

What:

HANDCRAFTED DECORATIVE ARTS RETURN TO WATCHMAKING

Engraving, enameling, painstaking stone-setting—they're all part of the new focus on artisanal watchmaking. Here are some exquisite examples. ▼

By Keith Strandberg

Artisanal crafts have been enjoying a renaissance in watchmaking as

watchmakers such as Vacheron Constantin aim to preserve the field's traditional decorative arts. The new Vacheron Constantin Métiers d'Art - Les Univers Infinis collection, inspired by the tessellation technique of M.C. Escher, takes this artistry one step further by combining up to four different métiers in one timepiece. The three watches in this collection are limited to 20 pieces each, and the watch pictured here, the Dove, combines engraving, guilloché, enameling and stone-setting. The result is a timepiece, powered by a Vacheron Constantin mechanical movement, that embodies both the history and the future of watchmaking.

Accent

The stone-setter highlights one dove with brilliant diamonds.

Carving

The engraver carves out the delicate forms of the doves on the yellow-gold dial base.

Color

The enameller meticulously applies the violet finish to the dial with a fine brush.

Price:
\$120,000

Contact:
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1 New Arceau pieces from Hermès incorporate a variety of decorative arts, from miniature painting to enameling. The Arceau Marqueterie de Paille pictured here features the early centuries-old art of straw marquetry, using rye straw from one farm in France.

Price: \$60,000
hermes.com

2 The Alexander the Great Minute Repeater Westminster Carillon Tourbillon Jaquemarts from Ulysse Nardin features five handcrafted moving figures on a man-made diamond dial. This timepiece takes over three months for a master watchmaker to assemble.

Price: \$716,887 in rose gold
ulysses-nardin.com

3 The Rendez-Vous Tourbillon Enamel from Jaeger-LeCoultre combines high watchmaking—its in-house tourbillon—and two decorative arts: The engraved surfaces are visible through the translucent enamel.

Price: \$123,000
jaeger-lecoultre.com

4 The new Patek Philippe 7099R Ladies Gondolo blends the decorative art of diamond-setting with hand-guilloché. The case of this watch is set with 480 diamonds in the labor-intensive random setting, while the guilloché gold dial is adorned with 367 diamonds (even the prong buckle showcases 26 diamonds).

Price: \$116,000
patek.com