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CARL F. BUCHERER: INSIDE THE PATRAVI TRAVELTEC II



CHRISTOPHE CLARET

BY NOLA MARTIN



Christophe Claret

A strong passion to engineer time drove teen-aged Christophe Claret from his home in Lyon, France, to the prestigious Geneva Watchmaking School, where he graduated at age nineteen.

HE QUICKLY developed into a master-watchmaker and established himself within the watch industry by developing innovative and complicated movements—particularly focusing on minute repeaters—for many well-respected Swiss watch brands.

By 1989, he had founded Claret Manufacture inside the picturesque Manoir du Soleil d'Or overlooking Le Locle, Switzerland. While continuing to create cutting-edge movements for the crème of the watch industry, Claret also gradually built his own branded collection.

Two decades after he started his company he debuted the Christophe Claret DualTow, which featured a patented and complex chronograph mechanism. Claret followed this successful branded launch with many unusual and complex timepieces. He nourishes a respect for tradition, but relishes the freedom to create. Today, Christophe Claret offers four collections: The Traditional Complications, which features unique pieces that reinvent time measurement; Extreme Complications, dedicated to unconventional creations; Interactive Gaming Complications, which features timely recreation; and Ladies' Complications that combine Haute Horlogerie in a feminine form.

A WOMAN IN MIND

AMONG CLARET'S recent debuts, the Marguerite is a whimsical watch developed and dedicated to a woman. This visually appealing watch captures the essence of love

with mechanical ingenuity. By pressing the pusher at 2 o'clock a message is revealed in French: *Il m'aime passionnément*, meaning "He loves me passionately," while two butterflies seemingly chase each other around the dial. It's a playful way to display the time.

To show the time, the darker butterfly situated on the rotating marguerite daisy indicates the hours; minutes are shown with a lighter colored butterfly attached to a stem. The underside of the watch delivers an interactive game of "He loves me. He loves me not." with the help of the visible rotor from the in-house manufactured movement MT1115.

These delicate details and engineering feats are exemplary of Christophe Claret and apparent throughout the four versions of the Marguerite. Each model is limited to thirty pieces all finished to meet the highest level of horology

DISCOVERING HISTORY

JUST THIS PAST YEAR Claret intertwined his passion for watchmaking with his perpetual support for and interest in Aventicum, the capital of ancient Roman Helvetia. He and his staff created a limited edition watch named after the site. Inspired by a solid gold bust of Emperor Marcus Aurelius that was discovered in 1939 near the Swiss town of Avenches, Claret replicated the artifact in the Aventicum. It's visible via a mirascope using two parabolic mirrors facing each other. The upper mirror has a hole in its center and it projects a hologram of the micro-engraved bust, which appears nearly two times larger than the replica due to the laws of physics.

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In watchmaking, everything has already been done, and everything has yet to be invented.”

– Christophe Claret

Yet this isn't the only creative feature here. The watch's transparent sapphire-winding rotor is embellished with five numbered Roman Gaul racing chariots displayed through the caseback. This patented mechanism actually serves two purposes: One to create power for the movement, the other as a playful game allowing the chariots to race.

REVEALING IN SOUND

CLARET'S TECHNICAL MASTERY of mechanical timekeeping developed from his quarter-century as a master complications maker is encapsulated in the recently debuted Allegro.

This miniature masterpiece of art and sound unites several high complications, including a minute repeater with cathedral gongs, a GMT with big date, a small second and a day/night indicator. The Allegro highlights Claret's expertise in developing unique technical solutions. Fully three patents have been awarded for this model, including one patent each for its big date, balance micro-regulation (with components all made in-house) and the gongs. The Allegro continues Christophe Claret's legacy of unpredictable, inventive and technically innovative timepieces. ●



The Christophe Claret Marguerite



The Christophe Claret Aventicum.