TIME

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News & Views from
the Ressence Perspective

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How to Spend Your Time

There is a reason this is a newspaper. A newspaper, a carefully crafted, printed object is something you hold, read at your own pace, and put down when you are ready. That instinct – to strip things back to what genuinely matters – sits at the heart of everything Ressence does. We create watches that tell the time in a clear, meaningful and honest manner. This newspaper works in very much the same way. Everything you read in *Ahead of Time* was chosen with the same conviction that what is essential is always enough. And as we allude to in the stories that flow across the following pages — our optimistic viewpoint is that there is no better time than now. Read and enjoy with care.

Insights from design industry legends

In Good Hands

Ressence's latest releases

For Your Wrist

Joining forces with Marc Newson

Two Minds

How will AI shape the watch industry

Robot Watch

Ressence debuts a new architecture

A New Movement



The Future is Brighter

Optimism remains essential in Ressence's recipe for success. With 2026 being the brand's most ambitious year, founder Benoît Mintiens provides a practical perspective on why novelty should be celebrated, and why this newspaper is viewing the design and watch world through a sunny lens.

The future offers more than the past. This belief lives at the heart of everything we do at Ressence.

Making a newspaper is like taking a snapshot of time. For *Ahead of Time*, we chose to use a wide-angle lens to show more of the context – the fuller picture – that social media algorithms are increasingly removing from the story. Those algorithms are designed to reward the immediate and the familiar. They compress the frame. We wanted to do the opposite. We framed the picture so that the unfolding story offers a perspective on the different facets of the brand's vision.

As an industrial designer and outsider to the watch industry, I had difficulty understanding how an industry could rely so heavily on its past achievements. It felt very odd to someone like me, someone trained to relentlessly challenge the status quo, to question at every step whether a solution could be better than the one inherited. The industry felt a little fragile for not adapting to an ever-changing world. As if in watchmaking, time did not matter that much. As if the theory of evolution did not apply to watchmaking. I have since come to understand that I was reading the situation differently from how it really was. At that time, I simply was not aware of the different perspective that our industry had from mine. Fortunately, our industry is doing great.

The wristwatch, as we know it, was defined nearly 200 years ago. Since then, the system architecture didn't change at all: a movement with a barrel, an escapement, a dial, hands, a crown at 3 o'clock. The formula has endured because it works. Nobody disputes that, but endurance is not the same as optimisation. So how would a mechanical wristwatch look if it were designed today, without any knowledge of the past? What would you keep? What would you leave behind? This is the question, which stands at the very beginning of the Ressence story and continues to frame the narrative at the core of our company.

Our tagline *Ahead of Time* is about believing that creativity, innovation, and human ingenuity will always create more value than wallowing in nostalgia. Ressence is built around a future-positive mindset, strongly believing that applying design thinking to watchmaking makes it more relevant in an age where we can check the time anywhere we look. When you primarily consider the wristwatch as a tool, you look at the product with functional eyes, apply ergonomics, think in terms of use and apply modern design processes to our products. The wristwatch stops being defined by its history and starts being defined by what it does.

Ahead of Time is also the name of our new journal. This first edition aims to illustrate our vision applied to watchmaking and demonstrate how blending two distinct cultures – fine watchmaking and industrial design – can create a new paradigm, a new reality within watchmaking. The journal is the perfect medium to take a little more distance from the immediate present and allow for better contextualisation.

Ahead of Time focuses on an important milestone: the introduction of TYPE 11 *(pictured above)*. At the core of TYPE 11 is our first in-house movement, the RW–01, designed specifically to work with our ROCS module. The RW–01 was conceived from the ground up to support ROCS, not adapted to fit it afterwards. That sequence matters. For the first time, we can merge the module and the movement into a single cluster. The line between the two disappears. They become the same thing. TYPE 11 is our watch for now. I wanted a watch at the crossroads of what Ressence stands for: contemporary design with classic proportions and finishing, yet still very 'Ressence'.

This edition also explores our collaboration with Marc Newson on the TYPE 3 MN. The watch is the perfect example of a meaningful collaboration. Newson and Ressence share a set of convictions: that rigour and originality can coexist, and that a functional object can also be beautiful. Also, Stefan Sagmeister, shares his vision on his counterintuitive concept "Now is Better". This fits naturally alongside everything this paper stands for. You will find a piece about our unique approach to collaborations, plus some new commissions with industry writers, with Robin Swithinbank zooming in on AI and watchmaking and a long read from Josh Sims looking at our relationship with time.

Enjoy the reading.
Benoît Mintiens, *Founder, Ressence*



Now is Better

Democracy is retreating. The climate is warming. And Stefan Sagmeister – the man behind album covers for the Rolling Stones and Talking Heads, and one of the most influential graphic designers alive – thinks things are going much better than the rest of us might be. Not because he is an optimist, but because he has looked at 300 years of data and drawn a different conclusion to our newsfeeds. In our sit-down interview, Sagmeister tells us why humanity always finds its way through.

— Full report on page 02



TYPE 11: Launch

Ressence introduces the TYPE 11 – a new model at the crossroads of classic watchmaking and contemporary design, featuring the first movement designed and developed by the company. Built in titanium with a smooth pebble-shaped case, the TYPE 11 carries the familiar codes of traditional horology – lugs and a round profile. It also features the signature Ressence Orbital Convex System (ROCS) displaying hours, minutes and seconds and the power reserve.

— Full report on page 03

07

Of the world's most innovative minds share their vision for the future, from Daniel Libeskind on what comes next for architecture to Sam Altman on why the world's next tech leaders need to inspire confidence in their teams.

— Full report on page 05

02

AI and Watchmaking

One of the most respected voices in watch journalism, Robin Swithinbank, asks: what happens when the disruptive force of AI inevitably comes for an industry built on tradition.

If we listen to the tech industry, how we work will look very different a year from now. For starters, there'll be a lot less of it to go around. Artificial intelligence, AI in its various nebulous forms, will be doing most of it for us. And doing it faster, cheaper, and without complaint.

There's unanimity to the tech industry's view. Speaking to the *Financial Times* in February, Microsoft AI boss Mustafa Suleyman issued a red alert for white-collar workers, signalling that AI is on the cusp of mastering professions such as law, accountancy, and marketing. Anthropic founder Dario Amodei has forecast that those same white-collar jobs could be gone in five years. Elon Musk, never one for understatement, believes work will become "optional".

Creative industries are bracing for impact. An AI-generated video of Tom Cruise and Brad Pitt duking it out on a skyscraper rooftop had many viewers wholly convinced, while directors, producers, editors, script-writers, costume designers, and the rest, to say nothing of the actors themselves, sat at home wondering what comes next. At the time of writing, Hollywood reporters still don't seem to know whether Zendaya and Tom Holland have tied the knot, or whether images of the happy couple circulating online are AI confections.

Far from Silicon Valley, in Switzerland, the watch industry watches on, not disinterested. Swiss watchmakers are not typically early adopters – historically, quite the opposite. In 2012, Rolex announced its arrival on what was then Twitter with news that its contribution would be "a monologue, not a dialogue." It posted its first tweet in 2018. E-commerce was a dirty word in Geneva and the Jura until the pandemic forced hands; some brands still avoid it entirely.

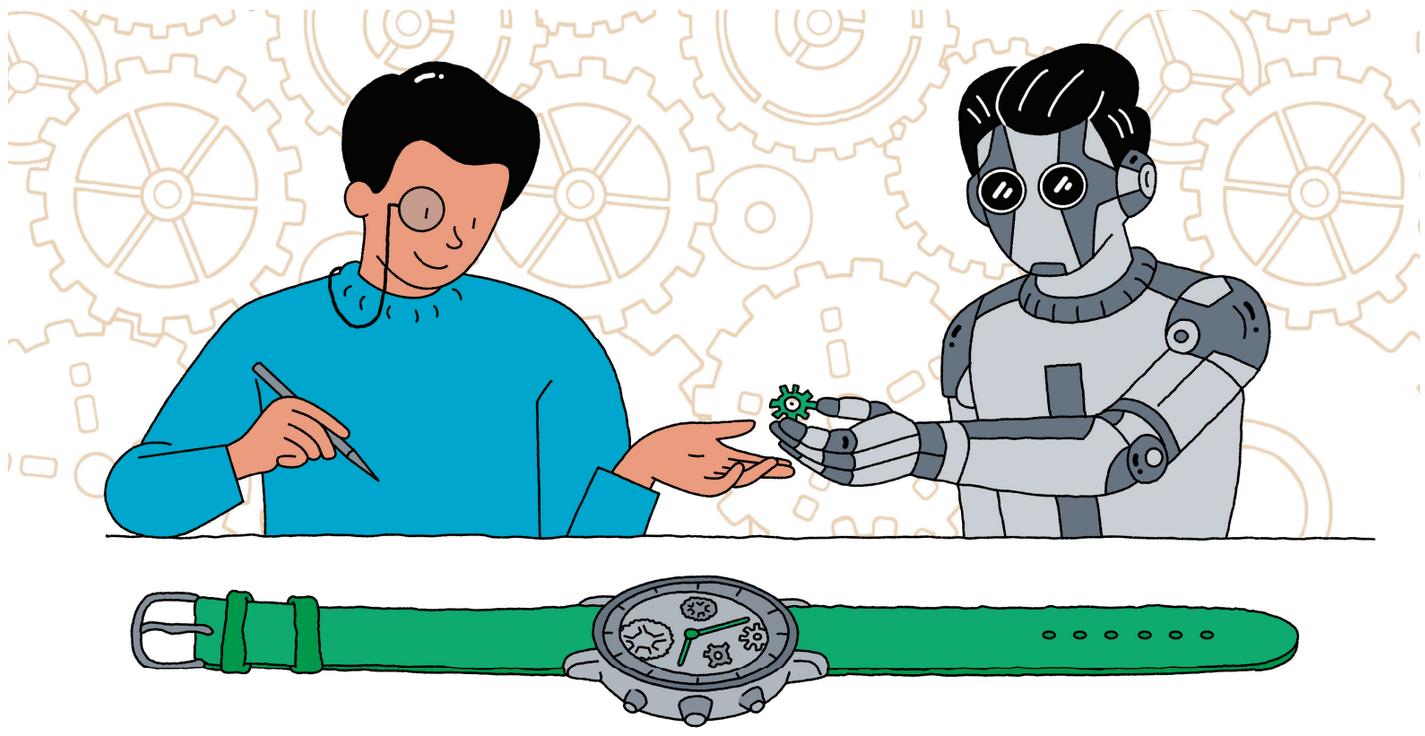
That technophobia in watchmaking exists at all should not encourage head-scratching. A mechanical watch has been an anachronism for getting on half a century, and has withstood the oncoming tides of newfangled gadgetry and gizmos more than once. Quartz, digital watches, CAD, personal computers, smartwatches, NFTs. Existential crises? Pah.

And yet this latest tech revolution feels different. For a number of reasons, some obvious, some less so. First is the climate it arrives in. Many chief executives have described the recent uncontrollable macroeconomic impacts of wars, tariffs, the Chinese slowdown, soaring gold prices, and the bullet-proof Swiss franc (up 12 percent on the dollar last year alone) as "the perfect storm." Some have responded by raising prices to protect profits, but that has only made things worse, with accusations of price gouging from disgruntled consumers landing squarely on the industry's doormat.

More specifically, AI's threat to human creativity has an enduring hold over luxury consumers. If the industry succumbs to AI-led design to cut costs and drive efficiencies, slashing the human quotient in the process, will it not betray buyer expectations and thereby sign its own death warrant?

What is of deeper concern, is the impact of worklessness on consumer capacity to afford the industry's product, particularly given it's become so expensive in recent years. Watchmaking is already experiencing a sort of reverse democratisation, as volumes plummet, particularly at the lower end of the market, a gateway into the category for aspirational buyers and for so long the top of the watchmaking funnel. Swiss watch exports have halved since 2015 – if white-collar unemployment spikes, will millions more follow?

Not necessarily. The other side of the argument has it that AI could yet be a boon to luxury watchmaking, to luxury more broadly. The robots may soon be doing our taxes and diagnosing our ailments, but they will never deliver human creativity and hand craftsmanship: they're not human.



Accordingly, the value of what is real, tangible, and human is on the up. As vinyl's revival, the perpetuation of the book and magazine industries, and a litany of record-breaking art and memorabilia auction results over the past six months demonstrate, there's a new desirability premium, a preciousness, in beautiful objects we can touch, feel, and own. The advance of the artificial is prompting a surge in demand for the real.

Experienced watch industry commentators seem unfazed by AI's arrival, even while the sector battles design similarity, another possible symptom of AI's creeping influence. "The basic problem for the watch industry continues to be designing and making products that look as if they were created by people who care about watches," says the author of the *Split Seconds* Substack, Jack Forster, who began writing about watchmaking in the 1990s.

He continues: "The tendency of AI to create homogenous pastiches of past work is not going to help. Combine that with the tendency for industries in decline to mistake disruptiveness for good taste, and what I fear we'll end up with are bad prompts going in and worse results coming out."

Tracey Llewellyn, global editorial director at the watch media platform Revolution, agrees. "A computer knows geometry, but it doesn't understand ergonomics or emotions," she says. "A human designer brings an intuitive sense of how a case sits against the bone of a wrist, or the way a dial's texture should play with light. These are sensory decisions, not mathematical ones."

Behind the scenes, watchmaking is in thrall to big tech and big industry, as it must be to operate at such a high level of precision and scale. Many brands are already using AI to augment decision-making and data management, and few consumers will take issue with it. Plenty are employing it as a sort of digital wall, throwing creative ideas at it to see what sticks. Hublot's chief executive has admitted to using it to visualise his own ideas as a starting block for conversations with his design teams. But a fully AI-designed watch? We've not seen it yet. And we may not. Early adopters of NFT watches, a daft Covid fad, were quickly ridiculed and their tokenistic products sidelined.

There is, however, an inevitability in play. "It's beyond question that you should use AI," says Oliver Müller, founder of the consultancy LuxeConsult. "It's more about how you're going to use it. AI will help speed up the design process, but it will remain a tool for helping express what is in someone's mind. If we leave the creative processes in product design to AI, we'll all be producing the same watch very soon."

Robin Swithinbank is a writer, journalist and editor who has covered fine watches and the luxury sector for more than two decades. He's a regular contributor to the New York Times, Financial Times and Robb Report.

— **Words by Robin Swithinbank**



Stefan Sagmeister values time. Every seven years, he takes a sabbatical, no matter how busy his professional life is.

Now is Better

The legendary designer on why the data proves we are living in the best time to be alive – and why.

Austrian-born, New York-based designer Stefan Sagmeister first received international acclaim designing album covers for the Rolling Stones, Lou Reed, and Talking Heads. Over a career spanning more than three decades, Sagmeister has expanded from graphic design into branding, large-scale installations, film, and immersive exhibitions. This is all united by a singular conviction: that good design should help people and delight them.

In recent years, Sagmeister has concentrated on tailoring his studio to enable close collaborations and a more intentional, hands-on approach to work. He takes time seriously. Every seven years, he enjoys a sabbatical, stepping away from client work entirely to reset, reflect, and refuel his creativity. He speaks to Ressence fresh from his last sabbatical — this is a man who practises the long view he preaches.

That long view is the engine behind his latest project, *Now is Better*. Part book, part exhibition, part data-driven provocation, *Now is Better* uses historical information to paint a picture that runs counter to the doom-scrolling consensus: by virtually every meaningful measure – life expectancy, literacy, democratic participation, poverty reduction – we are living in the best time to be alive. Sagmeister doesn't deny the existence of serious challenges. He simply insists we look at them through a wider lens. As he puts it, the statement 'the world is terrible' is accurate, and the statement 'the world is fantastic' is equally true. The difference is the time frame you choose to look through.

This clear-eyed optimism, combined with his deep respect for craft and the haptic, makes Sagmeister a natural ally of Ressence. In fact, Sagmeister collaborated with Ressence on the TYPE 3X, a limited edition built around the simple, stubbornly hopeful message, "Now is Better", rendered in Ressence's oil-filled display. He is someone who believes in progress without ignoring its costs, who champions the handmade in an increasingly digital world, and who remains convinced, with data to prove it, that tomorrow will be better than today. Here, he tells us why.

Your book Now is Better makes the case that we are living in the best time in human history. Do you genuinely believe that?

Yes, I believe so. I'd rather be alive now than twenty years ago, and twenty years ago I would have rather been alive then than a hundred years prior, and so on. One fact that always impresses me: in mid-nineteenth-century France, the average daily calorie intake was about the same as Rwanda's in the 1960s, when Rwanda was the most malnourished country. Back then, if you lived in France, you weren't concerned about global issues or who the president was - you just wondered how to avoid going hungry. Most people worked extremely hard yet only consumed about 1,650 calories per day, far too little, living in conditions the UN would classify today as extreme poverty. Sometimes it is simply important to remember this.

But democracy is clearly under pressure right now. Doesn't that worry you?

Right now, democracy is going a step back, but we've been going two steps forwards for a long time. The absolute all-time peak of democracy was about ten years ago, and I'm convinced that we will move forwards again, as we've seen in the past. When it comes to global warming, of course we'll have to work incredibly hard to address it. But looking at the past, humanity has always been quite flexible in finding remedies for these adverse side effects so that progress could evolve again. I'm hopeful we will find our way through this one too.

You talk about the importance of the time frame through which we view the world. Can you explain?

The statement' the world is terrible 'is accurate, and' the world is fantastic' is true. The difference between those two statements is the time frame I look through. If I look at today's newsfeed, every single item would be negative. But if I widen the viewpoint – if I add three hundred years to my time frame – every one of those views on the present day would be positive.

We need both perspectives. Having the short-term view that social and traditional media give us every second, minute, and hour is essential. But having a long-term perspective is equally crucial, otherwise we risk giving up entirely. There was a major study involving 100,000 young people, where 54 percent believed the world was ending. Those young people aren't actively fighting climate change or species extinction – instead, they're anxious and depressed, stuck in their bedrooms doing nothing to address the very problems they fear. Maintaining the broader perspective is essential: it helps us recognise how much better things have become in most areas that truly matter.

How do you think about what good design should achieve?

I love to make work that helps and delights people. This is true for anything I call good design. The helping part is the functionality. In the case of a watch, that means it's readable and tells the time. The delightful part is that it's a pleasure to have it on. With a brand like Ressence, it's the pleasure of how these discs interact with one another, how ingenious that system is, how pretty the watch itself is, and how it has a personality trait that I would like to have myself or that I can identify with.

In my own work, it could be something like the tunnels we designed connecting hospitals in Toronto. The functionality was that you could wheel a patient through feeling safe – we redesigned them with colourful walls and images of nature. There were little things hidden throughout, designed to delight. If a child was being pushed through on a gurney, the nurse could say, "look for all the bluebirds on the wall, let's count the bluebirds."

You're optimistic about AI. Why?

I am optimistic, even about something as unpredictable as AI. My stance comes from previous technologies. My go-to is the invention of the hammer. It turned out that more people built houses with hammers than killed their neighbours. I believe in the good of people. Of course, there will be terrible actors who use AI in awful ways, no doubt about it. But the ones who use it positively will outnumber and outlast the other guys.

If you had to bet on one thing still being part of our lives in fifteen years, what would it be?

I'm confident that people will still wear mechanical watches. I don't see that going away anytime soon, because they already survived the smartwatch onslaught and the quartz crisis, and the love for something purely mechanical will always remain. There will be a much smaller niche that loves petrol-driven cars, and the quality of those cars will be very high. It will be the same for watches. I have no doubt, and I can confidently say that I will love and care for my Ressence watch.

How do you see the future of physical media in the face of AI and smartphone use?

If I look at Brooklyn, everybody is making their own marmalade, cooking fine dinners, and possibly enrolled on a ceramics course. When it comes to records – the vinyl world is tiny, but it's a very high-quality world. It's satisfying because now people are appreciating the quality of the packaging. For $30 you can buy a fantastic piece of art and the vinyl. There is no other medium where you can buy an excellent piece of art for that price. If you go to a gallery you can't even get the catalogue for that price.



Sagmeister redesigned the TYPE 3 dial, embedding "Now is Better" into the minute track.

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The Watch of the Now



At 41mm wide and 11mm thin, the TYPE 11 sits immediately at ease on the wrist.

The new TYPE 11 is a watch for the present — a complete design that feels familiar and unique, yet unmistakably Ressence. From the brand's base in Antwerp, we learn about the approach that produced a covetable watch for all situations, consolidating a brand ethos into truly fresh work.

The Antwerp-based watchmaker Ressence has, since 2010, built its reputation on a series of deliberate departures from convention: the crownless case, the oil-filled dial, and the ROCS – a patented orbital disc system that replaces hands with rotating titanium discs.

The TYPE 11, which launched at Watches and Wonders 2026, is the brand's most considered and consolidated watch to date: 60H power reserve, water-resistant to 3 ATM, offered with four bracelet options, and powered by the Ressence Werk RW-01 (*read our full deep dive on page 4*), the brand's first in-house designed movement. It also introduces a patented ceramic ball power reserve indication, a first for Ressence. It is, in short, a watch that Ressence has built entirely on its own terms, from dial to movement.

"Our approach in the design process goes from the outside to the inside," says Ressence founder Benoît Mintiens. The movement was the last step. A logical one."

The result is a watch with the proportions of a classic: a round, pebble-smooth Grade 5 titanium case, 41mm wide and 11mm thin, with proper lugs and a silhouette that sits immediately at ease on the wrist. The familiarity is intentional. "The TYPE 11 is our 'now' watch," says Mintiens. "It is contemporary but not futuristic. It has the codes of classic watchmaking, but it is certainly not a watch of the past."

Above the case, a double-domed sapphire crystal with an anti-reflective coating on the inside protects the ROCS, Ressence's patented Orbital Convex System, in which rotating titanium discs display hours, minutes, seconds, and power reserve. The convex dial amplifies depth. Time is something you read at a glance.

The TYPE 11 launches in three colourways: Pine, Sky, and Latte – each conceived as a complete palette rather than a finish. Every variant features a combination of light and dark ceramic



Four bracelet options: leather, rubber, hybrid, and Milanese.



The TYPE 11 launches in three colourways: Pine, Sky, and Latte.



TYPE 11 in Sky, on the wrist and ready for any situation.

power reserve balls and a colour-matched seconds marker. Four bracelet options extend that logic further: leather, rubber, a leather-rubber hybrid, and a titanium Milanese mesh. "It really is a watch for any situation," says Mintiens. "The TYPE 11 has this DNA of the brand but in a more accessible, daily form. It is the watch that does it all."

The TYPE 11 is wound either automatically via rotor or manually through a caseback lever, which also handles time-setting. This eliminates the need for a crown entirely. A sapphire window on the caseback reveals the movement beneath.

The power reserve indication is a patented first for Ressence. A string of two-tone ceramic micro-balls sits at the top-left of the dial. As the movement charges, lighter balls emerge and darker ones recede. As power depletes, the process reverses. At 60 hours, the reserve is enough to last a full weekend off the wrist, allowing the wearer to put the watch down when they put their tools down, and pop it back on when they are ready again for the working week.

At the heart of the watch is the RW-01, built from the ground up with a single purpose: to power the ROCS. The movement and display are truly integrated, sharing components and logic as one unified system. "For the first time," says Mintiens, the movement and the ROCS are one. The result is a watch that is very reliable to service, refined in finish, and thoroughly engineered. "It puts us in another category."

TYPE 11 – Key Facts

01
Movement: Ressence Werk RW-01 – Ressence's first in-house calibre. Self-winding, 60-hour power reserve, 28,800 vph, 40 jewels, 67 gears, 18 ball bearings.

02
Display: patented ROCS 11.1 – rotating titanium discs showing hours, minutes, seconds, and power reserve. No hands, no crown.

03
Power reserve: Patented ceramic micro-ball indicator. 60 hours – off on Friday, still running Monday.

04
Case: Grade 5 titanium, pebble-shaped. 41mm × 11mm. 3 ATM water resistance.

05
Crystal: Double-domed sapphire with anti-reflective coating.

06
Colourways: Pine, Sky, Latte. Straps: leather, rubber, leather-rubber hybrid, titanium Milanese mesh.

07
439 components. 49g including strap. CHF 23,000 excluding taxes. Made in Switzerland.

04

Power From Within: The Ressence Werk

Technical innovation at Ressence is never cosmetic. From purpose-built movement to a patented orbital disc system, every complexity serves one goal: clarity on the wrist.

02
Double barrels deliver a minimum 60-hour power reserve, fed by a large automatic rotor for maximum winding efficiency.

01
A triangular calibre unique in Swiss watchmaking, its three-circle geometry mirrors the Ressence dial above.



03
No crown. Simplified manual winding. The RW-01 is built efficiently to drive the ROCS.

Design Werks

The Ressence Werk RW-01 is the brand's first movement designed and built entirely in-house. Not the starting point, but a natural step forward – and the TYPE 11 (*read our full deep dive on page 3)* is the first to feature it. Built from the ground up to power the ROCS, Ressence's patented orbital disc system, the RW-01 is the calibre that makes true integration between movement and display possible for the first time in the brand's history.

"It's a motor," says Benoît Mintiens. "It's a tractor. It's an engine. It does only one thing: it pulls the ROCS."

That clarity of purpose defines every decision in the construction of the RW-01. The calibre is triangular, a shape unique in Swiss watchmaking. Three circles define its geometry: two barrels and a central reference balance wheel, a configuration that deliberately echoes the three-disc motif of the Ressence dial above it. "I gave it a shape that no one has on purpose," says Mintiens. "From far away, you see it's not a standard movement."

Those twin barrels deliver a 60-hour power reserve. The RW-01 runs at 28,800 vibrations per hour, carries 40 jewels, 67 gears, and 18 ball bearings, and winds automatically via a large rotor. Manual winding and time-setting are handled through the caseback lever, keeping the case completely crown-free. A sapphire window lets you observe the calibre directly.

Ressence developed the architecture, aesthetics, and functional requirements in collaboration with a specialist Swiss movement developer. "In keeping with our philosophy of Simplication, the complexity lies in the dial, in how we display time," he explains in relation to the design of the watch. "The movement serves that purpose. But having our own movement means something profound."

Top Gears

Form follows function. At Ressence, design logic drives every engineering decision.

The ROCS, or Ressence Orbital Convex System, is the display module at the heart of every watch the brand makes. Introduced with the first collection in 2010, it replaces traditional hands with rotating discs that sit on the same flat plane, orbiting one another across a single flush surface. In three models, the TYPE 3, TYPE 5 and TYPE 7, the ROCS did something no other watch had done before: it operated submerged in oil.

Benoît Mintiens had the idea from the day he founded Ressence in 2010. He is an industrial designer by training, not a watchmaker. He saw the wristwatch as a legibility problem. Oil, he reasoned, would cancel the light refraction that distorts every conventional dial. It took three years to make it work, and the fluid he initially sourced came from a repairer of naval compasses.

The first obstacle was the escapement. Submerge a mechanical movement in oil and it stops functioning. Mintiens divided the watch into two hermetically sealed chambers: the movement below in air, the ROCS above in 3.57ml of oil. The TYPE 3 launched at Baselworld in 2013 and won the Horological Revelation prize at the Grand Prix d'Horlogerie de Genève the same year.

Solving that problem created several more. With no physical connection possible across the titanium membrane between the two chambers, Ressence developed a magnetic transmission: micro-magnets one millimetre wide, passing the minute signal across without touching. Oil expands and contracts with temperature, so seven miniaturised bellows maintain constant pressure across a working range of -5°C to +55°C.

The Future – Optimistic Viewpoints

Seven minds offering words of wisdom and a call to arms for a more upbeat approach to life and work.

The best of Ressence's debut book, 'Ahead of Time,' features twenty leading minds, united by a shared belief: that tomorrow can be better than today.

In 2025, to mark 15 years of forward-thinking watchmaking, Ressence commissioned Ahead of Time, a book of 20 interviews with visionaries from technology, design, art, science, geopolitics, fashion, and beyond. It is not a book about watches. It is a book about mindset – about the conviction that creativity, innovation, and human ingenuity will always generate more value than wallowing in nostalgia.

The interviewees span disciplines but share a common thread: an unwavering belief that the future offers more than the past. From Sam Altman envisioning a world of abundant intelligence and energy, to Lonneke Gordijn using art to unite humanity, each conversation reveals what it means to see potential in what is to come. As Benoît Mintiens writes in his foreword: "The best entrepreneurs remain humble despite extraordinary success. This humility, paired with curiosity and optimism, forms the foundation of genuine innovation."

Please enjoy seven conversations from the book – offering a snapshot of the optimism, intelligence, and creative courage that define Ressence's community. We encourage you to approach them with what Mintiens calls "child-like curiosity": eager, open-minded, and ready to discover.

— **Words by Nolan Giles & Matt Alagiah**



Spencer Bailey

Founder of The Slowdown

Colorado-born, New York-based writer Spencer Bailey built The Slowdown and its globally respected podcast Time Sensitive on a radical premise: being first isn't always best. Having grown tired of the fast-food diet of digital media during his tenure as editor-in-chief of Surface magazine, Bailey championed intentionally slow, quality journalism depth over speed, meaning over clicks.

What drove you to create The Slowdown?

I started thinking about the notion of 'slow media', similar to the slow food movement. In the 2010s, people consumed media almost thoughtlessly, and it wasn't making them feel great. It was like bloat – you feel bloated consuming fast media, just like you feel bloated when you eat a bunch of Chicken McNuggets. The Slowdown could be an alternative mode of media-making.

Do you have a positive outlook about the future of media?

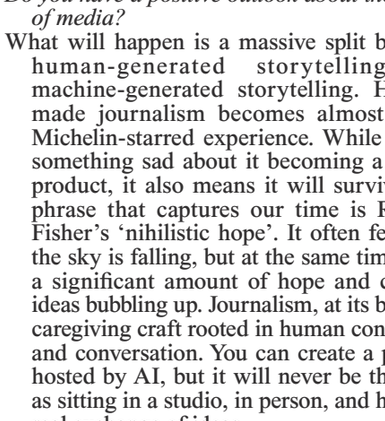
What will happen is a massive split between human-generated storytelling and machine-generated storytelling. Human-made journalism becomes almost like a Michelin-starred experience. While there's something sad about it becoming a luxury product, it also means it will survive. The phrase that captures our time is Richard Fisher's 'nihilistic hope'. It often feels like the sky is falling, but at the same time, I see a significant amount of hope and creative ideas bubbling up. Journalism, at its best, is a caregiving craft rooted in human connection and conversation. You can create a podcast hosted by AI, but it will never be the same as sitting in a studio, in person, and having a real exchange of ideas.

How will AI affect the idea of a master architect or designer?

In the same way it will affect journalism. You'll still have the masters, the Peter Zumthors, doing very high-craft, expensive architecture that starts with a human sketch. On the other hand, you'll have very cheap, efficient ways of building. If there's anybody who's anti-AI, they're fooling themselves. It should be used to generate incredible creative growth instead of just replacing the human head, hand, and heart.

Will AI shorten the path to mastery?

I interviewed Malcolm Gladwell, who popularised the 10,000-hour rule and asked him about AI shortcutting mastery. It will help, but true mastery still requires serious time.



Sam Altman

CEO of OpenAI

Sam Altman occupies a rare vantage point at the intersection of artificial intelligence and clean energy. As CEO of OpenAI, he has made powerful tools like ChatGPT widely accessible. Simultaneously, he champions clean energy through investments in nuclear fusion at Helion Energy. His dual focus reflects a clear-eyed optimism: intelligence and energy are the two fundamental inputs to human progress, and their increasing abundance will reshape everything.

Which technological advancements excite you most?

Intelligence and energy are the two fundamental inputs. With good ideas and the ability to move and manipulate matter, we can do everything else. The most significant developments currently underway are the increasing abundance of both. Throughout my career, my biggest mission has been to drive towards these abundances. I didn't realise that the price of intelligence would eventually converge with the price of energy. It now appears pretty obvious that this is happening.

What will that world look like?

If you can relax the constraints on intelligence and energy, I don't think we fully understand yet what that world will look like. However, I'm very excited to find out. It will be a world of great abundance. It'll be a little uneven – maybe houses stay expensive, but maybe medical care gets really cheap. It feels like the most significant reshuffle of our economy in a long time.

How do you build a culture at OpenAI where the sky is the limit?

You can't do this with just one inspiring speech. You need to inspire people repeatedly, in every detail, in every meeting. We're always asking people to go just that little bit further, think about a problem more expansively, and importantly, to try something that feels just that little bit riskier. When you repeat it again and again, you eventually develop this emergent property.

Do you think that we are psychologically ready for the scale of change that AI could bring? It could signal a massive change.

I have a tremendous belief in our ability to adapt to new things. Also, as humans, I think we can get badly psychologically hacked, and so we need to be vigilant against that.

How has having a child affected the way that you think about deep philosophical questions regarding consciousness, relating to both human beings and AI?

In some ways, having a baby feels like the most normal thing I've ever done, and in other ways, the most extraordinary. I've been thinking about the fact that my son will grow up in a world where he may never be more intelligent than AI. He'll never know what it's like to live without tools that are already incredibly smart and capable.

The big thought I'm having is simply about how different the world is going to be for him.



Tiina Karjalainen Kierysch

Head of Design at Bang & Olufsen

Finnish-Swedish designer Tiina Karjalainen Kierysch has spent a decade at Bang & Olufsen, moving from brand partnerships to leading design across the entire company. Her background in mobile phones at Sony Ericsson and smart wearables at Sony gave her a fluency in the digital that she now brings to one of the most prestigious names in high-end audio – a brand whose founders, in 1925, were uncompromising in their mission to create only the best and always strive to improve their designs.

How do you define your guiding principles as a designer?

When it comes to design, I don't have aesthetic guiding principles. I have guiding principles in terms of mindset – how to approach design. The first is curiosity. Curiosity is foundational and essential when working with design. Unique ideas often come from intense curiosity – when you are really open and daring to question things. That's when you start entering new territory. Another principle we hold at Bang & Olufsen is making sure our customers can feel the care we put into our products. If we show respect to the process, the customers, and the manufacturing methods, that care will be felt in the product. Perhaps you can't fully understand what it is, but as a whole, you will think that somebody has truly put their heart and soul into this.

How do you see the relationship between people and technology evolving? How can our relationships with technology become more meaningful and what role does design have here?

We would rather see our products move to a space where, instead of seeing it as a routine where you just put a device on, it could become a ritual. Imagine a very special tea that you enjoy, with a particular ritual surrounding the act of using your favourite teapot, your beloved teacup. A similar ritual can occur when interacting with audio devices. We are increasingly thinking about how to craft the digital experience. I see the craft space transitioning into a phygital realm [a term for the hybridisation of physical and digital], encompassing even more immersive sensory experiences.

So you see, for the future, you foresee a more meaningful and deeper way of interacting with technology, but always one where the products themselves still carry a strong physical sense of value for their users?

Yes. Yes. And there will be brands thinking about it differently. Here, we aim to create experiences that surpass the ordinary or mundane, and the experiential aspect plays a huge part in this. At Bang & Olufsen, we internally refer to our products as having different types of magic. And what we mean is that there's something delightful and surprising about them. And of course, this magic that we think about, how can we deepen that magic for the future, with the technologies of the future as well?



Phil Schiller

Apple Fellow

Phil Schiller spent three decades at Apple helping to shape not just products but the way we interact with technology – from the iPod and iPhone to the App Store. Working closely with Steve Jobs through Apple's renaissance, he mastered the art of blending technology and narrative. Now an Apple Fellow, he brings the same conscience to questions of AI, creativity, and what it means to build something that endures.

How do you perceive time in relation to technology?

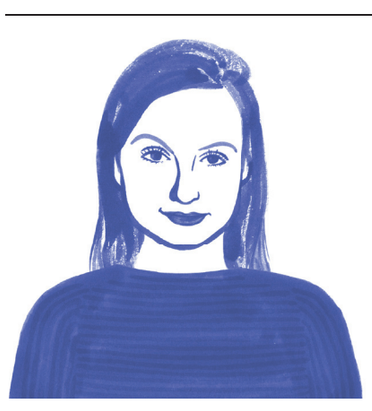
I've learned that no one can truly predict the future. In the mid-90s, we were working on things three to five years out. Five years out, the internet was about to take off. And nobody back then predicted how huge its impact would be. People knew there would be some kind of connected experience, but nobody knew what the internet would become. If we can't see the most considerable thing coming less than five years away, that says our predictive powers aren't that super. There's nothing wrong with that. It's very exciting to accept that you don't know whether the things you're predicting and planning will be the future or not.

What are your guiding principles?

My biggest guiding methodology is passion. I love things I work on and devote time to. Second is hard work, and the details matter. You're never done. The things I've worked on that others appreciate – when you open a box and take out a product, the box is beautiful, the product is beautiful, the instructions are beautiful, the font selection is beautiful. This effort shows that somebody cared about this when they made it. No detail is too small and no job is too unimportant.

What does the future look like to you?

There was a great computer scientist who worked at Apple, Alan Kay, who said the best way to predict the future is to invent it. Steve used to call it the intersection of liberal arts and technology. I'll share a quote I love, from Friedrich Schiller: "Art is the daughter of freedom." The idea that freedom gives rise to art, and art helps us develop as people. Are we creating, both in society and in our workplaces, that freedom to be creative and explore?



Lonneke Gordijn

Co-Founder of Studio DRIFT

Since founding Studio DRIFT in Amsterdam in 2007, Lonneke Gordijn has pioneered work where art, technology, and nature meaningfully come together. From synchronised drone performances above Art Basel Miami Beach to luminous dandelions in glass domes, her installations challenge perceptions of both the artificial and natural worlds – always in pursuit of genuine human connection, as she explains to us.

Your work is at the intersection of art and technology. Was that planned?

Not at all. It came from our natural interests. Our work doesn't come from the mindset of 'Hey, we have this technology, what can we do with it?' It comes from what we want to experience. Today, we're thinking: where is the human centre? How can you make an engine work in a way that speaks to us humans emotionally?

How does your work bring people together?

It's about movement. We make our artwork move so that people want to respond to it. Naturally, the audience starts breathing to the rhythm, heartbeats align. You can tune people to the same wavelength, and being on the same wavelength is important for connecting. That brings understanding and gives everyone the same energy.

How do you tell timeless stories that raise awareness?

Our installation Drifters makes a concrete block come alive, floating through the air as if weightless. It's extremely weird to feel something for a concrete block – but you do. When you feel something, you can act on it. If you don't feel anything, the subject becomes a theory. You rarely act on a theory.

How does time shape your principles?

I had a son nine months ago and my focus has changed drastically. What is valuable when it comes to time? It's about spending time in the right way, in every moment. Some moments will never come back. My advice is to be mindful – enjoy it in the moment instead of thinking afterwards, 'Oh, I was quite happy then.'

How can we positively confront challenges like climate change?

We have to make decisions as a collective and stick to them. Right now, we're just debating, and it drives me crazy. We have to look at nature for decision-making and systems. Nature has already figured this out. I am positive about what humans can do – if we look together towards nature. We have a mission as artists to promote the idea of uniting ourselves in one direction.

You're opening a museum in Amsterdam. How will it help define the future?

The building is energy-positive. During the pandemic, we realised how much artwork we ship worldwide, and it's very unsustainable. So instead of repeating ourselves, we'd rather spend that money on developing and showing artwork in the best possible way.



Daniel Libeskind

Founder of Studio Libeskind

Daniel Libeskind made his name with buildings that carry the full weight of contested history – the Jewish Museum Berlin, the Military History Museum in Dresden, the World Trade Center Master Plan. The son of Holocaust survivors, born in postwar Poland, he has never shied away from emotionally charged, politically resonant projects. Architecture, in his view, is not decoration. It is memory made physical – and a mirror held up to the society that builds it.

How do you define your guiding principles?

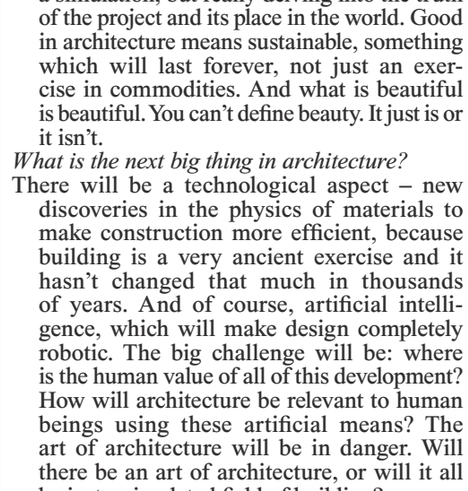
What is true, what is beautiful, and what is good. Those are the great, ancient values that I subscribe to. Truth in architecture means authenticity – not a stylised response or a simulation, but really delving into the truth of the project and its place in the world. Good in architecture means sustainable, something which will last forever, not just an exercise in commodities. And what is beautiful is beautiful. You can't define beauty. It just is or it isn't.

What is the next big thing in architecture?

There will be a technological aspect – new discoveries in the physics of materials to make construction more efficient, because building is a very ancient exercise and it hasn't changed that much in thousands of years. And of course, artificial intelligence, which will make design completely robotic. The big challenge will be: where is the human value of all of this development? How will architecture be relevant to human beings using these artificial means? The art of architecture will be in danger. Will there be an art of architecture, or will it all be just a simulated field of building?

How does that make you feel as an architect who has devoted their entire career to making beautiful buildings?

Our life is not made up only of logic, calculation, and transaction. It's primarily lived in an emotional way, in a spiritual way. Architecture, in the same way, has to touch on the emotions. Memory and history are the key to building the future. Cities are really reflections of our society and culture. That will not change, whatever the tools become.



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ressencewatches.com

Benoît Mintiens and Marc Newson, whose mutual admiration found its natural expression in the TYPE 3 MN.



In Good Company

Recently launched, the TYPE 3 MN heralds a meeting of minds where time is anything but conventional. Ressence founder Benoît Mintiens and Marc Newson sit down to discuss their fresh collaboration, the future of fine watch-making, and a shared philosophy for design that endures.



The TYPE 3 MN, a meeting of Ressence's fluid ergonomic form and Marc Newson's celebrated industrial design language.

The TYPE 3 MN heralds a meeting of minds where time is anything but conventional. Ressence founder Benoît Mintiens and Marc Newson meet to discuss their fresh collaboration, the future of fine watchmaking, and a shared philosophy for design that endures.

For this design duo, the inevitable collaboration seemed a natural fit. Known for designing for some prestigious brands today like Montblanc and Ferrari, Newson is a long-standing admirer of Mintiens' unique approach to fine watchmaking. And the resulting spin on the TYPE 3 is an expression of that mutual respect, details, like the hands of the watch face, nod to Newson's celebrated Ikepod watch designs of the 1990s.

Rather than chasing spectacle, the focus here is on clarity, and stripping back convention to arrive at something more intuitive. The TYPE 3 MN reflects a shared understanding that complexity should never feel complicated with every detail considered, resolved, and quietly deliberate in how it shapes the experience of reading time.

Sitting down to unpack the ideas behind their partnership, Mintiens and Newson talk about refining a perfect form over decades – rather than years – and the synthesis of style and shared values that has brought the two designers together, at last.

Benoît Mintiens: Why did we do a watch together? Even though it feels natural to us, it's interesting to know, from the outside, why we did this.

Marc Newson: From my perspective, I have a history of designing watches. I've always loved them and the process of designing them, but I haven't done that for a while. I remember becoming aware of your brand long before I knew who you were. It seemed to me that we shared very common aesthetic values and design culture. I was fascinated by the products you manufactured in the early days, and I am still fascinated by them today.

Benoît Mintiens: For me, it was a very strong idea to merge our universes. You are one of these pioneers who introduced industrial design thinking into fine watchmaking. And there are not many, I can tell you. As a young designer, I was inspired by that. And then, many years later, I started Ressence.

Marc Newson: I'd like to think that we were ahead of our time when I was designing those watches 20 years ago. Although sometimes being ahead of your time is not a good thing. But I was always fascinated by the technology you invented, because it felt to me like something I was always aspiring to achieve, even though I was working with completely conventional technology.

Benoît Mintiens: It removes the visible technicality of the watch to end up with a dematerialised result. And that's also what you put in your work – you have a very specific way of combining geometrical dimensions.

Marc Newson: Some people say "organic" – for me, that's always a simplification. I was always trying to make minimal watches. But making things minimal can be the most challenging. The result of our collaboration now seems, many years later, a seamless synthesis of all the values I was aspiring to a couple of decades ago.

Benoît Mintiens: The approach I always try to follow is: how do you get every dimension in the design process – the aesthetics, the techniques, the ergonomics, the economics, the mechanics – to another spot? Once you are able to make all of that coherent, you end up with a new reality. Sometimes I call it paradigmatic – something that is logical in itself, but completely different from any other logic around you.

Marc Newson: What's astounding for me is that you managed to do that within the constraints of the industry. Turning ideas into reality using non-traditional technologies is unbelievably challenging.

Benoît Mintiens: I remember the first time my main supplier saw my technical drawings. He was worried. He said: "No, your watch, it's never going to work."

Marc Newson: People often tell you things are impossible. All you can do is show them the result and say: "look, there it is – we did it." When I saw the oil technology for the first time, it was revolutionary. And it looked fantastic.

Benoît Mintiens: You have, across 40 years, a very distinctive design signature – a logic, a process. How do you define that?

Marc Newson: It's like having handwriting – a vocabulary I've established. At the risk of getting esoteric, I have created a subconscious rulebook that filters your brain – do's, don'ts, and more. The rulebook becomes bigger, and the possibilities become more focused.

Benoît Mintiens: Your style is extremely timeless. Take pieces you did 20 years ago – they're still relevant today. It's also a sustainability consideration: making products that aren't outdated in six months.

Marc Newson: Exactly – not creating landfill. I've always loved the idea of designing objects that, in theory, you could buy once and have for life. Not least the product we worked on together.

Benoît Mintiens: The shape of the watch you came up with is quite close to something that would travel in space.

Marc Newson: The shape was something really important to me. Despite the fact that it looks very simple, it's really not. I've been trying to perfect that profile for decades – starting from a pure mathematical ellipse. I feel that we have finally got to the perfect shape.

A Matter of Type

At Ressence, type is not decoration but engineering – shaped by use, milled into the body of a watch, and designed to endure over time.

In all forms of design communications, a good typeface balances beauty with legibility. But in industrial design, an even better typeface considers its physical integration with a product. For an object that's constantly in contact with a hand and the elements, durability matters. That's why Ressence reconfigured its numerals with the launch of the TYPE 5, back in 2015.

On the first Ressence watch designed for divers, where the text sits on the outside of the watch, the type is protected from wear as it's recessed into the titanium case with a depth of 0.2 mm. This is critical, as you're constantly touching the watch with your fingers to set a dive time. Underwater, where visibility is reduced, clarity and durability are even more essential.

In addressing this need, Ressence was confronted with a problem: there is no standard typeface designed for milling. Those that do exist aren't geometrical enough for the process, in which you programme the machine using radii rather than splines. A mill is also cylindrical, requiring a letterform that has a round beginning and end, with a single-lined path. This approach demands a different way of drawing. Traditional type design often relies on optical correction – subtle irregularities introduced to make letters appear balanced to the eye. But when translated into a milled form, those nuances can become inconsistencies. Instead, each numeral must follow a strict geometric logic, where curves, radii and spacing are resolved not just visually, but mechanically. In this way, the typeface becomes less a graphic layer and more an integrated component of the object, shaped as much by process as by intention.

Brands like Leica – known for its high-end, precision-engineered photography equipment – have been early pioneers of this technique. With a tool like a camera, that a seasoned war reporter needs in the field, silk screened text onto a lens or body won't hold up; in time it will wear and risk becoming unreadable. Like Ressence, Leica mills in its numbers before filling them with paint; the colour is protected, as it sits deeper in the camera body. Another interesting example is Italian watchmaker Panerai; their typeface is designed for a military grade watch. The model originally used two layers: a plate of radium, a radioactive material that glowed in the dark – forbidden now, of course – and a plate on top that was milled out for visibility.

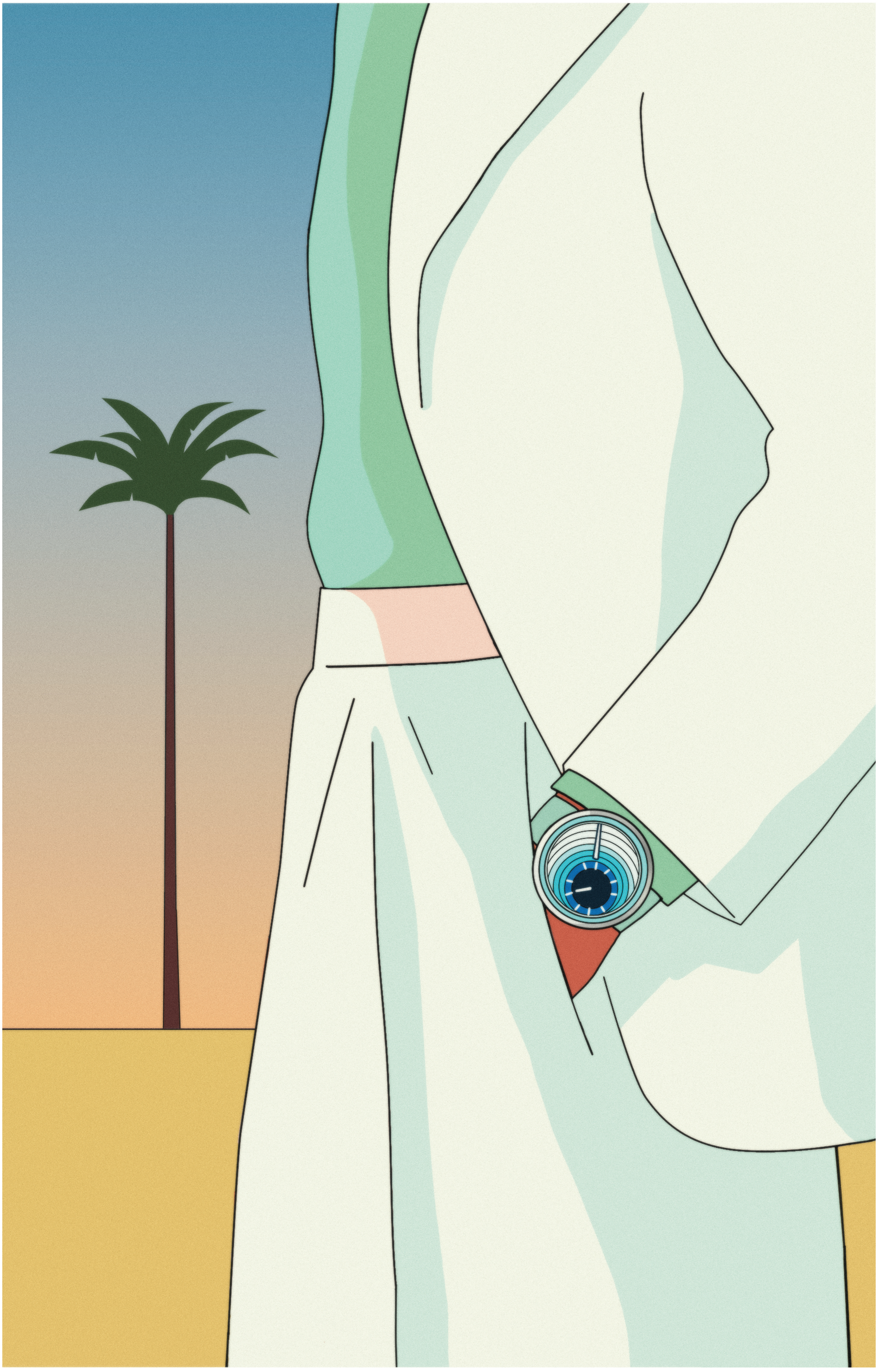
Naturally, for a watch, line weight and readability is important. Functionality is a founding principle for Ressence. The smooth, rolling curves of the Ressence typeface follow that a strong logic – shaped by the requirements of milling and legibility, they resolve into something fluid in form, an elegant extension of the watch design itself. Across disciplines, this principle of industrial design remains consistent: when information is essential, it must be engineered into the object, not applied as an afterthought. Therefore, it must stand the test of use, time and wear.



60
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4



Ressence Biodiversity [11]

A creative process is often the result of a meaningful combination of visions. These four partnerships illustrate that – from a mother-of-pearl inlay to concentric circles to miniature street-art – Ressence's Art Watch collaborations add a fourth dimension to their canvas.



Alain Silberstein

Model
TYPE 1^{S} REV (2022)

The creation of the TYPE 1^{S} REV began with a call. In 2022, collector and curator Wei Koh had launched Grail Watch, a platform pairing independent watchmakers with artists. For its first collaboration, he contacted Benoît Mintiens with an idea: to realise a dial design that French designer Alain Silberstein had submitted to an open Ressence competition in 2020, but never made it to production.

Silberstein has spent four decades building a unique universe of bold primary colours and geometric shapes, collaborating with some of the most established names in Swiss watchmaking. The open Ressence competition was a natural venue for his ideas. Playful in form, philosophical in intent.

For this first Grail Watch, he looked to the still life Vanitas by Philippe de Champaigne in 1646, and its three symbols: a tulip, a skull, and an hourglass. The painting is a meditation on the transience of life. Silberstein transposed each symbol onto a revolving disc of the TYPE 1 Slim.

"The tulip has become the hour indicator. The skull is the running seconds. Instead of the hourglass, I have used my yellow triangle as a reminder to seize each day and make it yours," says Silberstein.

The minutes hand was made thicker than a typical Ressence watch, in keeping with his geometric language. As the discs rotate, each symbol moves seamlessly without pause. The tulip tracks the hours. The skull marks the seconds.

"The message Silberstein wanted to relay worked perfectly with Ressence's display of time, in perpetual motion," says Mintiens. "His universe and ours may look very different, but we do align on some level, quieting down the noise."

The TYPE 1 REV was released as a limited edition of 36 pieces, paired with a blue calfskin strap with red stitching, and sold exclusively through Grail Watch. It was the first watchmaker-artist collaboration the platform produced.

Silberstein is a French architect turned watchmaker, known for Bauhaus-inspired designs in bold primary colours and geometric forms.





Shantell Martin

Model
TYPE 1^{2} SHA (2024)

The TYPE 1^{2} SHA is the story of a sole art watch, created in collaboration with British multidisciplinary artist Shantell Martin for TimeForArt, a biennial benefit auction held on 7 December 2024 in New York. The New York based artist is known for her murals, live-drawing performances, and collaborations that cross the boundaries of art, fashion, and culture, Martin has carved out a singular place in the contemporary art world, recognised by the British Crown with an MBE.

For Ressence, she accepted the scale challenge of drawing onto the dial of a special TYPE 1 Squared. Its white dial, black engraved hands, and black leather strap formed the perfect canvas for her signature black-on-white line drawing with an ultra-thin permanent marker. "I love that a watch can become a vessel for art and connection. You can clearly see this with the Ressence brand," said Martin at the time, about the invitation.

As the discs rotate, the words 'Enjoy Life' appear and dissolve on the dial, communicating a message. "This watch is a unique interaction between visual storytelling and the simple act of telling time," says Benoît Mintiens. "Working with Shantell felt like a natural fit for us," he continues. "Her minimalist approach and the profound freedom of expression in her art resonate deeply with Ressence. Shantell's work captures our ethos perfectly, creating something striking and meaningful without shouting for attention."

"TimeForArt represents a unique opportunity to showcase how the worlds of watchmaking and contemporary art can intersect and inspire each other, a vision we share at Ressence," adds Mintiens. TimeForArt presents its exhibitions, public programmes, and community education workshops entirely free of charge. The 2024 auction was held at Phillips on 7 December as part of The New York Watch Auction: XI, alongside contributions from 25 watch brands. That edition raised $1.2 million total.

Martin is a British artist based in New York, known for continuous black-and-white line drawings spanning walls, clothing and bodies.





Daniel Engelberg

Model
TYPE 8 DE2 (2025)

In 2025, Ressence launched the TYPE 8 DE1 and DE2, two limited-edition art watches built in collaboration with Munich-based sculptor and painter Daniel Engelberg. Engelberg trained at the Academy of Fine Arts in Nuremberg and Munich. He mills his works from wood, layers them in vibrant acrylics, and seals the surface under glossy epoxy resin.

His "Inside Out" series – the direct source for the TYPE 8 DE dials – uses concentric circles and soft colour gradients emanating from a black core to create an optical illusion of depth on a flat surface. In Engelberg's words: "The optical illusion creates an incredible sense of depth, pulling you in with mesmerising gradients and ever-changing perspectives."

The TYPE 8 DE1 and DE2 transfer this logic directly onto the titanium dial of the TYPE 8. The central disc is laser-engraved with concentric circular forms and filled with a progression of colour tones, referencing the disc effect of the always-revolving hour sub-dial. The outer track of the DE1 carries pink tones; the DE2 carries turquoise. Both come with a matching rubber strap in the corresponding colour, plus a complementary leather strap.

"It's a perfect example of two universes working together organically," says Benoît Mintiens, highlighting his admiration for Engelberg's practice, which he says offers a precise blend of industrial rigour, sculptural clarity, and painterly imagination. "This project is a true application of art to a watch," he adds. "It's an almost literal integration of an artwork into a watch dial – not the usual copy-and-paste we often see. Here, the dial and Daniel's creative ideas speak the exact same graphic language, an organic geometry that feels meant to be." With the Engelberg collaboration, the watch becomes much more than a time-keeping tool, it becomes a work of art, one in unique constant motion, and alive on the wrist.

Engelberg is a German sculptor and painter known for geometric works combining vibrant acrylics, milled wood and glossy epoxy resin.





Terumasa Ikeda

Model
TYPE 9 IKE (2026)

The TYPE 9 IKE is a collaboration between Ressence and Kanazawa-based Japanese artist Terumasa Ikeda, limited to eight pieces. Released in February 2026, it is the most technically demanding of Ressence's collaborations, involving traditional Japanese lacquer and mother-of-pearl craft.

Ikeda works with urushi lacquer and raden – a method of inlaying ultra-thin pieces of shell into a lacquered surface, cut and placed with extreme precision. He bridges traditional techniques and digital processes: laser-cutting the shell pieces, then placing the final design by hand. His studio occupies a renovated machiya in Kanazawa. Ikeda has described his practice as reflecting the "now" through ancient traditions.

For the TYPE 9 IKE, Ikeda created a composition specifically designed for Ressence's rotating, convex dial. The starting point was the ROCS 9 orbital display. "When I first saw the TYPE 9's orbital display, it reminded me of a planetary system – something astronomical," he says. "This inspired me to work around the idea of heliocentrism, when astronomers pursued truth through data even as authority resisted them. I really empathise with that attitude."

The practical challenge was considerable. Raden is flat and breaks easily. The TYPE 9 dial is convex. Ikeda resolved this by soaking the ultra-thin shell pieces in water and bending them gradually over rubber sheets until they conformed to the dial's curvature. The resulting surface carries colourful, discontinuous lines of mother-of-pearl inlaid into black urushi lacquer, radiating concentrically from the axis of the hour hand. As the dial rotates and the light changes, the same watch reads differently: circuit board, star map, geological section. "With this watch, you get that feeling of wonder," says Benoît Mintiens. "You don't fully understand what you're looking at, but you feel it, because it triggers something immediate.

Ikeda is a Japanese artist based in Kanazawa, working with urushi lacquer and raden mother-of-pearl inlay, bridging ancient craft and digital processes.



Scan to view details on our latest guest edition with Terumasa Ikeda, which launched in February, 2026.

Meaningful Numbers

0

This is where it all began. The Zero Series is the mother of all Ressence watches – and the first and last to feature a crown. The last broken fingernail in Ressence history. From the start, the goal was clear: make a mechanical watch read like a digital screen.

8

In many cultures, 8 signals balance – a principle that closely mirrors how we approach designing our watches. Ressence was born on the 18th of August. The number at the heart of that date has always stood for equilibrium.

11

The launch of our TYPE 11, featuring our own movement, marked a coming of age moment for the Ressence brand, celebrated in this newspaper.

479

Our TYPE 2 has the most components: 479 in total. It's an apt reminder of our pursuit of simplication; Ressence designs watches that feel intuitive and minimal, while housing ingenious mechanical and technological sophistication beneath.

From Antwerp's best chocolatier to its most iconic hotel, Ressence guides you through its home-city destinations worth your precious time.

Time Well Spent



Relaxation takes centre stage at Botanic Sanctuary's luxurious spa.

For a city of its size, Antwerp punches well above its weight. Whether it's fashion, gastronomy or design, the city has a knack for producing creative talents that are well ahead of their time. This is one of Antwerp's biggest draws; behind its historic, postcard-perfect exterior lies a wealth of innovation and new ideas. This is, after all, a city that makes things. Diamonds, clothing, art, chocolate – Antwerp is a quietly industrious city that's grown its global influence by exporting its goods around the world.

At its core is a respect for design that stems from ancient times, when Antwerp's guilds were prized for their monastic dedication to craftsmanship. That tradition endures today, visible not only in its ateliers and workshops but in its ever-evolving hospitality and retail scene; from the interiors of Hotel Julien to the stylish contemporary architecture of RAS and carefully-crafted gloves sold at Ganterie Boon. And this unique blend of heritage and innovation means Antwerp is more than just Ressence's physical home, but a place with which it shares a profound ethos. To guide you through your urban explorations, here is a guide to some of the Ressence team's best-loved spots; the cosy bars for after work drinks, the hotels favoured by visiting collaborators and, naturally, where to find some of the city's finest Belgian chocolate.

Eat / Historisch Centrum
RAS

On the banks of the River Scheldt, RAS occupies a glass building designed by acclaimed Belgian architect Bob Van Reeth in 1989. Inside, the dining room's tall windows frame serene river views, while summer brings the option of dining on the large waterfront terrace. The menu leans towards seafood (the fried sole is a classic), alongside refined interpretations of regional dishes like crispy veal sweetbreads in port sauce.
Ernest Van Dijckkaai 37

Eat / Harmonie
The Finch

Since opening in 2021, The Finch has earned a firm reputation as one of the city's most inventive dining spots. Led by chef Aiko Linssen, the kitchen reimagines Belgian bistro classics through an Asian lens. Designed around shareable plates, dishes combine local ingredients with bold flavours – think veal cheek in red miso sauce, steamed mussels with kimchi and Korean-spiced steak tartare.
Vinkenstraat 1

Eat / Het Zuid
Patine

A buzzy neighbourhood haunt offering an authentic taste of local life, Patine is particularly beloved among Ressence's watchmakers. It's a snug bistro and wine bar that doubles as a lively coffee spot during the day, with interiors decked out with an eclectic array of antique wooden furnishings and a shady terrace that wraps around its yellow-tiled exterior. Head there on a Sunday evening to catch live jazz performances.
Leopold de Waelstraat

Eat / Historisch Centrum
Borze Café

Borze Café is a snug mix of olive green walls, dark wood floors and tall, gilded ceilings. There's a long list of local beers (to be enjoyed with a plate of frites, naturally) as well as a refined menu of Belgian classics like stoofvlees (beef stew)
Borzestraat 30



The gothic spire of the Cathedral of Our Lady.

Sleep / Zuid
Pilar

Overlooking Antwerp's Museum of Fine Arts, Hotel Pilar spreads out across three storeys of a grand, corner building on Leopold de Waelplaats. Its 23 rooms are decorated by interior design firm Contekst, whose owner, Sam Peeters, opened the hotel together with Christophe Ysewyn in 2017. Expect a stylish mix of antique and designer furniture, polished concrete floors and exposed brickwork alongside an eclectic array of contemporary artworks.
Leopold de Waelplaats 34

Sleep / Historisch Centrum
Hotel Julien

Tucked along a quiet lane in the heart of Antwerp's Old Town, Hotel Julien is set across two 16th-century townhouses. With just 21 rooms, the hotel blends historic architecture with sleek, minimalist interiors that bring together antique furnishings with contemporary design pieces. Guests can also enjoy leafy courtyards, a rooftop terrace with cathedral views and a private spa – making it a particularly tranquil base from which to explore the city.
Korte Nieuwstraat 24

Eat / Historisch Centrum
Arte

A cornerstone of Antwerp's culinary scene since 1990, Arte is a lively, family-run restaurant serving classic Italian fare with a strong Sardinian influence. Signature dishes include truffle tortellini and delicate beef carpaccio – and be sure to save room for their irresistibly rich tiramisu for dessert. The dining room doubles as an open exhibition space for contemporary art, while outside a large terrace offers a relaxed setting for long lunches and hearty dinners.
Suikerrui 24

Sleep / Theaterbuurt
Botanic Sanctuary

Set within a restored 15th-century monastery complex beside Antwerp's botanical garden, this luxurious hotel began welcoming guests in 2022. Historic cloisters and chapels have been transformed into elegant rooms and suites, while tranquil courtyards and a luxurious spa make it an ideal spot to escape from the bustle of urban life. It's also become a renowned culinary hub, housing Michelin-starred restaurants Fine Fleur and Hertog Jan.
Leopoldstraat 26

Shop / Historisch Centrum
Ganterie Boon

Given that the symbol of Antwerp is a hand, it's not surprising that the city is also home to one of Europe's finest glove shops. Opened in 1884, much of its original charm has remained perfectly preserved; the original glove box designs, countertops, cabinets, and chairs all remain intact. Drop in to choose from a wide array of styles and colours made from a multitude of materials with many pairs still crafted in Europe using traditional techniques.
Lombardenvest 2



Pilar's 23 rooms are decked out in a stylish mix of antique and designer furniture.



Timber esculators lead down to the Saint-Annatunnel, which runs under the Scheldt river.

Visit / Wijnegem
Kanaal

Set within a former 19th-century distillery and malt house on the Albert Canal, Kanaal is a vast cultural and residential complex dedicated to art and architecture. Developed by Belgian designer and art dealer Axel Vervoordt, the site brings together galleries, artist studios, exhibition spaces and apartments. Monumental industrial buildings have been sensitively restored, creating an atmospheric setting for contemporary art installations and cultural events.
Stokerijstraat 19

Shop / Historisch Centrum
Philip's Biscuits

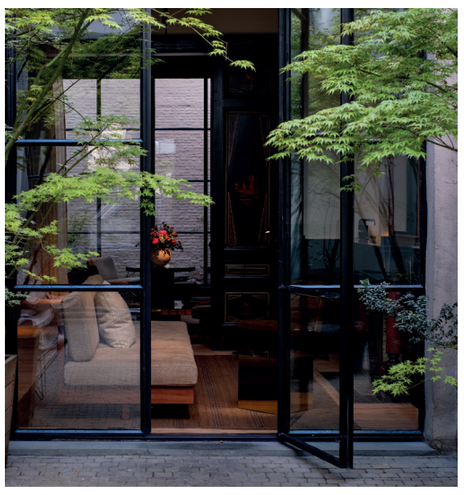
Its position as a wealthy trading port with abundant access to sugar and spices meant Antwerp has a long tradition as a centre for the production of baked goods, earning it the nickname "Koekenstad" ("cake city"). Among the best-known traditional confections are Antwerpse Handjes, biscuits modelled after the city's hand-shaped symbol. Some of the finest to be found anywhere in the city are to be found at Philip's Biscuits, who produced a particularly buttery variety topped with flaked almonds.
Korte Gasthuisstraat 39

Shop / Historisch Centrum
Pierre Marcolini

On Antwerp's elegant Schrijnwerkersstraat, Pierre Marcolini brings the renowned Belgian chocolatier's bean-to-bar philosophy to the city's luxury shopping district. The sleek boutique showcases meticulously crafted pralines, ganaches and seasonal creations, all made using carefully sourced cocoa beans that are roasted and refined in-house. Beautifully packaged and artfully displayed, the chocolates balance technical precision with inventive flavours, making the shop a pilgrimage site for chocolate lovers.
Schrijnwerkersstraat 25



The classic interiors of Ganterie Boon.



Hotel Julien's interiors by Peter Ivens and Bea Mombaers.

Hand Over Heart

How a Roman soldier and a severed hand provided inspiration for Ressence's logo.

According to Flemish folklore, Antwerp's name dates back to Roman times, when the city was just a small settlement on the banks of the Scheldt River. The waterway was one of the region's main arteries and provided a vital means of bringing goods in and out of the area.

But one day, as legend has it, a ferocious giant named Druon Antigoon set up a fort on its banks and began charging passing boatmen an exorbitant toll for travelling up and down the river. Those who refused his demands were met with a gruesome fate; he would cut off one of their hands and toss it into the water.

His reign of terror continued until one day, a Roman soldier named Silvius Brabo visited the region and wanted to cross the river. A nephew of Julius Caesar, Brabo was revered as a brave and fearless warrior and challenged Antigoon to a fight when he demanded his toll. Details of the battle vary across tellings, but one interpretation has Brabo using his military training and cunning to lay a trap for the giant, outmanoeuvring Antigoon's brute strength before slaying him and severing his hand, throwing it into the river. It was this heroic act that is believed to have given the city its name; in Flemish, "hand werpen" translates to "hand throwing."

For this reason, hands have become an important symbol for the city. Two hands feature on either side of a fortified castle on Antwerp's coat of arms. In the city's central square, the Grote Markt, a majestic fountain designed by master sculptor Jef Lambeaux features a bronze statue of Brabo triumphantly brandishing Antigoon's severed hand.

Ressence also honours this folkloric tradition by adopting a hand as its logo - a minimalist representation of the hand of Antwerp, and a tribute to its hometown and the spirit of bold ingenuity that the Brabo legend represents. But the significance of the hand also goes well beyond Ressence's connection to the city.

Across cultures, the hand is one of the most enduring symbols of human creativity and cooperation. It is the most important tool of craftsmen who shape raw materials into objects of beauty and function. In this sense, the hand is closely tied to the tradition of watchmaking itself, an art that has always relied on precision, patience and the skill of human hands.

The hand can also represent openness and welcoming. An outstretched hand suggests trust, friendship and the willingness to connect with others – values that resonate strongly with Ressence's philosophy of design.

Copenhagen-born DJ and producer Kölsch takes us through some of the music closest to his heart.

Spinning Discs – Kölsch's Curated Tunes

Rune Reilly Kölsch is one of dance music's most singular figures. Known simply under his DJ moniker Kölsch, he's revered for his distinctive sound that mixes house and techno with lush, melodic structures. Self-reflection is also a key part of his music-making process, crafting records that are imbued with deeply introspective themes, like his relationship to time. "I'm obsessed with time; tempo, waveforms, track length. It's more than a metric, it's my language."

Since launching his DJ career in the late nineties, the Danish music-maker has become a mainstay on the international club circuit; mixing live at legendary venues from Pacha to Berghain, and even once performing a set at the top of the Eiffel Tower.

Growing up in Copenhagen's anarchic, artist-filled commune Christiana, his creativity was nurtured from a young age and he was encouraged to see the world through a more experimental lens.

It was while visiting Antwerp for a performance that he met Ressence founder Benoît Mintiens. "As an avid watch collector and unapologetic nerd, I had been fascinated with Ressence for a long time," says Kölsch, who initially reached out to see if he could borrow a piece to wear during his set. What followed was a meaningful meeting of minds that's since transformed into a longstanding friendship. "Minutes turned into hours. In that conversation, we discovered how much we had in common; from a shared fascination with sci-fi films to retro-futurism. There was an immediate alignment in how we see creativity and the world around us."

Here, he puts together a selection of some of his most meaningful tracks exploring his relationship to time, memory and mastery.



Kölsch has performed his melodic take on house and techno in many of the world's most famous clubs.

01
Max Richter – Spring 1 – 2012
As spring yet again creeps up on us, life awakens, emotions resurge and music becomes meaningful. The only issue with this piece is that it is too short.

02
Bon Iver – Re: Stacks
This song is a realignment for me; it is about loss, and love "down in a frozen ground", it's musical therapy in its finest form.

03
Kölsch – Hands of mine
Hands of time, hands that create and demolish. Hands that look like those of my father, who is no longer with us.

04
D'Angelo – The Root
This song is from maybe the best album ever created. Another legend we sadly lost recently. It's music I wish I could create, but my hands lack the talent.

05
Digital Justice – Theme From 'It's All Gone Pearshaped'
This is a piece that means so much to me; it's accompanied me through everything and become integral, like a birthmark. A heartache that never heals.

06
When Saints Go Machine – Chainsaw
Sometimes someone says it like you wish you could.

07
Pryda – Vega
Some people would say music doesn't heal. I would have to disagree.

08
Anthony and the Johnsons – Hope There's Someone
Time will run out for all of us. With this song we are a little more prepared.

09
David Bowie – Subterraneans
A big part of being an artist is leaving questions behind. The more I dive into Bowie's work, the more there is to discover.

10
Kölsch and Troels Abrahamsen – All that Matters (Symphony of Unity strings reimagined)
This is probably the best I've ever been.

Thank you to Kölsch for sharing this list. To learn more about Kölsch visit kolschofficial.com or search for him on Spotify.



Kölsch in his signature fedora.

Ressence Spotify

Scan the QR code and tune into our playlists on Spotify, curated by the Ressence team and special guests.

Save The Date

This year's list of go-to events that celebrate creativity in all its forms; from contemporary design to fine art, and naturally, watchmaking.

14–21 April
Watches and Wonders, Geneva, Switzerland

Ressence has participated in Watches and Wonders since its debut in 2022, and the event has grown to become a key fixture in the company's calendar; a moment to meet press, retailers and devoted horology enthusiasts. The fair gathers many of the most respected maisons from Switzerland and beyond, but it's not only heritage brands on display. The Carré des Horlogers is dedicated to independent artisan-creators and it's here that Ressence will unveil an important new model this year; the sleek T11 is the brand's first watch powered by a fully in-house designed movement. The Palexpo exhibition centre hosts 65 brands across a series of vast, interconnected halls."

21–26 April
Milan Design Week / Fuorisalone Salone del Mobile, Italy

Every April, industry insiders from around the world descend on Milan for a week of design showcases and stylish celebrations. The Salone del Mobile furniture fair takes over the vast Rho Fiera exhibition centre, while all manner of events and pop-up exhibitions spill out across the city as part of Fuorisalone. This year marks Ressence's first appearance at the event, where it will be featured as part of Designboom's In Residence programme. In the ME Il Duca hotel will be an installation of some of the company's most notable watches; the Marc Newson-designed TYPE 3, for example, as well as the new TYPE 9 IKE – a collaboration with Japanese lacquer artist Terumasa Ikeda.

14–20th May
NYC x Design, New York, USA

New York's annual design festival spans everything from architecture and interiors to fashion, graphics and technology. Held each spring across the city's five boroughs, the event brings together designers, brands, studios and cultural institutions for all manner of exhibitions, talks and installations.

2–6 June
London Watch Week, UK

Launched just last year, London Watch Week returns in 2026 as a platform for brands to launch new designs, showcase rare models, and engage directly with the British market. But unlike traditional trade shows, it has an appointment-based format that allows attendees to experience timepieces in a more intimate setting – with the majority of events taking place inside an elegant townhouse in the heart of Mayfair. The 2025 inaugural edition quickly earned praise from collectors and specialist press for its intimacy and curation.

10–12 June
3 Days of Design, Copenhagen, Denmark

Since launching in 2013, Copenhagen's 3 Days of Design has grown from a modest gathering of Scandinavian makers into one of the world's most influential design festivals. This year's theme, "Make This Moment Matter", sets a reflective tone - with visitors soaking up the early summer sunshine as they whizz on bikes between the city's designated Design Districts. This year, eight districts take part, spanning neighbourhoods from Nordhavn and Holmen to the historic Frederiksstaden. The event is emerging as a rival to Milan Design Week and held in summer, the weather typically casts Copenhagen in its most beautiful light.

18 – 21 June
Art Basel, Switzerland

Each June, the art world converges on Basel for the industry's most hotly-anticipated annual gathering. Founded in 1970, Art Basel has become the gold standard of international art fairs, bringing together leading galleries from across the globe. The 2025 edition featured 289 exhibiting galleries from 42 countries and attracted 88,000 visitors. Blue-chip masterpieces hang alongside cutting-edge contemporary works, while ambitious large-scale installations make up the fair's Unlimited sector.

16–22 June
June Art Fair, Basel, Switzerland

Ressence is proud to be a key sponsor of the June Art Fair. Organised to coincide with Art Basel, the event takes place in a concrete bunker that's been artfully transformed into a gallery by Pritzker Prize-winning architecture firm Herzog & de Meuron. Founded in 2019 as an alternative to the conventional art fair viewing experience, June has an open-plan format that features a tightly curated selection of boundary-pushing exhibitors between whom dialogue and collaboration is encouraged. We look forward to seeing you there.

July 27
Red Dot Design Awards, Berlin, Germany

Few accolades carry as much weight in the design world as the Red Dot. Founded in 1954, the annual competition has grown into one of the largest of its kind, with entries spanning everything from product and industrial design to brand and communication design. Ressence is a past recipient of one of these coveted prizes, winning the "Best of the Best" award in 2024 for the TYPE 3 BB2.

6 September
Antwerp Concours d'élégance, Belgium

Ressence is the official timekeeper of this year's Antwerp Concours d'Élégance – one of Europe's most stylish automotive gatherings. A one-day, open-air celebration of classic car design, the event takes place just outside the city in the manicured grounds of 17th century Belvédère castle. Here, visitors will find a carefully curated selection of rare and vintage models from across the continent, which will be assessed by judges according to provenance, condition and design pedigree.

22–27 September
Bangkok Watch Week, Thailand

A fast-rising fixture on the Asian horological calendar, Bangkok Watch Week brings together leading Swiss maisons, independent watchmakers and regional retailers for a citywide celebration of fine timepieces. Hosted across luxury malls, five-star hotels and dedicated exhibition spaces, the event blends formal showcases with collector meet-ups and brand-led presentations. The event has grown rapidly since its launch, cementing Bangkok's status as a regional hub for serious horological collecting."

2–5 October
Milano Watch Week, Italy

This exclusive event, which was launched in 2024, has been designed not only to showcase the finest timepieces, but also serve as a window into Italian craftsmanship. Events take place in an array of luxurious locations in central Milan, centring in the historic Palazzo Mezzanotte – the seat of the Italian stock exchange on Piazza Affari. Here, guests can enjoy all manner of new launches, live talks and guided watchmaking classes.

3–6 October
Fine Art Asia, Hong Kong

Asia's leading fine art fair springs up in the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Center each year, bringing together international galleries and collectors across a wide spectrum of categories; from Asian antiquities and Chinese ceramics to modern and contemporary art, jewellery and design. Since launching in 2006, it has grown to become a key meeting point for collectors, curators and dealers across the global art market.

9–12 October
Tokyo Watch Week, Japan

Launched only last year, Tokyo Watch Week marked the first event of its kind in Japan dedicated exclusively to independent watchmakers. Conceived not only to celebrate homegrown talent but to invite leading independents from around the world to unveil new work, the event moves beyond the traditional trade show format to offer collectors a rare opportunity to engage directly with makers.

3–8 November
Dubai Design Week, UAE

Dubai Design Week is the Middle East's largest design festival. Launched in 2015, it has since matured into one of the most significant stops of the industry calendar – taking over the Dubai Design District with installations and exhibitions from designers, architects and creative studios from across the region and beyond. Last year also saw the launch of the d3 Awards, which were created to champion emerging talent from across the Middle East and North Africa.

7 November
GPHG Awards, Geneva, Switzerland

Often described as the "Oscars of watchmaking," Grand Prix d'Horlogerie de Genève (GPHG) is widely regarded as the watch industry's highest honour. Each year, an international academy and jury assess hundreds of submissions across multiple categories. This all culminates in a prestigious live ceremony where prizes are awarded. The GPHG recognises both major brands and independent makers. Past events have seen Ressence awarded for innovation; in 2013 the TYPE 3 was honoured with the esteemed Révélation Horlogère prize.

12–15 November
IAMWATCH, Singapore (by The Hour Glass)

Staged in the elegant ballroom of Singapore's Edition Hotel, I Am Watch gathers a diverse and illustrious assembly of watchmakers, collectors and horology enthusiasts. The event is organised by The Hour Glass; a Singapore-based luxury retail group which operates an extensive network of boutiques across the Asia-Pacific region and also serves as an official retailer for numerous prestigious watch brands (including Ressence).

19–22 November
Design Mumbai, India

Held at the Jio World Garden, Design Mumbai is India's only truly international contemporary design fair, created for architects and designers. Conceived as a bridge between local creativity and global markets, it provides a platform for Indian brands seeking international recognition while introducing global companies to India's rapidly expanding design economy. Across four days, more than 100 Indian and international brands present furniture, lighting, materials and interiors.

26–29 November
Seoul Design Festival, South Korea

Held each year at the COEX Convention & Exhibition Center, Seoul Design Festival showcases contemporary product design, furniture, lifestyle goods and visual culture. Known for spotlighting young Korean talent alongside international exhibitors, it offers a platform for experimentation and collaboration. Through curated exhibitions, installations and talks, the event highlights Seoul's growing status as a global design capital and a hub for innovative, forward-thinking design.

4–6 December
Art Basel Miami and Design Miami, USA

For a heady mix of culture and sun-soaked glamour, Miami is hard to beat. And in December, the city really comes alive with the arrival of Art Basel and Design Miami. Inside the convention centre, leading galleries unveil works by the world's leading artists alongside boundary-pushing contemporary pieces, while across the city Design Miami presents cutting-edge furniture, lighting and collectible design.



Ressence Recommends

Founder Benoît Mintiens takes us through everything that makes him tick, from vintage cars to eighties synth pop.

Human creativity distinguishes us from other living beings and fuels innovation. While some believe a higher power created us, humanity has shaped everything since, both for the better and for the worse. Looking back, these creations largely represent progress. We are driven to improve our lives and increase our chances of survival, guided by our genetic instinct. Animals act on similar instincts, as seen in the intricate construction of bird nests that help ensure the survival of their offspring.

Humans, however, create for broader reasons. What begins as functional often evolves into social and cultural significance. Products, cities, music, and food all follow patterns similar to evolutionary theory—they must adapt or risk becoming obsolete. Yet social signalling also plays a major role in ensuring the survival of our genes. That's where the power of marketing comes from. It explains why certain industries like watchmaking can survive outside Darwinism. As a product designer, I am driven by a restless desire to challenge convention. For this reason, I'm relentlessly challenging the status quo. Here are some creations I particularly appreciate that illustrate this long quest to adapt and progress.

Film:

Das Boot

Having been in submarines myself, it is hard to imagine how it must have been inside during combat operations. The film has many layers; it's a 'road' movie, it's a nightmare, but ultimately it's a film about the absurdity of warfare. It's fascinating to discover the inter-human dynamics in such an inhuman ecosystem. The hierarchy within the crew, the politics, and the tension between the different factions within the German army.

Tool:

Pencil

A pencil is the ultimate communication tool. Disarmingly simple, easy to use, cheap to produce, and very effective in its functional execution. It is the first precision tool a child learns to use in their life. Everyone understands a drawing, a pencil helps you to think, write down ideas and if no good, you erase it and start again. It's the most universal tool ever invented.

Song:

Fade To Grey By Visage

I was a teenager in the 1980s during the appearance of the synthesiser. My mother, who played 3 instruments, immersed me in music. The 'synth' offered a new type of sound, my sound. In our office, the speakers are the most expensive objects after our watches.

City:

Tokyo

There are not many places in the world where you experience something I metaphorically explain by comparing Windows and IOS. They both work, but they do it completely differently. Tokyo could have been a city on another planet at a similar point in its evolution to ours. It's fascinating to discover another operating system and realise that there are many parallel realities.

Travel destination:

Sinai Desert

I enjoy the feeling of being completely alone; it feels a bit unreal. It's certainly a special thing to experience when you live in a part of the world where human presence is everywhere. For me, the biggest luxury is to go somewhere with no human-generated noise, no smells, or light pollution. This is what peace feels like.

Car:

Alfa Romeo 8c 2900b

I'm a petrol-head and a fan of late 1930s designs. Car designs reflect the mindset of their time. Pre-war cars are honest and still very straightforward. The sound of the engine, the different smells, the vibrations, and the pre-plastic material mix all generate a real connection with the car. Driving them triggers all your senses.

Design Object:

Emeco 1006 Navy Chair

Product designers have a special relationship with chairs. The 1006 is like the archetype of the chair. Made out of 100% aluminium, non-magnetic, fireproof, and durable, it was designed for the US Navy to withstand torpedo blasts. It has an estimated lifecycle of 150 years!

Brand:

Concorde

Concorde is a tool designed to bend distance and time. It represents the positive outlook of progress in the 1960s. Its design philosophy is pure "Form follows Function". Concorde is the physical embodiment of a positive future vision transformed into a lifestyle – this is known as the "jet set".

Special Thanks

Founded by Benoît Mintiens in 2010, Antwerp-based Ressence is setting a new paradigm for watchmaking – rethinking what a mechanical watch would be if it were a 21st century invention. Known for its patented Ressence Orbital Convex System (ROCS), which replaces hands with rotating discs, Ressence crafts watches that are intuitive, legible, and deeply human. Award-winning innovations like oil-filled dials and the absence of a crown serve a clear purpose: ergonomics, clarity, and experience.

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In Too Deep

Writer Josh Sims on why the human brain is spectacularly ill-equipped to grasp deep time – and why that might be just as well.

A watch is deceptive. Sure, looking at one places us in the now – and not even that, but a construct of the now – but it barely places us in time. Even if you add a perpetual calendar, the scale is paltry: less than a century, little more than a lifetime. What a watch does is shield us from the true scale of time. Perhaps, for some, their ability to record ever more tiny increments of time is even a psychological defence against facing its true existential stupendousness.

Compress the history of the universe into a calendar year and it's not until early September that Earth is formed. It's December 30th when the dinosaurs go extinct. Us humans? We come along at 11.59 and 54 seconds on New Year's Eve. By February the next year, the sun will have boiled the oceans away and Earth will be uninhabitable. Yet we can barely take into account what happened just before our own births.

Our perception of time – 'deep time', as the writer John McPhee named the very, very long ago – is typically as off-kilter as it is ridiculously recent. The Tyrannosaurus Rex, for example, is closer in time to the iPhone than it is to the Stegosaurus. Cleopatra is closer in time to Taylor Swift than to Egypt's great pyramids. As McPhee described it, it can seem as though we're incapable of thinking in spans of more than five generations, two behind, two ahead. "Any number above a couple of thousand years – 50,000, 50 million – will with nearly equal effect awe the imagination to the point of paralysis," as McPhee would put it.

Even the time scales of religion – which the birth of palaeontology in the late 18th century did so much to undermine – don't come close to truth: the Judeo-Christian Biblical account of the Earth's creation amounts to just a few thousands of years (as the infamous Scopes Tennessee Monkey Trial of 1925 debated); the Hindu Yuga cycle writes of millions of years. But both are way off. Earth was created 4.5 billion years ago.

That word, billion, now used so casually in governmental budgets, economic forecasts, talk of Elon, Jeff and Mark. It sounds so small these days but its reality evidences the theory that we literally are not very good at comprehending any inhumanly big numbers. A million seconds? That's the same as 11.5 days. So how about a billion seconds? Many are surprised to hear that amounts to 31.7 years.

This incompetence in grasping deep time may be natural. All organisms exist in a sensory space they can relate to, a certain distance within which light, sound and other things they can perceive seem relevant to survival. Perhaps relatability in time is likewise limited. Others have proposed that we just have an innate aversion to thinking of deep time, seeing as we're the only species, as far as we know, that spends so much of its living worrying about dying.

And this incompetence may not be just natural, but sometimes disturbing. James Hutton, one of the founding fathers of palaeontology – and the man who first proved quite how deep time had been before humans came along – discovered that other scientists he showed his evidence to might recoil at it. One wrote of his sudden awareness of "how much further reason may go than imagination will venture to follow". It may be better if we don't think about this too much.

Likewise Charles Darwin was so attuned to how his theory of natural selection would turn upside down our understanding of humankind's place in the very grand, very long scheme of things that it's probable he delayed the publication of *On the Origin of Species*. It would be, as he put it, in the seminal work "like confessing to a murder".

He also felt the need to demonstrate the enormity of exactly what he was saying by way of a tool. He would unfurl a strip of paper 83 feet and four inches long (25.4m) in front of his audience and tell them that this represented one million years. Then he would fold back one-tenth of an inch of paper (2.5mm) and say that this tiny bit represented a century. And – you can always imagine him faltering as he spoke – his theory was referring to geological processes that took 300 lengths of his strip of paper.

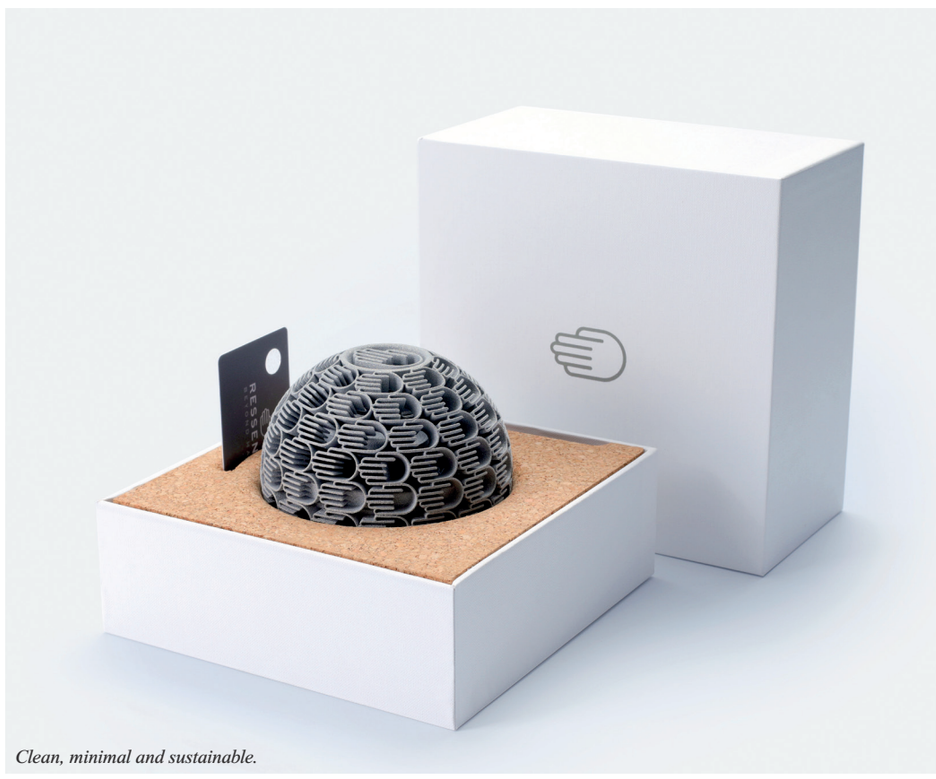
No wonder so many flee from those feelings of fearful smallness sparked by an encounter with the truly sublime. Certainly we struggle with deep scale as much as deep time. Let's do a Darwin-style demonstration. Spread your arms. One hand's fingertip is Earth, your other hand's middle fingertip is the Sun. How far away, on this scale, is the next nearest star? It's 247km away. While you're there, take the same span and now consider it to represent the entire existence of the Earth. Ask a friend to gently run a file over the nail of your middle finger. Congratulations, they have just entirely erased humanity from the planet's history.

There's both reassurance and terror in this little display. On the one hand, Earth has been around for quite a while, has been through five major mass extinction events, and will continue to be around for quite a while to come. Well, for another five billion years at least, at which point the Sun becomes a red giant and it's goodnight all. On the other hand, humanity can go as quickly as it came and, if it could, Earth would barely notice. All this ecological doom-mongering about us killing the planet? The planet will be just fine. As ever, what we're really talking about is ourselves.

If only we had a better sense of deep time, things could be so very much better. Unfortunately technology only reinforces a culture of constantly updated nowness that would have been incomprehensible to, say, a medieval craftsman – one who not only lived more in sync with the seasons, but would have been entirely comfortable with working on the building of a cathedral, the completion of which he knew he would never live to see. What politician is capable of acting today for the benefit of a distant tomorrow? What voter votes for it?

Rather, we feel more secure in the scope of our own lifetimes, maybe, at a push, that of our children's. But much more than that is a mere abstraction. Perhaps though, it's one with a lesson at its heart. You really are not here for very long. Carpe diem is a cliché, but one thing a watch can remind us of is time passing. Yours may not amount to a hill of beans in this crazy old universe, but enjoy it while you have it.

Josh Sims is a UK-based writer contributing to the likes of The Times, Wallpaper and Esquire. He's the author of Retro Watches and books on Rolex and Patek Philippe.



Clean, minimal and sustainable.

Out of the Box Thinking

Ressence is rethinking the function of product packaging and sparking a shift in perceptions of what it really means to be high-end.

In many industries, progress is defined by reduction. For a thinner phone or lighter aircraft, that reduction is not a compromise but rather a sign of refinement.

A truly modern approach to watchmaking embraces this innovation – a method of painstakingly designing what is essential. This Ressence calls 'simplication'. When less is doing more, the process of telling time is immediately more intuitive, and handling a watch is immediately more functional; it should be tangible at every touch, from the typographic detail on a watchface to the purpose and practicality of a product's packaging.

Traditional packaging in the watch industry has largely, however, resisted this shift. An old logic, in which weight and heft are used to signal 'high end', is holding progress back. Heavy, oversized wooden, leather, and lacquered boxes are designed for the moment of unboxing, not beyond it. An impression is formed, but function is forgotten.

In watchmaking, this matters – it stands in contrast to the watches themselves, which are designed to last for decades. Parts and materials are chosen for longevity, shaping components expected to run without pause, day after day and night after night. A watch can be repaired, dismantled, and even recycled at the end of life. The product is made to endure; the packaging, too often, is not.

Ressence owners see the world differently, and Ressence packaging was born with that founding principle in mind. From the outset, the box was not considered an accessory – or a throwaway – but an essential partner to the product itself. The result is radically simple: a compact, thirteen-centimetre bowl, reduced to only what is necessary to protect the watch.

Composed of repurposed cork and versatile polyamide, the form is fully recyclable. Rather than heavy boxes shipped around the world, Ressence packaging is lightweight, with all components made within Europe.

Puzzled?

Meet the artist behind this maze design imbued with a hidden meaning

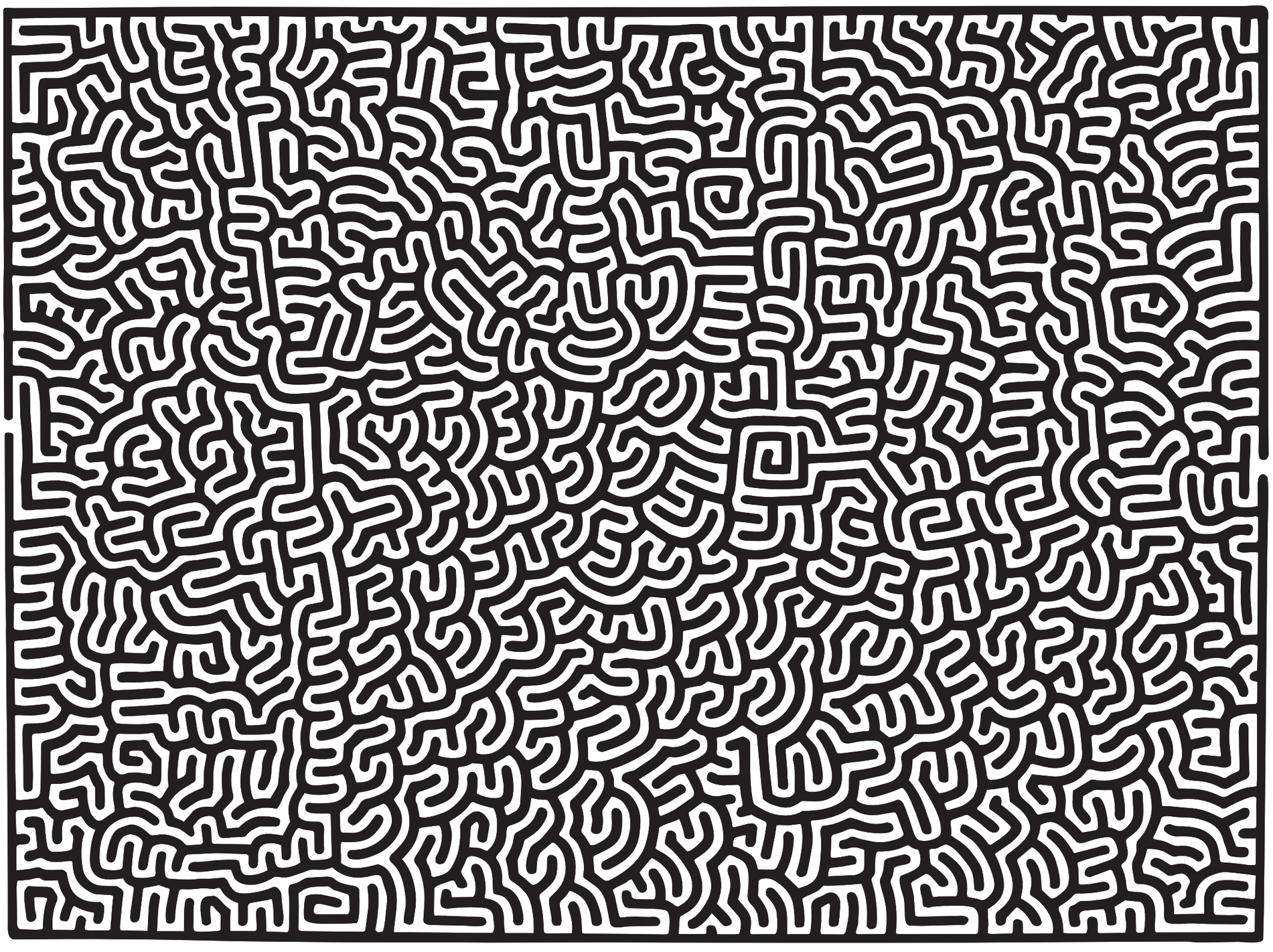
Jules Wittock first began drawing mazes as a child. Both his mother and grandmother were artists, so the young Wittock was encouraged to explore his own creative side – but while other children his age were drawing cartoons, animals and superheroes, the young Wittock would sit for hours creating elaborate puzzles by hand. "There was no logic to them," he says. "They were just like little games. And as I grew up I began making them more complex."

But it wasn't until he was in his mid-twenties that Wittock gained the confidence to begin exhibiting his artistic endeavours. "For a long time, it felt too personal to show people," he notes. "I never really saw my drawings as art." Friends and colleagues who had long admired his notebooks eventually persuaded him otherwise.

It was a leap he never regretted taking. His labyrinthine creations, with curving oil-painted pathways winding their way across linen canvases, quickly garnered attention in his native Belgium and beyond. What drew attention was not just the hypnotic complexity of his work, but the hidden layers within; each maze features a single entrance and exit, and the path between them spells specific words. Some works also feature secret patterns only visible using a UV light, while others have interactive elements like spinning panels powered by wind-up mechanisms. "I like hiding things in my paintings, so there are alternate ways of interacting with them," he says. "I like the idea that each person could read a piece differently. There's always a mystery within the maze."

Over time, the scale of his work has continued to grow – decorating entire rooms with vast murals and creating gargantuan canvases that can take up to a year to complete. "I enjoy the process of creating them. It's very meditative, I find it almost therapeutic." Today he's still based in his hometown of Brussels, but regularly travels the world attending prestigious art fairs where he holds live painting performances as well as exhibiting his work. As well as beginning to experiment with sculptural pieces in bronze and aluminium, he's also completed various public installations, most notably a ceiling mural in Brussels' Palace of Justice law courts. Each new commission, he says, pushes him into territory he hasn't previously mapped.

His bold approach to experimentation aligns him perfectly with Ressence's core ethos. "In each part of my work, there is a challenge. I did huge pieces, because people told me it was impossible to do something that big. And for Ressence, it's the same," says Wittock. "It's very innovative, and it's Belgian – like me. It matches all my values."



Renaissance of the Essential

On a Ressence watch time is shown via the patented ROCS – Ressence Orbital Convex System – where sub-dials orbit the main dial in fluid motion.

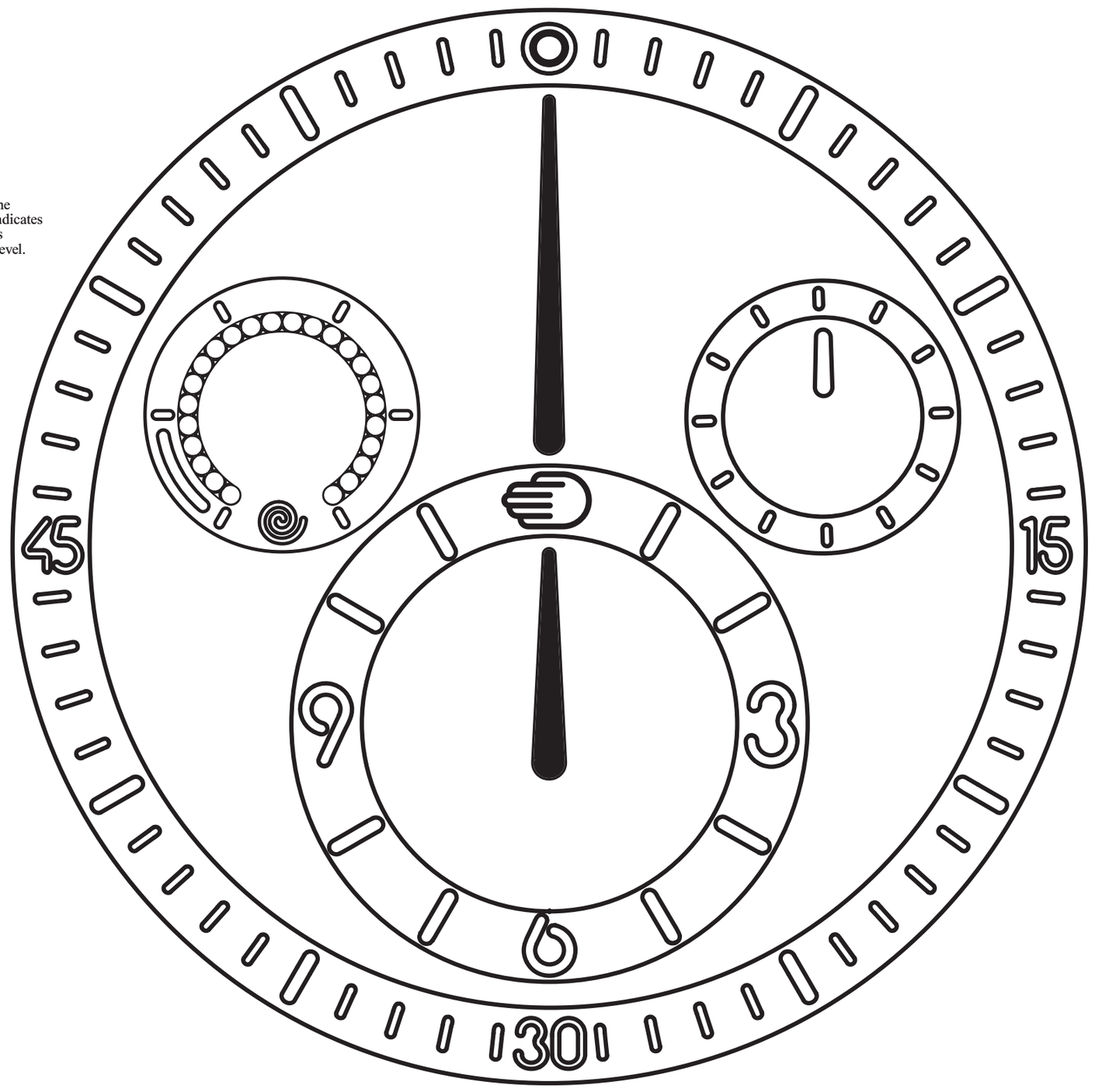
Stepping into watchmaking in 2010, industrial designer Benoît Mintiens asked a simple question: what does it look like to read the time, most intuitively? His answer was not to add more complications, but rather to strip them away, removing the crown and rethinking how watch hands should work - revolutionising two physical elements watchmaking had taken for granted for centuries.

At the core of every Ressence model, the patented ROCS (Ressence Orbital Convex System) is less a refinement of traditional watch mechanics and more a step-change in understanding how time can itself be displayed. Instead of traditional hands sweeping over a static dial, the ROCS employs a series of rotating discs that orbit one another on the same plane. Each disc represents a different measure of time. On the TYPE 11, hours, minutes, seconds, and power reserve – yet they move together in a single, coordinated system. The result is a dial that's constantly shifting, where the entire surface turns to display the time.

"When we design our watches, we first design the relationship with the watch," Mintiens explains. A standard watch stacks hands above a printed dial, introducing layers that the eye has to interpret. The ROCS removes those layers entirely: the indications are printed directly on the rotating discs themselves, so the whole dial becomes the mechanism. The form of a Ressence follows the curve of the sapphire crystal and removes visual layers to mirror how humans actually read information.

01
Minutes
The big hand on the main dial indicates the minutes.

04
Power Reserve
The dial with the ceramic balls indicates the movement's power reserve level.



02
Seconds
The small dial indicates the seconds (60 seconds).

03
Hours
The hand on the dial with the hand logo indicates the hours. The Ressence hand logo marks twelve o'clock.

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