



"We don't follow any brand DNA..." Maximilian Büsser and his friends' first 'Horological Machine' is engineered by British watchmaker Peter Speake-Marin. The seven-day power reserve is charged by a winding rotor inspired by the crescent-shaped blades of Grendizer's 'Double Harken' weapon from Seventies anime *UFO Robot Grendizer*. See for yourself: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grendizer>

"In a time of fast-changing trends, legacy, heritage and authenticity are not enough."

True to form

Watch purists may view links between watches, fashion and architecture as lightweight. But in some cases, certainly at the very high end, this rapprochement helps to further elevate watches into the realm of art, which, unlike mere whimsical trend, is enduring.

As Maximilian Büsser sees it, "We are not aiming to please the majority at MB&F. We are putting our guts into our work without any commercial considerations. We don't follow any brand DNA - we believe that's true art."

The fact that watch industry leaders are looking to the future and at the world around them - with or without the help of trend services - is thoroughly refreshing news for an industry often bogged down in history. At a time when people are more design-savvy than ever, this is a recognition that watch brands want to

avoid being insular, that they are committed to designing objects with longevity, and that good design is about creating watches that don't just tell the time, but more than that: they reflect the time in which they were conceived. The challenge is never to compromise on individuality, creativity and technical innovation in the process.

But it is hardly surprising that some watch brands view trend agencies and news services with scepticism. Luxury brands typically see themselves as trend-setters, not followers. Many only started using external advertising agencies very recently. Nevertheless, the Chief Executive of Nelly Rodi claims that even though many brands deny using his company's trend books, photocopies can be found in many designers' studios. Who knows if some watch brands are trying to underplay their outside influences? ○

As you may have guessed, an emerging trend for watches this year is the sinister and stealthy aesthetic, using black metal and rubber. Hautlence's new HLS07 jump-hour model (below; SFr.53,000) and Corum's new Admiral's Cup Tides 48 (bottom) both exemplify this dark progression.

