



My affection for HYT, the Hydro-mechanical Horologists, is no secret. I have, since the brand's conspicuous debut in 2012, championed the excellent execution of a totally original concept. The ethos of HYT echoes through the architecture of each and every release. Their commitment to the central theme of watchmaking meeting fluid technology is inspiring.

Despite their success, a lot of wristwatch aficionados lambaste HYT for their garish designs – and their gargantuan diameters.

Enter the HYT HI Ghost, the most muted, pared back, subtly sophisticated timepiece from the fluid fanatics thus far. With the release of the HYT H2 Tradition, I posited that HYT were heading in a new direction, instead choosing sympathetic styling over divisive design. It seems I may have been quite right.

It's as if the enfant terrible of haute horlogerie has been through its rebel phase and come out the other side, its bright green Mohawk and nose ring gone – and, in their place, a gentle quiff and a well-pressed three-piece.

But there's still a glint in HYT's eye and a fire in their belly. They've listened, they've learned, but they've not changed at their core. They've simply reached a new level of maturity that makes producing such a quietly confident timepiece not only sensible, but also unerringly natural.

There are so many details that excite me: the mass-dyed resin minute dial with sharp, full-bodied Arabic numerals, the bi-level power reserve indicator, the high-polish skeletonised seconds wheel and the tiny little dashes of red that simply seek to increase the urgency of the whole affair.

HYT HI GHOST

But the show-stopping feature is without a doubt the fact this watch glows in the dark. For the first time Super-LumiNova provides a glowing backboard for the black fluid-filled capillary. We've seen the light-absorbing black fluid – that took the best part of a year to refine – in the HYT Skull Bad Boy before, but here it comes to life thanks to its pairing with bright white luminant.

This is not the first HYT that is usable in the dark (the H4 Metropolis won that race), but it is, however, the first to manage the feat without the use of a micro-generator and a bulb. This is modern interpretation of an old school method.

The enticingly moody colour scheme results in this watch wearing smaller than its 48.8mm DLC-coated titanium case threatens. It is sleek, unobtrusive and usable. The visual interest comes from the clever marriage of contrasting surface finishes on the case: brushed, satinated and micro-blasted finishes rub shoulders in harmony, creating a soothing interplay of light and shade.

This is progress for HYT. It is evolution. To have retained and added to their DNA through a process of distillation and introspection, and arrived at this conclusion is, I believe, a seminal moment for the brand. With each new release surprising and delighting their fans, it will be fascinating to see what HYT do next...

The HYT HI Ghost is priced at £49,000 and will be limited to just 50 pieces.

