



DE BETHUNE
L'ART HORLOGER AU XXI^e SIÈCLE

De Bethune x HG Timepiece

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De Bethune and HG Timepiece are proud to announce their unique collaboration around the iconic hourglass by Marc Newson

It is a magical moment when two creative minds and art enthusiasts meet around their passion: Marc Newson, one of the most influential designers of his generation, and Denis Flageollet, one of the greatest living master watchmakers.

HG Timepiece

HG Timepiece - a Swiss company which develops and sells Marc Newson's timekeeping art objects - had been looking for a technique to blue the nanoballs in his Hourglass for several years. As there are no pure blue metals, it is not possible to plate the nanoballs with this colour, so it was a challenge to overcome. Moreover, the nanoballs' microscopic size (0.60 mm), as well as perfecting the blue colour coverage and its resistance to wear, were the other major obstacles to achieving this processing technique.

De Bethune

Each colour corresponds to a different type of energy. At De Bethune, the colour blue carries a broad and deep meaning. Evoking water, sky and space all at once, it is envisaged by Denis Flageollet, Master Watchmaker and Founder of the brand, as a luminous vibration.

Thanks to its mastery of the art of thermal oxidation of metals, De Bethune raises the level of complexity once again by bluing millions of nanoballs in polished steel. The blue colour results from the heat released by the chemical reactions of the heated steel. The reaction requires extreme cleanliness of the metals, a precise process only known to watchmakers. This unique preparation will then allow the bluing of the nanoballs, made of a special steel, in the kiln. The time of oxidation and the temperature must be meticulously controlled in order to obtain the perfect blue. Then, the nanoballs are sorted and only the perfect ones are chosen to fill the hourglass.

Collaboration

Through HG Timepiece, De Bethune agreed to try to make this blue dream a reality. Denis Flageollet, with his unrivalled expertise in bluing metals such as titanium and steel, experimented in his forge for many weeks with the heat reaction of polished steel nanoballs until he succeeded in bluing them perfectly in the desired tone. He thus developed a method for replicating this same blue on 127 million nanoballs. This was a painstaking process that took several months over the course of a year, and so will not be repeated in the future, given the enormous challenge involved.

The incredible task of bluing the nanoballs to perfection, coupled with the ever-increasing complexity of glassblowing, has led HG Timepiece and De Bethune to limit this unprecedented series to 36 Hourglasses: twelve 60-minute hourglasses and twenty-four 10-minute hourglasses.

An additional, unique hourglass will be added to the collection, thus completing the collaboration. More information will be announced in due course.