



THE ROTOR AND TOURBILLON
CASE OF HMI ARE INSPIRED BY A
JAPANESE MANGA BATTLE AXE

SUPER MECHANICAL

MAX BÜSSER & FRIENDS HOROLOGICAL MACHINE 1

They are a rare breed — men who've already ascended to the apex of achievement in one field before stepping away at the dizzying height to blaze a new path to glory. In the movie world, it's been done three times in recent memory. First by Clint Eastwood — the rugged, spaghetti western grim reaper who immersed himself in directing to come up with the beautifully nuanced, existentialist gem, *Unforgiven*. Similarly, Mel Gibson, who lit up screens with *Gallipoli* and *Year of Living Dangerously* with a visceral energy that had critics hailing him as the second coming of Brando, later surprised the same critics by directing the Academy Award-winning *Braveheart*.

Max Büsser, a watch world, a man named Max Büsser is poised to enact a similar story of ascendant role change by stepping into the shoes of a former owner.

When he was working in Jaeger-LeCoultre's Le Sentier headquarters in Switzerland, Büsser was handpicked to revitalize Harry Winston's timepiece division. He accomplished this in two ways. First, he brought high-end watchmaking credibility to Harry Winston by making it a hotbed for technical innovation through the Opus series of watches. This series of watches are manufactured with a star-independent watchmaker each

Büsser tapped Emanuel Guent, the designer of the Royal Oak, to create a range of modern, pure, iconic sports watches for the Harry Winston family. Then five years into his success, when Büsser reached the peak of his career, he decided to step away from Harry Winston and start his own boutique watch company, Max Büsser and Friends. His watches build on the relationships he created with the world's foremost independent watchmakers. Under Büsser's leadership, the company is now a rotating team comprised of some of watchmaking's

most exciting technical wizards and aesthetic firebrands bound by the spirit of human collaboration. The result of this collaboration has been the birth of MB&F's first Horological Machine, a four barreled timepiece with flying central tourbillon.

MB&F's Horological Machines — as each of his watches will be named — are machines which tell the time rather than machines to tell the time. This distinction is crucial to the understanding of MB&F's timepieces because they have nothing to do with the mundane necessity to read time and are all about the luxurious expression of time. Telling time with a MB&F Horological Machine 1 is an emotional experience in the same way owning a Ferrari Enzo or Pagani Zonda is an emotional experience. It is a mobile, high performance sculpture, bristling with futurist inspired styling and real functional innovation.

When asked what a modern timepiece meant to him, Büsser explained, "It is a functional tool as well as a work of art, a piece of jewelry, a means of self-expression and a high performance machine. Emotional values would center mostly around a real creativity unseen to date, a courage or even a boldness in the attitude of the project and

the first thing you'll notice is the sheer volume of the case. In the modern watchmaking universe it is a prime example of sculpture-meets-engineering; Captain Nemo's Nautilus-meets-Captain Kirk's Starship Enterprise. If you look at the side of the case from below, you can easily imagine an enormous architectural structure and the three-dimensionality of the timepiece continues in the multiple levels of the dial and indications. Hour and minute dials are separated by an elevated central tourbillon; notice how raising the tourbillon above the dial and suspending it from the single-arm cock — reminiscent of vintage Breguet pocket watches — allows the viewer to see right inside the beating heart of the movement.

As modernist as it may appear, HM1 is also a tribute to Büsser's vast devotion to legitimate horology. The development of the new caliber, actualized through the partnership of movement engineer Laurent Besse with AHCI member Peter Speake-Marin, was a match made in heaven. The synthesis of Besse's engineering background with Speake-Marin's roots in classical horology ensures that, although the movement looks like it were torn from the fabric of the future, its quality and finish are solidly founded on the very finest aspects of traditional haute horlogerie. The tourbillon cage, for example, is inspired by the battle axe of a Japanese Magna hero from Büsser's childhood, yet it receives stunning black polish — one of the most difficult finishes to execute in traditional high watchmaking.

A PREOCCUPATION WITH POWER Quality of energy was one of HM1's primary focuses. While the tourbillon may be the technical element



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Both dials feature transverse mounted floating sapphire crystal subdials adding to the three dimensional effect



by the crown. Each pair of barrels needs to equalize their energy with the other around the void of the tourbillon in the narrowest section of the movement. Distributing that immense power required the development of a sophisticated beryllium gear train. Using four mainspring barrels in parallel enabled MB&F to reduce the torque of each mainspring, thus improving accuracy, decreasing wear and increasing longevity — all while maintaining an incredible seven days reserve of power!

A CREATIVE REPRESENTATION OF TIME On the

dial side the right looks like the command center of a rocket ship. The dial on the right provides a reading for minutes with a massive speedometer needle-like hand. An indication for the watch's massive four barreled fuel tank is also mounted on this same axis. On the left dial you have a reading for hours. Both dials feature

**UNDER BÜSSER'S COMMAND
WILL BE A ROTATING TEAM
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transverse mounted floating sapphire subdials to provide time indication on the left, and on which the power reserve indication is engraved on the right. The hour and minute hands have to communicate with each other across the massive divide between them. This was accomplished with an oversized, ultra-flat, mirror-polished wheel centrally located under the dial. Too thin to support from its axis, this wheel cleverly floats between two layers of precision-adjusted jewels. Because of the artisan minutia involved,

only 100 watches will be made in the next three years. Indeed the

It is a mixture of technical mastery, truly refined traditional finish, and groundbreaking new aesthetics that heralds the arrival of one of the new masters of form and function — a new world collective known as MB&F, spearheaded by one of the watch industry's most exciting young leaders, a man named Max Büsser. ★

