



Manufacturing meets
finishing meets innovation
at the house of Bovet

Beautiful Challenge

BY KEITH W. STRANDBERG

WITH ITS OWN MANUFACTURE IN THE SWISS JURA, producing and assembling some of the world's most complicated in-house movements and making its own balance springs—an achievement that only a handful of companies in the watch industry can claim—Bovet Fleurier is a rare watch company indeed. Beyond mechanics, Bovet pays acute attention to the finishing and decoration of individual components. And beyond that, Bovet carries on the tradition of its founder through continuing innovation within the framework of heritage-honoring designs. According to owner operator Pascal Raffy, all three of these elements are absolute necessities if Bovet is going to thrive and fulfill its mission of perpetuating traditional watchmaking skills.

Bovet's Virtuoso Tourbillon
in rose gold, from \$270,000

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By choice and by design, Bovet is a fiercely independent and self-reliant manufacture. Raffy explains, “When I became sole owner of Bovet in 2001, it was clear that there was only one rightful place for such a legend, and that is the place it has always occupied; it has always been a house manufacturing exceptional timepieces embellished by the sophistication of their decoration. Respect for the history of the House of Bovet and for the unrivalled expertise of its craftsmen are fundamental values that have sustained the manufacture for many decades—some of them difficult—and they guarantee that it will prosper and perpetuate traditional watchmaking skills. My sole aim has always been to consolidate our expertise and to pass on our passion for the watchmaking arts to future generations, safeguarding and nurturing skills and traditions that have been threatened by industrialization and globalization.”

THE SPECIALIST’S SPECIALIST

Some companies in the watch industry specialize in design. Others become expert at manufacturing movements. Other companies concentrate on high complications. Others focus on high-level finishing. Still others pride themselves on their decorative techniques, including miniature painting and enameling. Bovet does it all. The comprehensive approach to watchmaking is part of its heritage. “Eduard Bovet



Owner Pascal Raffy, fine dial finishing and hairspring work at Bovet’s manufacture, Dimier 1738



Bovet’s Amadeo Amadeo Skeleton Tourbillon in rose gold, from \$224,300

Outposts AND Inroads

SIGNALING THE IMPORTANCE OF THE US MARKET, Bovet is opening its first US boutique this fall at 50 Central Park South in New York City. It is the fourth Bovet boutique worldwide, following openings in Moscow, Baku and Berlin. Taking a space on the ground floor of the iconic Ritz-Carlton Hotel, opposite Central Park, the Bovet 1822 boutique will feature a brand new collection of timepieces, specifically designed for this shop and unavailable anywhere else. This limited edition of 50 timepieces will feature commemorative engraving celebrating the opening. “I am proud to bring the House of Bovet 1822 to New York, where collectors will be able to explore and discover these exceptional creations. I warmly thank Bovet’s long-time partners Jeffrey Khalaf and Michael Rosenberg of the Timepiece Collection for their invaluable contribution to this endeavor,” says Bovet’s owner Pascal Raffy. “The US market occupies a special place in our hearts because it is one of our historical markets and because, every day, we see a deeper appreciation of our timepieces among American collectors.”

*“The most beautiful challenge
will also always remain
the human dimension of
our success.”* —PASCAL RAFFY

is recognized for having joined together chronometric performance and the decorative arts like no one else before him, and this continues to be proven today by the appeal, for collectors, of Bovet’s 19th century pocket watches,” explains Raffy. “Bovet has held a unique place in the world of fine watchmaking since 1822 because we continue to cultivate the excellence that characterizes the timepieces we manufacture.”

Raffy is quick to emphasize the virtuosity of Bovet’s artisans, who work in ateliers spread throughout the watchmaking region. Precision tourbillon movements are manufactured at Bovet’s wholly-owned Dimier facility in Tramelan, Switzerland. The assembly and regulation of new timepieces takes place in a converted medieval fortification—the Bovet Castle—in Môtiers, Switzerland. And only the most accomplished artisans work on the one-of-a-kind miniature paintings and the other incredible enamel work, for which Bovet is so well known.

VIRTUOSITY ON DISPLAY

All that Bovet does is on full display in the newly introduced Amadeo® Virtuoso. The Virtuoso is a five-day tourbillon with jumping hour display, retrograde minutes and power reserve indicator. On the reverse side, a second dial displays the time in the usual manner, via hours and minutes hands. These twin time displays, positioned on opposite sides of the movement—as well as opposite ends of a single axis—require a special technique, known as reverse hand fitting, and Bovet achieves it with aplomb.

The majority of the 44-mm timepiece is open, so the wearer can clearly see the spinning tourbillon and other inner workings of the timepiece, all of which exhibit an incredibly high level of finishing. “This beautifully hand-engraved movement is only fixed to the inner rim of the case by the stem of the crown and two clamp points at 3

*Nineteenth-century Mille
Fleurs pocket watch by Bovet*



The Fleurier Quality Foundation—certified Grand Complication Rising Star, a unique piece



and 9, which enhances the impression that this delicate movement is floating above the tourbillon cage inside the case,” Raffy details. Another special feature of this reversible timepiece has to do with symmetry. “In order to reflect the original design of a 19th century pocket watch, the Virtuoso timepiece has a new case, of which both front and back sapphire crystals are dome-shaped,” says Raffy. Additionally, the Virtuoso is fitted with the Amadeo® convertible system, allowing the timepiece to be worn on the wrist, displayed as a table clock or attached to a chain as a pocket watch.

ACHIEVEMENT AND CHALLENGE

Another reversible convertible piece using the Amadeo® system is especially noteworthy since it has recently become the first Bovet timepiece to be certified by the Fleurier Quality Foundation. The Bovet Grand Complication

Rising Star—manufactured entirely in Bovet’s Dimier facility—is a tourbillon with seven-day power reserve and two independent time zone displays with day/night indication. Certification by the Fleurier Quality Foundation requires that the movement be COSC-certified and that the completed timepiece passes a battery of chronometry and reliability tests. The timepiece must also be 100 percent Swiss-made and impeccably finished and decorated.

With its mastery of all of these elements, Bovet is well positioned to survive the slings and arrows of another 191 years, as a strong, independent house. And as it does so, it will be because of the talented individuals who dedicate themselves to Bovet’s mission. “Knowing that true luxury requires a lot of passion, inspiration, time and skill, our vision is to be able to make all of our movements in house, to succeed in that beautiful challenge every day, and to create a perfect harmony of understanding between our engineers, our watchmakers and our craftsmen,” Raffy says. “The most beautiful challenge will also always remain the human dimension of our success.”

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Virtuoso Tourbillon unique piece with miniature Madonna and Child painting on the reverse side, price upon request

