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A WEEK IN GENEVA

• BaselWorld Previews • Watches for Real Men • Time for the Girls

TOURBILLON by Pierre Thomas



SLYDE by HD3



SPIDER by Artya



In addition to this piece, another impressive watch is the Klepcys, realized in collaboration with Jean-François Mojon (designer of the outstanding Opus X, among others). A triple complication, it proposes a surprising display (partially inspired by some of Urwerk's advanced research). The hour is read over a 180-degree sector with a strong retrograde 'hand' composed of dice that, when rotating, alternately mark the day and night. The minutes and seconds are read linearly in the interior extension of this hand, on two respective central discs. Between 1 o'clock and 4 o'clock, a retrograde date is indicated using a scale of 0 to 9. Finally, a very lovely detail can be discovered at 5 o'clock—a hyper-realistic spherical moon that shows the phases of this astral body thanks to a semi-spherical lid that gradually covers the lunar surface. These 'beginners' have created a very remarkable watch.

Still in the mechanical domain, another initiative comes from **Pierre Thomas**, a brand founded by Pierre Galli, a dial maker and Thomas Engeler, a watchmaker-constructor. These two men slipped a large and very airy tourbillon of their own design into ancient Fontainemelon movements, with the ébauches dating back to 1870. Placed at 8 o'clock and mounted on two arms, this large tourbillon offers a splendid view of its inner workings, itself located in a 'well' of

light that traverses the movement. This piece is at the height of their classic ambitions and is another demonstration of traditional excellence and purity. With hours, minutes and small seconds (at 6 o'clock or at 9 o'clock), it is proposed on a mechanical base dating back to 1930. Superbly finished, the dials are available in black mother-of-pearl, meteorite, or brown or red lacquer and the exquisitely designed curved cylindrical case measures 49mm in diameter and 12.70mm in thickness. In terms of numbers, quantities are modest, with 100 pieces for the tourbillon model, 200 pieces for the hour, minute and small seconds model, but the quality is great.

It is impossible to discuss all the mechanical initiatives seen at the GTE or in the Geneva hotels. We will return to many of these brands, some of which are also exhibitors at BaselWorld, in our next issues.

These marvellous flying follies

To end the hectic watch week in Geneva on a different note and to demonstrate that if neo-classicism has returned to centre stage, watchmakers on the edge tend to propose some really crazy timekeepers. We thus, take a small visit to **HD3** and **Artya**.

In their highly different approaches, these two brands show two opposing horizons of watch-

making. In his provocative fashion, Jorg Hysek, co-founder of HD3, wants to show that the physical play of the gears, rods, cams and other regulating organs has reached its end. He has now designed a classic and very *haut de gamme* case, which does not enclose a movement but whose curved crystal is a tactile screen. Like a smart phone, you can slide your fingers across the screen to bring up all sorts of virtual timekeepers, fulfilling all the desired functions. This watch can change its appearance at will and can store photos or even be used as an agenda. At €4,000 euros, not including the various available downloadable modules, will the Slyde catch on?

At the opposite end, Yvan Arpa, also a born provocateur, is betting on the extreme individualism of watches, whose cases he treats with lightning. He is now going even further, not without a bit of humor and stuffs his movements with electronic components used in designs or imprisons horrible insects in a glue of his own invention. The art of watchmaking according to Arpa is devoid of all good taste and of any notion of political correctness. It is a sort of Dadaist timekeeping. After so much 'good taste', a little voluntary 'bad taste' might be considered as acceptable and helps to put things in their place. ◀