

JD
JAQUET DROZ
ART HORLOGER SUISSE DEPUIS 1738

&

Chantal Thomass



PRESS RELEASE

CHANTAL THOMASS & JAQUET DROZ: THE COLLABORATION



Summary

I. Jaquet Droz

II. Chantal Thomass

III. An exclusive collaboration

IV. The "La Ronde des Baisers" automaton



I. Jaquet Droz

"AS UNIQUE AS YOU ARE"



“
*Disruption has
always been in the
Jaquet Droz DNA;
it is part of its
heritage. Disruption is a
Jaquet Droz tradition!*

Alain Delamuraz

”

Jaquet Droz is an almost 300-year-old start-up, founded in 1738 by a visionary: Pierre Jaquet Droz. For their time, the clocks, automata and humanoid automata from Pierre Jaquet Droz were a mechanical and cultural revolution. The family company was a pioneer of watch exporting with items in multiple royal and imperial courts across Europe and Asia.

In 2000, Jaquet Droz was bought by the Swatch Group and incorporated into the prestige and luxury segment of the watchmaking group. Its acquisition by the Group has enabled the brand to enjoy the same heights of success as it did in the Age of Enlightenment, and to build on the exceptional heritage established by its founder.

With the arrival in 2022 of the new CEO, Alain Delamuraz, the company has refocused on the disruptive character of the brand. Driven by its new strategy "JD 8.0: A Disruptive Legacy" and recognised worldwide for its Ateliers d'Art and automata, the company has enhanced its audacious vision of animated Haute Horlogerie, custom-designed and bringing together exceptional movements and next generation materials, prioritising a unique and personalised experience. Each piece is created by and for a specific collector. These exclusive, unique pieces are delivered in person during an unboxing ceremony in the presence of the CEO.

Classical historical themes are retained while the brand also opens itself up to a new visual approach – provocative, impertinent and audacious.

The 160 points of sale, multi-brand retailers and single-brand boutiques have been replaced by a single sales location at the Manufacture in La Chaux-de-Fonds thereby favouring direct contact between the artists, artisans and collectors. Jaquet Droz has become more agile and has capitalised on their Phygital presence. Studio 8 combines a physical and digital presence so that it is possible to remotely follow the work of the artists and artisans in real time thanks to six cameras. At each step of the process, collectors can virtually lean over the shoulder of the artisan to observe and influence their work. Stronger and more grounded in its identity, Jaquet Droz is venturing into unexpected territory and staying right where it has always been: disruptive and visionary.



II. Chantal Thomass



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*I have always loved
fashion, especially my
own!*

”

Chantal Thomass

Although we immediately associate Chantal Thomass with lingerie, during the 70s she was one of the major figures in the wave of French creators that included Kenzo, Jean Charles de Castelbajac, Thierry Mugler, Claude Montana and Anne Marie Beretta. It was these eclectic creators with their distinctive styles who would go on to shape the woman of the 80s and 90s. Irreverent and eminently creative, this new guard spanned the generations and brought a new energy to Parisian fashion.

Within this movement, Chantal Thomass defined the contours of a new kind of femininity; extravagant, free, sensual, full of humour, fantasy and with a suggestive wink. Her pioneering signature style dances the line between what is masculine/feminine, covered/uncovered, underneath/above, borrowing men's fabrics and tailoring cuts with ease. Hers is a unique fashion that emphasises the body and remodels it. Greta Garbo, Louise Brooks, Marlene Dietrich, Joséphine Baker are her heroines. Lace, bows, pink and black... her signature elements. Today, an artistic director who cannot resist involving herself in multiple industries, Chantal Thomass has made Pop Art her core ethos; she shows off her talent and draws from her imagination to clothe both mass market and niche objects in pink, in black and in white. And a little bit of red too: "red is very important. But only a touch, and it must be matt... much like my lipstick!"



III. The collaboration



“
*This creative alchemy
has given life to the
"Ronde des Baisers" watch
whose aura exudes both
hypnotism and poetry.*

Chantal Thomass”

JAQUET DROZ & CHANTAL THOMASS: AN EXCLUSIVE COLLABORATION THAT REINVENTS FEMININE ELEGANCE AND CELEBRATES THE SUBLIME CRAFTSMANSHIP OF THE TWO BRANDS

"A collaboration is the pleasure of embracing a profession, plunging yourself into a technique, a special feature, a universe. It is a unique occasion to assimilate into an environment that is not your own and to get a feel for exceptional expertise.

It is also a journey to encounter a place, a history, the artisans... The Jaquet Droz Manufacture was incredible beyond my expectations; I discovered a level of mastery and technical expertise that is so rarely attained, all put to the service of unique objects that are almost magical!

Jaquet Droz is a company that knows how to set itself apart, daring to defy what is expected and leave the beaten track to push the limits of watchmaking.

To work with Jaquet Droz is to work with excellence sublimated by the soul and talent of the men and women – artisans without equal – these incredible "creators of marvels"!

This creative alchemy has given life to the "Ronde des Baisers" watch whose aura exudes both hypnotism and poetry: It is a rare object that celebrates all kisses – stolen, given, lost, hidden or kept in the heart!

It brings together everything that I love: a subtle game, between poetry and discipline, between romanticism and geometry, marked by a wave of "heart-lips" against the backdrop of an optical grid pattern. The colours that I cherish – black, white and of course, touches of pink and red – while diamonds set into a ribbon shape offer just a hint of delicate lace.

This "Ronde des Baisers" is a precious tourbillon, an intimate creation that reflects my own universe: audacious, refined and resolutely "me".

Chantal Thomass.

The piece, unique and engraved with the written signature of the artist on its oscillating weight will be unveiled at the FAB Paris art fair (Fine Art La Biennale) at the Grand Palais on 22-27 November in the presence of Jaquet Droz and Chantal Thomass.



IV. The "La Ronde des Baisers" automaton

JAQUET DROZ AND CHANTAL THOMASS COMBINE DISRUPTIVE
WATCHMAKING AND IRREVERENT POP ART FASHION

A free figure, explorer of avant-garde trends who breaks taboos and barriers in the name of an art that is in perpetual transformation: that which is true for Chantal Thomass is also true for Jaquet Droz. The watchmaker and fashion icon were destined to meet. The result of this union is a unique piece, an automaton set with diamonds and minerals that is a hypnotic manifestation of master craftsmanship and fashion.



It would be quite something for a fashion designer to not keep up with fashion. And yet, in her career spanning 50 years, Chantal Thomass has actually always been one step ahead, creating a brand identity that even the general public can identify at a glance: black fringe, bold red lipstick ("matt red, always"), constant innovation of materials and shapes and the ability to adapt to multiple universes (design, perfume, décor, cosmetics, etc.) with an uncomplicated cool.

For Jaquet Droz and Chantal Thomass it was love at first sight. The connection between Paris and La Chaux-de-Fonds was instantaneous. With her mischievous eye for such things, the creator grasped all of the possibilities offered by Jaquet Droz automata and the richness that the master crafts could bring.

Chantal Thomass is unique, and so is her automaton. Her commitment to the project was total. The creator visited the Jaquet Droz ateliers in person several times. Having never before considered a watch, she now wanted to know everything about it: history, heritage, movement, decoration, but also, she wanted to meet the craftsmen who breathe life into each unique piece from Jaquet Droz. In addition to two physical journeys to Switzerland, the Parisian stylist also regularly connected with the watchmakers via Studio 8. This online space which is equipped with 6 immersive cameras, allows the client to follow the development of their project, almost in real time. It was also via Studio 8 that Chantal Thomass defined, with rare precision, the specifications for her piece which would reflect her visual universe but also her rebellious spirit, identical to that of Jaquet Droz.





Chantal Thomass wanted a timepiece that was dominated by her colours: black, white, red. But the fashion icon knew that the graphic palette is one thing, the materials are another. To bring these tones to life, Chantal Thomass opted for different materials that would each bring texture and volume. On an onyx watch dial, a perspective image of a chequerboard is created from cubes of black onyx and Cacholong. This first is well known by Jaquet Droz, but the inclusion of Cacholong was a first. The marquetry work in stone is created with 34 individual parts. Each cube measures between 2.25 mm and 0.45 mm in height. They are machined and assembled individually, by hand, in 5 different heights in order to accentuate the 3D perspective of the chequerboard.

Around this central design is a moving peripheral disc. Taking the shape of a spiral, it links a gloss black disc that coils around another disc which is hand set with 376 diamonds (for a total of 0.63 cts) in a snow-set design. A single press of the push-button at 3 o'clock starts the movement: the exterior disc completes one revolution in 30 seconds, for a maximum of 4 minutes (8 revolutions), and can be started or stopped on request by pressing the same push-button. The hypnotic movement of this automaton takes nothing away from the precision of the watch. The automaton part uses two barrels, the timekeeping part uses two additional independent barrels for 68 hours of power reserve.

And the finishing touch added by the artist: In order to break up a composition that plays with the effects of symmetry, Chantal Thomass has taken 11 of the red pairs of lips so dear to her and placed them across the dial. Ten are gold, hand-sculpted appliques that are placed on the moving peripheral (and therefore, like the entirety of the disc, pass below the watch dial). The 11th is hand-painted, used as a signature for Chantal Thomass, placed below that of Jaquet Droz, set at midday and with two gold hands passing above.





"Create your own. As unique as you are"

For more information, please contact : press@jaquet-droz.com

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