

WHAT'S IN STORE

BUBEN & ZÖRWEIG'S QUEST FOR QUALITY TURNS STORAGE INTO ART

Based on the extraordinary products that Buben & Zörweg now offers, you'd never know that the company began 15 years ago as a supplier of packaging for jewelry and watches, but it did. Realizing that presentation is of prime importance, Harald Buben and Christian Zörweg set out to make the best packaging possible. Out of their constant quest for the absolute highest quality grew a totally different business, now their main business, the design and manufacture of exceptional watch winders, storage and display cases and safes—all exhibiting high-quality materials and exacting craftsmanship.

"We always wanted to do presentation units," says Buben. "We got to know collectors who told us that there was nothing on the market to display their collections. There were only some ugly

storage boxes, so, from that, we started creating collection cases for jewelry and for watches. Then we realized that there was nothing that showed the watches and at the same time kept them wound, so we went to Elma, which was making machines to keep watches wound at the industrial level, and decided to partner with them. We developed the Time Mover winders together, and then

BY KEITH W. STRANDBERG

we began producing presentation units." And what presentation pieces these are! They range from small, stand-alone styles to towers and complete walls, and many include humidors, wine racks, full bars, state-of-the-art stereo systems and even clocks equipped with tourbillons from the brand's own Atelier d'Horlogerie. The most elaborate pieces are dubbed Objects of Time. At home in even the most sophisticated interiors, these objects have the presence of a major piece of furniture and serve to highlight a collection while at the same time protecting it and keeping automatic watches perfectly wound.

Buben & Zörweg didn't stop there. "More recently, we started to create



{ THE SOLITAIRE ORBIT TOURBILLON }

TAKING IT HOME

Buben & Zörweg clocks, winders, storage units and safes are designed and crafted to complement stylish interiors, whether ultra-modern, cool contemporary or richly traditional. With top quality and exotic materials and world-class craftsmanship, these pieces hold their own in a room of fine furnishings.



watch salons, fully equipped rooms with an added security aspect,” Buben continues. “We have done units for collectors with 200–400 watches, and we knew we could create an atmosphere where people can enjoy their watches, where they can sit down and admire their collection, have a nice glass of wine, smoke a great cigar.”

“We want to go further into interior design; we want to work closely with architects and interior designers.”
 —Harald Buben

Business has been more of a challenge over the past couple of years as a result of the worldwide recession. Now that business is coming back, the Austrian company is poised to capitalize. “We used this time to work on our processes, to improve quality and to focus more on product development,” Buben details. “We are building a new factory now, and we are working to gather more and more specialists around us. We are not rushing to open new points of sale. We have a top product, and we believe that people will find places

to buy it. We want to go further into interior design; we want to work closely with architects and interior designers. We also want to make wardrobes and walk-in closets.”

One area where the company is doing really interesting things in is secure storage. “Safes are generally ugly; we want to turn them into objects of art so that people don’t even recognize them as safes. This is something interesting to us, taking security and making it an object of art.”

One of the challenges for Buben is showing everything the company can do—a repertoire that ranges from simple watch boxes to sophisticated computer-controlled winding units (and corresponding prices from \$210 to more than half a million). Retailers can display their winders and their presentation units; it’s much more difficult to communicate a company’s ability to make entire rooms dedicated to watches. “For retailers to explain what is possible is very challenging,” Buben admits. Ever conscious of the importance of presentation, the brand has created an installation—a special Buben & Zörweg space—inside a retail store in Geneva, where clients can experience an example of a full-size watch room in person.

As a maker of luxury spaces, Buben & Zörweg has certainly come a long way from its origins in packaging, and quality and craftsmanship have remained constants. As the world economy recovers, this company’s cutting-edge art objects are poised for success. 310.205.5555, buben-zorweg.com

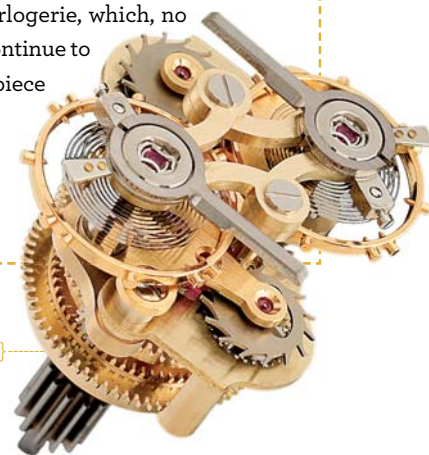


{ THE OBJECT DE TEMPS | ORBIT TOURBILLON }

CLOCKWORK INNOVATION

Buben & Zörweg presented its first tourbillon mechanism in the Pantheon Grande Réserve table clock in 2005. The limited edition run of 25 pieces quickly sold out, as did the follow-up Pythagoras World Time clock in the following year. A second generation of Buben & Zörweg tourbillons was heralded by 2007’s Ellipse Grand Revers Double Tourbillon with dual independent tourbillons. The Orbit Tourbillon, introduced in 2009, represents the third generation and presents a one-minute tourbillon orbit-

ing the dial every hour on the tip of the perfectly balanced minutes hand. All of these innovations—designed to counter the negative effects of gravity on the clock’s accuracy—exhibit the skill and craftsmanship of Buben & Zörweg’s Atelier d’Horlogerie, which, no doubt, will continue to delight timepiece enthusiasts.



{ THE BUBEN & ZÖRWEIG DOUBLE TOURBILLON MECHANISM }