival, as a sort of counterweight against the dominant technicality. In this context, being able to present unique works of art in which the craftsman's hand takes the most important role has a reflection on the whole product range. It is now the in thing to have one's own plumassier, marquetry artist for straw or hard stones, one's own enameller or engraver. It is even better to bring together different artistic crafts working in collaboration on a common approach, which helps to avoid the very real threat of a trivialisation of the artistic crafts. While we can only welcome the resurgence in popularity of these crafts, we can nevertheless regret one thing: the majority of the brands using them are simply reproducing themes from the past that no longer have any relevance to the present day. Attempts to adapt the artistic crafts to an aesthetic that is more in tune with the times are all too rare. Some brands are doing so, nevertheless, looking to the abstract or taking inspiration from artistic movements that are closer to the present day, whether impressionism or cubism... And good for them, because we think that this is what will allow a genuine renaissance in the artistic crafts rather than a mere repetition of what has already been done in the past. ■

europa star

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**FASTRIDER BLACK SHIELD by Tudor**

42mm monobloc case in high-tech matt black ceramic, black dial with red gasket for the sapphire crystal, red hour markers, red date and hands with red accents. Powered by the Tudor 7753 self-winding chronograph movement, which offers a power reserve of approximately 46 hours. Black leather strap with contrasting red stitching. Also available with a black rubber strap and with bronze accents on the dial and a beige Alcantara® strap.

www.tudorwatch.com

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TUDOR, A HERITAGE TRANSFORMED

A

"All the pieces in the puzzle are now falling into place. Image and awareness are stronger than ever,"

they say with delight at Tudor. Since 2007, the year of the great strategic change that brought the brand to its current level of visibility, it has therefore taken a mere lustre for Tudor to reconnect with its rich past. Having rediscovered its strong identity, Tudor today offers powerful and recognisable products that hark back to its past but by no means neglect the present. This seems to work and Tudor has succeeded in creating a buzz: the latest video advertisement for the Tudor Heritage Chrono Blue has been viewed over 350,000 times on YouTube and that for the Tudor Fastrider Black Shield 150,000 times.

A "HERITAGE" TRANSFORMED

Tudor has a veritable treasure trove of history. And it is on the rediscovery of this heritage that the brand is basing its return to strength by creating the eponymous Heritage line, which has since become its trademark. But while the name Heritage speaks for itself, this is not simply a question of reissuing emblematic, and in some cases iconic, models. A different and more interesting approach has been taken: that of historical touches and accents on technical pieces that are well aligned with contemporary tastes. Stylistically, we could say that the Tudor Heritage watches convincingly manage to assimilate, with coherence and balance, elements from the past and signs of modernity, vintage touches and technicality. A particular type of style begins to emerge, with familiar yet tighter lines, geometric touches of colour, reworked hands, three-dimensional hour markers, the use of SuperLuminova. It is a style that has been meticulously defined and manages to cover all segments and reach different "targets", both young and less young, a mixture of "trendy" and nostalgic people. The famous fabric straps, which have become a distinguishing sign of the brand, have undoubtedly played an important role in this. These have nothing to do with the so-called "Nato" straps, which are a lot more rigid



and don't have the same unbelievable level of comfort as the Tudor straps. The essence of Tudor's combined historical and contemporary approach is illustrated perfectly by these exclusive bracelets which, although they are made of high-technology fibres (notably polyethylene) that are ultra-resistant to salt water, sunlight and acidity, are nevertheless woven in the old style in an historical factory that is among the oldest ribbon makers still in existence, and which employs some incredible craftsmen who still weave using wooden tools.

As (indirect) proof of Tudor's return to grace, old watches have been taken out of the draws, collectors have become infatuated with the brand and prices for historical Tudor watches have rocketed at auction. In some cases the values of iconic vintage Tudor models have tripled or even quadrupled.

FAVOURABLE MOMENTUM

Tudor's current collection is situated in the highly competitive "premium" segment but the brand can now clearly show its difference thanks to the undeniable aesthetic success of its collection.

With an accessible average price of between CHF 3,500 and 4,000 (and an entry-level price of CHF 2,000) Tudor also finds itself in a favourable *momentum*, with the general economic situation forcing customers to look for alternatives that are both quality and affordable. It is against this background and with this renewed dynamism that Tudor will be reintroduced on the USA market this autumn after 17 years of absence. This is a vital relaunch for Tudor, which is very strong in China (where the brand has been present for 40 years) and Hong Kong and “in development” elsewhere, according to the brand’s management. A “very big launch” they admit, with the aim to open “hundreds of points of sale” in a market that is especially favourable in this price segment.

43 YEARS OF CHRONOGRAPHS

The new products presented this year at BaselWorld (in a magnificent and imposing stand that was, for the first time since 1926, on its own and illustrated the renewed ambition of the brand) will play an important part in this carefully prepared reconquest.

Several of these new products recall one of the historical specialities of Tudor: chronographs. This long story started 43 years ago. In 1970, Tudor released the Oysterdate chronograph, which made its mark not just because of its technicalities but also because of its audacious design, which was characterised by orange accents and pentagonal hour markers. Three years later, in 1973, the model that was nicknamed “Montecarlo” by collectors, which had a bi-

directional bezel in anodised blue aluminium and a grey and blue dial, became emblematic. In 1976, Tudor released its first chronograph with a self-winding movement, the Chrono Time, then in 1989 it was the turn of the Prince Oysterdate chronograph, with its very elegant cream counters on the black dial. In less than two decades, Tudor has thus made its mark in the competitive field of chronographs.

HERITAGE CHRONO BLUE

For lovers of vintage heritage, the Tudor Heritage Chrono Blue should be the success of the year. It is basically a contemporary reinterpretation of the Tudor “Montecarlo” from 1973 (ref. 7169), which is highly sought after by collectors. It evokes a certain “spirit of chic, glamorous and

“A spirit of chic, glamorous and carefree leisure, with a Mediterranean touch, characteristic of the 1960s and 1970s”





carefree leisure, with a Mediterranean touch, characteristic of the 1960s and 1970s," as the brand's management explains. All the aesthetic codes of the historical piece have been preserved, or slightly adapted, starting with the chromatic harmony of blue, orange and grey that indicates its modernity. The graphic design of the dial is close to that of the original, with its 45-minute counter (divided into three zones

of 15 minutes) off centre at 9 o'clock and its small seconds off centre at 3 o'clock, both housed inside blue trapezoids that give the watch its characteristic look. This "strength of character" is reinforced by new three-dimensional hour markers that surround a layer of SuperLuminova. With its bidirectional rotating bezel and disc in anodised blue aluminium, the 42mm steel case (compared with 40mm

for the historical model), which is polished and brushed, with tight lines and lengthened lugs, is also characterised by a screwed-in crown and pushers with a fine knurling and a polished finish. A lacquered blue Tudor emblem features on the crown. Under the sapphire crystal beats a Tudor 2892 movement with Dubois-Dépraz additional module (for the 45-minute counter). Retailing at CHF 4,200, the Tudor Heritage Chrono Blue is supplied with two straps: a steel bracelet and the indispensable fabric strap, which, for this model, uses the emblematic blue, orange and grey colours.

FASTRIDER BLACK SHIELD

On the completely contemporary side of things, the Tudor Fastrider Black Shield takes pole position. It is the latest model in the Fastrider collection, which is dedicated to speed and performance, a collection that consists of a series of chronographs in steel, fitted with the TUDOR 7753 self-winding calibre.

The new Black Shield takes things even further. There is a highly concentrated force that emanates from this matt black piece that is punctuated with red accents. It comes above all from the density of its 42mm case, which is a monobloc piece of high-tech ceramic. Developed and produced entirely in-house, it is produced



Tudor and Ducati, a 360° partnership

While a special Fastrider watch was presented in 2011 to celebrate the signing of the partnership between Tudor and Ducati, this time it is a Ducati motorbike that celebrates the arrival of the Tudor Fastrider Black Shield.

"We are not linked to Ducati by a traditional sponsoring agreement," the people at Tudor tell us, "but a 360° partnership that goes far beyond the status of a mere timing partner".

The two companies have taken a novel approach, based on their comparable stylistic philosophies and the numerous points that they have in common, each in their own area of expertise, and the aesthetic and technical history of

both brands. The design offices of Tudor and Ducati developed a special motorbike jointly. It is the Ducati Diavel Carbon, which aims to reproduce the spirit of the watch in its appearance and its shape. Produced in monochrome matt black, the single example of this exceptional motorbike reinterprets the codes of the Black Shield: a fine red line highlights the silhouette of the motorbike and even continues in the form of red LEDs in a light surround that is otherwise entirely black; the wheels are surrounded by red band, which gives a strong impression of power. The Ducati Diavel Carbon also features prominently in the launch film for the Black

Shield, in which we see it slalom between lava flows to bring us to the edge of the crater where the ceramic case of the watch is born. A beautiful bike but also an excellent communications vehicle.



by injection, from a single piece, which is a highly complex procedure that was only possible thanks to the experience gained from producing the ceramic bezel for the Pelagos divers' watch. The middle case and bezel, which is engraved with a tachymetric scale, are in ceramic, while the back, the buckle, the pushers and the crown of this chronograph are in black PVD treated steel with a layer of liquid glass that reinforces the material.

But the strength of this watch also comes from its clear, frank and straight lines, which the lively red graphic design of the hour markers, the tips of the hands, the central seconds, the Tudor shield and the gasket for the sapphire crystal tinted in the same colour all help to underscore.

Not forgetting the red stitching on the leather strap. This expressive force changes slightly and becomes more metropolitan in another matt black version where the red is replaced on the hands and hour markers by a bronze tint that is matched with a very nice beige Alcantara® strap with black stitching. In its most direct expression, the Black Shield is also offered with a black rubber strap. Water resistant to 150 metres, fitted with direct-action pushers and using the same TUDOR 7753 chronograph movement, it has a power reserve of approximately 46 hours.

Heritage on the one hand, future on the other... these two chronographs from totally distinct product lines show the scope of the brand's com-



petence. There is undoubtedly a strong continuity in the history of Tudor and that of the chronograph, but if the codes of the past can be perfectly reinterpreted, it is with an eye towards the future that they must be constantly reinvented. ■

Discover more on Tudor
at www.watch-aficionado.com





MINIATURE GRAND FEU ENAMEL, ENGRAVING, SNOW SETTING

Mademoiselle Privé, Coromandel, by Chanel

These jewellery watches, inspired by the Coromandel lacquered panels cherished by Gabrielle Chanel, faithfully echo their splendid motifs. These motifs are reproduced in miniature enamel, by Anita Porchet, a highly renowned independent Swiss enamel artist. On a base that is a deep black enamel with shimmering blue reflections, the paint (composed of brushed enamel mixed with oil) is applied with a brush in meticulous individual touches, in order to depict the scene in all its smallest details. As the various layers are applied and the firing operations are performed, the colours gradually reveal their subtle nuances and compose an aesthetically harmonious overall effect. Each creation is made even more unique by the hand engraving work performed prior to enamelling the dial. The artisan uses a hand graver to make a light engraving suited to the motif and which will subsequently endow the décor with extreme refinement and distinctive vibrancy. According to snow setting techniques, diamonds of varying diameters are randomly positioned next to each other until they entirely cover the gold surface beneath. Each jewellery watch features a different number of stones set on the bezel, ranging from around 600 to 650.

PATEK PHILIPPE – NOSTALGIA OR PREMONITION?

Is it a precursor of a great return to the most traditional form of stylistic classicism or an isolated piece, swimming against the tide of the current aesthetic trends? Regardless of the answer to this question, you can't help but notice that the Patek Philippe reference 6002 Sky Moon Tourbillon has made an explosive entrance on the watchmaking scene. Rarely have we seen such a richly engraved piece that has been decorated to such an extent that none of its surfaces has escaped the engraver's trace or the enameller's brush.

Stylistically the piece is astonishing, because it marks a triumphant return of the art of decoration that was the hallmark of the Geneva school of watchmaking. It is also part of a long tradition without trying to deviate from the aesthetic precepts of the great classic watchmaking that was born in the 16th century, which compensated for its lack of mechanical precision by a profusion of ornament that was supposed to reflect the richness and prestige of the owners of what were at the time only approximate timekeepers.

Since then, a lot of water has passed under the bridge and, with the invention of the sprung balance, the precision of mechanical watchmaking improved considerably and watches gradually became genuine instruments that accompanied

and assisted the development of navigation and later science. Ever since, their decoration lost importance, neglected in favour of highlighting the scientific qualities of a watch. You only have to look at the revolutionary watches of Breguet that are devoid of any decoration and display their

The Patek Philippe reference 6002 Sky Moon Tourbillon is as complicated outside as it is inside.

precision against immaculate backgrounds that favour the finesse of the measurement scales.

It is therefore perfectly understandable that the Patek Philippe reference 6002 Sky Moon Tourbillon has caused a stir. Here is a watch whose decoration is worthy of the great prestige watchmaking of yore, yet which has one of the most complicated and most precise calibres that there is. Patek Philippe's ambition is very clear: to show that the watch case itself can be a "grand complication" just as much as the movement inside it. (...)

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VACHERON CONSTANTIN ARTISTIC CRAFTS: GETTING FAMILIAR WITH LONGEVITY



An interview with Julien Marchenoir, the Marketing and Communication Director of Vacheron Constantin, by Pierre Maillard.

Europa Star: We see more and more high-end brands turning towards artistic crafts. How do you explain this phenomenon?

Julien Marchenoir: What attracts the brands so strongly to the artistic crafts is linked to the return to the values of longevity and expertise that we have seen over the past few years. By using the decorative artistic crafts we address the notion of longevity. Artistic crafts have also become a marketing tool that allows a brand to attain a certain degree of nobility.

At the risk of trivialisation?

JM: This is a risk, of course, since those who do not have the right knowledge cannot differentiate the genuine from the approximation. It is therefore up to us to inform and educate our customers. For example, doing a miniature painting on an enamelled base is not the same thing as doing a genuine enamel painting, which requires a specific firing for each colour used and is the only technique that allows for real longevity.

“In order to revive certain crafts, we need to be able to demonstrate that they are relevant to our time.”

It also seems paradoxical that we are talking so much about the artistic crafts when so many of them are under threat of extinction...

JM: One of the problems with the artistic crafts is that they are not well known among the general public. Training programmes for them have also gradually disappeared and there are now a lot of “orphan” crafts for which there are no longer teaching classes available. In some cases there is still a master craftsman in the discipline, but he doesn’t necessarily have the time or the inclination to pass on his special skills. Or, if he is disposed to passing on his “secrets” then it will only be to one or two people already involved in the same discipline. In order to revive certain crafts, we need to be able to demonstrate that they are not dull, that they have a future and that they are relevant to our time. (...)

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FEATHER MARQUETRY

Premier Feathers by Harry Winston

Nelly Saunier, a gifted master plumassière or feather artist, is endowed with masterful and delicate expertise that enables her to tame feathers in such a way that they obey her creative purpose. As delicate as its raw material, this art is practiced by a rare breed of craftspeople who continue to perpetuate this ancestral ornamental art.

Each of the three new models issued in limited production features marquetry created with the feathers of a bird that is raised specifically for this purpose. In addition to extreme dexterity, this skill requires excellent perception of volumes and above all of colours. Each dial thus crafted composes a nocturnal motif in shades of sky blue, turquoise, or sapphire blue, revealed by a touch of immaculate white or deep purple.

These timepieces are framed by a 36mm-diameter 18-carat white-gold case set with 66 brilliant-cut diamonds, equipped with a quartz movement and teamed up with a satin strap in a shade echoing the main dial colour.



GUILLOCHAGE

Extra-thin self-winding Classique Tourbillon
by Breguet

Breguet is renowned for the guilloché on the dials of its timepieces, which create refined yet sober backgrounds that allow the indications to be read clearly and do not crowd out the off-set tourbillon on this piece. Like the 42mm diameter case, the dial is also in 18-carat gold and has been silvered and engine turned by hand. The Breguet Calibre 581DR that powers this piece at a frequency of 4Hz has a lateral lever escapement in silicon and anti-magnetic steel, a silicon balance spring, small seconds mounted on the tourbillon and a power reserve of 90 hours.



BOVET AND THE ART OF ENGRAVING

In order to appreciate the attention to detail of the work carried out by Bovet at its facilities for cases and movements (Dimier 1738, in Tramelan) and decoration and assembly (the beautifully restored Château de Môtiers near Fleurier), you must first adapt to new dimensions and the world of the ultra-minuscule.

Let us first consider the component side of this 99 per cent *manufacture* (the only elements purchased from outside are the mainsprings and the watch straps) at Dimier 1738, where the 70 employees represent no less than 41 different professions associated with watch manufacturing. Here, all movement components are produced by stamping or wire erosion and finished to an astonishing level of detail. Just one example that I observed was a humble pinion measuring a mere 0.12mm in diameter that has to be machined before polishing. The machinist has to grind down 1/100th of this already tiny diameter and has a range of just four microns, or four millionths of a metre, in which to operate... but half of this must be left for the polisher to work with! Simply setting the machine for this task (a special milling



machine with two different milling discs, one in ceramic and one in aluminium oxide), adjusting the height and centricity of the working piece and spacing the milling discs on the machine, can take up to two days. (...)

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THE ART OF GUILLOCHAGE



Switzerland's bucolic Val-de-Ruz region does not command as many column inches as the better-known centres of excellence in Swiss watchmaking. But it was in the small town of Fontainemelon, on the ridge that separates Neuchâtel and La

Chaux-de-Fonds, that the first movement-blank factory in the group of Ebauches SA companies was established. Now part of the Swatch Group's ETA movement division, the factory continues to dominate the town. What is perhaps even less well known is that the next two villages as you travel east out of Fontainemelon are something of a hub for the artistic craft of guilloché. Yann von Känel, Director of Décors Guillochés SA, which employs 10 guillocheurs at its workshop in Cernier, explained the reasons for this and shared his thoughts on the art of guilloché with *Europa Star*. (...)

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ROGER W. SMITH – THE WATCHMAKER’S APPRENTICE

The Isle of Man, located in the Irish Sea mid-way between England, Scotland and Ireland, is perhaps most famous for its TT motorcycle race and its role as an offshore finance centre. But the small island is also a hub for global industries ranging from e-commerce to space technologies. It has



also become the centre of excellence in British watchmaking as home to the workshops first of Dr. George Daniels, and now of his erstwhile apprentice Roger W. Smith.

Roger W. Smith is tasked with perpetuating the “Daniels method” of watchmaking, which requires complete mastery of the 32 different skills required to design and manufacture a watch from start to finish. It took him 12 years, including three and a half working under Daniels, to learn all the skills required for this. Mastering the two machines used for engine-turning dials in silver, the rose engine and the straight-line engine, was just one of these.

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DAMASCUS STEEL BY GOS WATCHES

As we noted earlier this year in our report on Scandinavian watch brands (see *Europa Star* 02/2013), GoS Watches is the Swedish partnership between bladesmith Johan Gustafsson and watchmaker

Patrik Sjögren. After producing watches with Damascus steel cases equipped with the Unitas 6498 movement, the company presented its first to feature a Damascus steel movement, the Winter Nights, at BaselWorld this year.

The limited edition of 10 pieces features an in-house movement that has been developed with Martin Braun after a first meeting at the Geneva Time Exhibition in 2011. “I made the first prototype or proof of concept by customizing a Unitas 6498 movement with a Damascus steel bridge in 2010,” recounts Patrik Sjögren. “Martin liked what we had done with the prototype and approved of my design ideas while adding some of his own. We provided him with steel for the first prototype, which we finished during the summer of 2011. We made a few changes for the production movements and the first two were finished just in time for the release of the Winter Nights model during BaselWorld 2013.”

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ETRUSCAN GRANULATION

Rotonde de Cartier 42mm, panther, granulation by Cartier

The first recorded use of granulation dates back to the third millennium BC but it was the Etruscans of the seventh and sixth centuries BC who perfected the technique for their jewellery. There is a two-fold mystery surrounding the technology: for the first part, it is unclear how the Etruscans managed to produce such tiny spheres of gold; for the second, it is unclear how they fused these spheres to the metal underneath.

It was only in the 20th century that jewellers guessed that the Etruscans probably used a form of organic glue to achieve the effect, which securely binds the spheres to the surface without any solder and without any metal welling up around the edges of the spheres. Cartier has now revived this ancient technology for use in a wristwatch, taking the brand’s emblematic panther as its subject.



GRAND FEU ENAMEL AND GRISAILLE PAINTING

MANUFACTURA 1528, ANGELS COLLECTION,
by Julien Coudray 1518

In the delicate "grisaille" technique, the enameller works into the enamel fine gold or silver patterns, using either a hand chisel or punch. The 13-part dial is made from enamelled solid 18-carat Pd125 white gold, with traditional *grand feu* black and white enamelled domed cartouches. The centre of the dial is made from enamelled solid 18-carat gold featuring *grand feu* enamel miniature, using the "grisaille" technique. The three-coloured hands (blue, grey and yellow) are hand-engraved and designed to represent an arrow once together. The colours are obtained without either chemical treatment or lacquer.



ANGULAR MOMENTUM & MANU PROPRIA THE CAPITAL DIFFERENCE

The outskirts of Switzerland's capital city of Bern are an unlikely place to find one of the country's unsung heroes of the métiers d'art, but it is here, on one half of the fourth floor of the iconic Stufenbau building, a former nitro-cellulose (gun cotton) factory in Ittigen, that Martin Pauli works painstakingly and in splendid isolation.

Wandering through an open door, one feels a million miles away from the high-security, industrial *manufactures* of Geneva and the Vallée de Joux. In a workshop that resembles a working museum, with antique machines dotted around seemingly randomly, the atmosphere is so relaxed that even the cat from a neighbouring workshop is free to come and go as it pleases. (...)



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PASCAL VAUCHER ART AND METHOD

Some 27 years ago, at the end of 1986, Pascal Vaucher, a young gem-setter, had what he calls a "vision". But there was nothing mystical about this vision, despite the fact that the Beatles song «Lucy in the sky with diamonds» was perhaps playing in his head. On the contrary, it was a most pragmatic "vision" during which he saw all the possibilities that were offered by streamlining gem-setting in the watchmaking business.

This streamlining would "democratise" gem-set products, in particular making gem-setting on steel possible, profitable and affordable. What at first seemed heretical has since become a major trend and we have lost count of the number of brands, including the most prestigious, who have followed it. (...)

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WUntil then the gem-setter drilled each hole individually, adjusted the stone then folded the metal back to hold it in place. By streamlining this work, in other words by preparing the jewel holes systematically beforehand and calibrating the lots of stones, gem-setting could move from being an entirely artisanal activity to a semi-industrialised process.





ENGRAVING, PAINTING, AUTOMATION

The Bird Repeater by Jaquet-Droz

The Bird Repeater combines a minute repeater and an automaton of birds feeding three chicks, of which one comes out of an egg, while the water of the stream flows in a continuous cascade. The base dial is hand-engraved and painted mother-of-pearl. The waterfall is on a rotating disc that spins to create the illusion of falling water. The birds and nest are also hand-engraved and painted individually. The animation sequence has an impressive level of action with wings opening, eggs hatching and chicks being fed.

BAS RELIEF ENGRAVING AND GRAND FEU ENAMEL

DB25 Imperial Fountain, by De Bethune

A special edition of sets of 12 timepieces, inspired by the bronze Zodiac Animal Heads which adorned an ornate fountain in the famous Yuanming Yuan (Old Summer Palace) outside Beijing, China. These watches feature elaborately engraved animal heads for the 12 Chinese zodiac symbols. Each of the animal heads engraved by master artist Michèle Rothen, using the *bas relief* technique, is in the middle of the dial of the watch, backed by a *grand feu* enamel relief of the corresponding Zodiac symbol.

A completely new movement, Calibre DB 2145, was created to free the centre of the dial. The resulting movement uses peripheral hour and minute hands, circling the engraved Zodiac head. New techniques, such as the use of micro ball bearings and a new transmission system capable of driving the revolving discs, were developed specifically for this movement.



SKELETONISATION, GUILLOCHÉ, ENGRAVING

Area51 by Grieb & Benzinger

The Area51 is the result of an unusual request by one of Grieb & Benzinger's customers whose son wanted an alien-themed watch. The alien images of legend are produced on the dial with three-dimensional metallised surfaces and ruby-set eyes against the background of a grey moon surface complete with diamond-set craters. As for all Grieb & Benzinger timepieces, the Area 51's movement features an exquisite level of hand skeletonisation, engraving and guilloché, with blackened surfaces that fit with the extra-terrestrial theme. Housed in a solid 18-carat palladium white-gold case, the Area 51 comes with an extra-short strap to fit its 12 year-old owner.





GRAND FEU ENAMEL

Rondo Tulip Field by Delaneau

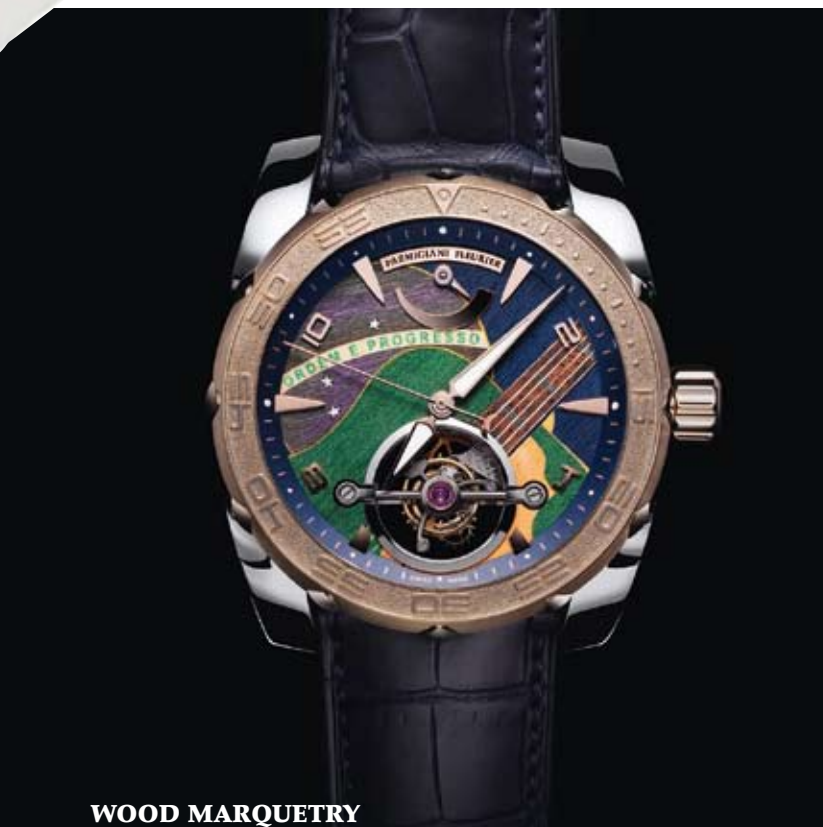
Delaneau's goal was to interpret miniature enamel painting in a new way, paying homage to impressionism. In order to capture the famous light, movement and atmosphere of impressionism, enamel techniques had to be reinterpreted. It necessitated the use of many different enamel colours, each of which had to be individually fired, layer upon layer. White-gold case set with 196 diamonds, diamond-set crown, alligator strap with white-gold buckle set with 24 diamonds. Unique piece.



STRAW MARQUETRY

Arceau H Cube by Hermès

Straw is an extraordinary material: a long, smooth rye stem, from which the usable parts have been patiently selected. The plant, which is a variety cultivated on a single farm, is delicately scythed by hand and then dyed through. Successive baths followed by drying reveal brilliant and profound colours with subtle highlights. Combining the colours, shades and direction of the fibres of each strand, the craftsman patterns the straw marquetry that will constitute the dial of the watch. With infinite precision, he cuts each piece and assembles them one by one in an unimaginably small space, reproducing the tricks of perspective that characterise the H Cube motif – designed, like the Arceau watch, by Henri d'Origny. This geometric view, emphasised by a 41mm white-gold case with asymmetrical attachments, is powered by an H1837 Manufacture movement that can be seen through the sapphire crystal case back.

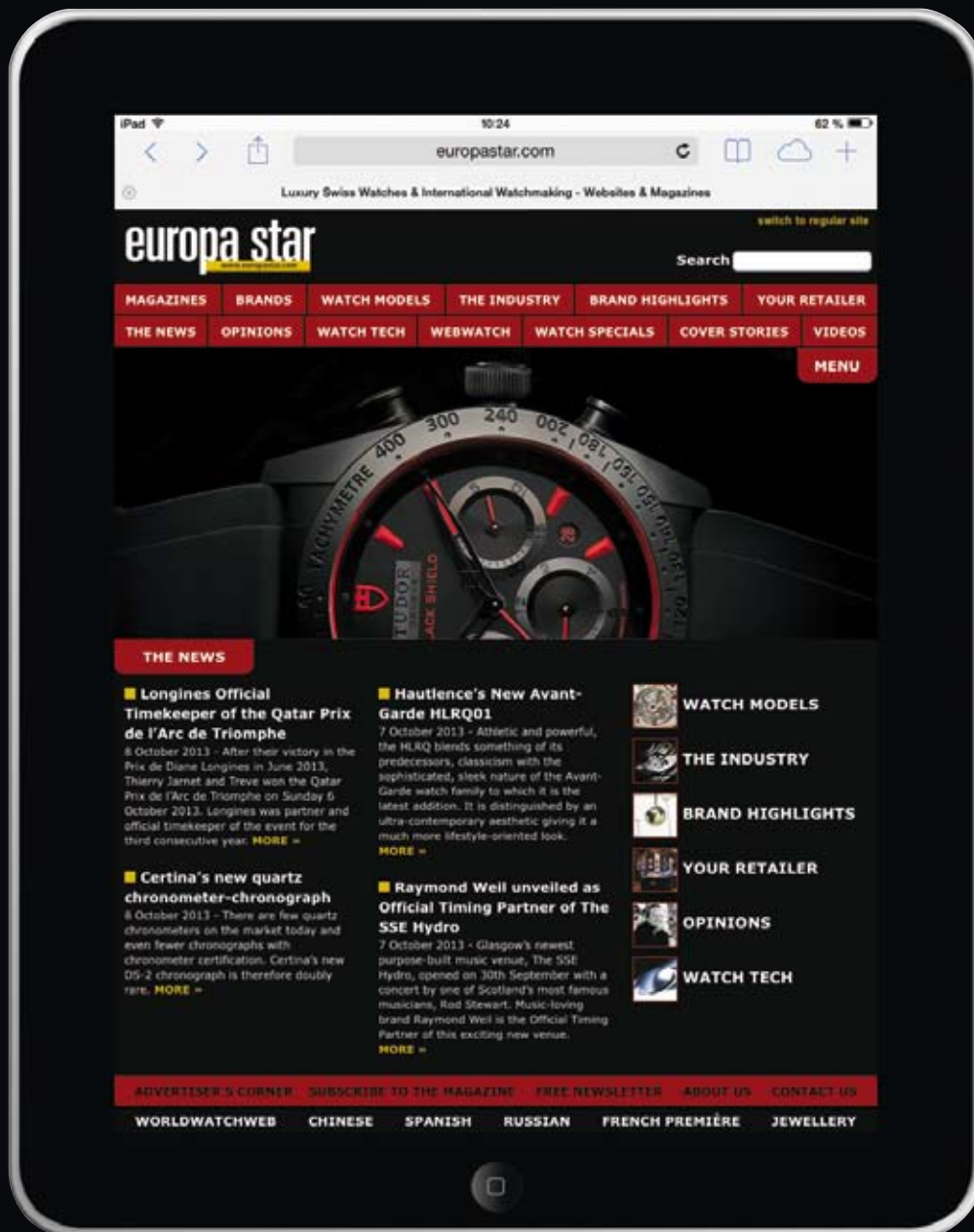


WOOD MARQUETRY

Pershing Samba Madeira by Parmigiani Fleurier

The outline of the guitar on the dial of this unique piece, with the tourbillon cage acting as its rosette, takes on the colours of the Brazilian flag and is made of wood marquetry so fine in its detail that the six individual strings of the guitar are the mere width of a strand of hair. Encased in titanium, with an 18-carat gold bezel, the PF calibre 510 hand-wound 30-second tourbillon with its 237 components powers the Pershing Samba Madeira for a full seven days (192 hours) before any winding is needed. The fine finish of the movement, which has Côtes de Genève decoration and hand-bevelled edges, is visible through the transparent sapphire crystal case back, which is surrounded by the engraved reminders that this is a "Modèle Unique".





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