

# GEBSON: A watch brand at the crossroads between culture and tradition

*The Neuchâtel-based brand is launching its first collection, inspired by Chinese culture.*



men's timepieces, and a bird or phoenix for ladies' models. Each of these watches combines engraving, enamelling and gem-setting. "Watches featuring these three techniques are a rarity. Using them together highlights a sophisticated play on light and artistic details", explains Pi-Cheng Hsu Derigon, head of design and product development for the brand. Each watch comes with a small booklet explaining the hand-craftsmanship processes involved in making it. "Just as some brands explain the mechanism of watch movements, we have chosen to do the same

for the exterior", says Gebson CEO Grégoire Bouille. Moreover, monthly newsletters entitled *Discovery Corner* and explaining the various enamelling and engraving techniques are available via the Gebson website, thus representing an additional element in brand communication.

The techniques involved in making watch exteriors often call upon a wealth of skills and expertise, and are subject to the technological constraints governing the making of a watch case, both in terms of its complexity and its extremely high quality demands. "The huge amount of work involved in invisible or traditional gem-setting on a watch case is largely unknown. The same goes for the technique of *grand feu* enamelling on dials", adds Grégoire Bouille. The dial with an enamel-painted tiger featured on one of the five models in the collection calls for two to three weeks of work in itself. Each colour needs to be fired for different periods of time, not to mention the meticulous task of painting on the infinitely

While launching into series production, the brand maintains its exclusive edge, since each watch is issued in a limited edition of eight. It is possible to customise each model in terms of the exterior, such as by choosing the dial colour, by replacing certain hand-engraved details, by defining gem-setting motifs, as well as by choosing the precious metal of the case or the composition of the gemstones.

Aesthetically speaking, this first collection is inspired by Asian culture, with a dragon or tiger on the dial for

small surface of the feline's whiskers. The brand name is engraved only on the case-back, so as to enable the dials to reveal the full force of their artistic beauty.

## *The know-how of three generations*

The Gebson brand is a subsidiary of Geb Group Ltd, owned by a discreet Neuchâtel family of industrialists of which the current CEO, Grégoire Bouille, represents the third generation. The company, located in Neuchâtel, specialises in the production of high-end watch cases for the major watch companies.

The new Gebson brand thus benefits from the know-how acquired in

the production of watch cases and from a network of specialised independent artisans built up by three generations of watchcase makers. The first collection is equipped with mechanical self-winding ETA movements enhanced by specific decorations on the oscillating weights. The next series of timepieces will be accompanied by collector's movements. These watch series will be ready by the end of January or early February 2010, the basic idea being to present an annual collection of models consistently issued in limited editions of eight. They will depict animal or floral themes featuring aesthetics and techniques partially inspired by age-old Asian and European cultures.



*The Terre Majestueuse model.*