

FUTURE WATCH

What does the world of horology design promise for the future? Many watch designers are observing design influences from beyond the watch world



CHRISTOPH BEHLING Award-winning product and watch designer, Tag Heuer

Having worked on mobile phones for Nokia, perfume bottle design for Dior and eyewear for Tag Heuer, I'm now working on Tag Heuer designs for 2009. Tag Heuer's biggest challenge now is women's watches.

I believe the key to great design is to push materials to their limits, using, for example, ceramics, to create something you can only make with that material.

I see a hunger for uniqueness and products that will endure. We are looking at the applications of rapid prototyping, a technology which can lead to customisation on a mass level, in-store, in the foreseeable future.

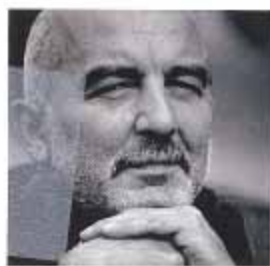


VALERIE URSENBACHER Watch designer, HD3 complication

Watches have recently become extremely desirable objects for both men and women. Watch design is more daring and high tech than it used to be.

Cars play a very important role in today's style and they give me lots of inspiration for my own designs. Science-fiction movies, extraordinary websites and innovative fashion inspire me, too.

When creating complicated movements, like the HD3, we are mindful to innovate both technically and on the design front. Ultimately, the movements are always the heart of our watches.



GIULIANO MAZZUOLI Product and watch designer, Manometro

In the UK, people love big watches. It's satisfying to see a confident, fashionable woman wearing a large watch. People will always appreciate simplicity because simplicity is the most difficult element in design.

I like to work with suppliers outside the watch industry because when, like me, you come from outside the industry, you bring a fresh approach.

My most ambitious project, 'Contagiri', combines mechanics, complication and design. When I raced Alfa Romeos in the Seventies, the rev counter in an Alfa Romeo GT evoked the most powerful emotions in me.



OCTAVIO GARCIA Creative director, Audemars Piguet

Our design people are working more closely than ever with engineers and we're increasingly taking inspiration from the automotive universe.

The big challenge is to respect traditional craftsmanship while adding a modern touch, in order to create watches with personality.

One of our most progressive products stylistically is the 'MC12', inspired by Maserati's Le Mans version. Carbon fibre and aluminium are integrated into the case and the levers' styling recalls the car's engine.



THIERRY NATAF Creative director and president, Zenith

Fashion is the instantaneous mirror of culture, society and humanity. Today, all the watches we make – even haute horlogerie watches – are linked to cultural and fashion trends.

I will continue to develop the Zenith collection on a tradition-to-modernity axis. We revisit the tradition of great watchmaking through our 'Chronomaster', 'Class', 'Academy' and complications like the 'Multicity', while always adding a twist.

We continue to innovate with 'Defy', combining 150 years of watchmaking expertise with futuristic, high-performance materials, to result in the unexpected, such as the 'Defy' for women – his watch for her.