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BASELWORLD 2014

— New products and news from the brands.

Louis Vuitton
08.05.2014

NEW WATCHES

OLIVIER MÜLLER | MARCH 27, 2014

HYT

Baselworld 2014 : Aesthetic variations and technical transition

— After getting off to a great start, HYT has made the most of 2013 to get itself (back) into battle order — and along the way, unveil five colourful new watches before the arrival of the H3 next year.

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The past year for HYT could be summed up by the expression "Carried away by success". "Carried away", because the brand did not have large enough teams or production capacity to produce and, more importantly, deliver all the orders on its books. Despite the backlog, HYT nonetheless carried on offering new models of its H1 and H2. The gap between orders (50 watches per month) and deliveries (4 watches per month) quickly became critical, before the brand engaged in strategic reorganisation – which has now come into effect.

"Success", because HYT has managed to establish a groundswell rather than a passing trend. Its radically new, never-before-seen approach to watchmaking has the added bonus of being completely out of the reach of counterfeiting, or even pale imitations by competitors. HYT sought to create a bombshell effect and has succeeded – so much so that its own orders are reeling under the impact of the blast.

The brand's strength resides in its independence, which allows it to retain full control of its own diary. Baselworld was of course due to be the venue for the long-awaited H3, but there's been a change of plan. CEO Vincent Perriard has followed the marketing department's credo to the letter: if there's a dilemma, it's better to satisfy existing customers rather than trying to cater to a waiting list. So for HYT, industrial transition has been the priority: since September, the brand has become a powerhouse, turning out a massive two watches a day. And to satisfy retailer demand, these watches come in nineteen different models, compared to five previously.

Red White and Blue

Five of these nineteen references are on display at Baselworld. The most remarkable are probably the H2s. The first of these, the Black DLC in pink gold, adds a touch of luxury to the watch case itself, whereas previously this was simply a showcase for the unprecedented caliber design. It would be going too far to say that the pink gold H2 has become a corporate watch, but it could now win over collectors who have previously hesitated. The titanium and grey gold H2 is the second variant to emerge this year. Its particular feature is the blue fluid, a first for HYT, mounted on a white flange.

"Developing a liquid requires an enormous amount of work in R&D – the new properties of a new colour include new densities and new chemical coatings; it takes some 18 months' work to fully understand these," explains Vincent Perriard, CEO. The hour markers and hands also add a touch of blue, giving an overall aspect that is especially consistent and bright. To be sure, with a diameter of almost 49 mm, discretion will not necessarily be the watch's main asset, but HYT connoisseurs don't usually worry too much about traditional watchmaking codes in that respect! To round things off, there's also a titanium version featuring a platinum crown.



H1 ALUMEN BLUE IS THE NAME OF THE NEW BLUE AND GREEN H1. © HYT

For the H1, the RED 2 has the H2's pink gold shade – but with a titanium background. HYT's first-born has been given a red fluid for the occasion. The watch will be available in autumn 2014.



H2 TITANIUM PLATINUM SQ, FEATURING RED LIQUID AND A MORE INTENSE SKELETON EFFECT © HYT

Lastly, the H1 Alumen Blue unveils a new alloy known as ALUN 316B. Made mostly from aluminium, the other main metals in the alloy are magnesium, zirconium and titanium. Its prime quality is its high mechanical strength, with hardness of 200-210 Hv. The timepiece features a satin blue finish – a contrast that nicely offsets the intense green fluid for the hours. Here, HYT has come up with a really subtly designed watch. The hour dial, featuring guilloche on the edges and applique hour markers, brings with it connotations of traditional fine watchmaking. But to counter any possibility of the dial being too traditional, immediately to its left the cheeky seconds turbine with its single green wing serves as a reminder that with the H1, you can throw away the book as far as standard watchmaking aesthetics go.



TITANIUM AND GREY GOLD H2 © HYT

All of these watches will be delivered gradually throughout 2014. In 2015, Vincent Perriard's team is due to focus once again on the H3. And as usual, it's anyone's guess what it will look like.

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