



PETER ROBERTS

GRAND COMPLICATION 5

THE "CONCENTRIQUE" SERIES



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THE PETER ROBERTS "CONCENTRIQUE" WATCH - Grand Complication 5

ABOUT PETER ROBERTS

Peter Roberts has long been known to enthusiasts and collectors in south-eastern England's horological circles. His ability to salvage and restore rare and complicated watches is enough to make collectors flock to him, and they try to keep him all to themselves. What made Roberts a legend, though, is the watch he produced to complete his studies - the horological equivalent of a Master's thesis. One look at it, and you know that here is a watchmaker who can be entrusted with anything from a 1930s Rolex Prince to a Vacheron minute repeater.

Roberts is a truly British form of eccentric, fascinated by all types of mechanical devices. He never seems able to break away entirely from a slightly-dotty-professor mode of behaviour; a simple question invariably inspires a discourse which walks the enquirer through the whole history of the subject. And despite his superior knowledge, he never exhibits even a tiny trace of superiority nor aloofness.

It started when Roberts became the first British student to attend the Watches Of Switzerland Technical And Educational Program (WOSTEP). Perhaps driven by his status as the lone Englishman at WOSTEP, Roberts - with all the arrogance of youth - chose as his final project to produce a watch he'd seen in a generic text on chronographs.



Original Watch - 1972



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The book contained drawings of every dial type and configuration, the final illustration showing five hands from the centre shaft. His instructor told him that it was only theoretical, and that, to his knowledge, no watch had ever been made with more than four hands from the centre.

Undeterred, Roberts used the Valjoux 726 - one of the finest manual chronograph movements ever made - as its base, and turned it into a certified chronometer with five hands indicating hours, minutes, seconds, date and a second time zone. It featured screw-down crowns on the winder and both pushers, and a mineral glass back - uncommon in 1972. What has enhanced his reputation among the cognoscenti is the knowledge that the number of hands on Roberts' chronograph has only been matched commercially by very few products from large concerns, such as the Maurice Lacroix Cinq Aiguilles, launched in 2000, and the Ulysse Nardin astronomical watches.

Roberts' achieved Fellowship of the British Horological Institute, followed by a career that includes the post of Official Watchmaker with Rolex England from 1972-1975, Head of Showroom Repairs at both Garrard Crown Jewellers and Watches of Switzerland in London, and 13 years as a lecturer training a new generation of watchmakers. His students included Peter Speake-Marin and Stephen Forsey, now makers of eponymous watches of great repute.

Roberts is now a consultant to a number of highly-regarded British and Swiss watch brands. He still repairs and restores watches for a limited circle of dealers and collectors, yet he finds the time to indulge in non-watch passions: he keeps a 1972 Lancia Fulvia for his daily transport, listens only to all-valve hi-fi and reel-to-reel tape, and swears by a Leica M6.



Original Watch - 1972



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Having produced the first-ever wristwatch with five hands from the centre, in 1971/1972, Roberts has been implored by those who have seen the “Concentrique” to make another. In part, the problem was a lack of Valjoux movements suitable for the task. Roberts and his wife Marie-Louise, who is also his best friend and business partner, had not entertained the idea in any seriousness.

That changed after a meeting with a watch manufacturer who, impressed by what he saw, revealed to them that he had sufficient raw Valjoux movements of the type required, enough to manufacture a limited run, but unlikely ever to be repeated. This movement was last made in 1974, Roberts observing that, “The watch is based on new old stock - very rare. We have been searching for these movements for years.”

After decades of resisting pleas to sell his own chronograph or to put it into production, Peter Roberts has announced the release of the Peter Roberts Grand Complication 5. It will be offered in a limited edition of only 40 examples in stainless steel, with four watches to be produced in rose gold. The quantities mark the four decades since Roberts made his first five-hand “Concentrique”.

Manufacturing unique pieces in such small numbers is difficult, and can be prohibitively expensive. To realise the first commercially-available timepiece to bear his name, Roberts has called on contacts in both Switzerland and England to enable these watches to be produced.

Inside the Peter Roberts Grand Complication 5 is a completely reworked movement based on the Valjoux Calibre 88, each individually completed by Peter. Beyond the base ébauche, every part of the “Concentrique” complication, through to the case, the dial, the hands and the crown is a unique design conceived by Roberts for the Grand Complication 5 watch. All of its brass parts are hand-finished, the plates hand-bevelled, polished, grained and gold-plated. All steel parts have their top surfaces hand-grained, with edges broken and hand-burnished.

Because Roberts is passionate about having spent his life in the horological profession, and having his education and training in both England and Switzerland, all parts of the Grand Complication watch come from these two countries.

This element of Peter Roberts' creations is symbolised in the brand logo. Just as he devised a five-handed watch to complete his studies, Roberts has again turned to five hands for this timepiece, powered by a unique design he calls the “Concentrique” mechanism. It is a true “Grand Complication.”





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SPECIFICATIONS

FUNCTIONS:

Time of day, including hours, minutes, seconds
Full Chronograph, including seconds, minute recorder,
hour recorder
24 Hour GMT indicator + second time zone with
bezel
Full calendar, with date, day, month
Moonphase

MOVEMENT:

Valjoux 88 base – Hand finished
“Concentrique” – unique mechanism
Column wheel
Manual winding
Power reserve: 46 hours
19 Jewels
Diameter: 13 ″ 29.5 mm
Height: 7.35 mm

CASE:

Diameter: 42 mm
Steel case: Stainless steel and bronze
Gold case: 18K rose and white gold
Crystal: Sapphire with anti-reflection coatings
Back: Sapphire crystal
Water resistance: 100 metres
Strap: 22 mm Autumn Brown – Finest quality leather –
hand-stitched

DIAL:

Three subsidiary dials displaying – Running seconds/
minute recorder/hour recorder
Main Colour: Black + Super-LumiNova®
Sub-dials colour: Silver

HANDS (8) AND COLOURS:

Running seconds/minute recorder/hour recorder: Black
Running hour/minute hand: Red + Super-LumiNova®
24 Hour hand (GMT): Yellow + Super-LumiNova®
Date hand: Orange
Chronograph seconds: White + Super-LumiNova®
Aperture displays: Day + Month + Moonphase



The Grand Complication 5 will only be available to a select group of 40 clients and collectors.



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