

MAN MACHINE MOMENTS

THE ART OF TIME:
THE MAKING OF MB&F HMI



HOW MAXIMILIAN BÜSSER DISTILLED IDEAS AND
CRYSTALLISED THEM INTO REALITY

EXCLUSIVELY
PRESENTED BY:
TIMEWERKE



THE MAN:
MAXIMILIAN BÜSSER



HIS MACHINE:
THE HMI OR
HOROLOGICAL MACHINE NO. 1

THE MOMENTS:

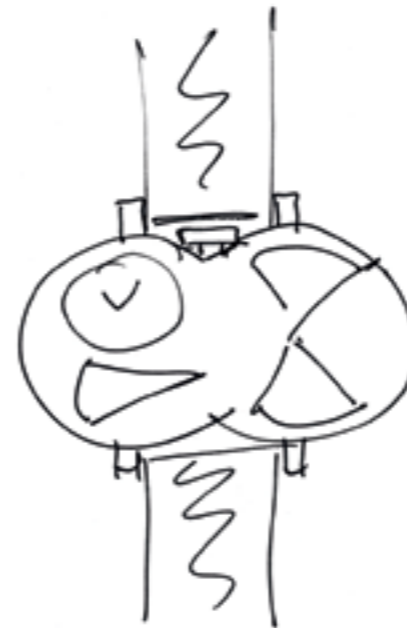


THE MOST DIFFICULT EXERCISE IN CREATION:
BEGINNING FROM A BLANK SHEET OF PAPER.

HOW DO YOU CREATE WHEN THERE IS NO FOUNDATION TO BEGIN WITH?
THERE IS NO BRAND DNA FOR INSPIRATION AND NO EXISTING PRODUCT
LINES FOR STYLISTIC ELEMENTS.

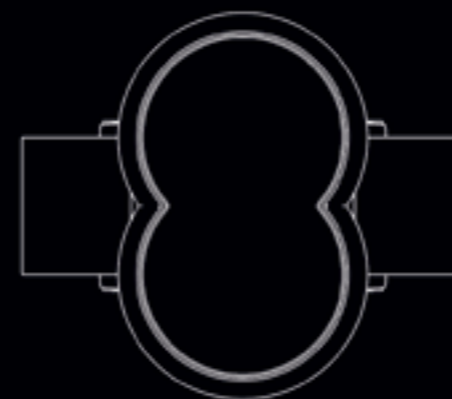
THE MOMENT CAME DURING A LONG FLIGHT BACK TO SWITZERLAND FROM
SINGAPORE. WHAT BÜSSER HAD WAS A BLANK PAPER AND AT LEAST AN IDEA FOR A
NEW WRISTWATCH.

THE PARAMETERS: "THE WATCH HAD TO BE BOTH EASY TO WEAR ON A SLENDER WRIST
LIKE MINE AND BE BIG ENOUGH TO ACCOMMODATE COMPLEX AND RELIABLE NEW
TECHNOLOGY," SAYS BÜSSER.



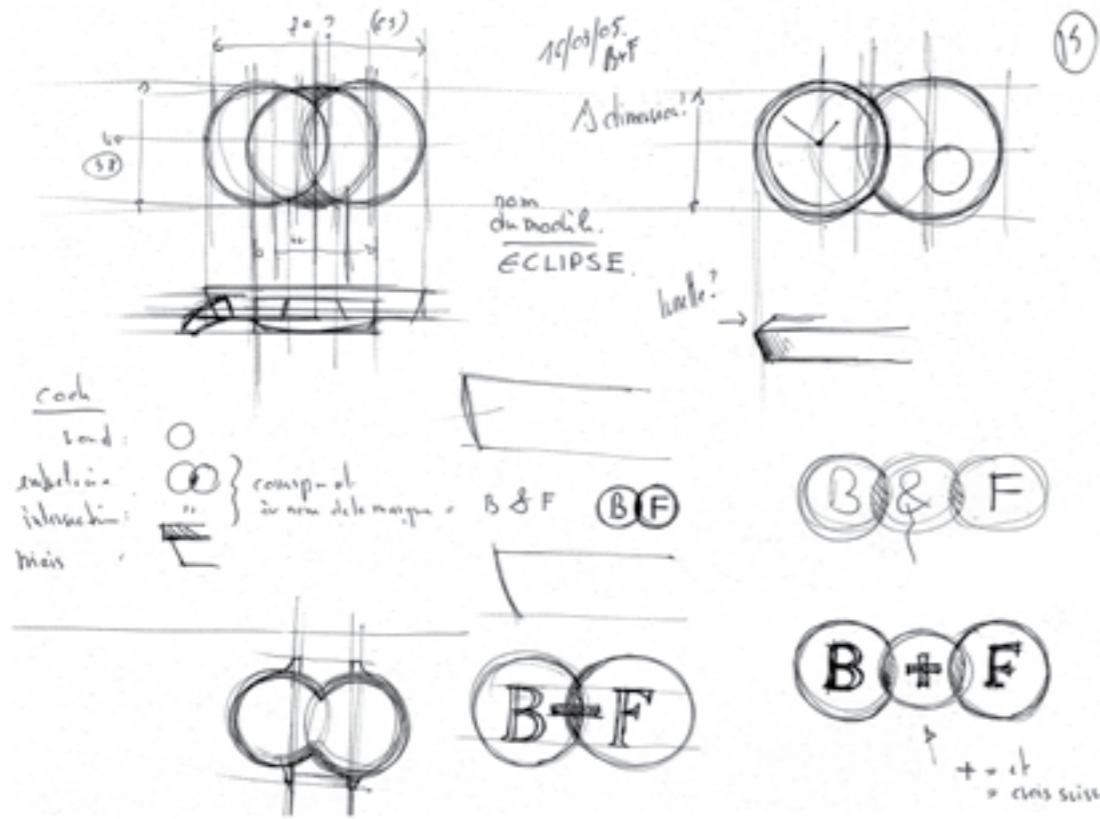
DURING THE SAME FLIGHT, BÜSSER DREW TWO OVERLAPPING CIRCLES. THE
FIRST WAS AN AREA FOR A CONSISTENT BRAND IDENTITY WHILE THE SECOND
WAS FOR A PLAYGROUND WHERE AN INDEPENDENT WATCHMAKER COULD PLAY WITH
HIS WILDEST IMAGINATIONS.

AN ARCHITECTURAL OUTLINE WAS SHAPED AND IT FIRST LOOKED LIKE AN
INVERTED PYRAMID. VERY SOON, A THREE-DIMENSIONAL ELEMENT BEGAN TO TAKE
FORM, EVOLVING INTO AN 'OUT-OF-THE-WORLD' MACHINE-LIKE STRUCTURE
WITH INWARDLY SLOPING SIDES.



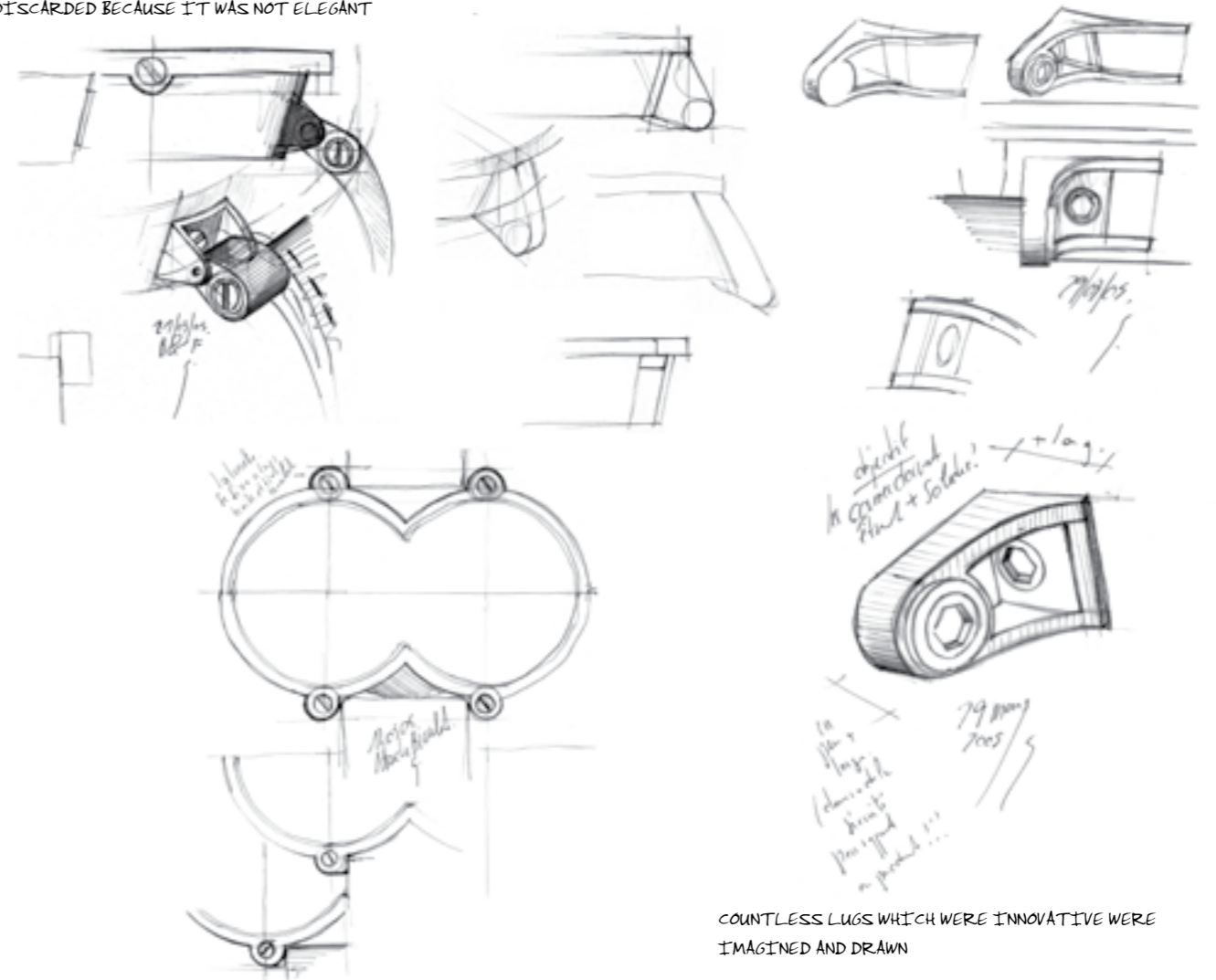
THE FIRST COMPUTER DRAWING

IN THE EARLY DAYS, THE PROPOSED SIZE OF THE CASE WAS SHOCKING AS CAN BE SEEN BY WHAT GIROUD WROTE. LENGTHWISE, IT WAS WRITTEN AS '10MM!' EVEN BÜSSER CONCEDES THAT HE WAS SCARED WITH SUCH A SIZE. THE EVENTUAL LENGTH IN THE END WAS NOT TOO FAR OFF AT 65MM



THE LOGO, AS CAN BE SEEN FROM THESE EARLY SKETCHES, SHOWS 'B&F' OR 'B+F'. IT WAS SO TILL ALMOST THE VERY END WHEN BÜSSER'S TRADEMARK ATTORNEYS ADVISED AGAINST IT AS THE POSSIBILITY OF FACING OPPOSITION OR CHALLENGES WOULD HAVE BEEN HIGH. 'MB&F' FOR 'MAXIMILIAN BÜSSER & FRIENDS' WAS FINALLY CHOSEN

ONE VERSION OF THE STRAP ATTACHMENT WAS MOBILE. HOWEVER, THE IDEA WAS DISCARDED BECAUSE IT WAS NOT ELEGANT



COUNTLESS LUGS WHICH WERE INNOVATIVE WERE IMAGINED AND DRAWN



"ONE OF THE IDEAS IN CREATING THIS WATCH IS NOT TO BE NORMAL, BE UNREASONABLE." -MAXIMILIAN BÜSSER



THE APERTURE ABOVE DEPICTS A POWER RESERVE INDICATION ON THE SIDE OF THE CASE, WHICH WAS TO BE A FIRST IN THE WORLD OF WATCHMAKING. HOWEVER, WHEN SUCH A FEATURE APPEARED SIMULTANEOUSLY IN JEAN DUNAND AND VAN CLEEF & ARPELS TIMEPIECES, THE IDEA WAS SHELVED

"IT WAS NOT WORTH DOING IT AS WE DO NOT WISH TO BE LABELLED AS COPYCATS," SURMISES BÜSSER

THANKS TO ERIC GIROUD, A DESIGNER AND FRIEND OF BÜSSER, CRITICAL INPUTS WERE RECEIVED AND THE SKETCHES BECAME MORE DETAILED. THE TWO SEPARATE HALVES BECAME HOLISTIC THROUGH THE INTEGRATION OF ALL THE CREATIVE WORLDS INTO ONE, MORE HARMONIOUS WHOLE.. THE CONCEPT OF EVERYTHING BEING PUT TOGETHER IN ONE HARMONIOUS CASE IS EVIDENT IN THE INITIAL SKETCHES

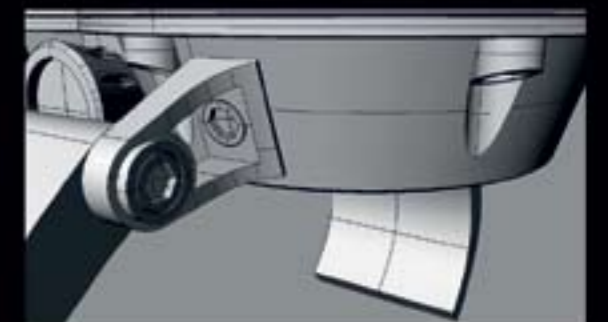
"FOR A VERY LONG TIME, WE HAD A CROWN AT 12 O'CLOCK WITH A PUSHER BUTTON ON THE SIDE, AN INSPIRATION FROM OLD POCKET WATCH SYSTEMS THAT SEPARATED THE WINDING AND TIME-SETTING FUNCTIONS WITH THE SAME CROWN. THE SHOULDERS ON EARLY DESIGNS THEREFORE HAD DIFFERENT LENGTHS." ~ BÜSSER



MORE THAN 30 LUGS WERE DESIGNED. ONLY ONE WAS SELECTED. IT HAD TO BE INTEGRAL TO THE CASE AND PRACTICAL IN HOLDING THE STRAP SNUGLY TO THE WRIST

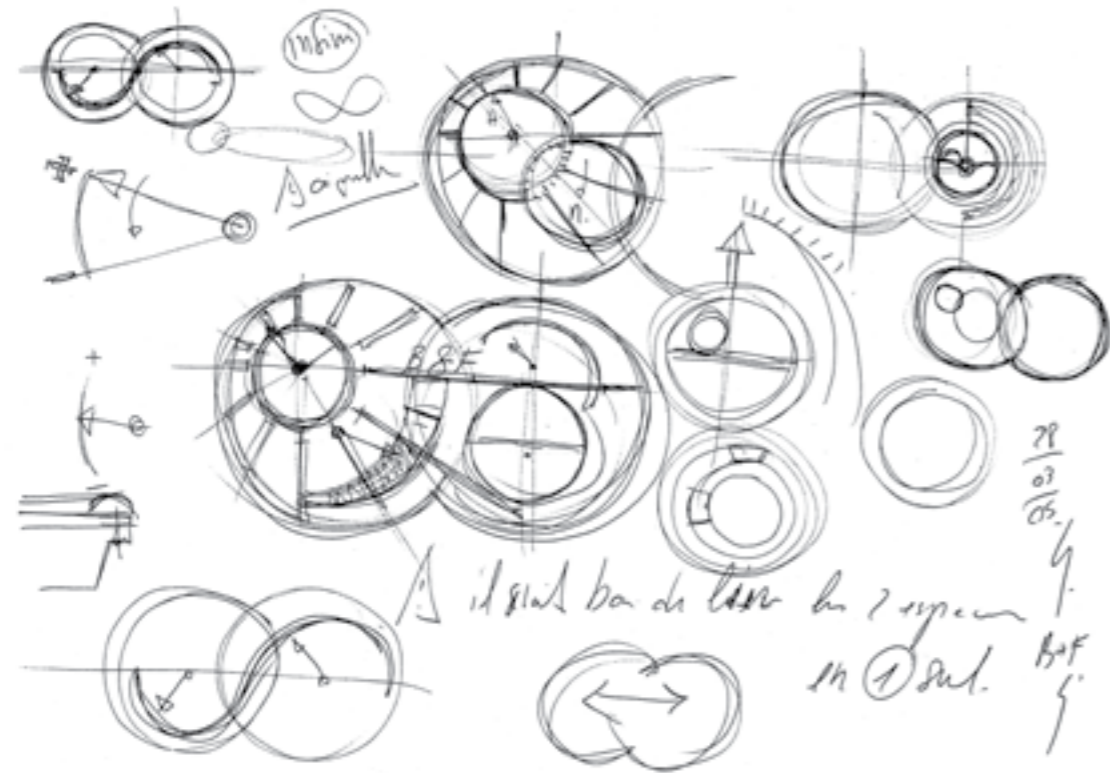


WHILE THE DESIGN IS BOLD, THE FORM AND SIZE MUST BE COMFORTABLE WHILE SITTING ON SLIM WRISTS

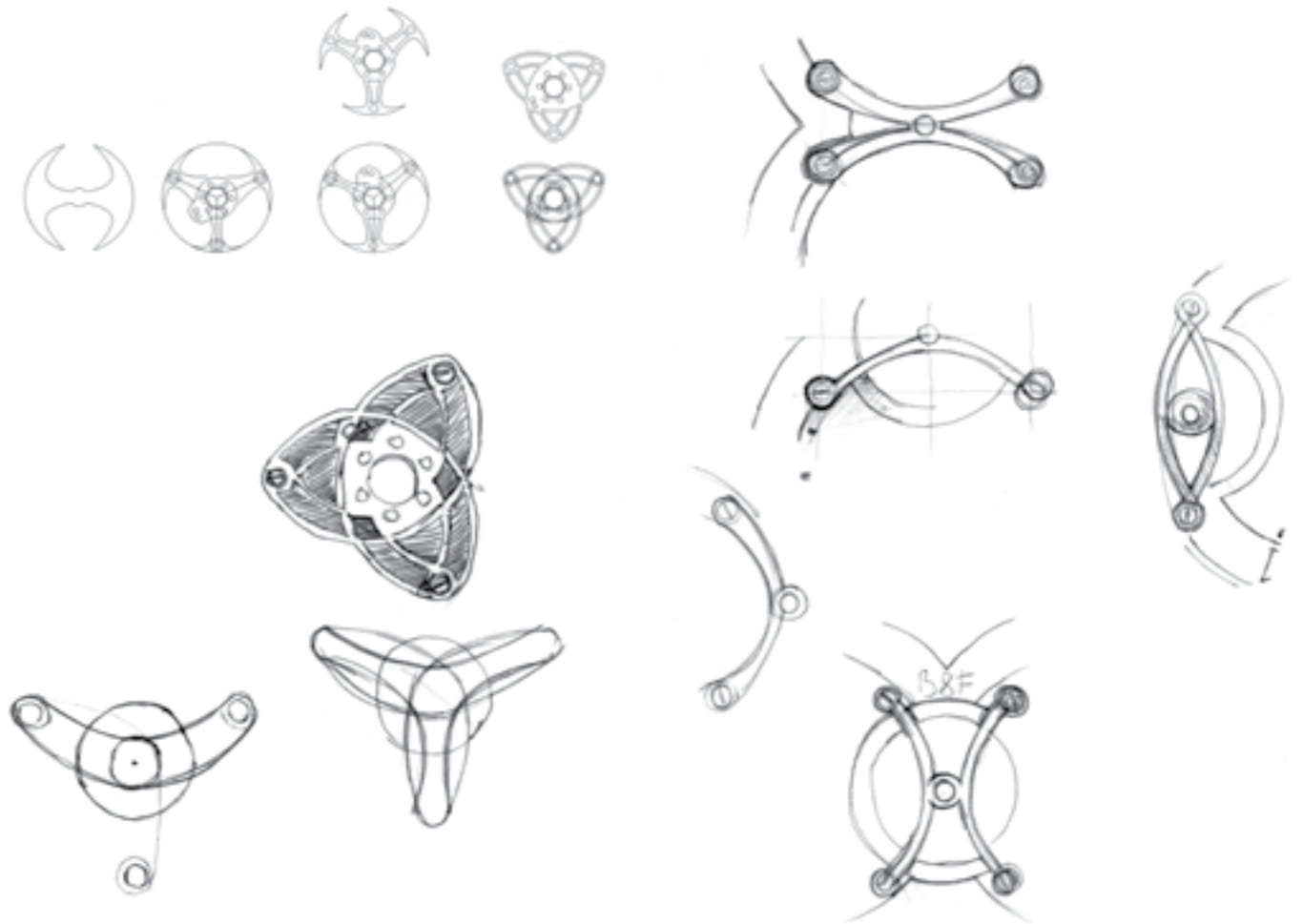


NOTICE THAT THERE IS NO CENTRAL TOURBILLON IN THESE ORIGINAL SKETCHES.

"WE INITIALLY DESIGNED THE DIAL WITH CONCENTRIC COUNTERS, THEN SWITCHED TO RETROGRADE. AS WE WERE UNSURE OF THE RELIABILITY, WE SWITCHED BACK TO CONCENTRIC COUNTERS IN THE END," REVEALS BÜSSER.

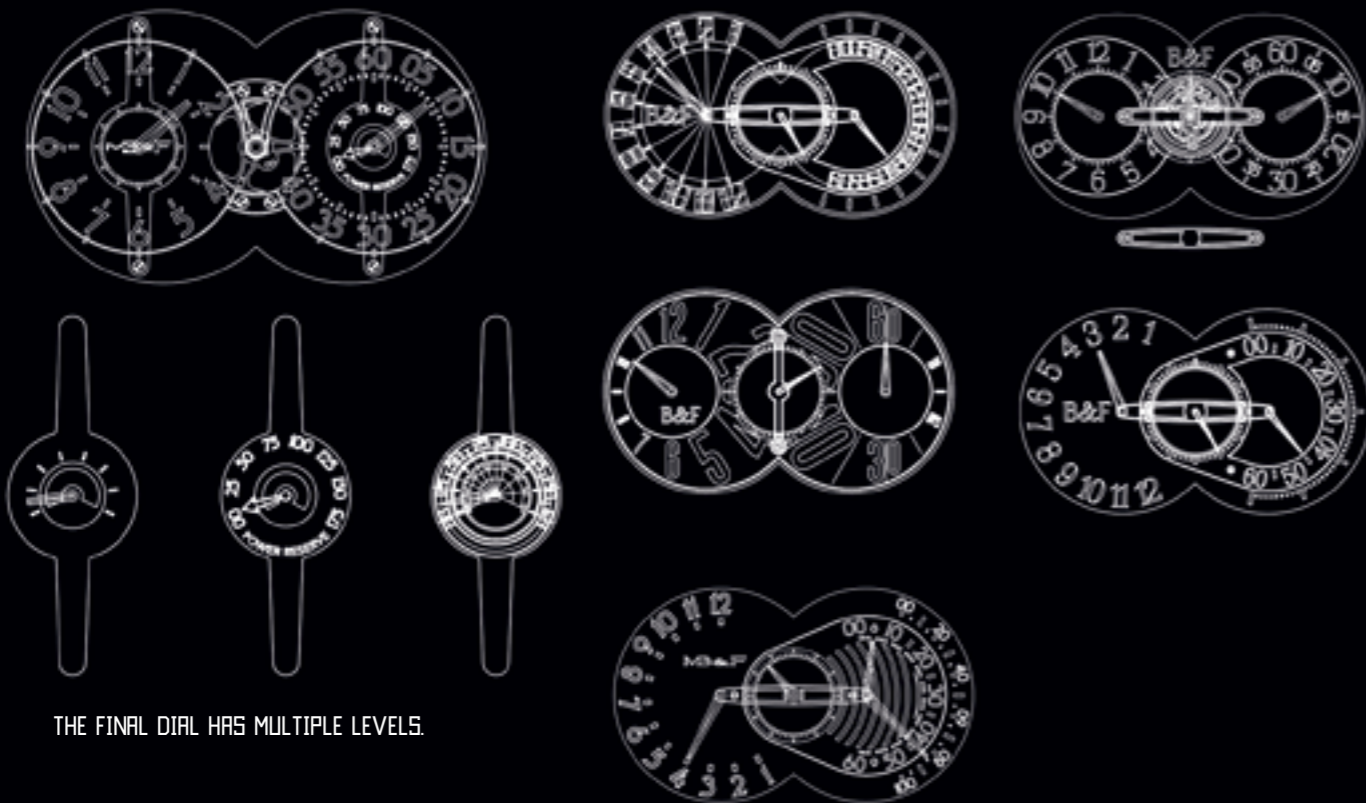


IT WAS A SIMILAR CASE FOR THE DIALS, WITH MANY MULTIPLES BEING DESIGNED, CONSIDERED BUT DISCARDED. THE FINALIST WAS A PROMISING MULTI-LAYERED ARRANGEMENT THAT UNDERWENT FURTHER REFINEMENTS.

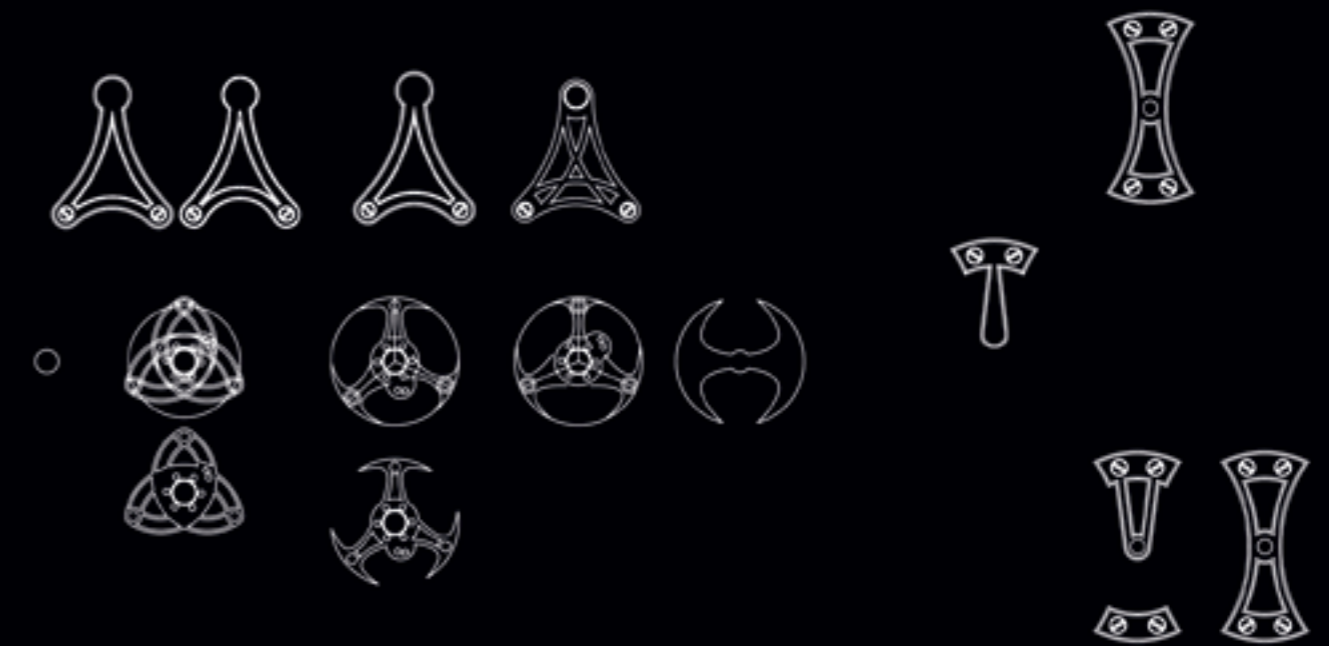


DRAWING OF THE TOURBILLON BRIDGE AND TOURBILLON CAGE BRIDGE

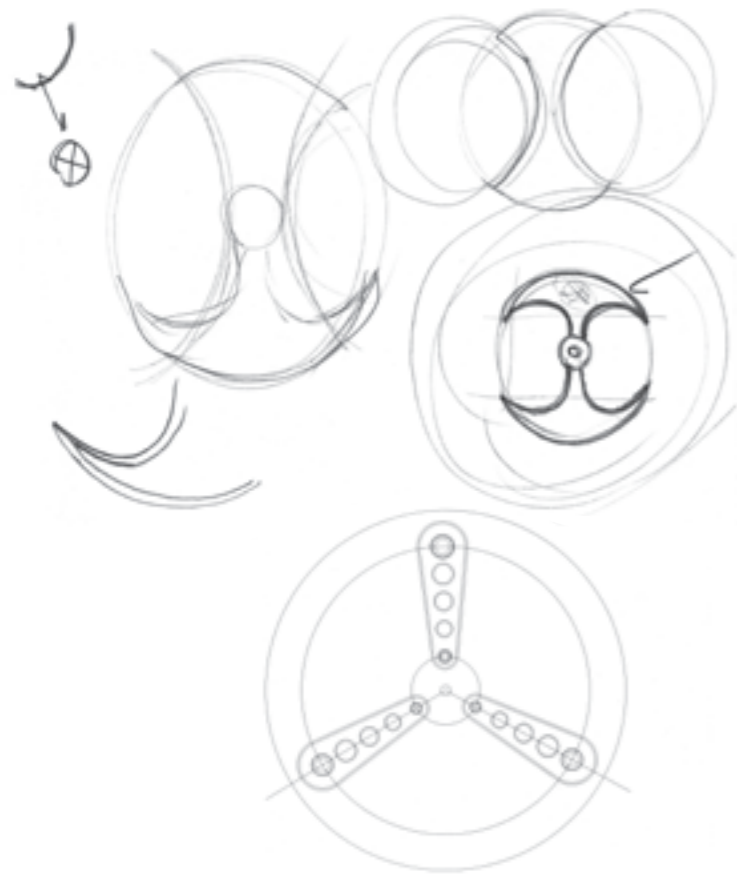
"WE DID NOT REALLY KNOW WHAT TO DO WITH THE TOURBILLON BRIDGE AND TRIED NUMEROUS VARIATIONS TILL WE DECIDED ON THE GRENIZER CONCEPT. THEN THE WHOLE DESIGN JUST MADE SENSE!" ~ BÜSSER



THE FINAL DIAL HAS MULTIPLE LEVELS.



THE TOURBILLON CAGE IS INSPIRED BY THE BATTLE AXE OF BÜSSER'S CHILDHOOD COMIC BOOK HERO, GRENIZER A.K.A. GOLDORAK. THE TOURBILLON BRIDGE IS REMINISCENT OF A DESIGN FROM AN EARLY ABRAHAM-LOUIS BREGUET POCKET WATCH.

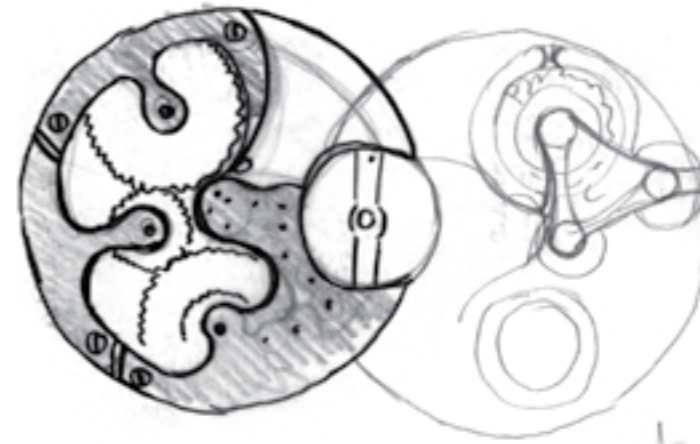


THE ROTOR WAS INSPIRED BY GRENIZER AKA GOLDORAK WIELDING HIS DOUBLE HAKKEN

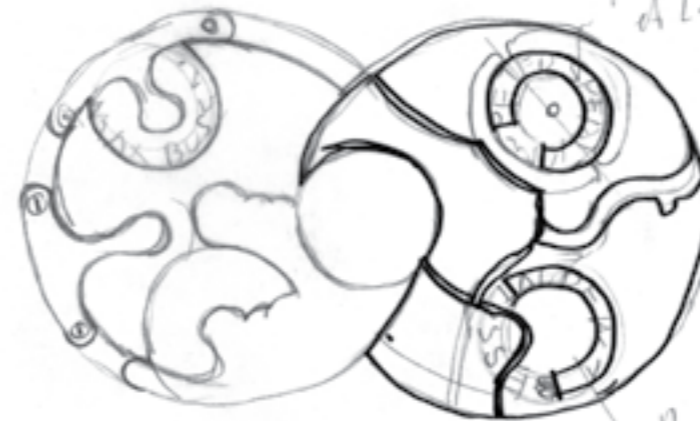


"A COMPETITION BETWEEN ERIC AND MYSELF EMERGED. HE CAME UP WITH THE VERSION WITH SCREWS IN THE MIDDLE AND I CAME UP WITH THE GRENIZER IMAGE. THE REST IS HISTORY..," SAYS BÜSSER.

Max Büsser



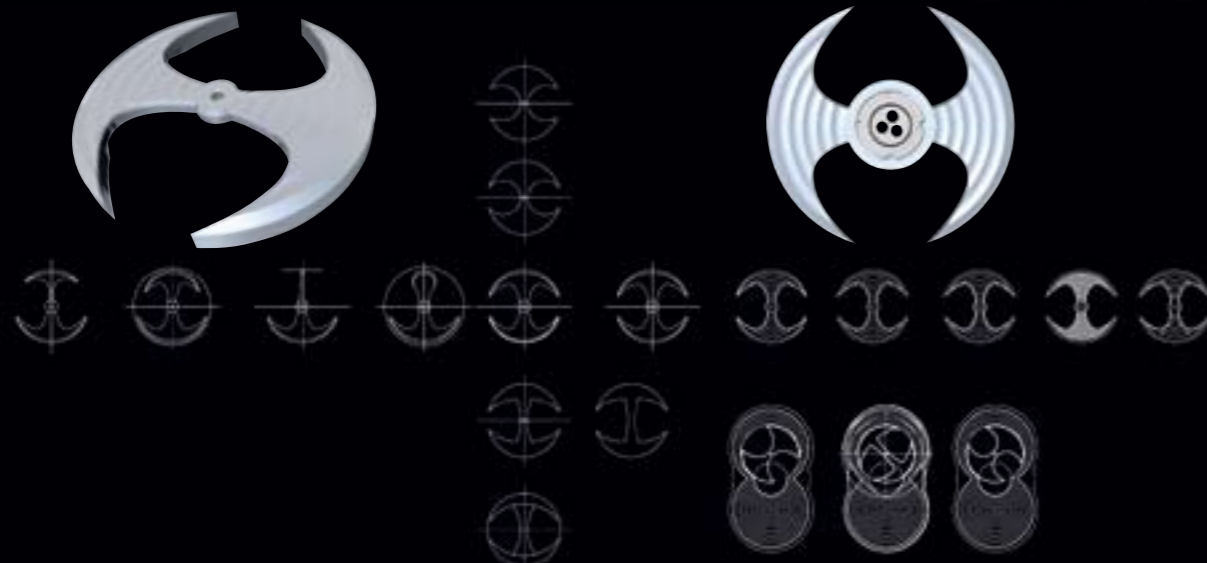
THE FIRST FEW ATTEMPTS AT DRAWING THE MOVEMENT BY GIROUD AND BÜSSER WERE EXTREMELY CHALLENGING. "OUR POOR ATTEMPTS AT THE BEGINNING CAN BE SEEN WITH OUR DRAWINGS," ADMITS BÜSSER VERY CANDIDLY. "WE DID NOT KNOW WHAT WE COULD MOVE AND WHAT COULD NOT BE MOVED. THEN PATRICK LÉTÉ WHO WORKS WITH LAURENT BESSE CAME UP WITH A SERIES OF STUNNING SOLUTIONS.."



SKETCHES OF THE MOVEMENT

Patrick Lété

Nox



"FOR THE WINDING ROTOR, MY CHILDHOOD COMIC HERO GRENIZER AND HIS DOUBLE HAKKEN RESURFACED; THIS ALSO INSPIRED THE TOURBILLON CARRIAGE. THE TOURBILLON BRIDGE ON THE OTHER HAND RECALLS A POCKET WATCH MADE BY ABRAHAM-LOUIS BREGUET. THE CONTRAST AND MIX OF REFERENCES ARE DESIGNED TO CREATE TENSION BETWEEN DIFFERENT AREAS OF THE TIMEPIECE."
- MAXIMILIAN BÜSSER

WHAT IS THIS SO-CALLED 'TENSION'? TO BEGIN WITH, ONE PRINCIPLE FOR MB&F IS 'GENERAL COHERENCE'. THE DESIGN OF THE WATCH IS BASED ON THE INTEGRATION OF TENSION OR 'OPPOSITES' SUCH AS THE CONVERGENCE OF INSPIRATIONS FROM TWO VERY DIFFERENT WORLDS. THE OPPOSITES IN THIS CASE - A FICTIONAL COMIC BOOK HERO AND A REAL HISTORICAL WATCH. IN THIS REGARD, THERE IS TENSION BETWEEN COMPONENTS WHICH HAS TO BE BROUGHT TOGETHER TO ESTABLISH A CONTEMPORARY OBJECT, SO TO SPEAK.



THE TOURBILLON IS PLACED IN THE CENTRE

PATRICK LÉTÉ WHO WORKS WITH LAURENT BESSE SAVED THE DAY FOR GIROUD AND BÜSSER WITH HIS TECHNICAL DRAWINGS FOR THE MOVEMENT



HAVING THE TOURBILLON AT THE CENTRE OF THE DIAL MARKED THE FIRST STAGE OF THE LAYOUT, BEFORE THE HOUR AND MINUTE DISPLAYS. WHILE RETROGRADE INDICATORS WERE SERIOUSLY CONSIDERED, THE IDEA HAD TO BE ABANDONED BECAUSE OF TECHNICAL CONSTRAINTS.

THE DIALS ARE ON MULTIPLE LEVELS TO CREATE SPACE AND VOLUME WHILE THE TOURBILLON PROVIDES THAT EXTRA SPARK OF LIFE. BY PLAYING WITH SHADOW AND LIGHT ON THE DIAL, THE MACHINE BECOMES COHERENT AND ALIVE.



THERE ARE 4 MAINSPRING BARRELS AND TOGETHER, 168 HOURS OR 7 DAYS OF AUTONOMOUS RUNNING IS POSSIBLE WHEN THE MAINSPRINGS ARE FULLY WOUND



MB&F HOROLOGICAL MACHINE N°1
Introduced in 2006

Features:

- Automatic movement (by Laurent Besse and Peter Speake-Marin)
- 28,800 vibrations per hour
- Raised central one-minute tourbillon
- 376 components
- 81 functional jewels
- 7-day power reserve
- 4 mainspring barrels
- Power reserve display
- Separate dials for hours and minutes
- Dial in either silver/ruthenium (silver) or ruthenium/silver (dark-grey)
- 41mm by 64mm case, height: 14mm
- Water resistant to 30 metres
- Available in either red gold or white gold case

Limited to 90 pieces: 30 pieces will be made a year over 3 years beginning 2006

"ONE MAJOR PROBLEM WAS THE ATTACHMENT OF THE BEZEL TO ENSURE WATER RESISTANCE AND HOW TO SCREW THE ATTACHMENTS TO THE SIDE OF THE CASE, AGAIN FOR WATER RESISTANCE. THAT IS NOT FORGETTING THE ISSUES OF ASSEMBLING AND DISMANTLING THE PIECES," RECALLS BÜSSER



A TOTAL OF FIVE DIFFERENT PROTOTYPE CASES WERE CRAFTED BEFORE BÜSSER AND GIROUD ACHIEVED THE PHYSICAL FORM THAT FINALLY MATCHED THEIR MENTAL IDEAL. APART FROM THAT, "... THE LUGS ALONE WENT THROUGH 30 DIFFERENT RENDITIONS AND WE EVALUATED 70 DIFFERENT VERSIONS OF THE DIAL," SAYS BÜSSER. "ERIC [GIROUD] AND I WANTED A SYMBIOSIS BETWEEN THE MACHINERY AND GRENZIER. GOING FAR BEYOND THE NORMAL TECHNICAL CONSTRAINTS, OUR MOVEMENT CONSTRUCTOR, PATRICK LÉTÉ, WHO ALSO TRAINED AS AN INDUSTRIAL DESIGNER, REALLY CAUGHT THE SOUL OF THE WATCH."

ALL THE SCREWED ELEMENTS HAVE SEALS. BEING ABLE TO ATTACH COMPONENTS EASILY AND QUICKLY BY SCREW WAS ESSENTIAL FOR TECHNICAL REASONS; HOWEVER, A SUITABLE AESTHETICAL SOLUTION WAS NOT FOUND UNTIL GIROUD CREATED A SCREW HEAD THAT ACCOMMODATED THE HEXAGONAL INSERT. THESE SCREW HEADS ARE NOW ONE OF THE STRONGEST 'JULES VERNE' FEATURES OF ARCHITECTURE.

THE BEZEL HAD TO BE SUBSTANTIAL ENOUGH TO SUPPORT THE SCREWS AND GASKETS. A LOOK AT THE SIDE OF THE MOVEMENT REVEALS TORSION BARS WHICH STIFFEN THE LONG BASE PLATE, ENSURING RIGIDITY FOR THE RAISED CENTRAL TOURBILLON. THE FINAL GROUND-BREAKING MOVEMENT HAD A FIGURE-OF-EIGHT SHAPE AND THIS DICTATED THE FORM OF THE CASE.

"OUR GOAL WAS TO BLEND A MIXTURE OF TRADITIONAL REFERENCE MARKS WITH ULTRA-MODERN IDEAS. WE TRIED TO CREATE TENSION IN ORDER TO CREATE COHERENCE... AND WITH HMI, I FEEL COMFORTABLE BECAUSE WE HAVE ACHIEVED JUST THAT," CONCLUDES BÜSSER. ■

A SPECIAL PROJECT BROUGHT TO YOU BY:

TIMEWERKE

THE ART OF TIME

