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The Good Life

The Cost Of Time

World famous watchmakers and their creations help you appreciate the mechanics of measuring the immeasurable

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Varing from GoS watches takes inspiration from Swedish viking history

Time stood upside down. Perhaps not in the cosmic scheme of things, but in a little watch dial made by French-Dutch watchmaker Ludovic Ballouard. His relatively young brand, which was launched as recently as 2009, is already a pop icon. The reason for its celebrity is also these *Upside Down Time* pieces, which he displayed at an event in Delhi recently. In these, the numbers or batons stand on their head.

At the event, leading luxury watchmakers congregated. Two masters were making their first appearance here. One was Ludovic and the other was Patrick Sjogren, watchmaker and founder of acclaimed Swiss brand GoS. Their very presence excited the horologists and

hobby collectors, and they added to the magic with first public display of some of their marvels.

Other brands featured were Cecil Purnell — with its high-end, gravity-defying tourbillion watches — and Laurent Ferrier — with its smooth faces and specially designed escapement that promises more precise timekeeping. Most of the brands present had either been nominees or winners of the Grand prix d' horlogerie de Genève (GPHG) also fondly known as the Oscars of watch making.



Ballouard's first ever creation Upside Down Time is in sync with his personal philosophies

10 million.

Sweden's most luxurious watch brand GoS is a creation of Patrick Sjogren and master blade-smith Johan Gustafson. Sjogren was here to display his limited edition watches *Varing* or the viking warrior watch, as he described it. Only twelve such pieces were made, personally created by Sjogren and his partner at GoS' workshop. "We have used Damascus steel for the ring and old bronze to create this watch, representing the royal essence of history. Our watch collections are inspired from the Swedish history and nature," says Sjogren. This is the brand's first ever bronze watch. It honours the Swedish Vikings who used bronze for every other article and decorative, while they used steel to make weapons.

Sjogren also displayed another special collection, Midnight Blue. In it, he has used a special finishing in the dial, giving it a bluish-black tinge. This dial turns this shade of 'night' only at the right temperature. Sjogren said, "It involves two processes. One is to get a contrast in black and the other is by using heat treatment on the dial to achieve the perfect uniform blue colour throughout. The watchmaker needs to carefully remove the dial at the right

Ballouard's most popular concept, of upside down watches, is just one among his many eccentric creations. "I try to present my thoughts and way of life through my watches," he said, "I always believe in the philosophy that the most important time is the present time." It is an interesting take by a time keeper — that, the passage of time means little. At the event, he presented three six of his pieces priced between ₹ 4.2 million and ₹

moment to get the perfect blue shade.” GoS’s watches are priced between ₹ 700,000-800,000.

Rahul Kapoor, co-founder of Excedo Luxuria, which retails brands such as Cecil Purnell and Laurent Ferrier in India, says, “Laurent Ferrier, known for its neo-classical style combined with mechanical perfection, presented its Galet Annual Calendar which has won the GPHG award. It has a beautiful rose gold colour.” The watch is known for its easy handling, visual balance and readability. Ferrier’s watch collection was priced between ₹ 3.4 million and ₹ 40 million.



Cecil Purnell's Spherion Gyro-Tourbillon was priced at ₹53 million

Cecil Purnell, a brand from Switzerland, presented its Spherion Gyro-Tourbillon and Diamond Pavé Lucky Lady. The tourbillon collection is the most-detail oriented piece and is customisable. The brand makes only 50 such watches every year. These watches are priced between ₹ 15 million and ₹ 120 million. The Spherion Gyro-Tourbillon on display cost ₹ 53 million.

The watches were displayed at the Independent of Time 2018 event, organised by the India Watch Club. Kapoor, who is also the founder of the club, sees a slow but steady growth in demand for luxury watches in India. He says, “Today, people in India have more exposure and education. We had around 2,500 members between 2012 and 2014. The number of active members increased to 6,500 by 2018.”

There may be jokes made on our lack of respect for time — like the ones on Indian Stretchable Time — but we surely appreciate fine timepieces.

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Fashionably Forward

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