



Business icon

VULCAIN: A GOD SERENADED BY CRICKETS

This is the story of a pair of talented watchmakers, the Ditisheim brothers, and the brand they founded which took its name from Vulcan, the Roman god of fire, volcanoes and smithery.

In 1858, the Manufacture, located in the Neuchâtel mountains, the cradle of Swiss precision engineering, made a name for itself producing complication watches: minute repeater, grande and petite sonnerie, perpetual calendar. These masterpieces won prizes at many international exhibitions.

However, this iconic watchmaker first started to achieve fame across the Atlantic in 1947. The manufacture created the first mechanical alarm wristwatch, equipped with a calibre soon to become legendary – the Cricket – which roused its wearer with a powerful sound similar to that of its namesake.

The Vulcain Cricket was an instant hit. Illustrious wearers included Truman, Eisenhower, Nixon, Johnson and Obama, earning it the name “The President’s Watch”. There is an interesting anecdote in the annals of the Manufacture about President Eisenhower. He wore his Vulcain Cricket to a press conference on Swiss watches, and the alarm on his wrist went off accidentally. Of course, everyone at the conference knew exactly what it was!



In the 1950s and 60s, it was the watch of choice for major expeditions. It conquered mountains, accompanying Italian climbers to the Himalayas, and the 8611-metre summit of the legendary K2. Climbers and explorers praised the highly reliable rate of their Cricket, and its chime which was as loud on the summit of K2 as it was in the humidity of the Equatorial African bush.

The Cricket also made a name for itself under the seas, as the most advanced diving watch. It was worn by the world record breaking deep-sea diver Hannes Keller.

An unrivalled specialist in mechanical alarm watches, Vulcain continued to innovate, launching the Nautical in 1961, one of the first diving watches to feature an alarm that was perfectly audible underwater. Its chime is a crucial function, as it notifies the diver when it is time to return to the surface.

This was followed by the Aviators – instruments for seasoned aircraft pilots or travellers, equipped with an alarm function and a second time zone.

Each collection is an event. This is especially true of the 50s Presidents’ Collection, which has been gracing the wrists of presidents since Harry S. Truman. This year, for the first time, Vulcain will also be paying tribute to the first female American Vice-President with a First Lady model from its collection of automatic watches for women.

Vulcain has never forgotten its heritage, with the Manufacture’s production of models for women dating back to the 1920s. Echoing the spotlight it has shone on the “Presidents”, the brand is now releasing a sophisticated new collection. The signature understated and elegant oval shape of this collection has been honouring the role of the “First Lady” for over 50 years.

Renowned for its iconic models and its unique mechanical movements, the Vulcain Manufacture also holds a prestigious position in the world of Haute Horlogerie thanks to its decorated dials, as illustrated by the “Grand Feu” cloisonné enamel of the stunning “Pegasus” and “The Vulcain” Limited Editions.

With the same dedication to perfection and excellence, Vulcain added a grande complication timepiece to its collection, opting for the Holy Grail of any Manufacture: a tourbillon. With its dual barrel and power reserve of 5 days, this model underscores the brand’s ambitions.

In 2002, the company, which has now been producing timepieces for over 160 years, relocated to Le Locle, the cradle of Swiss watchmaking, to a magnificent mansion house which perfectly reflects the company’s image.

Today, Vulcain is continuing its international development with timepieces that appeal to a demanding clientèle – the same clientèle which has made the brand’s motto its own: “Always at the right time, in the right place”.

For enquiries email: info@vulcain-watches.ch

VULCAIN
MANUFACTURE DEPUIS 1858





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