## F.P.JOURNE Invenit et Fecit

# THE HOUR GLASS

## Young Talent Competition Awarding to the winner at the F.P.Journe Manufacture April 9, 2024

Since 2015, the Young Talent Competition allows discovering the next generation of most talented young watchmakers in the world, supports them in their route to independence by identifying their achievements and putting them under the spotlight. F.P.Journe organizes the Young Talent Competition with the support of The Hour Glass, luxury watch retailer in the Asia Pacific region. Both Maisons aim to perpetuate and support the art of haute horology and cultivate the appreciation of extensive horological craftsmanship.

The selection criteria are based on technical achievement, the search for complexity in their realization, the quality of craftsmanship as well as their sense of design and aesthetics. Applicants must have independently designed and created a timepiece or an horological construction. The 2024 Young Talent Competition winner receives a diploma and a CHF 50,000.- grant from The Hour Glass and F.P.Journe, which will allow him to purchase watchmaking tools or finance an horological project.

The jury of the Young Talent Competition 2024 is composed of key personalities from the international horological scene: Philippe Dufour, Andreas Strehler, Giulio Papi, Marc Jenni, Michael Tay, Elizabeth Doerr and François-Paul Journe.

#### Thomas Aubert Séléné

23 years old - Le Russey - France Graduated from Edgar Faure High School in Morteau, France - July 2023

#### Introduction\_

During my final year at Edgar Faure High School, I was fortunate enough to be able to make a timepiece I called Séléné. The project required us to think creatively in order to design, produce, and assemble our watch. That year my class was lucky enough to be assisted by John-Mikaël Flaux, a French horological designer who specializes in automata. Mr. Flaux gave us a great deal of freedom. The only constraints were that we choose a base movement and that we create a non-dragging animation. One of the requirements imposed by the training program was that our creative process had to be centred on a specific theme. I decided to concentrate on curiosity, a feeling that the mechanical arts have always aroused in me.

#### The origin of the project's aesthetic style\_

This watch was entirely designed and produced between October 2022 and June 2023. During the first month I spent a lot of time learning things, both in the field of horology and in other completely different areas. While pondering and learning, I came to be interested in astronomy. It seemed to me that this was a vast and fascinating subject, and it elicited the curiosity of many people. One thing led to another, and I began to investigate shooting stars. That phenomenon is intriguing and accessible to everyone. By the way, do you know why we make a wish when we see a shooting star? According to the Greek astronomer Ptolemy, when the gods came to watch over humans, they pushed the stars to one side – this was a manifestation of their curiosity about mankind. Thus, shooting stars represent a way of contacting the gods, so that they remain close to us and make our wishes come true. When I heard that anecdote, I realized it would make sense to create a watch with animated shooting stars as a way of representing curiosity.

From an aesthetic point of view, I wanted my watch to reflect the stars and astronomy and chose to do so by creating contrast and brilliance. The greatest challenge during the design phase was to keep my objective in mind: to make an animated watch with a contemporary design.

I chose to call the watch "Séléné". That is the name of the moon goddess, who rides through the night sky in a silver chariot drawn by two horses. Her name is synonymous with purity and bright, shining light.

#### Functioning principle and technical choices\_

One of our requirements was to base our work on an existing movement. I chose to modify the entire system, including a key winding movement as a way of paying homage to automata. So I based my work on the gear train of a calibre 6497 and completely redesigned all the other components: bridges, plate, balance, time adjustment and winding, in order to achieve the design I wanted without making any compromises. To give meaning to the concepts of curiosity and shooting stars, I wanted the animation to be rapid, located on the back of the watch, and to be active during winding, so as to maintain the viewer's interest while the key winding is taking place.

To furnish the driving force for the stars I didn't want to use a second barrel, as one sees in certain animations, for that would require more space and would also involve other constraints. To avoid this, I developed a system that makes use of the "lost" energy of the click. Normally, the click has a recoil to avoid over-winding of the barrel.

However the energy from that recoil is dispersed and lost. If it is augmented, it can be recovered and redistributed elsewhere. My system is based on the principle of re-using that force in a multiplying gear train.

Thus the shooting stars move due to the principle of cams and feelers at the gear train's extremity. Concerning time adjustment and winding, these are fairly traditional technical choices with a set-hands arbor that allows uncoupling for time adjustment and is fitted on the barrel arbor for winding.

#### Execution and production\_

Execution began after the conception and design phases, around the month of January. This was the step I was the most confident about. I trained with Luc Monnet (a French clockmaker who specializes in the mechanical arts) and I had some machines at home. I made almost everything except the glasses and the strap.

Components such as the bridges and the plate were produced on a Hauser jig boring machine and a Schaublin 102 lathe. Each hole was reamed on the jig boring machine, in order to achieve perfectly concentric jewels. I used numerical controls for more technical milled pieces such as the dials and the case. The greatest difficulty I encountered during production was when piercing the back glass. It took me over 2 weeks to discover the correct technique on a traditional machine, so that the glass was pierced cleanly and without any chipping.

All the chamfering was done by hand with a file; the pieces were then polished with diamond paste, as were all the block-polished pieces.

The steps of prototyping and starting the mechanism took a great deal of time, because they involved both correcting pieces and dealing with many unforeseen situations. After decoration, all the components were assembled. This was approximately one week before the project's due date, in June.

#### Presentation and description of the watch\_

Séléné is a mechanical watch with two hands and a 46-hour power reserve. Its 316L stainless steel case is 43 mm in diameter, 13 mm high (with glass) and weighs 110 g. Its integral strap is unusual in that it has no lugs, which gives it an elongated look and an aerodynamic style that is reminiscent of a rocket ship. A rubber strap was chosen to give a sporty look, and because it is a material that offers many options in terms of both colour and style.

The shooting stars on the watch back move during winding, as the key is turned. Made of steel, they are block-polished and chamfered to give them "shine". The dial they are placed on is made of sand-blasted blued steel.

The constellation of Pisces is engraved on the watch; however, this may be adapted to suit the client's wishes. On the front, the dial is made up of two parts: the interior, in silver, has a scratched finish and a circular-grained outer portion. The indexes are steel balls, echoing the stars.

The hands are made of steel. They are chamfered, blued, and polished, and their surface is block-polished to create contrast. The three-quarter bridge and the plate are made of nickel silver with a sand-blasted and scratched finish. The pallet bridge is made of sand-blasted and chamfered steel. The entire surface of the balance cock is block-polished, and it is chamfered.

#### Conclusion

I am proud of this project, for aside from the horological object per se, it represents a key moment of my life. All my energy, all my skills, and all my knowledge were devoted to it during its creation. This project allowed me to acquire new skills and knowledge, and to accept challenges that were both mental and physical.

I would particularly like to mention the incredible telephone conversations I had with Luc Monnet and Théo Auffret (winner of the Young Talent Competition 2018), who generously and enthusiastically gave their time and shared their knowledge, purely due to their passion for horology and their desire to help me with my watch.

In conclusion, this year was one of increased and deepened self-knowledge. In order to successfully complete the project, I spent many long moments at my workbench, thinking. Those moments allowed me to realize how much I enjoy making horological projects come into existence, whether by creating my own pieces, or, on a more modest scale, taking part in the projects of others. This experience has strengthened my desire to devote myself to creation and design after finishing my studies. Until I have enough time and money to produce my own creations, I have founded my own micro-entreprise specialized in making prototypes and components.

#### Technical specifications:

Name: Séléné Diameter: 43 mm Thickness: 13 mm Weight: 110 g Calibre: 6497 modified (creation of bridges, plate, balance, time-setting and winding systems) Case: 316L stainless steel Finishing: traditional, hand-decorated









### Interview Thomas Aubert

#### About you:

#### What inspired you most when choosing this career path?

I think it was my grandfather, who was an independent clockmaker-repairer. Sadly, he died while I was still a student, but he passed his passion for horology on to me. I felt obligated to work hard and to finish my apprenticeship. It was my way of honouring him, by completely devoting myself to our shared passion.

#### How has your approach to horology changed from the time you began your studies to the moment you opened your own workshop?

At the beginning, I saw horology as a sort of miniature puzzle. That was really what drew me to the profession. I was fascinated by the idea of putting many micro-pieces together to give life to a time-keeping object. But the more I learned about the profession, the more I became aware of the infinite number of possibilities the horological profession can offer. As I continued my training, I came to understand that not only could one put the puzzle together, one could also design it. That dream of creativity and independence came into focus over the course of my studies. I often told myself that one day I too might open my own workshop. Finally, after being fortunate enough to meet the right people at the right time, I was able to make that dream come true once I finished my studies. Thanks to this, I see my profession not only as a way of making a living, but also as a means of expressing my creativity.

#### In the face of all the challenges involved in the creation of a watch as complex as Séléné, how did you remain motivated?

First of all, out of passion. I truly enjoyed all the aspects of the entire project. I wasn't thinking of the finished product when creating Séléné. I made it for everything that came before. The process brought me more satisfaction than the finished product itself.

For me, this school project was also a way of creating a watch with no commercial constraints. Not having any obligation to generate sales allowed me to unleash my creativity.

#### About the watch:

#### What part of the fabrication process of this watch did you prefer?

The profile turning. That was the part I had the most knowledge of and the process I was the most skilled in. So I was able to go far in terms of quality, designing pieces that were quite technical and that required a great deal of precision to turn.

Is there any aspect of the process of creation that you wish you had approached differently in hindsight? Yes, in the development of the idea of curiosity, the theme I chose for my project, I would have liked to include a key for the winding and setting system, embedding it in the strap buckle, but I didn't have enough time.

#### If you had to create a follow-up piece to Séléné, what characteristics would you like to explore or add?

I don't want to make a follow-up piece to Séléné. The watch symbolizes the end of my apprenticeship and everything that represents. However, one day I would very much like to design a watch that utilizes the driving force system employed in Séléné. The system I devised could be used to drive other complications. I think it could be exploited in many other pieces.

#### About the future:

#### Why did you decide to take part in the Young Talent Competition?

It represented a kind of closure for my project and gave me the opportunity to receive more advice and critiques from people in the profession. It allowed me to end my cycle of studies by presenting a piece that embodies, par excellence, my horological journey.

#### What are the skills and knowledge that you hope to gain for your future creations?

If I had to choose a single area in which I hope to improve my skills, I would select the design and development of watches. Both technically and aesthetically, I would like to acquire the skills that would allow me to design and conceive my most inventive ideas.

#### What are your plans for the future of your workshop?

I share a space with my friend and fellow classmate Alexis Ramel-Sartori, who works in the same field. We would like to grow the workshop, both in volume and in terms of its activities, by combining creation and subcontracting. We have clients that we get along very well with, who give us work that is interesting and varied. We would therefore like to keep those clients, while continuing to develop that aspect of our activity. Eventually, we hope to enlarge our team by recruiting other colleagues. This would allow us to make subcontracting an independent activity, and to free up time and resources so we can devote ourselves to creating pieces that will bear our name.

#### What personal challenges have you set for yourself in the coming years?

The main challenge I have given myself is to continue to take enormous pleasure in what I do, while giving my work a human dimension. On a more pragmatic level, I hope that Alexis and I will create our first timepiece, and that in doing so we will gain knowledge and experience and also benefit our workshop.

#### www.fpjourne.com

The independent F.P. Journe Manufacture produces around 1,000 precision mechanical watches per year with 18K rose Gold movements, the brand's exclusive signature. The label "Invenit et Fecit" engraved on all its watches, guarantees and highlights the importance of an inhouse calibre entirely designed and constructed in its workshops.

F.P.Journe organizes the Young Talent Competition and brings more than 40 years of expertise in authentic haute horology. François-Paul Journe's historical knowledge has led him to show a timeless consistency in his research on precision and innovative prowess. It is a real honor for him to encourage these young talents by sharing his knowledge, his passion and his determination on a daily basis. He supports them as he was supported at their age.

#### www.thehourglass.com

The mission of **The Hour Glass** is to advance watch culture. They are known for their thoughtfully curated selection of brands, their passion in designing uniquely immersive retail experiences and their team of highly knowledgeable watch specialists. The Hour Glass strives to become the primary port of call for all enthusiasts and watch collectors alike. Everyday across their combined network of over 50 boutiques in the Asia Pacific region, they are poised to further the awareness and appreciation of watches and ready to guide their clients in their hunt for a superlative timepiece.