

WATCHES AND JEWELRY

Vacheron Constantin, Bovet Fleurier, Richard Mille and HYT share 2019 watchmaking goals

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The Salon International de la Haute Horlogerie (SIHH) show Jan. 14-17, 2019 in Geneva, Switzerland, attracted a record 23,000 visitors vying to check out the latest models and advances in high watchmaking. Image credit: SIHH

By [Barbara Palumbo](#)

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GENEVA, Switzerland The luxury watch industry has gone through its fair share of ups and downs since the beginning of time or timekeeping, shall we say.

Some of the more recent downs were created, however, without a whole lot of accuracy or even relevancy think, the Apple watch scare. Yet, the masses will often choose to dismantle, decipher and overly discuss that which they sometimes subconsciously wish to believe.

Time's up

Think about it: many advertisers are obsessed with clicks in the way that Gen Z has an obsession with likes, and if one throws the words, "Apple", "millennial", or "influencer" in the headline of an article, that almost guarantees a highly-viewed piece. Sad? A bit.

But in a changing luxury world, you either adapt through solid product and clever marketing, or, you hypothetically and often dramatically die.

At this year's edition of the Salon International de la Haute Horlogerie (SIHH) in Geneva, Switzerland, the focus was most certainly on the ups.

The positivity of the fair was infectious amongst collectors, retailers, journalists and brand executives, alike. Brands chose to get back to their core values by marketing what made them great in the first place: impeccable mechanics, interesting concepts, longevity and a uniquely vivid story.

It will be interesting to see how the 2020 edition of the **SIHH** is impacted with upcoming date changes. The show is moving to April next year though still in Geneva to coincide with the Baselworld show that will happen immediately following in Basel, Switzerland. But, for now, all seemed peachy-keen in the present world of haute horology.

Meanwhile, this publication spoke with four brand executives at the SIHH one from an established Richemont brand that has a steady presence at the fair, another that took part in its first year at the SIHH this year, one that exhibited for the last time, and one that is strictly an independent brand that exhibits in the Carr des Horlogers.

These executives discussed their plans for the present as well as the future as it pertains to what they feel they need to portray to buyers, what their thoughts are on changing consumer behavior, and what is going to set them apart in 2019 and beyond. Here is what they had to say:

Laurent Perves, chief marketing officer, **Vacheron Constantin**

"In 2019, Vacheron Constantin intends to keep its longstanding mission to epitomize beautiful high watchmaking.

"As Vacheron Constantin has done for more than 263 years, the maison will continue to place its collectors' and clients' expectations above all else, working on relevant innovations and channels to offer them the best products and services.

"In this context, digital channels will play a critical role to complete the product and boutique experience."



A new watch from Vacheron Constantin shown at SIHH. Image credit: SIHH

Pascal Raffy, president and owner, [Bovet Fleurier SA](#)

"For 2019, we at Bovet intend to carry on as we have done for over 185 years, grounded in our values and the exemplary and rare artisanal skills that distinguish our maison.

"We will continue to apply these skills and vision to daring new creations and mechanical complications that push horology forward.

"Take, for example, our new Rcimal 26 Brainstorm Chapter One, which features the writing slope' inclined case design, crafted out of light, ultra-transparent sapphire, which allows new elegant, ergonomic and intuitive perspectives and arrangements of its complex mechanisms and displays.

"Such timepieces are intended for a new generation of luxury timepiece collectors. I prefer the term collectors' to consumers,' which feels deeply impersonal.

"Our collectors' desires guide the inspiration and production of new timepieces at every stage.

"We know that Bovet collectors, as discerning connoisseurs of true luxury objects, seek timepieces that are inherently rare and crafted with only the finest quality, artistic inspiration, and precious materials.

"We are willing to invest months and even years to conceive and create collectible timepieces that will dazzle them and exceed their expectations, both mechanically and artistically.

"It is my will that production be strictly limited, allowing our artisans the time to invest in creativity and responsive customization according to collectors' whims, from hand engraving to custom miniature painted dials.

"In 2019, Bovet will continue to cater to our collectors' desires and create exquisitely crafted, fascinating and deeply personal timepieces."



A new Bovet model shown at SIHH2019 in Geneva, Switzerland. Image credit: SIHH

Tim Malachard, global marketing director, [Richard Mille](#)

"2019 will see the brand continue its organic growth through the development of new and innovating models. This has always been key to the brand since its creation.

"We are also developing our dedicated Richard Mille boutiques all over the world and recently opened in New York, Moscow and Istanbul.

"We now have 40 boutiques and our focus is to best cater to our clients and offer the best the brand has to offer in terms of experience, hospitality and events."



Richard Mille Bonbon collection 2019 at SIHH. Image credit: SIHH

Gregory Dourde, CEO, [HYT](#)

"We have placed the experience at the heart of the HYT project: telling time more than keeping time. That's our focus.

"Why limit the measurement of the time to indicating the now in splendid isolation, with needle-sharp hands or fleeting digital displays?"

"Time flows and only gains meaning through content. Our watches show the flow of the time. They are a mediator to reengage a part of yourselves. Time is fluid. Time is precious."



An HYT watch shown at SIHH2019. Image credit: SIHH

SIHH2019: Bridging the Past and Future of Fine Watchmaking / by Time on Foundation

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