



JAEGER-LECOULTRE REINFORCES THE ALLIANCE OF FINE WATCHMAKING AND HIGH JEWELLERY WITH TWO NEW 101 MODELS

Introducing two new High Jewellery watches for 2020, Jaeger-LeCoultre places its Calibre 101 in the spotlight again. The two entirely original designs reaffirm the unique alliance between high jewellery and fine watchmaking made possible by this exceptional mechanism.

Originally conceived and developed for jewellery watches and introduced in 1929 by La Grande Maison, Calibre 101 revolutionised feminine watchmaking – its minuscule size and baguette shape offering new realms of aesthetic freedom to designers. Developed half a century before the advent of computer-aided design and production technology, Calibre 101 is a remarkable feat of miniaturisation. At 14mm long, less than 5mm wide and weighing barely one gram, the tiny, hand-wound calibre remains the smallest mechanical movement in the world. It is also one of the world's oldest movements that continues to be in production.

Over the years, Calibre 101 has appeared in jewellery watches by Jaeger-LeCoultre under its name, as well as in creations by other great Maisons. These rare timepieces have graced the wrists of exceptional women, including Queen Elizabeth II, who wore one – a gift from France's Président– for her coronation in 1953.

New expressions of femininity

For the two new diamond-set timepieces, Jaeger-LeCoultre's in-house artistic team has taken a jewellery-led approach – first, designing the forms of the bracelets and the style of gem-setting, then integrating the cases and movements into the designs. Whereas designing a watch normally takes the opposite approach, beginning with the case and then creating bracelets or straps to complement it.

Both bracelets adhere faithfully to the classical high jewellery codes and are composed of pink gold set with diamonds – using only stones classified IF to VVS. However, the designs are utterly different in both form and character, emphasising the creative freedom allowed by the diminutive Calibre 101.

Snowdrop

Inspired by the white bell-shaped flowers that are able to grow through a thin layer of snow in the Vallée de Joux, the manchette-style Snowdrop exudes delicate femininity. A circle of pear-shaped diamonds surrounds the dial to form a flower, and waves of diamonds repeat the petal pattern in perfect symmetry,



all the way around the bracelet. Jaeger-LeCoultre's designers chose a 'griffe' setting for the diamonds, which minimises the metal's presence and allows light to pass through the stones from all angles. This intensifies the spark of the watch, creating an impression that the diamonds could almost be floating on the surface of the bracelet.

With 904 diamonds, of which 204 are pear-shaped and the remainder brilliant-cut (for a total of 20.9 carats), the gem-setting work alone represents 130 hours of work by the jewellery artisans of the Manufacture Jaeger-LeCoultre. As seen from its profile, the bracelet's structure is supported by two bands of gold, each of them grain-set with diamonds – a linear setting technique in which tiny beads of gold are pulled up from the surface of the metal and pushed over the stone to secure it.

Bangle

The Bangle watch is an altogether bolder expression of femininity, inspired by the graceful geometry of Art Deco and the strong forms of 20th-Century Modernism. A dynamic interplay of symmetry and asymmetry, the bracelet is set with 996 diamonds (for a total 19.7 carats), graduated in size to emphasise the sweeping curves of the design. The artisans have combined the griffe (144 diamonds) and grain setting (852 diamonds) techniques to heighten the diamond's three-dimensional effect and maximise the play of light.

Rows of grain-set diamonds highlight the gold bands that run along both sides of the bracelet, supporting its structure. The bracelet needs no clasp as it delicately opens with a simple twist of its two sides.

Calibre 101

As watchmaking became increasingly sophisticated from the late 19th century onwards, Jaeger-LeCoultre developed new solutions to many horological challenges – including miniaturisation. Among the Maison's innovations were the diminutive LeCoultre Calibre 7HP, introduced in 1880 for small enamelled and gem-set watches; and LeCoultre Calibre 6EB, introduced in 1908, which measured barely more than 1cm square.

Appearing in 1929, Calibre 101 represents the apotheosis of this quest to merge accurate timekeeping with tiny dimensions, conclusively demonstrating Jaeger-LeCoultre's mastery of micro-mechanical engineering. Rather than having its components set on a single plate, Calibre 101 adopted the "stacked" dual-level architecture first developed by the Manufacture for the Duoplan movement in 1925. The escapement is set on one plane, the barrel and cogs on another – and the mainspring is wound by a flat crown set into the base of the case.

Now more than 90 years old, the movement has benefited over the years from many improvements in materials and machining, but its dimensions and architecture remain unchanged. The present, fourth-generation movement, Calibre 101/4 has 98 components (compared with the original 78), measures 14



mm x 4.8 mm, with a thickness of 3.4 mm (a volume of 0.2 cm³), and weighs barely one gram. Its balance wheel oscillates at 21,600 vibrations per hour (3 Hertz frequency) and the mainspring provides a power reserve of 33 hours.

Due to the tiny scale, each of the components must be custom-produced and adjusted – making every Calibre 101 unique. Only a handful of watchmakers at the Jaeger-LeCoultre Manufacture have ever mastered the skills necessary to produce and assemble movements at such a microscopic scale. Consequently, only a few dozen can be produced each year to grace the wrists of exceptional women.

Specifications:

101 Snowdrop

Case size: 18.35 x 5.98 mm

Movement: Calibre 101 – manually wound, with 33 hours of power reserve

Functions: Hours, Minutes

Dial: Silvered opaline

Bracelet: Pink gold set with 904 diamonds, including brilliant-cut and 204 pear-shaped stones for 20.9 carats

Reference: Q2882201

101 Bangle

Case size: 18.35 x 5.98 mm

Movement: Calibre 101 – manually wound, with 33 hours of power reserve

Functions: Hours, Minutes

Dial: Silvered opaline

Bracelet: Pink gold set with 996 diamonds for 19,7 carats

Reference: Q2892201

Jaeger-LeCoultre: HOME OF FINE WATCHMAKING SINCE 1833

Located in the calm, serene setting of the Vallée de Joux, our Home offers a unique sense of belonging. It is here, inspired by the exceptional landscapes of the Jura Mountains, guided by an unquenchable inner fire, that La Grande Maison gets its soul. With all crafts under one roof within the Manufacture, watchmakers, engineers, designers, artisans work together to give birth to fine watchmaking creations. Driven by a compelling energy and a spirit of collective invention that daily inspires the commitment of each and every member of our family, we cultivate our understated sophistication and technical creativity. This same spirit has powered the creation of more than 1200 calibres since 1833 and made Jaeger-LeCoultre the Watchmaker's Watchmaker.