

JEWELRY

Bulgari unveils timely releases at Geneva Watch Days 2023

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Taking design codes from house archives and nods to Roman history, six new pieces reveal a balance between past and present trends. Image credit: Bulgari

By EMILY IRIS DEGN

Italian jeweler Bulgari is activating in light of an annual event with the help of Swiss maestro and ambassador Lorenzo Viotti.

In an exclusive interview with the conductor for Geneva Watch Days 2023, Mr. Viotti announces the release of "Beyond Time," a chronicle of 100 years of horology. Furthering this sentiment of historic appreciation, Bulgari is also presenting a lineup of six new timepieces, reimagining archival designs and elements of Roman heritage for the modern consumer.

History in the making

From Roman coins to 1960s vintage looks, Bulgari's roots as a member of the Italian market and as a jeweler that has been operating since the 1880s are the foundation of fresh timepieces

New Monete Catene Secret Watches, introduced at Geneva Watch Days 2023 from Aug. 29 to Sept. 2, are inspired by ancient money. With a chain bracelet that is reminiscent of those worn in midcentury Europe, the diamond-studded creations are fitted with denarii.

Bulgari's Monete Catene Secret Watches showcase history-minded artistry

Though the denarius was only the standard coin in Rome for about 400 years, from 211 B.C. to 238 A.D. with the ruling era of Gordian III, it continued to be used in the republic for ceremonial purposes. This history imbues them with an enriched significance beyond just purchasing items.

With these additions serving as centerpieces, the inspired watches capture the essence of Italian history.

The maison is also out with the Octo Finissimo CarbonGold Automatic and the Octo Finissimo CarbonGold Perpetual Calendar models, made with anthracite carbon and touches of gold, a combination first introduced in 1993.

Finally, Bulgari's Serpenti Misteriosi comes in two options, both in the shape of a snake, its classic symbol of femininity.



In 1966, Mr. Nicola Bulgari first placed antique coins into jewelry designs, creating the Monete collection. Image credit: Bulgari

The first is glittering with gold and diamonds page, while the second is a rose gold piece scaled with black lacquer and beset diamonds.

Each of these drops fuses thousands of years of tradition, the old-world know-how of the house and Bulgari's most recognizable design codes with modern twists. With new pairings and updated looks, the jeweler is balancing the act of staying true to the past and appealing to the current market's demand for futuristic visions.

Personal time

Bulgari's "Beyond Time" book outlines a century of watchmaking on the part of the brand.

Mr. Viotti speaks to the significance of the read in his own video slot. Sharing with consumers his relationship with time, he links the luxury category to that of music through personal narrative, a particularly captivating form of marketing for young people who value companies that highlight individualism ([see story](#)).

The maestro presents Bulgari's newly-released book

"Time is a luxury," says Mr. Viotti, in the video.

"Time is never enough," he says. "For me to be in the present is already too late.

"I feel sometimes that I can play with time, especially in my profession."

He leafs through the "Beyond Time" book as he narrates, the pages dazzling with pictures of glinting jewels and intricate products from the brand.



A new book outlines the design history of Bulgari, showcased at the Geneva event. Image credit: Bulgari

With footage shown of the maestro leading his instrumentalists while wearing a Bulgari watch, he mentions that he believes that he and timepiece craftspeople share a lot in common since their art forms depend on the work of a collective and are extremely detail-oriented.

The inclusion of music appears to fall in line with what Bulgari's peers are doing, as other luxury horological names increasingly turn to the art form to find new brand ambassadors, forge fresh partnerships and bring engaging experiences to their customer base.

Swiss watchmaker Rolex is among the high watchmakers putting forth these offerings.

The exclusive partner of the Vienna Philharmonic since 2008 and the sole sponsor of its renowned New Year's Concert since 2009, the brand recently stepped into the land of opera ([see story](#)). Expanding its Perpetual Arts

initiative, Rolex is investing in several houses in the classical music and performance genre.



The detail-oriented and collaborative work of making music and making watches is discussed by Mr. Viotti in Bulgari's activation. Image credit: Bulgari

Another Swiss watchmaker, Audemars Piguet, is platforming more modern music.

Established last year, the label is extending the partnership it shares with British American DJ, songwriter and record producer Mark Ronson. Together, they launched "Syncing Sounds" in 2022, and this summer, orchestrated a collaborative performance amidst Mr. Ronson's appearance in a campaign and film for the effort ([see story](#)).

With Mr. Viotti as the anchor to the "Beyond Time" release, he not only ties Bulgari to what is apparently one of luxury's favorite arts, but emphasizes the book's central theme of history by sharing with consumers his interactions with the industry that the maison belongs to.

"I received my first watch from my dad, and that was a very special moment because it was a watch that he himself worked super hard to get when he was young," says Mr. Viotti, in the video.



Mr. Viotti is celebrated for his music by Bulgari, wearing a luxury timepiece from the brand as he creates. Image credit: Bulgari

"So it's much more than just a timekeeper," he says. "It's an emotion keeper, a legacy keeper."

In telling his own story and showing viewers where he is now, it seems that one thing has remained with him from childhood to the conductor's stand: his watch.