



Team Effort

MAÎTRES DU TEMPS CEO STEVEN HOLTZMAN BRINGS TOGETHER SOME OF THE WORLD'S MOST TALENTED MASTER WATCHMAKERS IN A UNIQUE HOROLOGICAL COLLABORATION

WHEN AMERICAN STEPHEN Holtzman decided to create his own series of exceptional timepieces after a fruitful career in watch marketing, the imaginative entrepreneur decided to combine some of the world's most talented watchmakers into a team in which each player provided a unique set of skills. With that, the concept of Maîtres du Temps was born and Holtzman had soon scooped-up legendary watchmakers Christophe Claret and Peter Speake-Martin, who agreed to develop the brand's first timepiece. The result was Chapter One, a highly complicated watch that became a collectors' favourite when it was launched in 2007. Holtzman continued to work with Speake-Martin and brought in Daniel Roth, the owner of the eponymous Swiss watch company, for the brand's second release, Chapter Two, in



WATCH IT
FROM TOP
CEO Steven Holtzman; Maîtres du Temps' Chapter Two

2009. He will maintain this unique approach, working with a new team of master watchmakers on Chapter Three, which is due in 2011.

HKT: How did you come up with the concept?

SH: When I had the idea for the brand, I wanted to get the best of all the Swiss watchmakers. It was like working with great chefs. Of course, you can't take the best 20 chefs and put them together to make you a great dinner; but if you have two or three people working together, you will get something amazing. So, when I wanted to create an exceptional watch, I couldn't think of anything better than working with a team of the greatest living watchmakers.

HKT: How did the watchmakers react when you approached them with the idea?

SH: They didn't buy it in the beginning. Watchmakers are usually very introverted guys; they work in their own micro world. So, originally, they were like "why do we need two watchmakers to make a watch?" However, they gave it a go anyway, and once they had done it, they were really enthusiastic about it.

HKT: What is the process like?

SH: For each movement we have a different team, so every time there is a different group of watchmakers. The idea is that the masters can always change. On each project, people take different roles: one person will be the constructor, another one will be the manufacturer, assembler or designer. By getting people who all have something to contribute, we aim to make it perfect.

HKT: What is the brand's DNA?

SH: The thing that visually sets our watches apart from others is a rolling bar, which we use to express different things. But our main distinction is really an outstanding level of craftsmanship. If you just want to get the time, you can look at your mobile phone. But to appreciate our watches, you really have to understand craftsmanship. A timepiece like this can have 600 or 700 components, and every component can take a week to make. It's not simply about buying a watch, it's about a whole new level of craftsmanship.

HKT: What was the difference between Chapters One and Two?

SH: For Chapter One, we can only make one or two watches a month, so the demand is much higher than the supply. We have orders to keep us busy for the next one or two years, for sure. So, for Chapter Two, we decided to do a slightly less complicated watch of which we can produce 20 or 30 a month. While Chapter One really was only a collector's piece, Chapter Two provided a watch someone like a doctor or lawyer could buy. ■