



LOUIS MOINET
1806

INVENTOR OF THE CHRONOGRAPH



LOUIS MOINET

1806

THE LOUIS MOINET STORY

We are glad to introduce you to the unique world of Louis Moinet,
one of the greatest watchmakers of all time.

Thank you for sharing Louis Moinet's values with us.

This personal copy belongs to

N° / 1806



Let me tell you a story...

"Destiny has given me the privilege of rediscovering the treasures of Louis Moinet and sharing them with the world.

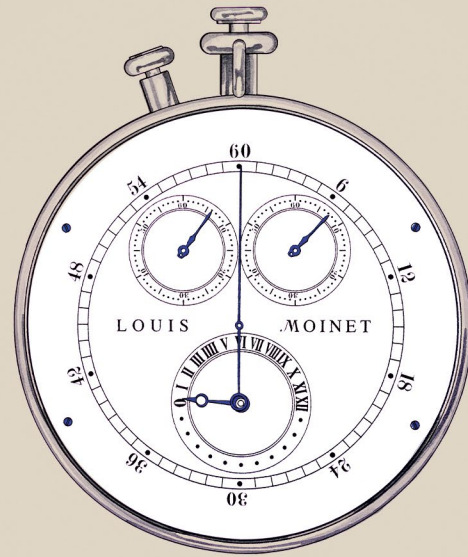
Thanks to our passion, our independent watchmaking firm has taken up a noble challenge – elevating this once-famous name to the watchmaking pantheon.

Our watches are brimming with emotion. If you listen closely, you'll hear Louis Moinet's heart beating in every one of them."

Jean-Marie Schaller

Owner & Creative Director

Louis Moinet

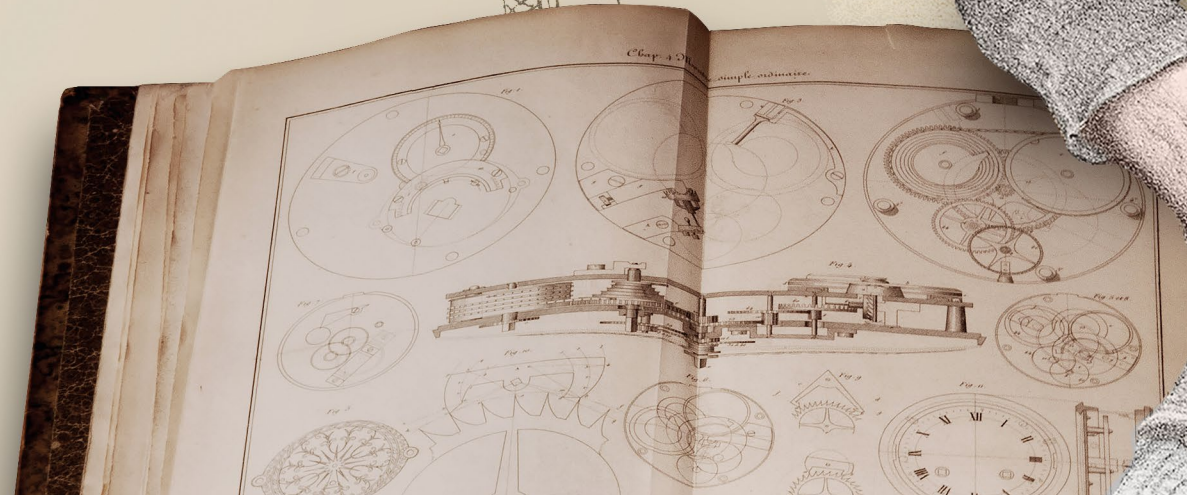
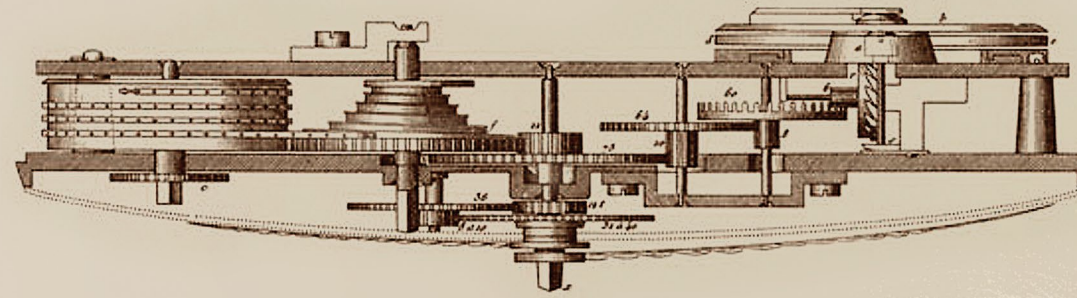


For his 1816 invention, the Guinness World Records™ organisation declared Louis Moinet the creator of the world's "First Chronograph".

*L'essentiel est de ne pas s'écarter du vrai**

**It is essential not to depart from the genuine*

Louis Moinet



Arts

Professor of fine arts



Louis Moinet was born in Bourges in 1768. A prodigiously talented child, he regularly took first place in academic competitions.

He soon developed a passion for watchmaking and art, studying at the knee of a master watchmaker and taking private drawing lessons from an Italian painter.



Master of Art

1788

By the age of twenty, Louis Moinet was fixated on Italy, the land of fine art. He lived for five years in Rome, studying architecture, sculpture, and painting. He became acquainted with members of the Académie de France, which exposed him to some of the finest artists of the era.

He then moved to Florence. There, he learned the art of cameo under the great master Pikler and continued to refine his skills as a painter and mechanical artist, working in an atelier provided by Count Manfredini, Minister of the Grand Duke of Tuscany.

Academy of Fine Arts

1795

Upon returning to Paris, Louis Moinet was appointed Professor of the Académie des Beaux-Arts, in the Louvre.

He became a member of several scholarly and artistic societies, cooperating with eminent artists, such as the astronomer Lalande, the bronzier Thomire, and Robert-Houdin, the skilled automaton-maker, a man regarded as the “innovator of the magical arts”.

Haute Horlogerie

1800

A reference in Haute Horlogerie

In parallel, he pursued his theoretical and practical study of horology. He renewed contact with his former teacher, but it was not long before the student became the master.

From 1800, Louis Moinet dedicated his life and soul to watchmaking, spending long periods in Switzerland and meeting many famous watchmakers in the process, including Jacques-Frédéric Houriet.

Moinet was described by his peers as a “gifted artist”, an “eminent scholar”, and “a specialist in transcendent horology”.

President of the Société Chronométrique

Louis Moinet was appointed *President of the Société Chronométrique de Paris* (Chronometry Society of Paris), whose members included some of the greatest talents of the era, and whose avowed purpose was “the development and encouragement of watchmaking, one of the finest sciences of the human mind.”

Within this setting, he cultivated ties with his fellow members including Abraham-Louis Breguet, Louis Berthoud, Antide Janvier, Louis-Frédéric Perrelet, Joseph Winnerl, as well as Benjamin Vulliamy, watchmaker to King George III of Britain and Ireland.



Work with Breguet

1815 – 1823

Moinet worked closely with the great Abraham-Louis Breguet for many years. The two men shared a passion for horology, and gradually Moinet became not only a close friend and confidant but a serious advisor as well.



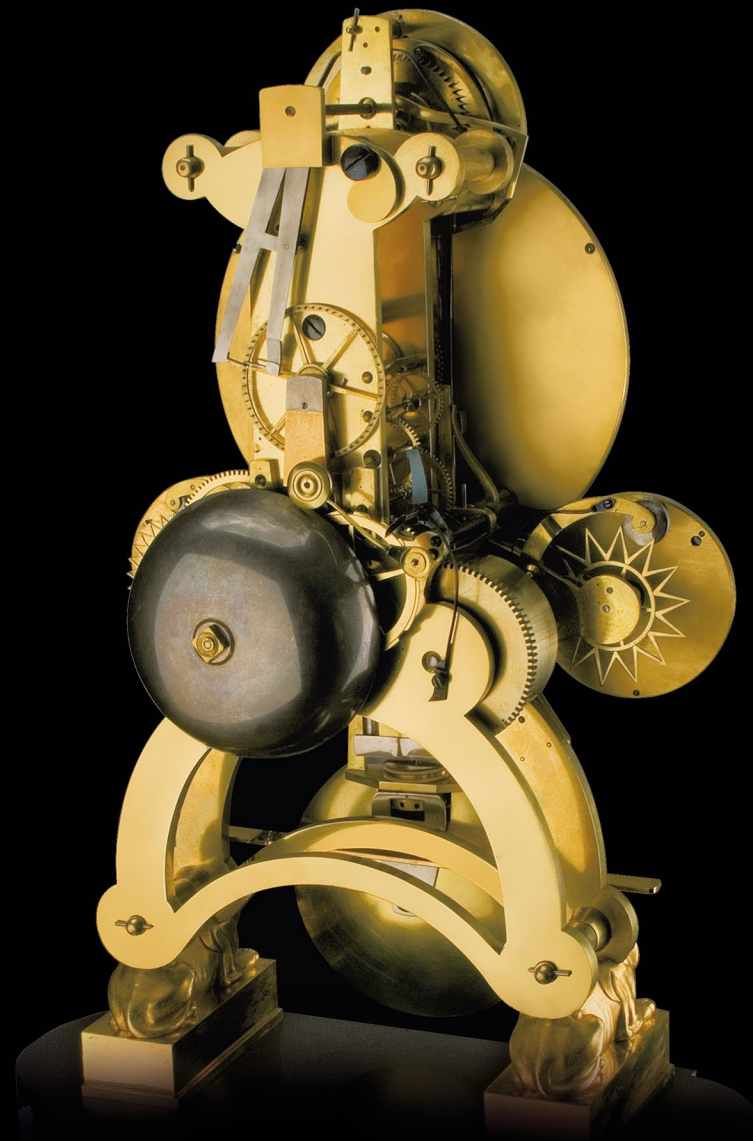


Vanguard creativity

The work of Louis Moinet includes alarm watches, regulators, and astronomical watches. As the inventor of unprecedented concepts, he devised some truly astonishing mechanisms.

Pocket watch calibres with unique architectures, a redesigned balance cock, a more efficient winding mechanism, and an entirely new mainspring producing a more stable operating rate for timepieces made by his hand were just some of the innovations born of his genius.

He was so fond of this mainspring, in fact, that he described it rather poetically, as turning a “half-ripe cherry red” colour when fired in the kiln.



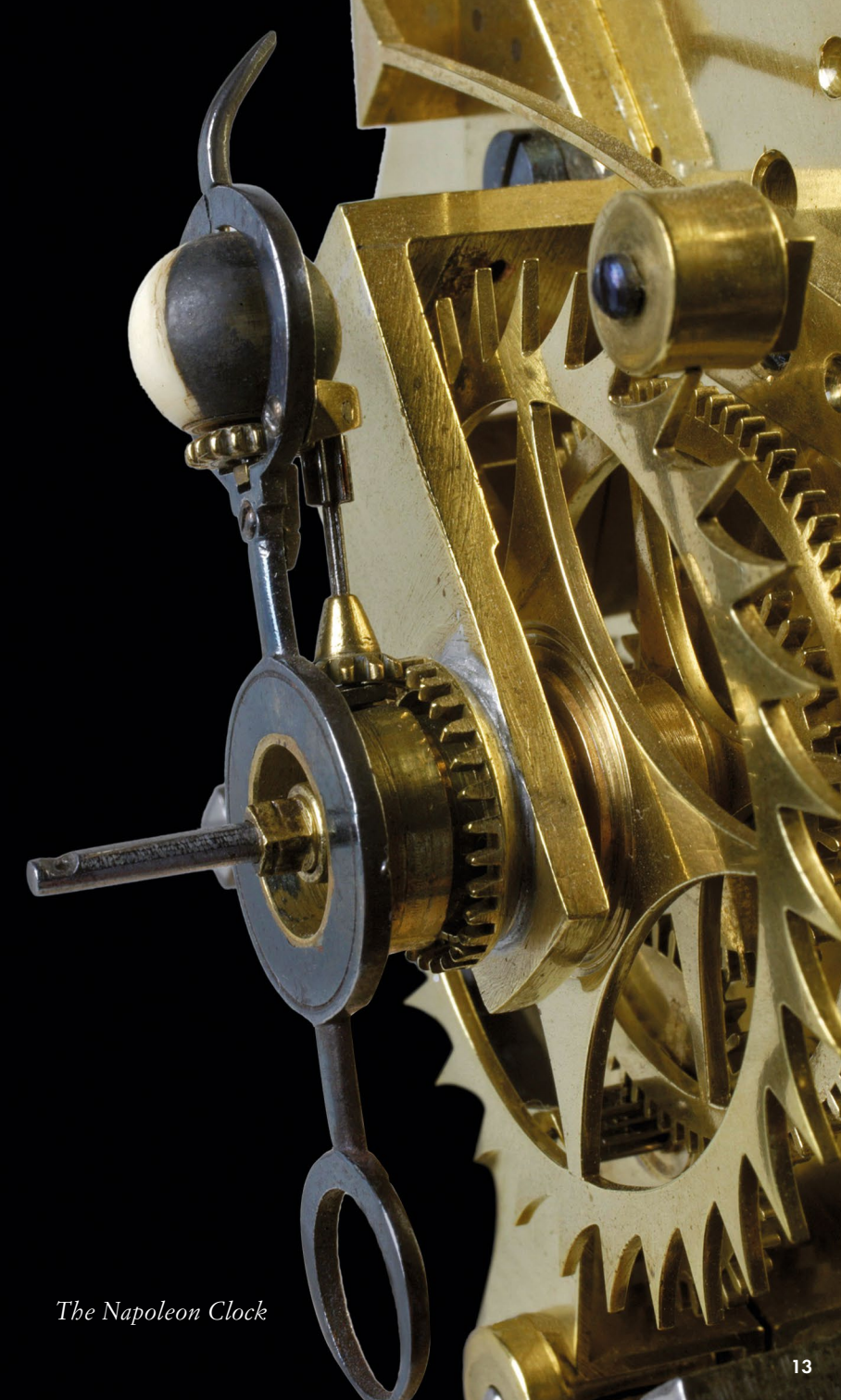
Maker of precision instruments

Moinet pursued perfection in his craft and dedicated years to the design of a revolutionary balance spring stud system. This allowed the regulating organ to be paused without needing to be dismantled.

Louis Moinet watchmaking horizons extended to maritime, astronomical, and civilian horology, and he took his responsibilities seriously.

In an effort to improve the potentially life-saving accuracy of his marine chronometers, he slotted, bevelled, and hand-finished each wheel of the gear train. Such fastidiousness was the mark of the man, a scientist, and artist, and one with a full-fledged commitment to society.

A lasting testament to his efforts can be seen in the outstanding originality of the “Napoleon Clock’s” mechanism. It displays the moon phases inside the day hand by means of a tiny ivory ball. It is, to this day, as artful, elegant, and unexpected a solution as one might hope to find.



The Napoleon Clock

Inventor of the chronograph

1816



The recent discovery of a hitherto unknown timepiece rewrote watch history. It turned out to be the first ever chronograph, although its maker, Louis Moinet, called it a *compteur de tierces* (thirds timer).

Thanks to evidence presented by both the hallmarks on the case and the private correspondence of Louis Moinet, we know that the watch was completed in 1816, one year after the project began.

Louis Moinet thus became the official holder of the title “First Chronograph” awarded by the Guinness World Records™ organisation.





High-frequency pioneer

The chronograph's balance beats at 216,000 vibrations per hour, meaning at the then unimaginable frequency of 30Hz. To put that into perspective, the usual balance frequency in a modern wristwatch is 28,800vph or 4Hz.

Louis Moinet is thus the father of high-frequency time measurement. Remarkably, it was not until exactly one century later that a watch that surpassed his record was made.



Most accurate time device of its time

In the nineteenth century, watchmakers sought to increase the precision with which they could measure time by increasing the frequency of their watches. By 1820 the generally accepted limit was time measurement to one tenth of a second.

The *compteur de tierces* (thirds timer) was thus by far the most precise instrument of its period, measuring time six times more accurately than the norm.

Moinet's division of time into sixtieths of a second is another historical achievement that places him among the great contributors to modern watchmaking.



Reset function

The stop, start, and reset functions for the central hand are controlled by two buttons, which qualifies it as a chronograph in the modern sense, although the term was coined much later. The reset function was revolutionary for the time.

Until recently, it had been thought that the reset function dated from Adolphe Nicole's patent of 1862. However, Louis Moinet had in fact invented the reset function half a century earlier for his *compteur de tierces*, completed in 1816.



Setting his sights on the stars

Moinet originally made the timer as an astronomical transit instrument, to track the movement of heavenly bodies from land.

“I came to Paris in 1815 with the sole purpose of devising and making a *compteur de tierces*” he wrote in a letter in 1823. “The difficult and seldom attempted realisation of this instrument featuring a new construction has fulfilled my purpose most satisfactorily.”

Why did Moinet need such high frequency?

He was timing the passage of stars, planets, and even planetary moons. A frequency of 216,000vph produced 60 vibrations a second, thus dividing the second into sixtieths.

He made the timer initially to set the precise distance between the crosshairs in his telescope, as he describes in his *Traité d'Horlogerie* (1848): “This invention came to me during my observations in the following circumstances. I had acquired a small mobile quadrant by the famous Borda (maker of the repeating circle). This fine instrument was balanced on rubies, and its maker supposed that an ingenious system of counterweights would preserve it via its own inertia from the motion of the ship, thereby providing observations at sea almost as exact as those obtained on land. But the project was not successful.”



“Having acquired the instrument for another purpose, I added –for terrestrial observations– an azimuth circle with a graduated Vernier scale by the late Fortin, two intersecting planes, a polished mobile axis, and a three-footed stand with levelling screws and a scale, etc. Nevertheless, the scope’s narrow field of vision put the reticule lines very close together, and it was to remedy this inconvenience of failing to see a line that I devised the *compteur de tierces*, which worked very well by giving me a precise distance between the reticule lines.”

Moinet’s timer had to function for at least twenty-four hours at an energy-hungry frequency to time successive transits of a star. To minimise energy consumption, his escapement ran on oiled rubies. He reported that it had worked very well for a prolonged period.

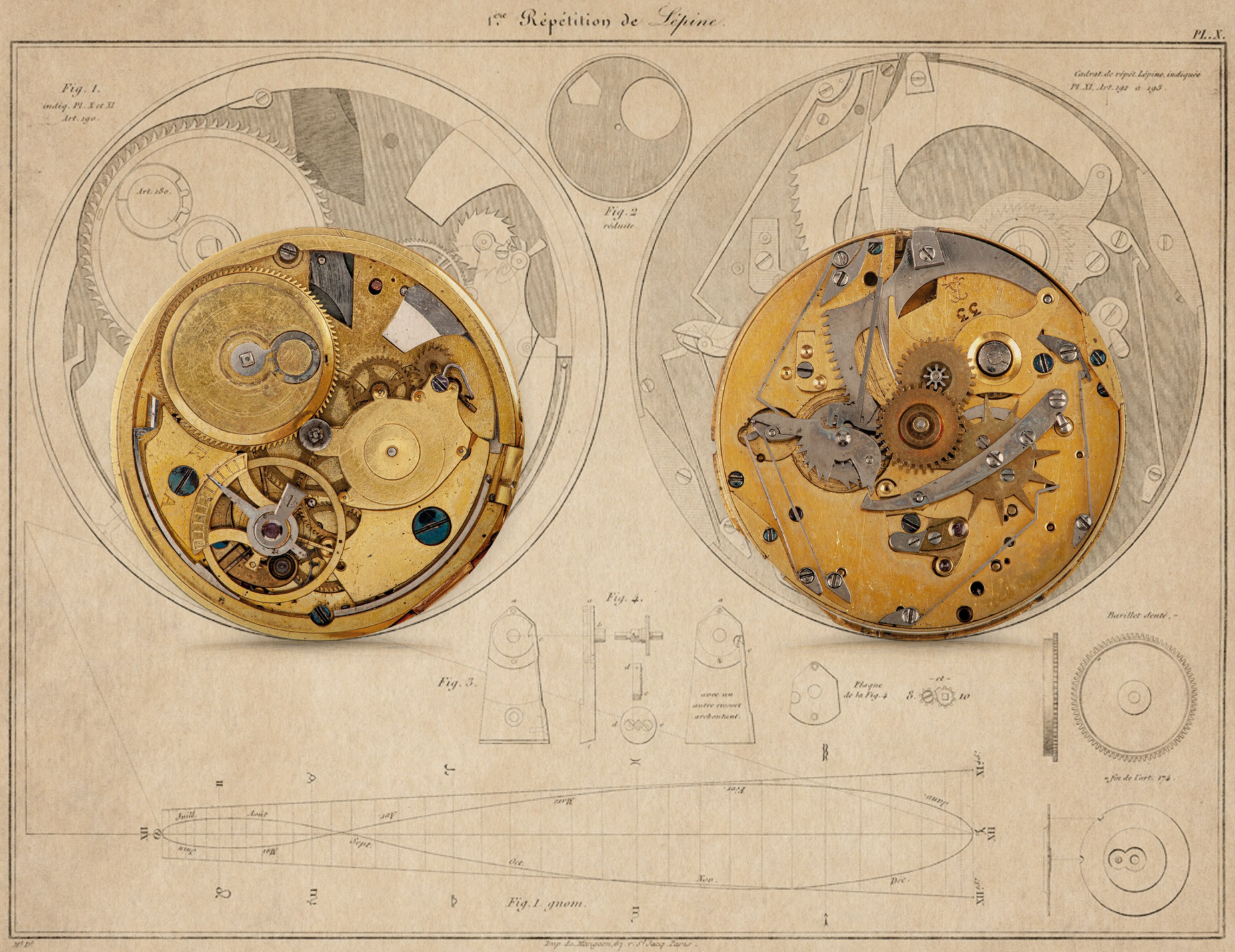
Traité d'Horlogerie

The famous *Traité d'Horlogerie* (Watchmaking Treatise) was published in 1848 and reprinted in 1856 and 1875. It is widely reputed to be the finest book on horology of the century.

It comprises detailed descriptions of the finest watchmaking techniques and was valued by the great watchmakers of Moinet's era such as Frodsham, Perrelet, Saunier, and Winnerl, in addition to several other scholars and connoisseurs such as HRH Prince Alexander of Orange.



He devoted twenty years of his life to writing this two-volume treatise, which remains highly sought-after to this day.



Personalities



Napoleon 1806

There are some extraordinary stories behind Louis Moinet's clocks, usually crafted in cooperation with the famous bronzier Thomire.

Napoleon's clock was created in 1806 to commemorate the Emperor's coronation. It is equipped with an automaton that crowns Napoleon every hour on the hour.



*National Museum van Speelklok
Pierement, Utrecht.*

King of Naples

1810



An exceptional clock of astonishing intricacy crafted for Marshal Joachim Murat, King of Naples.

The four different dials combine a full calendar indicating the hours, minutes, seconds, day, date, month and moon phase. The movement is entirely visible from the back.

Ateliers Louis Moinet Collection.



Thomas Jefferson

1810



Thomas Jefferson, third American President, signatory of the Declaration of Independence and also United States Ambassador in Paris, became acquainted with Louis Moinet. He shared his three criteria with Moinet for the creation of a work of art: beauty, durability, and utility.

Louis Moinet clock almost identical to the one owned by Thomas Jefferson. Thomas Jefferson's clock is exhibited at the Monticello Museum, Virginia.



James Monroe

1817



James Monroe was the fifth President of the USA. In 1814, during the presidency of James Madison, the White House was burned down by British forces. By 1817, architect James Hoban had succeeded in rebuilding this historic seat of power, which he furnished with this clock, sourced in Paris the same year. Monroe took up residence in the White House around that time and served until 1825.

The famous “Minerva” clock by Moinet and Thomire remains one of the few surviving original artifacts from that time. It still stands (and ticks) in the White House to this day.

White House, Washington DC.



Emperor of Russia

1817



Alexander I, Emperor of Russia, and his clock representing Mars, the Roman god of war.

Notice how the base is decorated in the same way as Monroe’s White House clock depicting Minerva, goddess of war.

Catherine Palace, Saint-Petersburg.



King George IV
of the United Kingdom
Ca. 1825



The clock that once belonged to this great patron of the arts, trend-setter, and musician, is exquisitely elegant.

Its slender design bears the hallmarks of the Regency period, with its return to a stricter classicism.

Royal Collection, London.



King of Hanover
1807



Ernest Augustus I, who would become King of Hanover in 1837 following the death of his father, George III, owned an impressively sized (73cm high) Louis Moinet clock resembling a neoclassical urn with a dancing hours motif, which he obtained in 1807 while still Prince of the United Kingdom.

Courtesy of David Roche Foundation, Australia.



Queen of France

1838



Maria Amalia of Bourbon Sicily, Queen of France, read the time on a playful, engraved, neo-renaissance clock with a matte gilded finishing.

The original is of a different design and is kept in the Château de Versailles, France.



Princess Borghese and Duchess of Guastalla

Ca. 1810



Pauline Bonaparte, Princess Borghese and Duchess of Guastalla, enjoyed her clock depicting Minerva enthroned on her palanquin.

British Embassy in Paris.



Ermitage Museum

Oath to Cupid by Louis Moinet (1807).



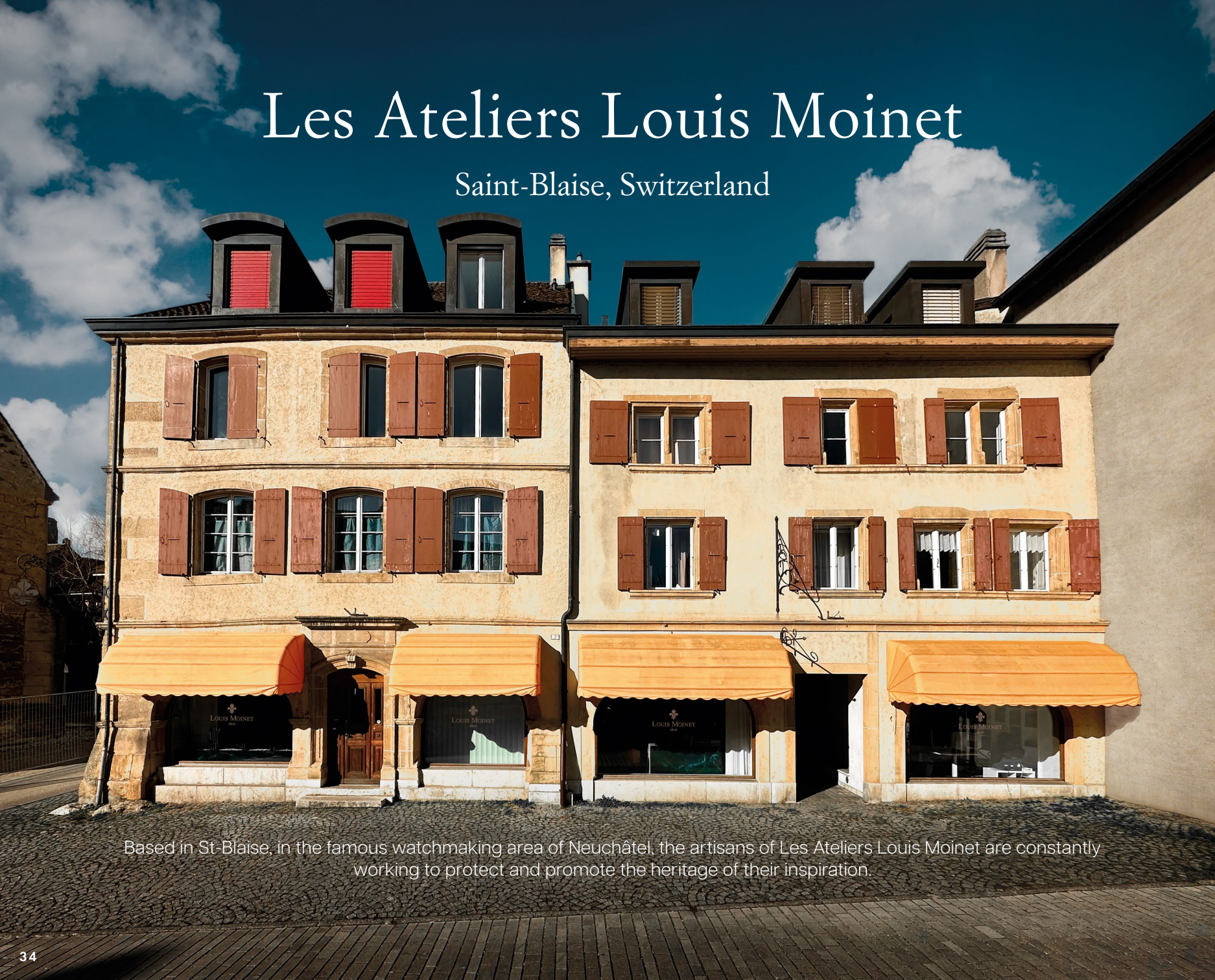
Louvre Museum

Oedipus and Antigone before the tomb of Laius (ca. 1820).



Les Ateliers Louis Moinet

Saint-Blaise, Switzerland



Based in St-Blaise, in the famous watchmaking area of Neuchâtel, the artisans of Les Ateliers Louis Moinet are constantly working to protect and promote the heritage of their inspiration.



Welcome to our unique world

Under the watchful eye of Jean-Marie Schaller, Les Ateliers Louis Moinet exclusively manufacture mechanical watches as unique pieces or in strictly limited editions.

The Imagination Room is a haven of creation. Here, further research is done on the endlessly fascinating mechanical arts.

Although Louis Moinet was an eminent nineteenth century horologist, his work has been largely forgotten. However, recent research has brought to light some of the masterpieces of the past, which are proudly displayed in the museum section of the Saint-Blaise workshops.



Jean-Marie Schaller

CEO AND CREATIVE DIRECTOR



Hailing from the horological hotbed that is the Jura region of Switzerland, Jean-Marie Schaller was always passionate about watchmaking.

In the year 2000, he answered what he now refers to as a call of destiny, taking up the reins of Louis Moinet's legacy and vowing to preserve it in a way that would make the great man himself proud. But with so much of Moinet's fascinating contributions to the industry forgotten, he was forced to begin his search in the dark.

Then, in 2012, at a Christies auction in Geneva, a promising ray of light pierced that darkness: He took a chance on a lot that would go on to be ratified as the world's first chronograph, and, later, awarded a Guinness World Record to that end.

Together with a highly talented team, Jean-Marie Schaller aims to enrich watchmaking with creations that are as spectacular as they are unprecedented.

"The finest work is to build a mechanical masterpiece from a blank sheet, the greatest reward is to see the sparkle in the eye of whoever discovers it."

Jean-Marie Schaller
CEO and Creative Director





Artisans

The artisans at Les Ateliers Louis Moinet are charged with distilling a material down to its very essence, allowing its natural beauty to imbue whatever space it is afforded. Their skill is one of addition by subtraction and relies on a fundamental respect for the intrinsic power of the materials they have to work with.

The following friends are just a few of the talented companions with whom we have shared this adventure thus far...



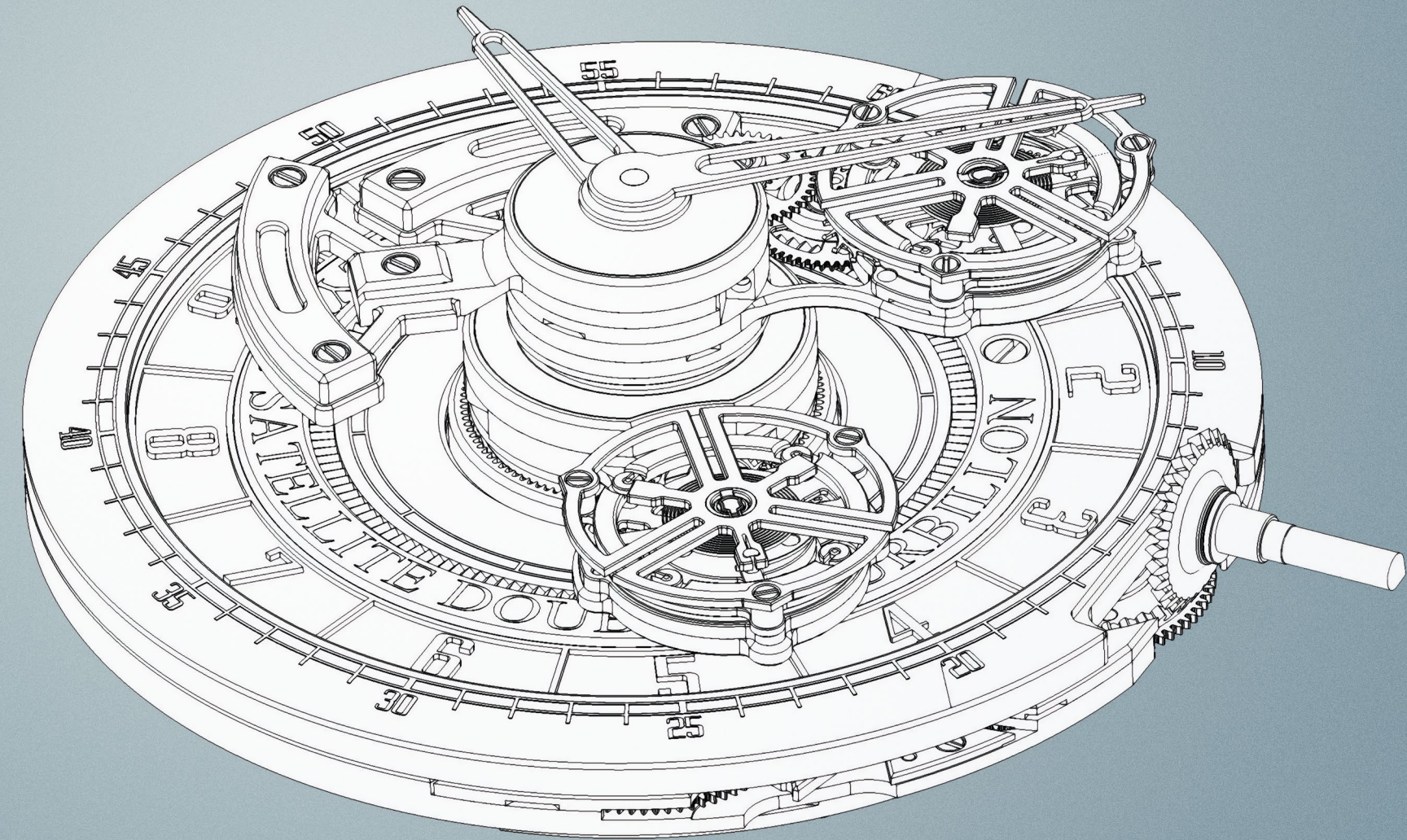
Valérien Jaquet

MOVEMENT MANUFACTURER



A lifelong friend, Valérien runs the family business Concepto, with which Louis Moinet has established a very close relationship for over two decades.

Valérien and his team have extensive experience in developing and manufacturing high-precision mechanical parts. Louis Moinet relies on these advanced technologies to innovate with each new release.



Matthieu Pin

MASTER WATCHMAKER



Matthieu Pin is the watchmaker who runs the Louis Moinet workshop in Les Breuleux (JU). His experience would probably allow him to disassemble and reassemble a chronograph with his eyes closed.

The Louis Moinet workshop houses five highly talented watchmakers. It is in this dream factory that all of our mechanical masterpieces are brought to life.



Luc Labenne

METEORITE HUNTER



Luc Labenne who hails from Paris, has been hunting meteorites in the desert since 1997. He is the first person to find a meteor from the Moon. He has also unearthed rocks from Mars containing water from the Red Planet dating back billions of years.

Luc is a long-time friend of Jean-Marie Schaller, who gets his supplies exclusively from him. Why? Because Luc is the world authority in terms of meteorites, and each piece is duly authenticated by the Meteoritical Society, thus confirming its provenance.



Daniel Haas

METEORITE CUTTER



Louis Moinet's extraterrestrial or fossil materials are often very rare, meaning great care must be taken during their preparation for use. One such example is the Louis Moinet Magistralis from 2009, which became the first watch in the world to incorporate a fragment of the moon. This marked our first collaboration with Daniel Haas.

A long-time supporter of Les Ateliers Louis Moinet, Daniel's unique know-how in the preparation of rare and ancient materials takes the wonder of mechanical art in a new direction.

By integrating components originating thousands of years in the past with a mechanism intended to run thousands of years into the future, every one of these special Moinet watches is a testament to time itself.



Martin Brunold

ARTISAN OF ASTRONOMICAL OBJECTS



The astrolabe is an instrument used for astronomical observation and is of great importance in the development of human sciences.

Martin Brunold is probably the only manufacturer of quality astrolabes in the world. For more than forty years, this Swiss craftsman has made them entirely by hand, patiently carving them in brass. His production is obviously extremely limited, and his rare and exceptional works are exhibited in international museums, or held in private collections.

Jean-Marie Schaller wanted to acquire one. It was his first meeting with Martin Brunold. From that encounter, a long-term collaboration was born, resulting in several extraordinary projects and with more to come.



Achievements

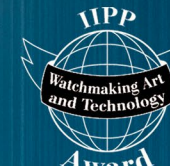


Louis Moinet is the official holder of “First Chronograph” and “First High-Frequency Stopwatch” titles awarded by the Guinness World Records™ organisation.

Louis Moinet has also won more than fifty highly coveted prizes, including a Red Dot Design Award (Best of the Best category), a gold medal in the Chronometry Competition, a Robb Report “Best of the Best” award, a “Chronograph of the Year” distinction from Begin magazine, Japan, and a UNESCO Award of Merit.



reddot design award
best of the best



Best of the best

GEOGRAPH RAINFOREST



reddot design award
best of the best 2012

The Red Dot is considered one of the most prestigious awards in the field of design.

In sixty years of competition, less than ten watchmaking models have obtained the prestigious distinction of “Best of the Best”. For this, the Geograph Rainforest was chosen from more than 6,000 different products.

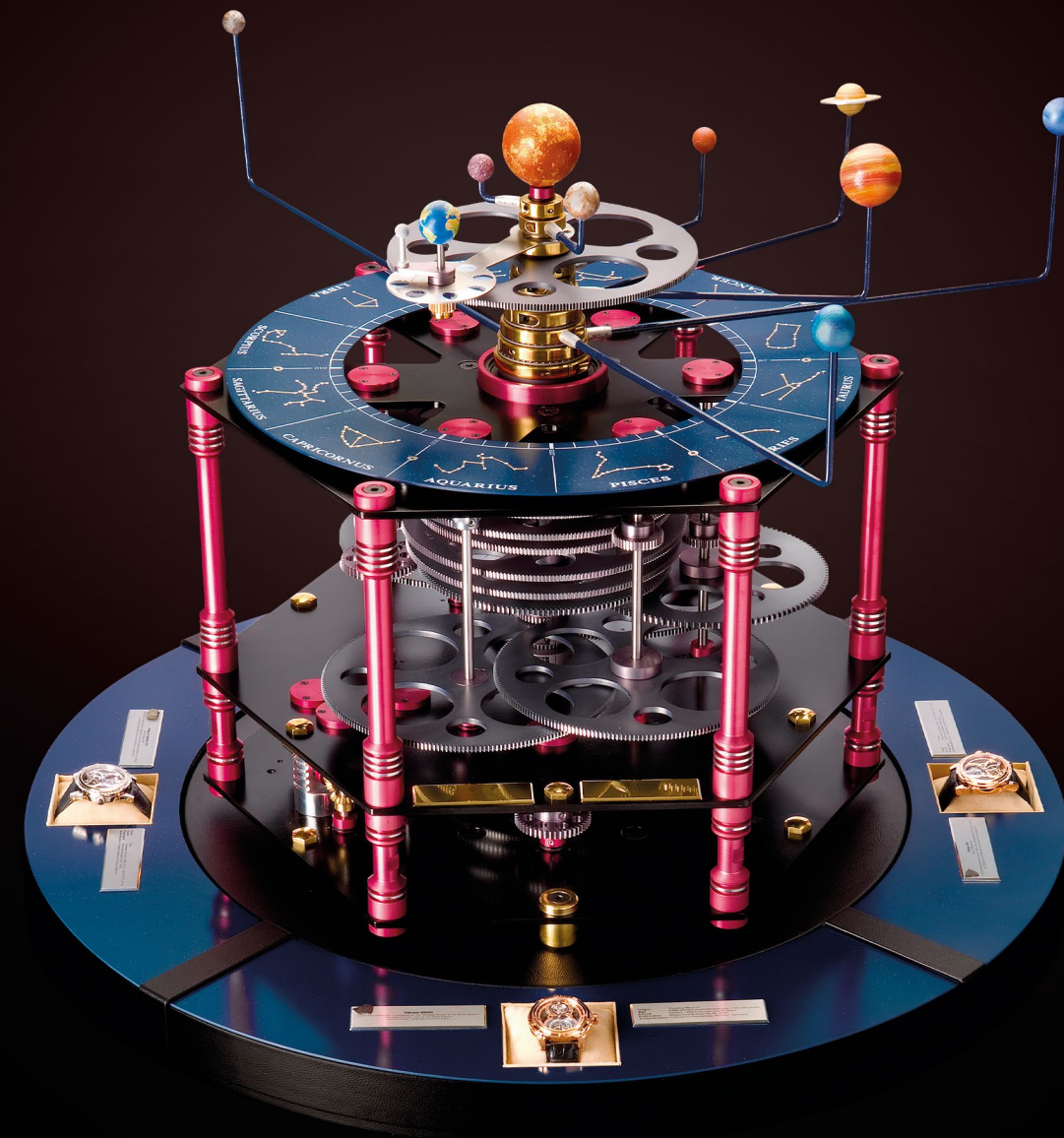
The Louis Moinet Geograph Rainforest has a dial made from a fossilized palm tree, 70 million years old and native to Southwest Asia. Each piece has helped support the Pulau Banding Foundation whose goal is to preserve the riches of the tropical forest of Belum-Temengor, one of the oldest in the world.



Heritage

Continuing and preserving Louis Moinet's historical heritage, the artisans of Les Ateliers Louis Moinet are proud to dedicate their creations to the most important people of our time.

His Majesty, the Sultan of Perlis, seen conferring a knighthood on Jean-Marie Schaller.



Meteoris, Planetarium Unique.



Values

Each Louis Moinet watch bears four symbols representing the values of the timepiece.



The uniqueness of Louis Moinet

Louis Moinet, inventor of the chronograph, is one of the most well-respected names in the watchmaking world.



Creative Watchmaking

Each Louis Moinet creation features rare and distinctive mechanical movements as well as innovative mechanisms or embellishments.



Art and Design

Each Louis Moinet watch conveys a unique artistic spirit, expressed in bold and creative designs.



Exclusivity

Louis Moinet crafts watches in small limited editions as well as one-off models.

A star indicates a limited edition, while a moon symbolises a one-of-a-kind creation.



MECHANICAL WONDERS

COLLECTION

Contemporary mechanical art emphasising creativity, technology, and exclusivity. Outstanding and unique mechanisms merged with powerful designs to forge watches with a strong and trailblazing character.





ASTRONEF
MECHANICAL ART IN MOTION





IMPULSION

THE GREATEST SHOW ON YOUR WRIST





MEMORIS SPIRIT
TIMEKEEPING AT ITS MOST DARING





TEMPOGRAPH SPIRIT

RETROGRADE WITH SOUL



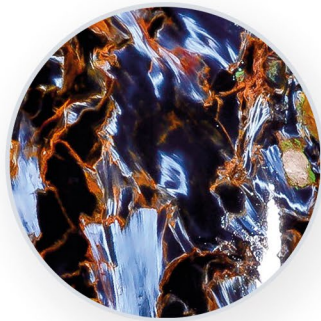


TIME TO RACE

THE INSIDE TRACK OF WATCH DESIGN



Extraordinary materials



Pietersite



Azurite Malachite



Lapis Lazuli

The rarest semi-precious stones are enhanced using artistic crafts such as engraving, micro-painting, or enamelling as a way to generate emotions.

In their quest for the exceptional, Les Ateliers Louis Moinet integrate extremely beautiful fossil materials with the design.





JURASSIC TOURBILLON
FOSSILIZED DINOSAUR BONE



COSMIC ART

COLLECTION

Out-of-this-world creations incorporating extraterrestrial fragments (meteorites), genuine material used in the conquest of space, and involving cooperations with legendary cosmonauts and astronauts.





SPACE REVOLUTION

DOUBLE FLYING TOURBILLON





SUPER MOON

GENUINE LUNAR METEORITE





MARS MISSION

GENUINE MARTIAN METEORITE



Pioneer in extraterrestrial materials

Some rare meteorites used in our creations.



Lunar meteorite

Lunar meteorite is one of the rarest kinds of meteorite. To date, less than 400 lunar meteorites have been identified in the world. Our friend, Luc Labenne found the first ever example on Earth and continues to supply us with his discoveries.



Martian meteorite

Martian meteorite is even harder to find! To date, fewer than 300 Martian meteorites have been identified in the world. The price per gram is higher than gold and platinum combined.



Allende meteorite

The oldest known material in the solar system, Allende's age is estimated at 4,567 billion years, which would make it older than the Earth itself!



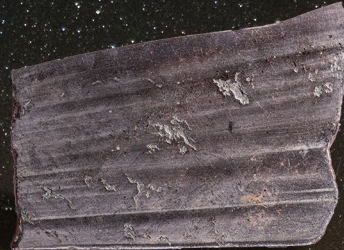
Erg Chech meteorite

This exceptional meteorite is almost as old as Allende, dating back 4,566 billion years.



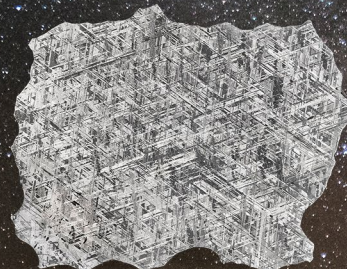
Jbilet Winselwan meteorite

This mysterious meteorite contains traces of amino acids, potentially the very first trace of known life in the cosmos.



Isheyevo meteorite

Isheyevo, found in Russia in 2003, is a carbonaceous chondrite meteorite containing a beautiful sequence of fine layers.



Gibeon meteorite

This iron meteorite was found in Namibia. It displays an extraterrestrial motif – the exceptional Widmanstätten pattern.



Armanty meteorite

This meteorite, composed of a natural and extraterrestrial ferro-nickel alloy, comes from the heart of an asteroid measuring more than 100km in diameter. It was discovered in recent years in China.

Space materials

Louis Moinet has collected materials from the most important space missions.



Yuri Gagarin
1961

Yuri Gagarin completed the first manned spaceflight when he piloted Vostok 1 into the unknown.

This bolt was a part of the external capsule of Vostok 1 and has been deformed by the heat of reentry.



Apollo 11
1969

Apollo 11 allowed man to set foot on the Moon for the first time.

This fragment of polyimide film protected the crew from the extreme temperatures (-250°C to 400°C) they had to endure during the mission.

This material withstood the trip from Earth to Moon and back again. Remarkably, it travelled over 1 million kilometres through interplanetary space in the command module of Apollo 11.



Japanese rocket
2012

The purpose of the H-II's flight was to launch the H-II Transfer Vehicle "Kounotori HTV-3", a cargo transporter carrying research items and spare parts to the astronauts on the ISS.

This fragment is from a rocket fairing that flew in space following its launch from Tanegashima Space Center on July 21st, 2012.



Bespoke timepieces



The experience of time is a very personal thing. As such, Les Ateliers Louis Moinet work directly with clients who are looking for originality, personality, and often cultural significance.

All consultations are strictly confidential. They are between the watchmaker and watch wearer – the way it should be.



Acknowledgements

British Embassy in Paris
National Museum van Speelklok Pierement, Utrecht, Netherlands
Ermitage Museum, St Petersburg, Russia
Tsarskoye Selo State Museum, St Petersburg, Russia
David Roche Fondation, North Adelaide, Australia



INVENTOR OF THE CHRONOGRAPH



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