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# REVOLUTION

THE WORLD'S ULTIMATE WATCH LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE

USA 18

**SIHH 2011**

THE YEAR OF  
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WATCHES OF TOMORROW



The HD3 Slyde timepiece takes modern luxury watchmaking to new levels with its touchscreen display

# THE NEW RADICALS

THE SECOND EDITION OF GENEVA TIME EXHIBITION (GTE) ADDED CREATIVITY AND THE INDEPENDENCE FACTOR TO GENEVA'S 'WATCH WEEK'. INNOVATIVE, OPTIMISTIC CREATIVITY REIGNED SUPREME NOT ONLY AT THE SIHH, BUT ALSO IN GENEVA'S CONFERENCE CENTER

BY ELIZABETH DOERR

If you'd attended last year's edition of Geneva Time Exhibition, you likely came out of it thinking, "Nice, but I only needed to spend a couple of hours here." If you went back to the second edition of GTE this year with the same thoughts, you probably came out of it totally overwhelmed. With almost double the amount of exhibitors at the 2011 edition (58 total), not only did the number of watches on display increase, but also their quality and creativity. GTE boasted the world premieres of three new brands (Cyrus, Heritage Watch Manufactory and Arcadia); the introduction of a watch technology the world was so ready for that you practically screamed, "Finally!" when you saw it (HD3's Slyde); and the European premiere of the USA's first wristwatch tourbillon (RGM).

This edition of the GTE also contained the debut of the GTE Superwatch Award, a transparent contest among the brands on exhibit that was judged by a fully independent jury of six prominent experts from six countries. The voting process was as unique and fair as the timepieces that were submitted for judging. The result, certainly a surprising one, arose from the number of quality pieces available.

## MOON ROCKS

Cyrus, founded by cousins Laurent and Julien LeCamp in cooperation with watchmaker Jean-François Mojon (Opus X), was the first major new brand a visitor saw upon entering the Geneva Conference Center. The moniker the

LeCamps chose for their new company is based on an historical idea (Cyrus the Great, founder of the Persian empire, is recognized for his achievements in human rights, politics, and military strategy, and influences on both Eastern and Western civilizations), but the resulting watches are pure modernity: the Klepcys, which contains two years of development, two patents, and a decidedly three-dimensional design, was the main event. This piece is unadulterated originality complete with a retrograde hand that changes color, a linear display of time within a round case, a satellite and retrograde date display that is completely new, and a three-dimensional moon replete with craters in the right places.

Louis Moinet, also situated in a prominent location within the fair, presented the Astralis Tourbillon, which includes a split-seconds, column-wheel chronograph that counts up to 30 minutes, and also features an interesting element at the six o'clock position: a "planetarium" containing bits of extremely rare stone. The base of the planetarium is crafted in aventurine and decorated with exclusive meteorite discs that include Dhofar 459 (a meteorite from the moon); Jiddat al Harasis 479 (a meteorite originating from Mars); Sahara 99,555 (possibly originating from Mercury, this is considered as the "Rosetta Stone" of our solar system); and Itqiy (a mysterious asteroid that was formed near the sun). The planetarium disc makes one full rotation in a 24-hour period so that each of

the extremely rare and precious meteorite and asteroid discs can be observed in turn.

In comparison with this extraterrestrial element, the mundane aspects of extremely good watchmaking may seem just a bit commonplace — however, it is these aspects that ensure that the Astralis is a viable piece of haute horlogerie. The manually wound movement is decorated with polishing and engraving to mimic the look of a meteor shower; the tourbillon bridge is hand-engraved; and the two-tone beveling of the individual flat components is done by hand.

## NEW DOGS, OLD TRICKS

It's a difficult task to make "traditional" watchmaking into something sexy. However, a few new boutique brands at GTE absolutely proved that it is possible. Ressence, the brand that surprisingly took second place in the GTE Superwatch Award, is one case in point. "The renaissance of the essential" is how Belgian founder Benoit Mintiens sees it, and to prove his point, his Platform Watch, which relies on a modified ETA 2824 for power, has found an entirely new way to tell time using a single-level revolving dial. The effect is astonishing, and comes across as understated, unique and minimal all at once.

Zeitwinkel, which gestated for four years before emerging in 2010, bases its philosophy on clean design with unique movements and a distinctly Germanic feel. This comes as no surprise when you learn that one founder is a





brand," Hysek said of his creation, which will retail for 5,000 Swiss francs when it begins delivery in September. The showing at GTE was something of a pre-screening; it will be officially launched at BaselWorld in March.