

**HYT** PRESS REVIEW  
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« REVOLUTION »



**HYT H2**

**MOVEMENT** Exclusive HYT manual-winding mechanical movement; retrograde fluidic hours; jumping minutes hand; temperature indicator; 8-day power reserve

**CASE** 48.8mm; DLC-coated titanium; water-resistant to 50m

**STRAP** Rubberized anthracite alligator



# LIQUID DISPLAY

The HYT H2 pushes the limits of hydro-mechanical timekeeping

BY WEI KOH

Vincent Perriard — the CEO of HYT and the man who was behind the total rebranding of Concord — has never been afraid of taking chances. And so, despite the fact that collectors' tastes are returning to a more classic, historic-themed aesthetic, despite the fact that both Johann Rupert and the wife of Chinese President Xi Jinping are in total agreement that the future belongs to "discreet luxury", despite the fact that driving anything remotely outré in Italy will get you pulled to the side of the road and investigated for tax evasion, he still gambled on the chance that there are collectors out there who still want something visually arresting, conceptually polarizing and totally groundbreaking.

Perriard's act of horological double-downing on his concept of hydro-mechanical timepieces, which merge liquid technology with haut-de-gamme watchmaking, seems poised to pay off in multiples. Why has the world flocked around Perriard's idea of using liquid as a time-telling device? To understand this, you should be aware that Perriard's favorite word is "disruption" — that is, "We are gonna be totally disruptive, we are gonna cause a major disruption." Yet, he has managed to marry his iconoclastic leanings with some serious watchmaking credibility. The perfect example of this is his latest creation, the H2.

The first of his watches was the simply named H1, which was launched in 2012. While featuring an evocative and highly entertaining retrograde liquid hour display, it was fairly straightforward in terms of movement architecture. Essentially, a traditionally finished base caliber powers two vertically mounted accordion bellows that apply

pressure in opposing directions for the liquid hour display.

But for 2013, Perriard has teamed with one of watchmaking's greatest technical geniuses to create the H2, a watch that is staggeringly cool. That man is Giulio Papi, the co-founder of Renaud & Papi, the Audemars Piguet-owned incubator for some of the most sublime movements in the world. The bulk of Renaud & Papi's production goes to Audemars Piguet's high complications, with its second-largest client being Richard Mille. As such, the collaboration with such a hallowed complication specialist gives massive street cred to HYT — something that Perriard is not unaware of. He says, "I used to work at Audemars Piguet and it is a brand for which I have so much respect and affection. To be able to work with a legend like Giulio Papi is really a dream come true."

The main movement design concept revolves around not adding many new functions, but totally reimagining the architecture of the movement to integrate the liquid mechanism with the base caliber in a totally holistic way. Take a look at the timepiece and you'll see the bellows have been repositioned such that they are both canted toward you and take the iconic form of a V-twin, air-cooled motorcycle engine. These two bellows are complemented by a massive oscillating balance wheel that is positioned at 12 o'clock. Though it is not a tourbillon, you can easily see a tourbillon version of this movement waiting in the wings, especially considering Renaud & Papi's past expertise with this device.

At three o'clock, you'll see Renaud & Papi's signature gear selector, which is found on many

Richard Mille watches and which made its debut on the Royal Oak Concept watch. This allows you disengage and re-engage three modes: winding, neutral and time-setting. At nine o'clock, a totally mechanical temperature indicator gives you a reading of the optimal zone for the function of the liquid indicator. Flip the watch to its back and you'll see its twin barrels, which provide a full eight days of power reserve. Both barrel covers have been skeletonized to show the state of wind of the springs within. When the coils are concentrated at the center around the barrel arbor, it means that the watch is fully wound; when the coils are loose and concentrated at the perimeter of the barrel, it means that power is at the end of its reserve. The finish of the watch is sublime, though Perriard has now abandoned the ultra-classic finish applied to the H1 to create a more matte-black, appropriately futurist surface for his movement.

While the H1 featured a liquid retrograde hour indicator, the H2 adds to this with a retrograde minute hand. It should be stressed that while wildly expressive, these indicators remain highly legible. The H2 features a massive 48.8mm DLC-coated titanium case crowned by an impressive domed sapphire crystal, though the profile of its lugs actually makes it quite wearable for most wrists. HYT is also working on a case made from a largely transparent polymer that is extremely hard-wearing, while Perriard plans to create a model in the future with luminous liquid to tell time in the dark. We have to admit that even the most stalwart classicists among us find the idea of a luminous, transparent H2 spectacularly appealing. \*