



[The WATCH]

H1 AZO PROJECT

HYT's latest watch is an instrument that reflects the ancient idea of using water and hourglasses to mark the passage of time. But this object is also an embodiment of the future, a perfect combination of physics, mechanics and design

by Paolo De Vecchi

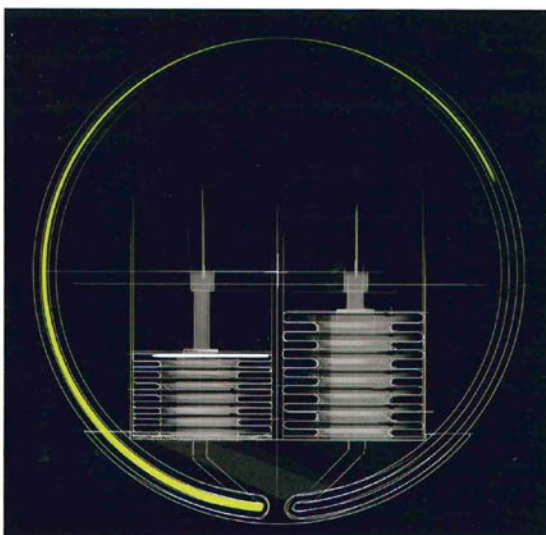
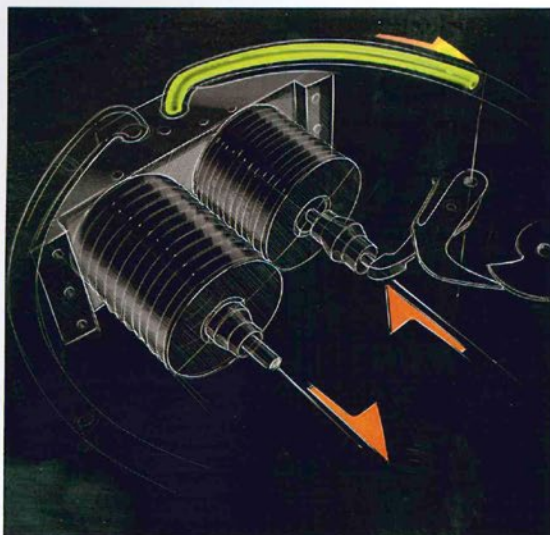


*T*his operation - launched a decade ago by Lucien Vuillamoz and recently brought to completion by Vincent Perriard, former CEO of TechnoMarine, under the HYT brand - is a kind of "Back to the Future". Other famous watchmaking names were also involved, including Bruno Moutarlier, industrial director of Audemars Piguet immediately before and after the turning point in 2000, as well as Swiss companies Chronade and Preciflex for the development of the mechanical and the fluid elements of this exceptional

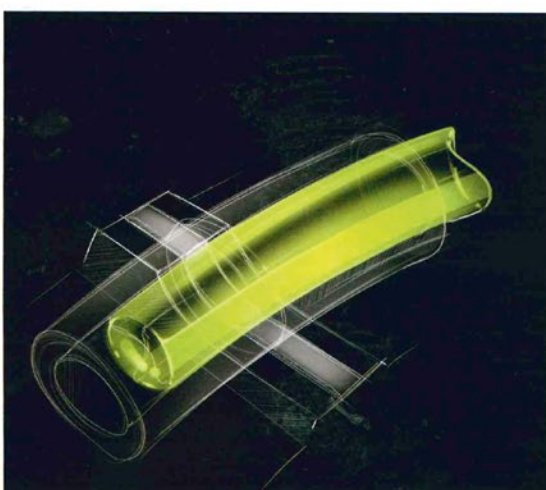


watch. The visionary project assembled a work group calling itself "Hydro Mechanical Horologists" - the concept did not remain in the realm of the imagination, it has been transformed into timepieces combining a futuristic style and mechanism with the ancient practice of using water to measure the relentless flow of time. Our forebears didn't only use sundials to measure time, but also hourglasses, where the passage of time was mirrored by the flow of fine sand, powdered glass or liquids of various kinds. And today, HYT's

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The H1 Azo Project by HYT works as a hybrid mechanical/fluid system - a watch movement activates pistons that display the passage of time by pushing a special liquid inside a graduated glass tube



invention uses a fluid - dyed bright green for visibility - to carry out the task, but inside a wristwatch and on the basis of an exquisitely mechanical movement. Images of the H1 Azo Project model, a product of HYT's collective genius, speak for themselves, but although it looks rather straightforward, in reality the construction is highly complex. The final result is a small tube positioned around the exterior face of the dial on a graduated scale. Inside it flows a green liquid (in this case framed by the bezel in an identical colour), but to get to this you must imagine a long, arduous interdisciplinary

study, part of which involved the laws of fluid behaviour applied to mechanics and watch design. The starting point was the design of rectangular capillary vessels made of plexiglas to create tube-shaped capillaries. Made in borosilicate glass with a diameter of around 1 mm for every 11 mm of length, a liquid flows inside them, driven by ultraflexible, hard-wearing bellows. They are activated and synchronised by a watch mechanism that functions with pistons, enabling the liquid to move and show, quite literally, the flow of time. www.hytwatches.com