



Jean Dunand

Tourbillon Orbital with Dalmatian jasper dial.

far from the madding crowd

Standing at baggage reclaim recently, on my way back from the Inhorgenta watch fair in Munich, a beautiful piece of luggage came sailing past me – hand stitched in a multitude of different coloured leathers with corner protectors like the suitcases of days gone by. I remember having seen these bags in London’s Piccadilly and wishing I could afford one, but never had I seen one up close, let alone on an airport carousel. It struck me that there are those who are content with a black wheelie bag, and maybe a coloured ribbon for easy spotting, and those who love to have something that no one else has, something that will have everyone else looking on in envy.

›Sophie Furley

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In the world of watches, there are many limited editions to choose from, with the chances of bumping into someone with the same watch at over a thousand to one. But for those who consider even those odds too high, there is one brand that stands out from the crowd – Jean Dunand.

Defining unique

Jean Dunand only makes unique, one of a kind, timepieces. This is, and always will be, the philosophy of the brand. “Jean Dunand’s single purpose is to think differently and to



Tourbillon Orbital with centre dial in blackened gold and outer ring in ruby heart with see-through ‘skyscraper’ hands.

propose exceptional timepieces in unique executions,” explains Thierry Oulevay, CEO. With two main collections: the Tourbillon Orbital (*See Europa Star 04/2005*) and the Shabaka, which is being officially launched during this year’s spring fairs (*See our exclusive preview of this watch in Europa Star 06/2006*) Jean Dunand’s timepieces are all *piece unique*, the most limited of editions, 1 of 1.

Ornamental stones

However, producing unique pieces is not enough for Thierry Oulevay, who is taking the originality of his Tourbillon Orbital timepieces one step further by offering a small selection of one-off dials made of exotic materials, such



as 40 million year old petrified coral, Dalmatian jasper, lapis lazuli and rare opals. These ornamental stones are unique pieces in their own right and when added to the Tourbillon Orbital, they add a whole new dimension to the timepiece as the dial makes a full revolution each hour.

I had the chance to observe one of the Tourbillon Orbitals in motion recently and the constantly rotating dial is truly fascinating as the tourbillon cage moves at the speed of the minute hand. One glance and the cage will be at three o'clock and fifteen minutes later it will be at six o'clock, totally changing the face of the watch. With these semi-precious stone dials, the effect is even more magical.

Mother Nature

Mother Nature doesn't make it easy; these ornamental stones are extremely challenging to work with. The first hurdle is to find them, as some of the stones are extremely rare. According to Oulevay's dial specialist, some stones are found in mines, like the petrified woods in Arizona, while others are found using an axe in places as remote as the mountains of Afghanistan, at altitudes exceeding 4,000 metres. After finding the stones, the next step is to cut them to the correct thickness, always running the risk that

Pink gold, white gold or platinum (45 mm) one-of-a-kind timepieces equipped with an 10 200 manually wound rotating movement with off-centre flying tourbillon, exclusive watchmaking ball-bearing system with triple rotation within one block, moon phase display and vertical winding and setting through the centre of the movement from the caseback. 130-hour power reserve indicator in the case band, four domed sapphire crystals and water-resistant to 30 metres.

the stone could break at any time. The rarity of the stones and their fragility determine their value, with prices easily going into the thousands of Swiss francs for one dial.

Art Deco

With this small collection of ornamental stone dials, the brand is following in the footsteps of the great Art Deco artists by searching out new materials with which to work. Thierry Oulevay and his partner, the renowned watchmaker, Christophe Claret, are both Art Deco enthusiasts and the watches have a multitude of Art Deco elements incorporated, such as skyscraper hands, fir-tree engine-turned engravings and ceramic stones that are subtly integrated into the overall design of the timepieces. The ornamental dials take the decorative art of the timepieces to a new level by providing colours and depths to these

Tourbillon Orbital with the centre dial in an Art Deco pattern of blackened gold and outer ring in lapis lazuli.

already unique, contemporary works of art. For the aficionado who is looking for something entirely different, something his peers can't get their hands on - a Jean Dunand Tourbillon Orbital could well be the answer. He could certainly rest assured that he would never, not in any airport or even at BaselWorld, bump into anyone with the same watch. <

For further information related to Jean Dunand, click on Brand Index at www.europastar.com

