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## THE 2014 ULTIMATE HOME

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# Daisy Oracle

CLARET USES INNOVATIVE MECHANICS TO ANSWER A QUESTION DEEP IN A LADY'S HEART



**M**ANY A YOUNG maiden has given her heart to a man based on the predictions of a tiny wild flower. “He loves me... he loves me not...” While the rhyme can be gendered in either direction, traditionally the ritual preserves the chant of lovelorn adolescent girls.

This tradition has since transcended time and now serves as the inspiration for Christophe Claret to create a watch that is both charismatic and intricate; the ultimate incarnation of the daisy oracle as a corsage for the dainty wrist.

Claret introduces ‘Margot’—his very first complication for ladies. It features an ingenious mechanism that helps to ‘predict’—or at least tries to—one of nature’s paramount questions: “Does he love me?” Says Claret, “It was very

important to arrive with a feminine watch that is a real high complication timepiece only for women, and not just another complication from the men's bastion such as a chronograph, tourbillon or a minute repeater"

With a simple press of the pusher at 2 o'clock of the watch, the game of chance comes alive. With each press the delicate satin-lacquered titanium petals—sometimes a pair of petals—around the central yellow sapphire pistil subtly disappear under the dial, as if they had just been plucked out by an invisible hand. At each press, a distinct, crystalline chime resonates, aurally signalling the pace of the game.

The hammer set with the ruby, viewed at the case-band at 8 o'clock, indicates the strike; with the much-awaited answer. The calligraphic letters in French appear on the dial at 4 o'clock, conveying a random answer—*Un peu* (a little)—*beaucoup* (a lot)—*passionnément* (passionately)—*à la folie* (madly) or *pas du tout* (not at all).

While designing the watch, Claret recalls, "We were debating whether the picking of the petals on the daisy be clockwise, petal after petal. However, we were able to desynchronise the whole pattern and devised a system wherein the petals could be picked off randomly. This is controlled by the system which recognises the pressure exerted on the pusher, so we played on the inertia to bring about even more possibilities of randomness"

With the last 'pluck' of the petal, you can activate the pusher at 4 o'clock which instantly makes all the petals reappear; the sentiment window displays an ellipsis.

Women who adore clever mechanics wrapped up in a finely finished case will have a choice of either white or rose gold. The pink mother-of-pearl dial reveals delicately engraved verses by one of the master's of the French Romantic Movement, Victor Hugo. The excerpts are taken from the 19th century poem *Unité*. On the dial, three pear-shaped diamonds poetically punctuate the engraved verse.

Though the 42.5mm width may be considered somewhat big for a lady, the gold case has a curved profile on the case-back, which envelopes even the most slender of wrists. A pair of gold-tipped steel hands emerge from the multi-level corolla, intensifying the three dimensionality of the dial.

Margot also offers options set with baguette diamonds or snow-set brilliant cut diamonds on the case. "There are many possibilities of personalisation, particularly on the type of stone setting" elaborates Claret. "We also customise in accordance to the requests made by clients to change the colour of the mother-of-pearl and sometimes, can also use other languages for the sentiments used or the different outcomes of the game"

The philosophy of 'picking petals' remains an extremely romantic representation of the creative genius of high complication. Keeping aesthetics in high regard, Claret hides the crown from view and integrates it with the top lugs behind the watch. With a total of 5.20 carats of baguette set diamonds, the hexagonal diamond on the top lug displays a scintillating play of light.

The display back reveals the automatic winding rotor, a delicately carved, flower-shaped carousel of colours symbolising sentiments of love, with a central cabochon concealing the rotor's ball bearings. Each one of the eight resplendent triangular precious stones denotes a feeling—hope, passion, tenderness... Which one will line up with the red-lacquered heart when the flower halts its waltz?

Claret's Margot blooms in four limited editions of 20 pieces each, and with a price of ₹1.90 crore, it sure does not leave a lady guessing whether "he loves me...?"

—SAROSH MODY

**Christophe Claret**, [www.christopheclaret.com](http://www.christopheclaret.com)

Opposite page: The dial has three pear-shaped diamonds at 3 o'clock, 6 o'clock and 9 o'clock and satin-lacquered titanium petals that tightly embrace the central yellow sapphire pistil.

Right: The display back reveals a carved flower-shaped carousel of colours symbolising sentiments of love, with a central cabochon concealing the rotor's ball bearings.

