

Watch news

WORDS: RICHARD BROWN

If you're familiar with MB&F, you'll know that the brand's creations seldom sit within one product category. While they do indeed tell the time, MB&F watches display the hours, minutes and seconds of the day in such inventive and intricate ways that to categorise them merely as timepieces would be to do a disservice to the company's founder, Max Büsser. He doesn't create watches; he conceives machines.

Büsser's latest, the Horological Machine N°8 (HMS, pictured below right), is inspired by a Can-Am race car. It inverts a Girard-Perregaux base movement so that a battle-axe-shaped winding rotor faces upward, positioned between two 'roll bars' so that it is visible through anti-reflective sapphire-crystal glass. Dual optical prisms vertically display bi-directional jumping hours and trailing minutes. As you can see, it's not your typical piece of wrist wear. Then again, there's rarely anything conventional about Büsser's works of art, watch-wise or other.

Having previously worked with high-end clockmaker L'Épée 1839 to co-create a table clock, and with music box specialist Reuge to launch a mechanical mini-space-ship, Büsser recently branched even further away

from traditional watchmaking. His latest partnership with Caran d'Ache, the coveted pen and crayon maker, is the Astrograph – a fountain pen designed to resemble a space rocket.

Available in high-gloss rhodium, sandblasted matt rhodium or anthracite ruthenium, an 'entry door' to the rocket, concealed in the ring of the pen, activates the lowering of three stabiliser legs, on which the Astrograph can stand. Comprising 99 components, the pen comes with a miniature magnetic astronaut figurine and a presentation box in the form of a launch pad. What to get the man who already has everything this Christmas? Max Büsser has just provided the answer.

Horological Machine N°8, £66,900; Astrograph pen, £19,995, mbandf.com



Joyeux anniversaire

All year the watch world has been waiting to discover just how Patek Philippe would honour the 40th anniversary of its most famous timepiece, the iconic Nautilus. The answer arrived in October in the shape of the platinum, time-only 5711/1P (44mm, £82,310), and the enormous (49.25mm) white gold chronograph 5976/1G (left, £69,960). Both watches arrive with blue dials bearing anniversary inscriptions, and feature baguette-cut diamond hour markers.

patek.com



RED-HANDED

Maurice Lacroix has made a limited-edition version of its Masterpiece Skeleton Chronograph for Harrods. The 45mm timepiece was unveiled at SalonQP and incorporates a new automatic chronograph movement, produced exclusively for Maurice Lacroix by calibre creators Concepto. The hour and minute hands are diamond-cut and lined with luminescent coating. The Harrods edition comes with a red seconds hand and a red 30-minute chronograph disk at three o'clock. Masterpiece Skeleton Chronograph Harrods Edition, £5,350, mauricelacroix.com



JUNGHANS' RETRO RACING LINES

In a year characterised by nostalgic reinterpretations of a great swathe of halo timepieces – Patek Philippe's Nautilus, Audemars Piguet's Royal Oak, Vacheron

Constantin's Overseas, Girard-Perregaux's Laureato and Piaget's Polo being five of the most important – Junghans has presented a vintage-inspired showstopper of a stopwatch. Inspiration for the Meister Driver Chronoscope came from the dashboard instruments of 1930s Maybachs and 1950s Mercedes models. With colour-contrast sub-dials and large minute markers, which take precedence over smaller hour numerals, the Chronoscope is a tool watch designed with time measurement in mind. The self-winding, stainless steel, 40.8mm chronograph comes in at £1,790, but the mid-century German automobile you need to complete the look might set you back a little bit more. junghans.co.uk



Reaching for the moon

Your closest Glashütte Original boutique is now just a two-hour Eurostar journey away. October saw the German watchmaker open a new flagship store on Paris's Rue de la Paix. It now operates 21 boutiques across the world, though, sadly, one in still remains to be seen in London.

To mark the occasion, the brand bolstered its Senator Excellence line with the launch of the Panorama Date (steel, £7,100; red gold, £14,100) and the Panorama Date Moon Phase (steel, £7,900; red gold £14,900).

Both models are equipped with Glashütte's Calibre 36, which provides a 100-hour power reserve from a single spring barrel. This impressive feat – power reserves of more than 48

hours typically require more than one spring barrel – was achieved by compacting the case in which the movement's silicon balance spring sits.

The Panorama Date mounts two concentric display discs on the same level, eradicating the need for a bar in its date window; once properly set, the Panorama Date Moon Phase needs correcting just once every 122 years.

Glashütte Original was founded in 1994, following the privatisation of Germany's Glashütter Uhrenbetriebe, a collection of watch, clock and instrument companies that had been nationalised in 1951. And as for the '25' presented in all Glashütte date windows? A purely aesthetic pleasure. glashuette-original.com



Chain of command

When Apple was looking for a way of elevating its first smartwatch from the realms of geeky gadget to executive accessory, it was telling that it chose a collaboration with Hermès.

The Apple Watch Series 2 dropped in September; and Hermès will continue making leather straps for a special edition that incorporates faces based on its own Clipper, Espace and Cape Cod. Launched in 1991, the latter model took inspiration from the chain of an anchor. Several new iterations have launched this year: a men's version with a cuff-style wristband; dial options that include onyx and lapis lazuli; and new gem-set editions.

From £1,750, uk.hermes.com

