

*Embargo: September 19, 2024, 7:00 PM (UTC+01:00)*



## **MIH GAIA WATCH**

### **PRESS RELEASE**



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*Press Release*

## **The International Watchmaking Museum presents the MIH Gaïa Series III and the MIH Gaïa 50th Anniversary Edition**

***La Chaux-de-Fonds, September 19, 2024*** – To celebrate the 50th anniversary of its building, the International Watchmaking Museum is unveiling two new creations: the MIH Gaïa Series III watch and a special 50th anniversary edition featuring 50 unique dials, hand-guilloch  by Georges Brodbeck, winner of the 2023 Gaïa Prize.

Inspired by the previous two series but with a renewed design by XJC, these models were developed within the MIH restoration workshop and crafted with the help of renowned artisans and companies historically established in the La Chaux-de-Fonds region.

Set to go on sale during the 30th Gaïa Prize ceremony on 19.09.2024 and delivered by the end of the year, the MIH Gaïa Series III watches and the 50th anniversary edition pay tribute, each in their own way, to watchmaking expertise and the museum’s legacy. The sale of these creations is intended to fund preservation and promotion efforts for the collections housed by the MIH.

### **The Art of Reference**

The MIH Gaïa watch embodies the essence and spirit of the place where it was conceived. Original in both form and display, the piece draws inspiration from the museum’s architecture: a brutalist building whose underground structure surprises with its interplay of empty spaces, concrete, and light. This game of hide-and-seek inspired the design of the watch case, a blend of intertwining curves and straight lines.



The dials of these new editions are inspired by various architectural elements, creating unique and innovative visuals. The straight lines of the MIH Gaïa III series dial evoke the angles of the structure and the visible intersections of the formwork. The chosen blue color also harks back to the first MIH watch model and the museum's institutional colors. The curved lines of the guilloch  dial by Georges Brodbeck reflect the play of curves, rhythm, and light orchestrated by the architecture. The silver, left in its pure form, echoes the raw materiality of the exposed concrete.

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### MIH Gaïa III Series

This limited and numbered series of 100 pieces features a blue finish, the institutional color of the International Watchmaking Museum (MIH). The dials are colorized by POSITIVE COATING, a company specializing in surface treatments. By combining PVD (Physical Vapor Deposition) and ALD (Atomic Layer Deposition) technologies, they achieve a stable and uniform coating.

The patterns on these celestial blue dials are inspired by the visible formwork marks on the concrete walls of the MIH. These parallel and perpendicular lines also evoke the brutalism of the structure through its sharp right angles.

Each watch is associated with an original, numbered, and signed serigraphy by Xavier Perrenoud.



### 50th Anniversary Edition

A limited and numbered series of 50 pieces has been produced to celebrate the museum's jubilee. The dial design is the result of Xavier Perrenoud's exploration of the symbolism behind the Ensō, a complex concept in Zen Buddhism represented by a circle that embodies the idea of emptiness through form.



The interplay of solid and empty

spaces created by the random stops in the guilloché lines, crafted by Georges Brodbeck, invites a philosophical reflection on the balance of elements. Inspired by this spiritual concept and the curves and light play of the museum's architecture, the 50th Anniversary Edition dial is made of silver. Each guilloché line, arranged in a graceful arc, is the result of a confident and precise movement, yet its placement is a free interpretation of the artisan hand', making every piece unique. These timeless curved forms echo the elegant, ovoid silhouettes of the museum's characteristic showcases.



Each watch is associated with an original, numbered, and signed serigraphy by Xavier Perrenoud.

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## Partners

The first MIH Gaïa watch was created in 2019 through the close collaboration of artisans and companies from La Chaux-de-Fonds, all experts in their field and renowned worldwide for the quality of their work. Winiger Horloger and the Timeforge office were responsible for its design and technical plans.

For the 2024 edition, XJC reimagined and redesigned the watch; Sellita brought it to life with its movement; Singer produced its dial. Positive Coating added color to the MIH Gaïa III series using ALD technology, and Georges Brodbeck engraved the 50 silver dials of the special anniversary edition; Stila provided a custom-made case; Brasport adorned it with an apple leather strap; Cornu & Cie crafted the clasp, and the Dubois Laboratory contributed to its reliability by conducting a series of tests. In partnership with MIH and the artisans from its antique watch restoration workshop, each of these experts worked tirelessly to create a watch that is aesthetic, high-performing, and truly unique.

## How to acquire an MIH Gaïa III watch and the special 50th anniversary series?

Available online starting from September 19 at [www.montremih.ch](http://www.montremih.ch). The selling price for this watch, made in La Chaux-de-Fonds, is set at CHF 3,400 (excluding tax) for the MIH Gaïa III and CHF 5,050 (excluding tax) for the special 50th anniversary series. The MIH Gaïa watch also meets the demand of museum visitors, who wish to acquire a locally produced piece during their visit to this UNESCO World Heritage site. For this reason, it will also be available for purchase at the MIH shop. Moreover, it is expected to be an ideal investment for collectors looking to support the MIH.



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## **About the Gaïa Prize**

Established in tribute to one of the museum's first patrons, Maurice Ditisheim, who was the Chairman of the Board of the Bureau de Contrôle des Ouvrages en Métaux Précieux, the Gaïa Prize has been awarded since 1993 by the International Watchmaking Museum and, by extension, the City of La Chaux-de-Fonds. This prestigious award is presented to individuals from the industry, artisans, historians, researchers, and scientists. It symbolizes the recognition by peers of the spiritual heirs of the watchmaking culture that permeates the museum's collections.

## **MIH, a monumental showcase**

The current building of the International Watchmaking Museum in La Chaux-de-Fonds is the result of a collaborative effort between Zurich architect Pierre Zoelly and local architect George-J. Haefeli. Completed in 1974, this semi-underground structure was designed to securely house the watchmaking heritage while blending seamlessly with the museum park. A combination of concrete and brick, the architecture merges brutalism and territecture to offer visitors a unique troglodyte experience.

Internationally recognized for its architectural quality, the MIH received the Béton Prize in 1977, the Cembureau Prize in 1978, and was named European Museum of the Year in 1978.

## **Images**

[https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1w3ossedK4CXWUfdZC5Ys7rW8D36psWIG?usp=drive\\_link](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1w3ossedK4CXWUfdZC5Ys7rW8D36psWIG?usp=drive_link)

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## *A Timepiece to Celebrate Horological Heritage*

### **Why Purchase a MIH Gaïa Watch?**

Because you love it! But also because it embodies the values of the museum and the Gaïa Prize. This fine piece of horology, crafted in La Chaux-de-Fonds, reflects a dual ambition: to raise public awareness about the preservation of horological heritage by funding various projects related to the restoration, documentation, and enhancement of the museum's collection, while also showcasing regional watchmaking expertise.

The funds raised through the sale of the MIH Gaïa Series III and the Special 50th Anniversary Edition will support the comprehensive redesign of the permanent exhibition spaces. This significant project aims to renew the museum's scenography, offering visitors an exceptional experience in the presence of horological masterpieces. By acquiring one of these new editions, you are contributing to the preservation and conservation of a tangible and intangible heritage of international significance, while also helping to promote watchmaking craftsmanship.

### **The MIH Gaïa Watches**

#### **The First Two Series**

Unveiled to the public in 2019, the MIH Gaïa watch was presented during the 25th Gaïa Prize ceremony. This first series of 200 pieces featured a blue dial with a unique design inspired by the spirit and architectural codes of the MIH. The second series, released in 2021, boasted a black dial. Proceeds from the sales of Series I and II enabled the restoration of two iconic works: "The Grand Magician," an automaton created by the Maillardet family around 1830, and François Ducommun's Tellurium, dating from the early 19th century.

#### **A Local Inspiration**

The design of the MIH Gaïa watch draws inspiration from the museum's concrete structure and architecture. Manufactured in the hometown of Le Corbusier, the timepiece shares many similarities with the Brutalist movement. The sharp, raw, and minimalist reliefs of the building are reflected in the watch's lugs and dial, combining rectangular and circular elements. The watch also plays with the architectural concept of voids and solids: the time, displayed on a rotating disc, appears through an aperture at the top of the dial, while the minutes are indicated by an opening in a domed disc—a nod to the Gaïa trophy—also in rotation. On the back of the case, the oscillating weight reveals a message, a tribute to the museum's underground structure, which gradually unveils its many treasures throughout the visit. The MIH logo is subtly engraved on the crown, and the museum's geographical coordinates are inscribed on the buckle of the strap. Unusual yet understated, gender-neutral and timeless, the MIH Gaïa watch embodies the synergy between industry and craftsmanship.

## A Project with a Long-Term Vision

Nearly 20 years after the creation of its first watch in 2005, and on the occasion of its building's 50th anniversary, the MIH sought to celebrate this milestone by highlighting the artisanal and innovative expertise of the watchmaking sector. Following in the footsteps of the previous two series, the MIH Gaïa Series III and the 50th Anniversary Edition maintain the same aesthetic—both classic and original, high-end in finish yet accessible in price. With the success of the first two models, the MIH renewed its partnerships with the region's top watchmakers and artisans. The museum benefited from their support in creating a functional prototype, overseen by its in-house restoration workshop, which assembled, tested, and conducted technical verification of all components, while also collaborating with two new partners to offer remarkable dials.

This network of expertise reflects a historic production system of Swiss watchmaking, which the MIH aims to bring to public attention.

## Two Exceptional Watches for a Landmark Project

The year 2024 marks the 50th anniversary of the MIH's residence in its current building. Carved into the side of the Parc des Musées in La Chaux-de-Fonds, this raw concrete structure offers a unique perspective on the works it houses. After half a century of operation and two million visitors, it is time for the museum to undergo a transformation. Extensive renovations and upgrades within the Parc des Musées and the building will allow the museum and its collections to be rediscovered in a new light.

This intervention is more than just maintenance of the building designed by Pierre Zoelly and Georges-Jacques Haefeli; it aims to undertake a museographic redesign of the permanent collections. The original display cases, instantly recognizable and emblematic of the MIH, will be enhanced by a new scenography—harmonious and respectful of preventive conservation standards, it will illuminate the masterpieces of horological heritage.

The museum route will be structured around three themes: an introduction to the history of time measurement, a synthesis of mechanical watchmaking, and a multidisciplinary exhibition addressing issues related to time mastery. This new visitor circuit, tailored to different audiences, is above all a cultural project designed to accompany societal evolution in a forward-looking approach.



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## Technical Specifications

### REFERENCE

MIH Gaïa, Series III: Limited to 100 pieces

MIH Gaïa, 50th Anniversary Series: Limited to 50 pieces

### CASE (Manufactured by Stila SA)

Material: 316L Stainless Steel

Diameter: 39 mm

Thickness: 9.74 mm

Water Resistance: 3 ATM

Sapphire Crystal

Case Back Engraving: MIH Gaïa III / 50e MIH,,  
Swiss Made, La Chaux-de-Fonds, and individual  
serial number

Crown Engraving: MIH



### DISPLAY (Manufactured by Jean Singer & Cie)

MIH Gaïa, Series III Dial

- Main Dial: Blue, laser-engraved, ALD-coated by POSITIVE COATING
- Hour Disc: Rhodium-plated
- Central Minute Disc: ALD-coated by POSITIVE COATING

MIH Gaïa, 50th Anniversary Series Dial

- Main Dial: Silver, guilloché by Georges Brodbeck, with ALD anti-tarnish treatment
- Hour Disc: Rhodium-plated
- Central Minute Disc: Rhodium-plated

### MOVEMENT (Manufactured by Sellita Watch Co SA)

Caliber: SW400-1, 13¼", Ø 31.00 mm

Type: Mechanical Movement with Automatic  
Winding

Oscillating Weight Engraving: International

Museum of Horology

Power Reserve: 38 hours

Frequency: 28,800 vph

Jewels: 26 rubies



### STRAP (Manufactured by Brasport S.A.)

Material: Apple vegan leather

### CLASP (Manufactured by Cornu & Cie SA)

Type: Pin buckle

Engraving: MIH and the museum's geographical coordinates (47°06'03" N / 06°49'48" E)

### PRICE

CHF 3,400 (excl. taxes ) for MIH Gaïa, Series III

CHF 5,050 (excl. taxes ) for MIH Gaïa, 50th Anniversary Series

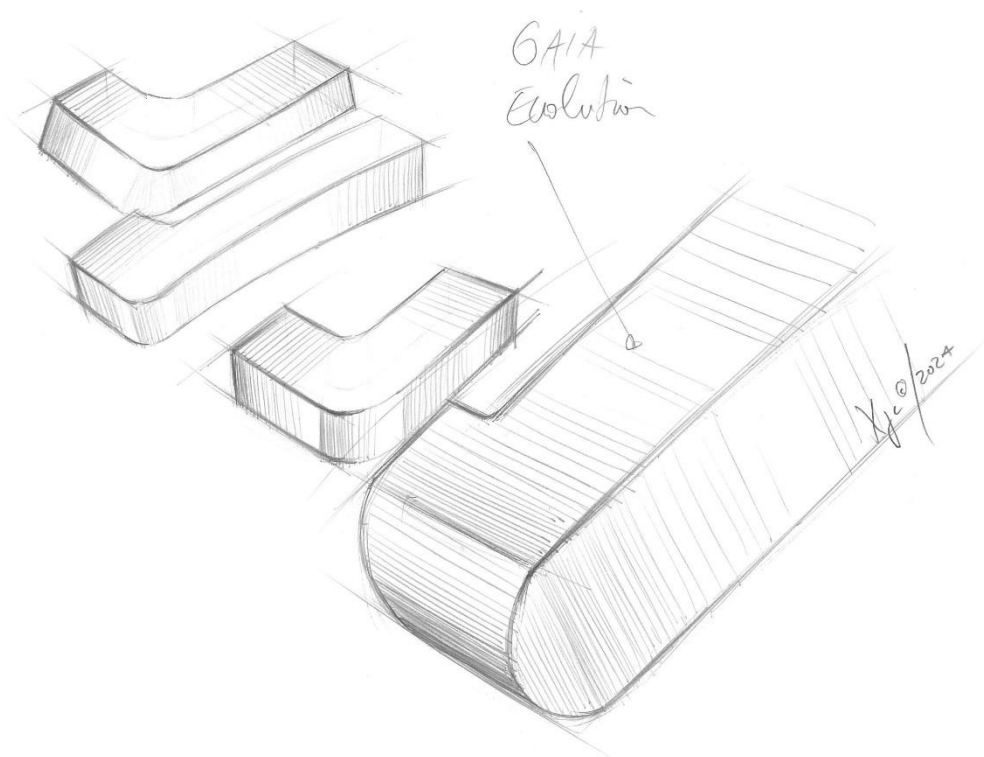
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## *A Museum, a City, Nine Partners*

Regional experts and artisans from La Chaux-de-Fonds have come together to support the MIH in its unique project to safeguard and promote horological heritage. These craftsmen, all based in La Chaux-de-Fonds, were enthusiastic and proud to contribute their technical expertise to various aspects of the watch, resulting in a piece of remarkable quality.

### **XJC – Design**

Xavier Perrenoud, the initiator of the previous two editions of the MIH Gaïa watch, brings his innovative vision once again to renew contemporary aesthetics and horological craftsmanship.

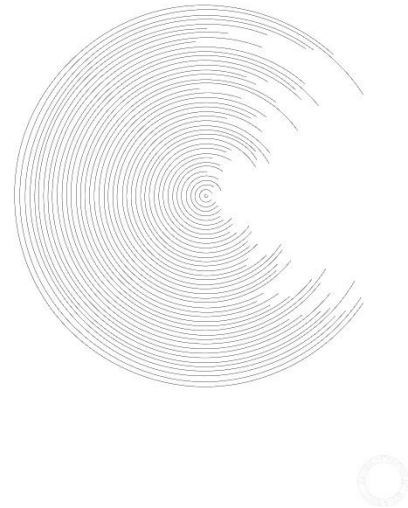


### **MIH Gaïa - Series III**

The celestial blue dial patterns are inspired by the visible formwork marks on the MIH's concrete walls. These parallel and perpendicular lines also evoke the Brutalism of the structure in its right angles.

## 50th Anniversary Edition

Inspired by the "Ensō," a circle in Japanese Zen Buddhism that draws attention to the void it defines, this symbol, reinterpreted in contemporary art by Kengo Kita in his work "Reconnecting," emphasizes the duality and unity of a form that represents emptiness. In Kita's work, circles become lines, and lines become circles, much like the dial crafted by Georges Brodbeck. The interplay of solids and voids created by the random stops of lines invites philosophical reflection on the balance of elements. The choice of silver, like concrete in contemporary architecture, allows for a subtle and elegant play of light through a refined aesthetic. The contrasting textures between the smooth dial surface and the raw guilloché patterns echo the different volumes and textures of the MIH building that visitors can appreciate during their visit. The curved forms counterbalance the interlocking circle and rectangle shapes of the dial, directly inspired by Brutalist architecture.



## Sellita – Movement and Assembly

Sellita has a long tradition in both the assembly and design of high-quality automatic movements. One of its Swiss-made mechanical movements, adapted to the MIH Gaïa watch, forms the heart of the timepiece.

*"The project is truly exciting due to the watch's refinement and beauty. The MIH Gaïa watch offers a unique vision of horology and aesthetics, perfectly aligned with the values of the MIH. The idea of an entirely La Chaux-de-Fonds-made watch is wonderful and further strengthens the strong ties between the city and its museum. This geographic connection gives the project great coherence while highlighting the unique expertise of our city."* - Miguel Garcia, Director

## Stila – Case

Stila contributed its expertise to the creation of the watch case, ensuring that the watch's housing is of exceptional quality. Collectors will find that the MIH Gaïa watch offers a level of craftsmanship as refined as that of prestigious watch brands.

## Jean Singer & Cie – Dial

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Jean Singer & Cie, a manufacturer known for producing dials for renowned watch brands, lent its extensive experience to the museum to create high-quality dials, notably taking on the challenge of crafting the characteristic domed central disc of the MIH Gaïa watch.

*"This project reminds us that in La Chaux-de-Fonds, we have the capability to create magnificent things with the exceptional craftsmanship of family-owned watchmaking subcontractors."* - Joris Engisch, Director

#### POSITIVE COATING – Series III Dial Coating

Founded in 2004 in the heart of the microtechnology industry, Positive Coating specializes in developing innovative surface treatment solutions. Since 2012, the company has combined PVD (Physical Vapor Deposition) and ALD (Atomic Layer Deposition) technologies to offer stable, homogeneous coatings while significantly expanding the range of available colors. These treatments, applicable to complex three-dimensional geometries, adorn the 100 numbered models of the MIH Gaïa Series III watch.

#### Georges Brodbeck – 50th Anniversary Edition Dial Guilloché

Georges Brodbeck, who began his career as a precision mechanic, entered the world of horology in 1973. Fascinated by the restoration of antique machines and guilloché work, he dedicated himself to this craft in the 1990s, eventually opening his own workshop in 2001. Far more than just a decorative technique, Brodbeck has played a crucial role in reviving an art that seemed forgotten since the 1950s. This master craftsman honored the MIH by lending his virtuosity to the creation of the MIH Gaïa 50th Anniversary Edition's guilloché patterns.



#### Brasport – Strap

Brasport, a specialist in calf leather watch straps and vegan alternatives, as well as small leather goods (cases, cardholders, cigar cases, etc.), has been innovating since its founding in 1946. The MIH found in this partnership an opportunity to pair the MIH Gaïa watch with responsible, ethical, and high-quality apple leather straps.

#### Cornu & Cie – Buckle

Cornu & Cie, a manufacturer specializing in metal watch bracelets, deployant clasps, and pin buckles, is known for its inventiveness—a value shared with the MIH in this endeavor.

#### Laboratoire Dubois – Reliability Testing

Laboratoire Dubois was called upon to ensure the precision and compliance of the watch with industry standards. The MIH Gaïa is meant not for museum displays, but for daily wear.

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Specializing in testing, analysis, and quality control in the watchmaking field since the 1970s, the lab's founder, Henri Dubois, was awarded the Gaïa Prize in 2014 in the "Entrepreneurship" category.

*"I appreciate the collaborative aspect of involving different local watchmaking actors; each one contributes their expertise to the project. Creating a watch requires the pooling of many specialized skills, and the horological capital possesses all these strengths." - Patrick Dubois, President*

## *The Gaïa Prize*

Creativity, innovation, reflection, originality—each year, the Gaïa Prize celebrates the vibrant world of horology. Established in 1993 by the International Museum of Horology, the Gaïa Prize honors individuals who have made significant contributions to the reputation of horology—whether in its history, technology, or industry. Unique in its kind, the Prize is distinguished by its selection process, recognizing the best among the best. The museum created this award to express its gratitude to the spiritual heirs of the horological culture that permeates both the museum's collections and the city itself.

The Gaïa Prize was founded in tribute to one of the museum's earliest patrons, Maurice Ditisheim, who served as the chairman of the Board of Directors for the Precious Metals Control Office. Over time, the Gaïa Prize has earned a prestigious reputation on the international horological stage, often referred to as the "Nobel Prize" of watchmaking.

Named after Gaia, the ancient Greek personification of the Earth, the Gaïa Prize features a distinctive design: a translucent acrylic globe pierced by a ray of light, symbolizing the enlightenment and creativity celebrated by the award.

## *MIH: A Multifaceted Institution in a Remarkable Building*

This year, the International Museum of Horology (MIH) celebrates the 50th anniversary of its establishment in its current building, but the origins of the Horology Museum date back over a century. On March 24, 1902, the authorities of La Chaux-de-Fonds signed the founding act of the museum, building upon collections assembled by the School of Horology since 1865. Throughout the 20th century, these collections grew significantly, leading to a shortage of display space. In the 1960s, Georges Henri Rivière, Director of the International Council of Museums (ICOM), emphasized the collection's importance and the need for a suitable space to exhibit it. An architectural competition was launched, and the "Gnomon" project by architects Georges-Jacques Haefeli and Pierre Zoelly was selected. Construction began in 1972, and the museum opened to the public in October 1974. The building's design earned the architects the Concrete Architecture Prize in 1977 and the Cembureau Prize in 1978.

The MIH explores various approaches to understanding time through diverse exhibits. This sanctuary is spread across three levels—two of which are partially underground—while the

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third level is situated within a park. The institution is built on three pillars: a museum, a restoration workshop, and a research center.

The museum houses a vast collection, including large and medium-sized clocks, mechanical and electronic watches, marine and onboard chronometers, non-mechanical measuring instruments, automata, and paintings. With 10,000 conserved objects, of which about 3,000 are on display, it is the largest horological collection in the world. The restoration workshop plays a crucial role in studying and preserving these pieces, while the research center boasts a library with thousands of books, periodicals, sales catalogs, advertisements, and private archival collections.

### *Contacts, and Images*

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Images Available at:

[https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1w3ossedK4CXWUfdZC5Ys7rW8D36psWIG?usp=drive\\_link](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1w3ossedK4CXWUfdZC5Ys7rW8D36psWIG?usp=drive_link)

<https://montremih.ch/acces-presse/>

## *Partner Interviews*

XJC

Xavier Perrenoud, Designer

The MIH Gaïa watch is an unconventional project. What inspired you to take part in it?

"This participatory project embodies authenticity, transparency, and a logical connection to the values of the museum. Today, people like to know where the products they buy come from, and this project offers a glimpse into the modern design process of a timepiece."

What positive impacts does this "made in La Chaux-de-Fonds" project reflect for you?

"The MIH Gaïa watch highlights one of the cradles of Swiss watchmaking – La Chaux-de-Fonds and its expertise – while showcasing the talents based there."

Like the MIH Gaïa watch, the creation of a timepiece is always a collaborative effort. What are the evolutions, challenges, and benefits of this process?

"It's always interesting to see a project mature and evolve based on the input of participants. For the design of this watch, the goal was to work on an original, clean display inspired by the MIH. We thought in that direction, but changes were made right up to the last moment. Additionally, certain constraints drive creativity."

What are the areas of expertise and successes that define your company?

"We specialize in creative direction for luxury and craftsmanship brands, focusing on vision and the aesthetic coherence that stems from it. Product design is closely linked to this initial step. In a constant drive for innovation, XJC has developed an 'idea laboratory' that explores craftsmanship to create objects, reversing the traditional design process. This could be through techniques, materials, forms, etc."

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## **Laboratoire Dubois**

Patrick Dubois, President

The MIH Gaïa watch is an unconventional project. What inspired you to take part in it?

"The contagious enthusiasm of the project initiators at MIH made me want to involve the Lab in a role that matches our expertise: reliability."

What positive impacts does this "made in La Chaux-de-Fonds" project reflect for you?

"I appreciate the collaborative aspect involving various local watchmaking actors; each contributes in their area of expertise. Creating a watch brings together many specific skills, and our watchmaking metropolis has all these assets."

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Like the MIH Gaïa watch, the creation of a timepiece is always a collaborative effort. What are the evolutions, challenges, and benefits of this process?

"Pooling expertise is very stimulating and requires a lot of exchanges, which is enriching. Of course, it can sometimes complicate the process."

What are the areas of expertise and successes that define your company?

"Our company specializes in testing, analysis, and quality control, whether for movements, cases, or straps. We help ensure the quality and reliability of watches for our clients. We also work outside of watchmaking, particularly in our chemistry department, which has various activities."

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## Jean Singer & Cie

Joris Engisch, Director

The MIH Gaïa watch is an unconventional project. What inspired you to take part in it?

"We wanted to give the MIH a little helping hand by offering the services of our company; it's a way to celebrate this anniversary together."

What positive impacts does this "made in La Chaux-de-Fonds" project reflect for you?

"It shows that we tend to forget how, in La Chaux-de-Fonds, we can create beautiful things with the exceptional expertise of family-run watchmaking subcontractors."

Like the MIH Gaïa watch, the creation of a timepiece is always a collaborative effort. What are the evolutions, challenges, and benefits of this process?

"The only real challenge is understanding and interpreting our clients' desires both technically and aesthetically. Once everything is clear, nothing is impossible nowadays. The hardest part is making choices because the possibilities are endless."

What are the areas of expertise and successes that define your company?

"Over the years, we've built true expertise in new vapor-phase surface treatments, known as PVD. The colors developed by Singer, such as Singer Blue No5 and Singer Blue No11, are well-known. Competitors even use these names when placing orders. Additionally, our century-long know-how gives us credibility with our clients."



## Sellita

Miguel Garcia, Director

The MIH Gaïa watch is an unconventional project. What inspired you to take part in it?

"It's essential to support our museum. The MIH plays a central role in preserving and promoting the art of watchmaking. As a watchmaking company, we are particularly sensitive to preserving this heritage. Furthermore, the project itself is very exciting, with the refinement and beauty of the watch. The originality of the MIH Gaïa watch offers a unique vision of watchmaking and aesthetics, perfectly aligned with the MIH's values."

What positive impacts does this "made in La Chaux-de-Fonds" project reflect for you?

"The idea of a fully La Chaux-de-Fonds-based watch is beautiful and further strengthens the strong ties between La Chaux-de-Fonds and its museum. This geographical connection gives the project great coherence while showcasing the unique expertise of our city."

Like the MIH Gaïa watch, the creation of a timepiece is always a collaborative effort. What are the evolutions, challenges, and benefits of this process?

"The MIH opted for an original time display using discs. This choice may seem trivial at first, but it has significant technical implications and requires great care in developing the case and assembling the watch."

What are the areas of expertise and successes that define your company?

"Founded in 1950 in La Chaux-de-Fonds, Sellita has a long tradition in both assembling and designing high-quality mechanical movements. Over the years, Sellita has become a pillar of the Swiss watchmaking industry. It was therefore natural for Sellita to be the motorist of the MIH Gaïa watch."

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## Georges Brodbeck

Guillocheur

Georges Brodbeck, you are renowned for your mastery of guilloché, but also for your skills in restoring old machines. We're here in your workshop, and there are machines everywhere!

"The oldest machine I have dates back to 1770. Today, I challenge anyone to remake a machine like that with the means they had back then. No one today is smart enough to do it; they were built differently, and they took their time as well. There are no bad machines, only bad workers. Each has its own character and flaws, and you have to compensate. It's like people – if we were all perfect..."

The MIH Gaïa watch is an unconventional project. What inspired you to take part in it?

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"When the curators of the International Watchmaking Museum presented the idea to me, I was moved by the nobility of the project. I wanted to contribute in my own way to help the museum shine. Each model is unique and requires special attention. You give a part of yourself to the piece, and that's what I love about it."

Can you describe some guilloché patterns for us?

"The most classic is the 'flinqué.' It's a series of waves aligned one after the other, creating what we call bicycle spokes. Then there's the 'clou de Paris,' a criss-cross of two lines at 90 degrees to create small pyramids – that's very classic. From a flinqué base, if you shift the lines, you get 'flinqué flammé,' 'flinqué torsadé,' or 'flinqué spiral.'"

And what about the decoration of the MIH watch?

"The decoration of the MIH Gaïa watch is a series of lines on a specific sector, with random stops and different spaces between the lines. Each piece will be completely unique; no two will be alike."

What challenges did you face during its creation?

"For the MIH watch, there's a particular attention required. I need to control the spacing, starts, and stops, so each line needs special care. You have to maintain a constant speed while moving the burin through the material, and be able to remove it without stopping. If you stop in the material, the tip of the burin breaks, and it leaves a mark."

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## POSITIVE COATING

Ophélie Steinmann, Client Relations and Sales

The MIH Gaïa watch is an unconventional project. What inspired you to take part in it?

"As members of the MIH Friends for several years, POSITIVE COATING was immediately drawn to the concept of the MIH Gaïa watch. Joining this project for our 20th anniversary creates a link between the history and future of watchmaking, between craftsmanship and new technologies."

What positive impacts does this "made in La Chaux-de-Fonds" project reflect for you?

"Through this project, POSITIVE COATING actively contributes to local cultural activities and the international recognition of the MIH. This collaboration celebrates the importance of watchmaking and microtechnology in our region. The MIH Gaïa project allows us to share our passion with a wider audience, inspire the next generation of watchmakers, and strengthen our commitment to excellence. We are honored to be part of this initiative and look forward to presenting our contribution."

Like the MIH Gaïa watch, the creation of a timepiece is always a collaborative effort. What are the evolutions, challenges, and benefits of this process?

*Embargo: September 19, 2024, 7:00 PM (UTC+01:00)*

"Watchmakers must constantly innovate while respecting the traditional techniques and aesthetics of Haute Horlogerie. Thanks to collaboration among experts, watch design continuously evolves, integrating innovations without compromising craftsmanship. New technologies offer possibilities in design, durability, aesthetics, and performance. POSITIVE COATING leverages these advances, blending technologies and drawing inspiration from craftsmanship and watchmaking heritage to meet contemporary expectations."

What are the areas of expertise and successes that define your company?

"POSITIVE COATING specializes in surface treatments and customizations using cutting-edge PVD (Physical Vapor Deposition) technology. These treatments improve performance and aesthetic customization options for watches, offering unique colors and finishes that are both durable and aesthetically pleasing. Our innovative techniques cater to the needs of the most demanding customers."