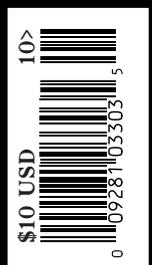


Watch Journal

Featuring: The Cartier Clé

Pushing Power Reserve Boundaries. Top In-House Movement Makers.
Philanthropy: Only Watch. Eric Giroud on Design.
Exploring Modern Watchmaker's Benches.





ERIC GIROUD

Founder, Through the Looking Glass Design Studio

OPPOSITE: Eric Giroud

RIGHT: The Harry Winston Opus 9

“I approach each project like an architect. Before I do drawings, it’s very important for me to understand what the brand wants, the real reason for this watch.”

—Eric Giroud



PROFILE

Eric Giroud got into watches, his current field of design expression, kind of by accident.

“I was working in a design studio and we designed pens, furniture and many other things,” Giroud says. “One day, an Italian gent asked us to design a small watch tube for traveling. I designed it and when I went to Florence to deliver it, he asked me why I didn’t design watches. I thought it was a good idea. Everyone told me to be careful, that working in the watch industry was very hard and very specialized. I designed a watch for myself. I showed it to the guy in Florence, who loved it, and we made 1,000 pieces of it for Underwood.

“After that, I did some more projects. I met people who made watches and I decided to quit the design company and founded my own company. Then I worked with Mido. It was not easy to get into the watch world, but I love it.”

Since then, Giroud has worked with some of the biggest names in watchmaking, including Harry Winston, MB&F, Manufacture Royale, Tissot and more, winning two Red Dot and five Grand Prix d’Horlogerie awards,

and many more accolades along the way.

In most cases, brands come to him to suggest a project. “I met Peter Speake-Marin, Max Büsser and others, and they gave me a chance. When I made the Opus 9 with Harry Winston and Jean-Marc Wiederrecht, I was fortunate because it was a great time to network. Now the brands call me. Good people call me, so I am very lucky.”

For Giroud, watches are very challenging because of their small size. “I like working with the suppliers who actually manufacture the parts,” he continues. “I propose ideas to the brands, who love them, then I go to the manufacturers for each part. Many times they tell me I’m crazy, so I have to fight to keep my ideas. At the end, the watches are for the people who buy them. It’s important to have a balance between the brand, the manufacturer and me.”

Some of the watches Giroud loves are the F.P.Journe Resonance, the Lange Saxonia 38.5 and the Breguet Tradition, but he wears Vacheron Constantin every day. “I wear a Vacheron Constantin Patrimony Contemporaine 40 mm in pink gold because I think it’s the most beautiful classic watch redesigned

in the last 10 years,” he says.

Giroud loves what he does and looks forward to every day. “I enjoy going to see brands and talking with them personally,” he says. “It’s like I have an office in every company I work with.

“I’m working on a connected watch now, but it’s not easy,” he continues. “If you design wearables for the consumer today, it’s all about business. You have a king, which is Apple, and everyone is chasing them. In most cases, the ideas are not very interesting – they just want to sell it. There is no culture. It’s just support for the technology.

“I approach each project like an architect,” he details. “Before I do drawings, it’s very important for me to understand what the brand wants, the real reason for this watch, to understand the artistic part, the marketing part. For me, I have to understand why they need this watch, why this complication. It’s very important to have this information to make sure I have the right target. I want people to say, ‘You understand!’ when I show them the first drawings.”

—Keith W. Strandberg
ericgiroud.com

ERIC GIRLOUD



DAVID BONILLA

Technical Manager, The Henri Stern Watch Agency

OPPOSITE: David Bonilla
 RIGHT: Patek Philippe
 Aquanaut Travel Time

“When you buy a car, you know it has to be serviced and you accept that. That same message for watches should be communicated at the time of purchase, including the time involved and the cost.”

—David Bonilla



One of the key issues facing watch companies today is aftersales service. With a shortage of watchmakers, it's more important than ever before to manage this part of the business as efficiently as possible.

To continue to address these issues, the Henri Stern Watch Agency, sole distributor and primary service center for Patek Philippe USA, recently named David Bonilla its new technical manager. Bonilla is a WOSTEP-certified watchmaker who joined HSWA in 2010.

“People are always surprised at the time it takes to service a watch,” Bonilla says. “The bottom line is that when your watch gets to a watchmaker, he will take the time necessary to service it, including disassembly, fixing any problems, oiling and then reassembling and testing it. The analogy would be like bringing your Mercedes Benz in for service and the garage taking it completely apart, then reassembling it.”

Bonilla loves watches and has from a young age. “I found my father's old Bulova watch in his drawer, by accident, which

wasn't working,” he remembers. “At that time, I didn't know anything about mechanical watches. I did research on it and I fell into the rabbit hole and got really sucked in. I worked at a consulting firm first, then I decided to become a watchmaker. Eventually, we made that Bulova watch work.

“As Technical Manager for Patek Philippe, part of my role is to teach the Patek Philippe way of servicing watches, showing the watchmakers what they need to be conscious of and showing the Patek technique of doing things,” he says.

It's important for brands to communicate about aftersales service. “There is a need for education across the board,” Bonilla says. “When you buy a car, you know it has to be serviced and you accept that. That same message for watches should be communicated at the time of purchase, including the time involved and the cost. I recommend that customers service their watches somewhere in the three-to-five-year range,” he continues. “Oils degrade over time, so the three to five years is the sweet

spot for service.”

Even though watches are produced in large quantities, they are unique unto themselves. “I like to make the analogy that watches are like children and you have to discover their personalities and get the best out of them,” Bonilla says. “I put my heart into each watch and send it off with pride to the client. This new role is a big challenge because it has taken me out of my comfort zone, and I know I will develop into a more well-rounded person.”

Bonilla's favorite watch is Aquanaut Travel Time Ref. 5164. “It's an awesome piece to wear every day,” he says. “I also love the Grandmaster Chime, just for its complexity, and I would love to own a perpetual calendar, Ref. 5140, because it's really an amazing watch.

“With today's modern technology, I think it's important to have something that has been handcrafted on your wrist,” he continues. “I am a real gearhead and I really enjoy the engineering aspect of great watches.”

—Keith W. Strandberg

PROFILE



SIR NICK FALDO

SIR NICK FALDO

The Professional Golfer on Perfect Timing

OPPOSITE: Sir Nick Faldo
 RIGHT: Audemars Piguet Royal
 Oak Offshore Diver

“Winning is good for you because it gives you the confidence to continue to win.”
 —Sir Nick Faldo



It's not every day that I get to interview someone who has been knighted by the Queen of England. So when my interview with Sir Nick Faldo, the esteemed golf champion and television commentator, started, I tried to stay cool, an attribute that Faldo has in spades.

Faldo attributes his success to “hard work and commitment,” he says. “I left school at 16 and went to the practice ground. I hit thousands of golf balls and got myself out on tour and played as much as I could.

“I learned from both my successes and failures. If you make a mistake at a certain time, you learn from it. If I want to win, I just have to avoid doing this. If I want to be able to perform under pressure, I have to do certain things in my golf game. Winning is good for you because it gives you the confidence to continue to win.”

Faldo has been an Audemars Piguet ambassador since 1989. “I was their first ambassador,” he points out. “I am really pleased. I have had a great time with them. We toured Asia together: Thailand, Singapore, Hong Kong and had some great experiences there.”

Faldo is still in awe of fine timepieces. “When you appreciate the time it takes to make a real masterpiece today, I cannot understand how they made a watch by hand a hundred years ago, with such perfection,” he says. “In general, I love things that are handmade. The best luxuries in the world are handmade.”

The watch Faldo wears most often is his Audemars Piguet Alinghi Royal Oak, the first forged-carbon limited-edition, on a rubber strap. “I don't worry about bashing it or anything,” he says. “I live in Florida where it gets very hot and sweaty, and I don't have to worry about it. I love the iconic design of the Royal Oak. It must give the folks at Audemars Piguet great pride because it has stood the test of time and really hasn't changed much. It's a big watch, it's really cool and it uses different materials.”

For his next Audemars Piguet watch, Faldo has his eye on the Grand Complication. “I would really like the Grand Complication with the really fancy dial, it is great for wearing with a suit,” he says.

Faldo doesn't wear his watch while play-

ing golf, but keeps it on most other times throughout the day. “I think it would influence my swing, especially the size and heft of the Royal Oak,” he says, smiling. “As a golfer you have to get to the tee at the right time. Our whole days are governed by time, and for TV, as a commentator, I have to be there at a certain time. My life is lived in 30-minute increments.

“Television keeps me connected to the game of golf,” he adds. “It's great exposure, I enjoy it, and it's a pretty good day job. TV is very important to the success of golf, to keep promoting the game.” —Keith W. Strandberg