



# WELCOME TO THE FAMILY

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The launch of a new Patek Philippe collection is a rare and precious occurrence, and the latest watch design to spring from the imagination of Thierry Stern is no different. Meet the Cubitus: cousin of the Aquanaut and Nautilus, and a groundbreaking elegant sports watch in its own right





“You want something new and you’re trying to come up with ideas and suddenly, boom, you say, ‘Okay, let’s do something different, something that isn’t round.’” The way that Thierry Stern explains his inventive process, it sounds so natural, so easy...and for him, I suppose it is. It happens that one morning he wakes up and decides that what Patek Philippe needs is an elegant square sports watch, so he sets about creating one.

“I think it is important to think outside the box, to leave your comfort zone, to think of something that you would not find in a marketing brief,” says Thierry. “It must be your own dream, your own idea.”

It is a warm, early-summer afternoon in Geneva. Sunlight bathes the gracious and lofty suite of reception rooms that occupy part of the top floor of the Plan-les-Ouates manufacture. Beyond the double doors of this elegant suite, the hive-like hum of daily business at one of the world’s most prestigious watch brands continues as it would on any other day. The whole floor bustles with hundreds of people, from delivery crews to a delegation visiting from Korea. They chatter among themselves, unaware of the events unfolding just a few meters away.

Sitting across from Thierry Stern, I find myself in the curious position of being one of the first people beyond Plan-les-Ouates to see Patek Philippe’s new collection. Those four words are somewhat inadequate when it comes to conveying the importance of such a generational event, and they are words

## THE CALIBER, AS WITH THE CASE DESIGN, IS SIMULTANEOUSLY FAMILIAR AND GROUNDBREAKING

seldom heard in this context, because Patek Philippe rarely launches an entirely new family collection. In fact, we must look back to the end of the previous century before we encounter a similar event when, in 1999, Patek Philippe released the Twenty-4. But it is to an event two years earlier, the 1997

birth of the Aquanaut, that Thierry refers as he picks up one of the three straight-sided watches on the tray in front of him and holds it level to better appreciate its slender profile. “This,” he announces, “is Cubitus.”

“I would describe it as a classic sports chic watch that you can use on every occasion,” Thierry says. “I like it because I can wear it whether I am in jeans, a swimsuit, or a suit. This watch will follow me everywhere, the same as the Nautilus and the Aquanaut.”

Thierry explains that he sees this new model “as a cousin of the Nautilus and the Aquanaut.” The family resemblance is hard to miss. Although the watch’s design is undeniably rectilinear in its execution, its relation to the Nautilus is similarly undeniable. Seeing a Cubitus for the first time is a disorienting experience. The brain is so accustomed to registering certain indelible design signatures and associating them with the Nautilus that their echoes in the Cubitus deceive the eye, which for a mere fraction of a second believes it is looking at a Nautilus before adjusting to the fact that this is an entirely new watch.

Thierry elaborates further on the familial ties between the Patek Philippe collections

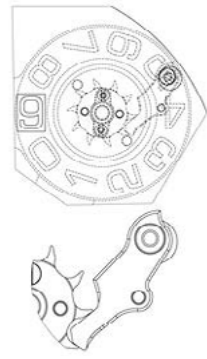


Previous pages: three new 45 mm-wide watches launch the Cubitus collection: the steel REF. 5821/1A (top left), which has an olive green sunburst dial; the platinum Instantaneous Grand Date REF. 5822 with a navy blue strap and blue sunburst dial (right); and the steel and rose gold REF. 5821/1AR with a blue sunburst dial (bottom left). Opposite: the slender REF. 5821/1AR has an 8.3 mm profile. Its case is built in

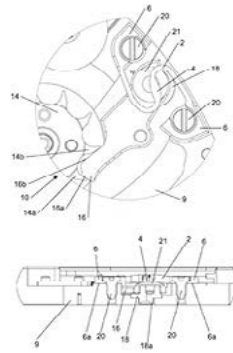
two pieces and has a screw-down crown. Above: the REF. 5821/1AR features the same horizontal relief dial pattern as on the REF. 5822 platinum model. There are contrasting polished and satin-brushed finishes on the bracelet’s central and main links. The date aperture frame is in rose gold. The rose gold baton hour and minute hands and applied baton indexes have a white luminescent coating

PHOTOGRAPH: JEAN DANIEL MEYER

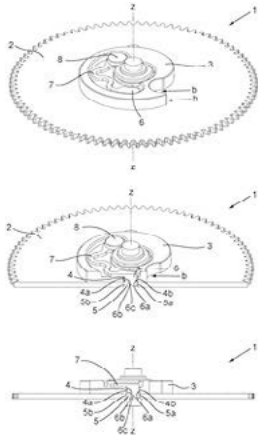




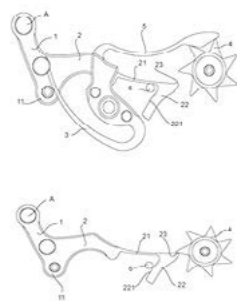
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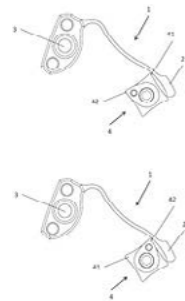
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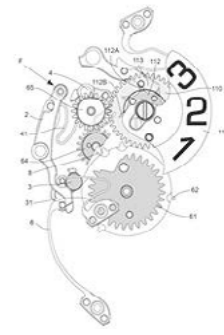
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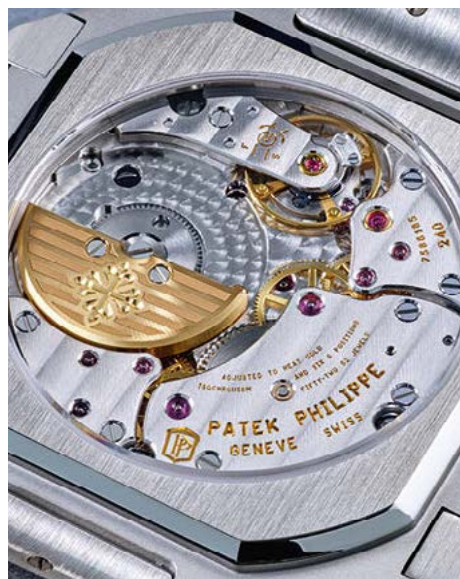


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with the arrival of this new elegant sports model. “Whereas the Aquanaut is the first watch you give to a sporty novice who wants to wear a Patek Philippe, this is one for somebody who already knows a little bit about the brand. When they look at it, they will immediately see that a lot of work has gone into it.”

As is the case with its famous cousin (the Aquanaut), the Cubitus’s bezel, with the same combination of satined and polished surfaces, determines the initial aesthetic impact of the piece. The lateral attachments that characterize the two-part construction of the Cubitus protrude from the sides of the watch, although they are straight-sided rather than exhibiting the familiar gentle curvature of the Nautilus. The baton hands and indexes remind one of the Nautilus, and the horizontal relief of the blue or olive green sunburst dial is similarly familiar. Two of the three Cubitus watches are equipped with a metal bracelet, which is plainly that of the Nautilus albeit adapted to the dimensions and the geometry of the new models.

And yet, all that said, this is a new watch, a very new watch with its own strong identity. “It is a watch that will be easy to spot and identify,” says Thierry, although this is



Inset: the new self-winding caliber 240 PS C1 J LU is ultra-thin and can be seen through the sapphire crystal caseback of the REF. 5822. The off-center micro-rotor in 22k gold bears the same horizontal relief as the dial. Top: six patent applications were filed for this caliber, relating to mechanisms for (clockwise from top left): adjusting the indications disks with the flexible locking plate to align the

date aperture disks (two patents); the cam arm wheel with a dual-function spring, which guarantees precision in the instantaneous jump of the date at midnight; a dual-lever correction system that improves the manual date change; the tangential brake that absorbs the surplus energy when the date changes from 31 to 01; the flexible day corrector, which allows the user to alter the day at any time

provided, of course, that you have the rare opportunity to see one being worn. With production numbers in the hundreds, he admits that these watches will be very desirable. “I would say that during the first three years there will be a hunt for these watches. We are not going to limit production,” Thierry continues, “but they will be limited because of the production. It is the same with all our watches. We can produce the finest watches in the world, but we cannot increase production beyond what is physically possible. You will understand if you take a close look at the details of the case, the movement, and the dial,” he says. “Then you will appreciate the work of a real watch company.”

Two of the watches in the new collection are time-and-date models and have been fitted with the trusty self-winding 26-330 s c movement. The REF. 5821/1A is cased in steel with an olive green sunburst dial and the REF. 5821/1AR is in steel and rose gold with a blue sunburst dial. However, the platinum-cased Grand Date REF. 5822, which has a navy blue composite strap, houses a new movement that is based on the caliber 240, the slimline self-winding movement with planetary micro-rotor that was launched in

IN DETAIL: THE INSTANTANEOUS GRAND DATE, DAY, AND MOON PHASES REF. 5822P



A navy blue composite strap with textile patterning is attached to the watch by distinctive hinged lugs

The square-with-rounded-corners case of the platinum REF. 5822 (45 mm in diameter, measured ten o'clock to four o'clock) has contrasting finishes that highlight the innovative design. The top of the case and bezel are vertically satin brushed while the bezel's bevel and the sides of the caseband and lateral attachments are polished

The double-aperture large date function found at twelve o'clock is perfectly level due to its coplanar disk design. The new instantaneous jump mechanism means that the date change at midnight takes just 18 milliseconds

The instantaneous jump mechanism applies to the moon-phase and day-of-the-week indicators as well as the large date function, so any changes in all three take place simultaneously. On the snailed sub-dial between six and eight o'clock, the indicators are transfer-printed in white

The small seconds, on a snailed sub-dial between four and five o'clock, are in white to remain legible against the blue sunburst dial and are indicated by a white gold hand

Inset under the lug at six o'clock, a diamond offers the usual Patek Philippe indication that this is a platinum case, this time baguette cut to align with the case shape





Opposite: matching cufflinks accompany each of the models in the new Cubitus collection. They are paired (see clockwise from top) with the REF. 5821/1AR; Instantaneous Grand Date REF. 5822P; and REF. 5821/1A.

The cufflinks' shape and material echo the respective watchcase, and the centers boast the same color and horizontal relief pattern as the corresponding watch dial, a distinctive feature of the new Cubitus models

## “PATEK PHILIPPE’S NEW COLLECTION” ARE WORDS SELDOM HEARD, BECAUSE THE COMPANY RARELY LAUNCHES AN ENTIRELY NEW FAMILY COLLECTION

1977. The platinum Cubitus showcases this latest Patek Philippe caliber 240 PS CI J LV.

The caliber, as with the case design, is simultaneously familiar and groundbreaking. Wearers of the Nautilus REF. 5712 will immediately recognize the lower part of the REF. 5822P Cubitus’s dial, which features small seconds between four and five o’clock and a moon-phase indicator at seven o’clock. However, the upper half is completely new. Gone is the power-reserve indicator between ten and eleven o’clock. Instead, in its place at twelve o’clock there is a double-aperture large date, which frees up the space around the moon phases for the days of the week.

To wearers who do not have 20/20 vision, it can seem as though watchmakers are using ever smaller numbers on date disks, so the appearance of a larger date on a Patek Philippe model is most welcome. However, this apparently straightforward rearrangement of the date display belies an immense amount of work. The number of additional components alone testifies to the magnitude of this seemingly trivial change. Whereas the movement in the REF. 5712 comprises 249 parts, there are 353 total components required to make the caliber

within the Cubitus Grand Date REF. 5822. It really is astonishing to think that this caliber features 104 additional components, and yet it is just 0.77 mm thicker than the 3.99 mm movement of its Nautilus cousin.

The Cubitus Grand Date’s functionality is not the only one of its characteristics that differs from the Nautilus’s. The delivery of its calendrical information has been refined to a degree that is barely discernible and yet so typical of Patek Philippe. The date change is instantaneous, as are the moon-phase and day indicators, all of which change at midnight in a process that lasts 0.018 seconds, so there is no discrepancy, however small, between the time and date. But this simultaneous change consumes a considerable amount of energy, and it is largely in pursuit of energy efficiency that this Cubitus model features technical refinements that are the subject of six patent applications. When considered individually, these refinements may seem insignificant, but when combined they ensure smooth running and aesthetic harmony.

It was in pursuit of aesthetic harmony that Thierry insisted the disks indicating the units and tens in the date windows

were coplanar. In general, large dates use two superposed disks, which under close examination show a slight difference of perspective. To most people this is barely, if at all, noticeable, but it bothered Thierry. So the Cubitus Grand Date features two disks of equal height, one slightly smaller disk on the left carrying the numbers 0–3 printed twice, and one on the right, numbered 0–9.

On this new watch, no detail is too small to be overlooked. For instance, the rotors are finished in a similar style to the gadrooning of the dial. Then there is the Patek Philippe tradition of setting a tiny round brilliant-cut diamond between the lugs of all platinum watches, which now include the REF. 5822. However, for this watch the diamond is baguette cut. “It’s not round, because round wouldn’t be logical on a square watch,” elaborates Thierry. He pauses, looking thoughtfully at the collection in front of him, and adds, “It is these little details that make the difference between a watch and a fine watch.” Or, in other words, the difference between a watch and a Patek Philippe. ✦



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