

## MAX LYRICAL

Maverick watch designer Max Busser, the mastermind behind the revolutionary MB & F series of timepieces, gives his 10 tips on getting watch design right.

1. Practicality is important but it's not the main objective. It's the machine and what we dreamed of that matters more than creating a super practical object.
2. I look at harmony and detailing. I like De Bethune sports watches because everything is well thought of, such that every line speaks to the other line.
3. Bad design in watches is like that of cars where one likes the front and not the back. It seems as if two different teams are working on the same product. Everything has to make sense.
4. Details lie in the finishing. It's like shoes. You can have simple shoes that are as superb as bespoke ones. But if you put too much detailing, it becomes vulgar.
5. Having the right amount of details is like putting the ingredients together in a curry – no spices make it bland while too much makes it inedible.
6. Don't try to compare us with other watch brands – they make timepieces while we create mechanical sculptures. No one is better than the other but that we are of two entirely different worlds.
7. We use our roots to design our future. We never forget our roots. I have a problem with very modern design which lacks soul.
8. If you design things to be loved, you will create rubbish.
9. The design of the movement matters to me because the engine is completely designed for the machine.
10. There's a trend to take a mass produced movement and create a funky case and make people believe that they are Urwerk. But they are simply being designers. That's why we don't consider ourselves designers but creators of mechanical art. That's what separates the boys from men. ♡

TEXT BERNADETTE PNG PHOTO TOM HAN  
ART DIRECTION DENNIS CHONG

## HM3



Max Busser is the visionary behind the MB & F (Max Busser and Friends) initiative that sees the watchmaker collaborate with different creative individuals from the horological world to create timepieces he dubs "kinetic sculptures". The first creation, Horological

Machine (HM1), debuted in 2006 and its follow up HM2 came out the year after. Both stunned the industry with their outrageous design.

This year's HM3 again redefined the notions of a complication, traditionally conceived as additional functions such as a tourbillon or a chronograph. For the first time, the complication translates to the execution of the structure and the very engine of the watch. It's a first for the brand as Max Busser claims, "everything becomes a complication here. Nobody in horology has done this and we had to

find very different solutions to the problems posed".

For HM3, the goal was seemingly simple – the ability to see the movement simultaneous to reading time. But that also meant a defiance of logical watch design. It took the team six months to develop the system, which involved creating two large ceramic bearings that powered the cones and date wheel. Thus instead of being seen from the caseback, the brand's signature swinging battleaxe rotor and balance wheel can now take centre stage, allowing one to admire the oscillations.

The hand-finished

case itself is made of 55 components and as Busser proudly claims, "would cost 10 times that of a Patek Philippe case".

The brand has two versions of the HM3 on offer. The Starcruiser offers cones in line with the arm while the Sidewinder has them perpendicular to the arm. Both are available in 18K white gold/titanium or 18K rose gold/titanium combinations.

Despite its \$114,900 price tag, there has been healthy demand from collectors. In fact, the very first HM3 will be delivered straight to a collector in March next year.



**MAX  
BUSSER**  
Pushing the  
boundaries of  
watchmaking