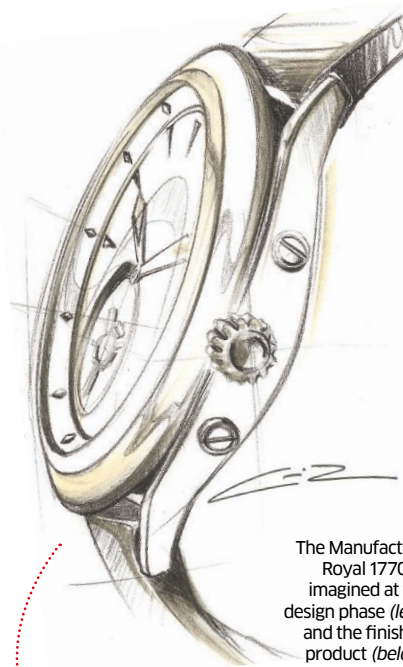


Giroud sketched this watch specially for *GO*

# Design speak

**Eric Giroud's** a one-man movement whose repertoire spans dozens of haute horology brands. He brings cool to the industry in a way we haven't seen since G erald Genta. But unlike Genta, he's got India in his crosshairs



The Manufacture Royal 1770 as imagined at the design phase (left), and the finished product (below)

**What are you busy with these days?**

I'm working with 10 brands across major luxury groups at the moment. But I can't talk about those projects. What I can tell you is that I'm working on two designs that I think are very interesting: the next generation of MB&F's Legacy Machine as well as its Horological Machines.

**Have you considered starting your own watch brand?**

I don't think I'm cut out for the business side of this industry; I love my independence and freedom. If I ever do start my own venture, it will probably be a restaurant or a small collection of furniture, but not watches.


**Other than timepieces, what do you wish you'd had the chance to design?**

The Porsche 911. Its design is timeless and very simple. I even owned a 911S a while ago. Another design I'm fascinated with is that of the surfboard. Minor tweaks to it drastically change how people are able to find a better surfing line.

**When was your last creative block?**

This morning. When I get one, I'm very honest about it: I call up the brand and chat with them to work around a solution. I also immerse myself in contemporary art to overcome these blocks. Recently, my wife and I have been collecting the works of contemporary artists from the East and West Coast of America. Michael Hilsman is my latest discovery. I also admire the work of Anish Kapoor. Sometimes, something as simple as a tram ride from my office to Geneva's city centre gives me some of my craziest ideas.

**We hear an Indian watchmaker's been angling to work with you.**

I have been in talks with an Indian company for the last two years but I can't reveal much more. Three years ago, I travelled to the south of India. To work with a brand, it's important for me to like the people who run it, and I love Indians. 

**Y**ou can't typecast Eric Giroud. On the one hand, this independent Swiss product designer is a conservative revivalist. Consider his take on the elegant 1770 Manufacture Royale: a modern jig on a classic timepiece. On the other hand, he can be a mad genius who works beyond the parameters of conventional wristwatch design. Remember his work on MB&F's sick 3D Horological Machines, or the avant-garde Harry Winston Opus 9 and Opus 11?

Brands know the real money is in design these days – there hasn't been any groundbreaking technical innovation since George Daniels created the co-axial movement four decades ago. Which is why Giroud's the go-to guy for some of the biggest names in the industry, from Tissot to Swarovski.

We recently caught up with the watch designer for a chat.

