

Faces for our 80th anniversary

The watch industry is, above all, a vast community of men and women who work, day-in day-out, at imagining, elaborating, producing, decorating, distributing and selling watches. Europa Star, which is celebrating its 80th anniversary this year, has decided to render a symbolic homage to all these players in the watch world, whether they are CEOs or simple artisans, creators or salespeople. There will be 80 faces among tens of thousands to be discovered throughout the year.

Bernhard Lederer – Master watchmaker

Born near Stuttgart, Bernhard Lederer learned his watchmaking skills initially in the restoration department of a museum and continued when he worked as an independent specializing in the restoration and reconstruction of time-pieces for auction houses and museums. However, Lederer had a vision of how time should be portrayed that didn't necessarily correspond to the established norm. He saw space where others saw matter, he saw the unconventional where others saw the predictable, he saw a future where time would be watched and not calculated. His creative genius saw no bounds, no constraints, only horological liberty.

To achieve his dreams, Bernhard Lederer moved to the cradle of watchmaking, Switzerland, and with *blu – source du temps* began to create watches that showed the passing of time as had never been seen before. Time became a planet circling its own universe, concentric circles indicating a moment in time without numerals, it became diamonds floating in a sea of mother-of-pearl, it became a revolving tourbillon that moved through 360°, time had become pure emotion. "Time is something emotional," Bernhard Lederer confides, "it is something to be enjoyed and not destroyed by hands fighting to show something or other. What I try to do is show just how beautiful it is to have time and how beautiful time can be." (DML)



Philippe Merk - CEO Maurice Lacroix S.A.



Six years ago, Maurice Lacroix was a predominantly fashion quartz watch brand, strong in Germany and popular in the rest of Europe, but largely unknown in other parts of the world. Then, Philippe C. Merk, CEO Maurice Lacroix S.A., came in and turned the Maurice Lacroix brand around. Now, the brand has a complete range of watches, including the high-end

Masterpiece collection, featuring unique retrograde watches and one manufacture movement. The brand is poised to turn watchmaking on its head with the revolutionary, yet mysterious, *Memoire 1*.

Merk has been able to combine his unique background (a scientific degree and an MBA) into watchmaking success. "To be good in the watch industry, you need the brain, which has the analytical capacity; the heart, which gives you emotion and feeling; and the belly, which gives you the gut feeling for the future," he says. "You have to feel the consumers and how they perceive innovations and complications - these are not analytical functions, but more emotional ones."

Merk is never one to sit on his laurels, he is working too hard. "We are taking the momentum we have and accelerating the pace to bring the company to a totally new position," Merk says. "There are big established players who do an excellent job managing their brands, but it's up to brands like us to challenge these brands, create a new *haute horologie*. *Memoire 1* is really a step in that direction, to do something totally different, groundbreaking and revolutionary, a complication that has never been done before. This is the direction in which Maurice Lacroix will continue." (KWS)

Denis Hayoun – Photographer

"I didn't even know what all the buttons were for, but I do remember – as if it were yesterday – the first picture I took with our family Polaroid. I was eleven years old. We quickly became inseparable, my third eye and I." So explains Denis Hayoun of his first exploration into the world of photography, an art that he has mastered that demands dedication, concentration, attention to detail and a vast amount of creativity.

In 1989, Denis founded his own studio, *Artphoto* and became one of the few specializing in photographing watches and jewellery.

But technological revolution within both the photographic and computer industries was changing both photographers' and clients' perspectives, images could now be transformed into illusions, illusions into dreams, dreams into art. Photography became an ally of design and computer savvy, which is why Denis Hayoun, a genius of the technique, set up his ultra-modern *Diode* studio in Geneva.

"If a diode permits the electronic control of light, I dissimulate the prowess of my techniques much like a ballerina soars onto her points, leaving behind the scene years of practise, so that the essential will become apparent, light dancing with flesh, faces, jewels, watches, in a naturally sensual purity, sensually natural," Hayoun reveals. "This is how I see images today." (DML)

