



HYT PRESS REVIEW


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WATCH REVIEWS

DAVID CHOKRON | OCTOBER 30, 2013

 **HYT**
HYT H2 – Crazy Hydromechanics
– In a further development of its concept, HYT proves that a retrograde liquid indication of the time is no gadget, especially with such a complex mechanism.



An hours hand? What's the point? When HYT presented its first model, the H1, it exposed its concept right on the watch face as a fluorescent green liquid in a tube going around the dial. It's the level of this slightly radioactive-looking liquid that shows the time. When it reaches the end of its travel it is immediately sucked in to return to its departure point in a considerably reworked version of the retrograde principle. At Baselworld 2013, HYT unveiled its H2, a second take on the initial concept that took it a few centilitres further.



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THE H2 DOESN'T GO UNNOTICED ON THE WRIST. HERE THE TIME IS 1:35. © DAVID CHOKRONWORLDTEMPUS

Architecture

The idea remains the same: hours in a tube and the minutes shown by the conventional hand. The design and manufacture of the H2 are the work of Renaud & Papi, purveyors of complicated movements to their shareholder, Audemars Piguet, and also of Richard Mille. You immediately recognise the influence of this constructor in the function selector at 9 o'clock with which you can switch the crown from winding to setting the time. The crown has a torque limiter that prevents overwinding.



THE TWIN BARRELS AND BELLOWS IN A GAS MASK CONFIGURATION. © HYT

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The entire complexity of this eight-day calibre rests on the two bellow reservoirs visible on the two sides of the watch. Configured like a motorcycle V-twin engine at 45 degrees, the reservoirs contain a liquid the formula of which is held in the strictest secrecy. Gradually compressed, they push the fluid along the circular tube. Then at the right time, they retract fully, drawing in all the liquid from the tube before starting the process anew. No detail is forgotten: the H2 even compensates for the expansion of the liquid in rising temperatures so that the volume of green always shows the exact time.

Impact

Beyond the technical aspects, the H2 is even weirder than the H1, which says a lot. From the back, the two mainspring barrels and bellows have the mean look of a commando in a gas mask – an image that served as a sneak preview of the launch of the watch. The brand's CEO, Vincent Perriard, favours guerrilla style, bare-knuckled communications. Like other brands that prescribe to the new school of off-the-wall watchmaking, HYT thus punches way above its production weight so far as reputation is concerned. The H2 therefore won't go unnoticed.



THE H2 REVEALS ALL: BALANCE, BELLOWS, FUNCTION INDICATOR AT 9 O'CLOCK, THERMOMETER. © HYT

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On the wrist you get a genuine 48.8mm UFO in an ultra-light titanium case. The three-dimensional construction of the movement is in plain view. Is it just what watchmakers call a conversation piece? It's more than that – a unique mechanism that is far more complex than it looks. Because if putting the time in a tube is a way of playing about with the principles of watchmaking time and prestige, it had better be good. Otherwise any idea that goes beyond the limits will fall flat.

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