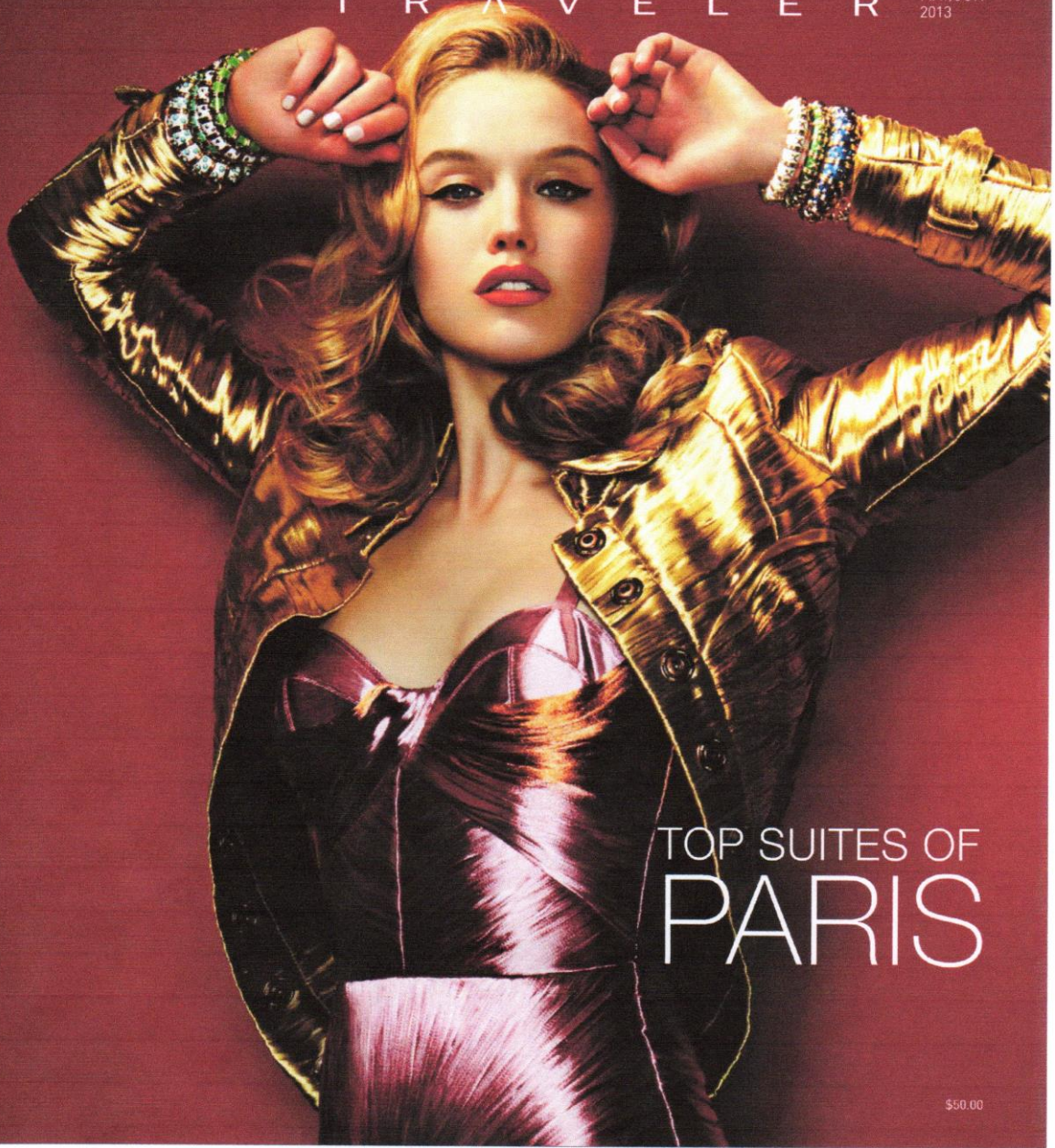


THE PRIVATE JET LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE

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LIMITED TIME

SWISS INGENUITY

For the ultra-rare and extremely unusual, look no further than these two creative independent watchmakers based in Switzerland.

BY ELIZABETH DOERR

LUDOVIC BALLOUARD HALF TIME

Ludovic Ballouard is anything but a household name, yet this 42-year-old watchmaker, originally from France, gave up his day job as one of the leading watchmakers in François-Paul Journe's atelier—Ballouard was devoted to the assembly and regulation of F.P. Journe's extraordinary *Sonnerie Souveraine*, a repeater almost without equal—four years ago to strike out on his own. And this he did in 2009, as the world's economic crisis was taking a foothold. But the moment had come for him: He felt compelled to conceive and develop his own ideas, so he took the often arduous route of the independent watchmaker.

His first watch, daringly different, debuted in 2009 and was aptly christened **Upside Down**. It created quite a stir with numerals literally positioned upside down on the dial—except for the one displaying the current hour. The idea came to him during this critical financial period, as numbers didn't seem to make any sense.

The Breton's second timepiece, **Half Time**, operates on a similar concept: All the numerals on the dial are cut in half (and thus rendered illegible), but for the one showing the current hour. The illusion remains complete as the numerals—in contrast to those of the *Upside Down*—appear to be on the same plane as the rest of the dial, and thus seemingly immobile. In reality, upon closer inspection, the numerals are painted across two black disks, which rotate when the retrograde minute hand has reached the numeral 60 and makes its lightning-quick leap back to the beginning. One disk rotates forward and the other backward. The two puzzle halves fit together at the 12 o'clock position and provide one solid, full Roman numeral depicting the current hour.

Housed in a 41mm case of platinum or 18K red gold, the playful *Half Time* was conceived and designed completely by Ballouard, who seems to double as a magician. (For production, Ballouard has one other watchmaker assisting him.) The unconventional, gold-plated, manually wound brass movement with a 36-hour power reserve is complex and simple at the same time, displaying its magic message with great finesse.

The inventive watchmaker enamored of model airplanes, who moved to Geneva in 1993 to work with Franck Muller, makes no more than 50 watches a year in his workshop just outside Geneva. *Half Time* retails for \$85,000.

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HALF TIME /
LUDOVIC BALLOUARD