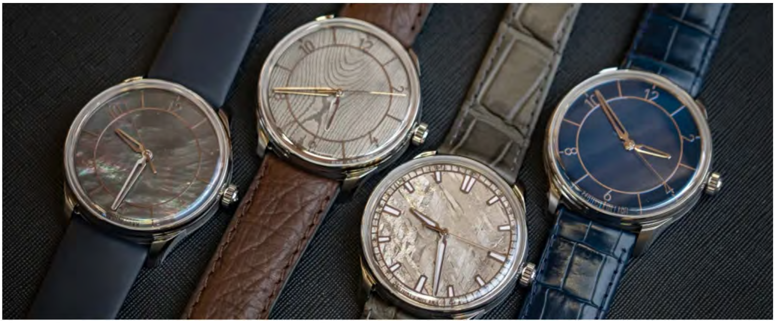
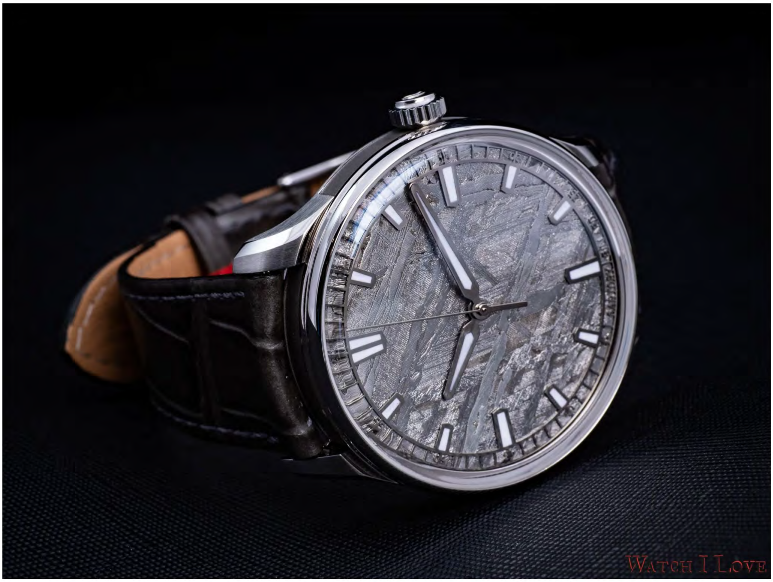


Hands-on with Sartory Billard SB04 Collection

On: 19 December 2019

Reading Time: 4 minutes

I had the pleasure to meet (again) with Armand Billard, "one half" from the Sartory Billard, during the Aurochronos Festival 2019. It was the perfect opportunity to photograph the latest collection since Baselworld was way too crowded for that. I am acquainted with their work since they released their second collection, the SB02, in 2017. This year they release the very bespoke-able SB03 and the dearest to me, the SB04. Today I will present you shortly four pieces from the Sartory Billard SB04 Collection.


WATCH I LOVE

Review Sartory Billard SB04 Collection

Don't get it wrong from the first paragraph, the SB04 collection is all about bespoke and personalised watches. The prototypes that I will present you today are just some of the possible models. They have endless (taking the absurd from the equation) possibilities for their pieces. And most important, they are always in the search for new ideas and the clients can come with their owns.

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Sartory Billard SB04 Mother of Pearl

Ludovic Sartory and Armand Billard, the brand's owners are completely against "of the shelf" solutions. They are bringing original designs, particularised for them by their suppliers and personalised for you by them.

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The article contains just some of the pictures, the rest of them can be found in the gallery (end of the article).

SARTORY BILLARD
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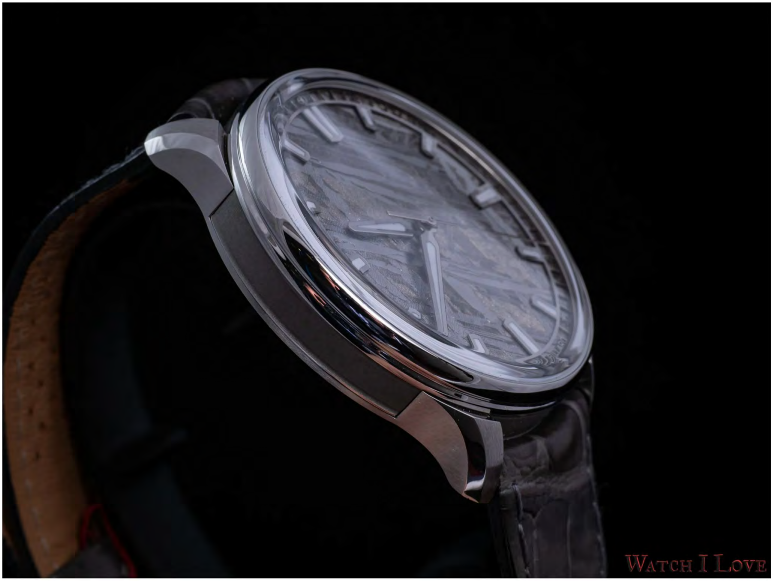
Sartory Billard case

One of the most important aspects of their philosophy is to offer their clients something special. It starts with the case. The cases are the brands' own design. The French brand work with small companies that offer limited series but high-quality products.



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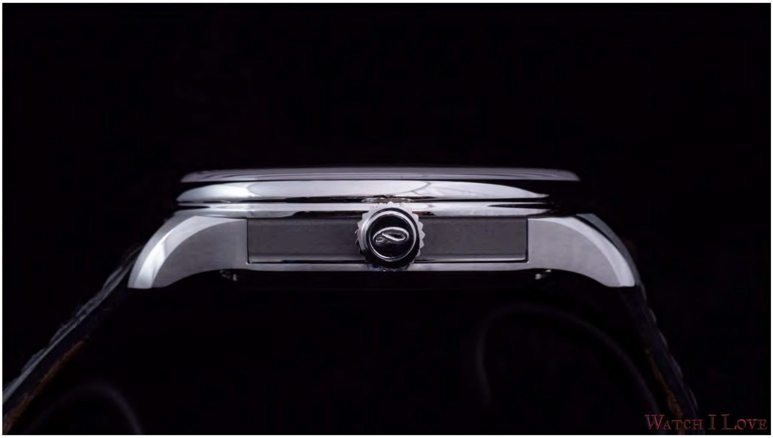
The 40mm steel case is lovely executed. An elegant combination of brushed and polished surfaces is combined with a sporty mass reduction on the caseband. This sunken surface received a satin-frost finish that makes the watch stand out on the wrist. Just t0 catch the attention. The detail does not "scream" for attention.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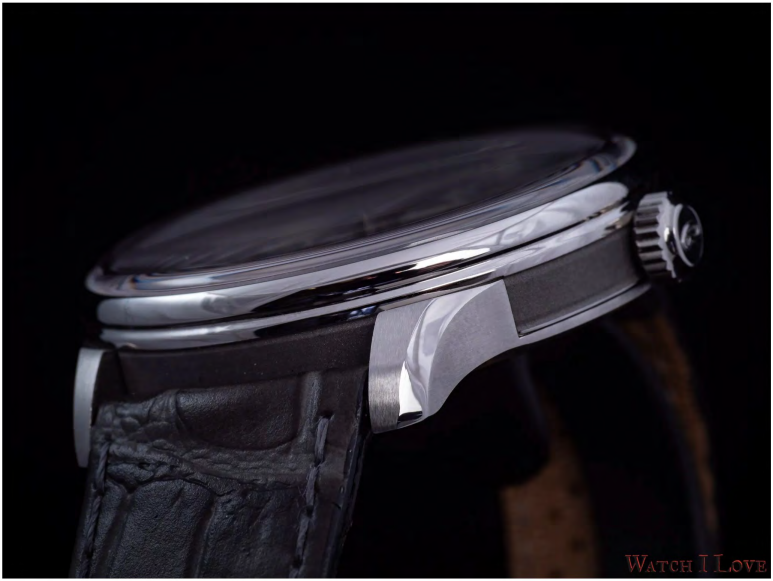
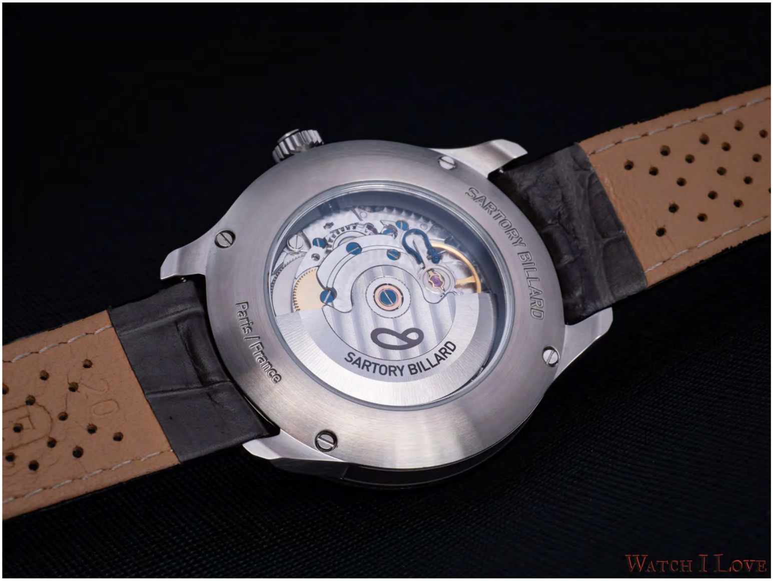
The crown is elegant. Its small dimensions get well with the watch's elegant note. The crown is personalised with the Sartory Billard logo.


Watch I Love

The curved lugs are short. They make the watch wear small and comfortable. The lugs are oversized on top, creating a nest for the gorgeous shaped and polished bezel.

The circular polished caseback is fixed with 4 screws. The see-through makes visible the personalised Swiss Made movement.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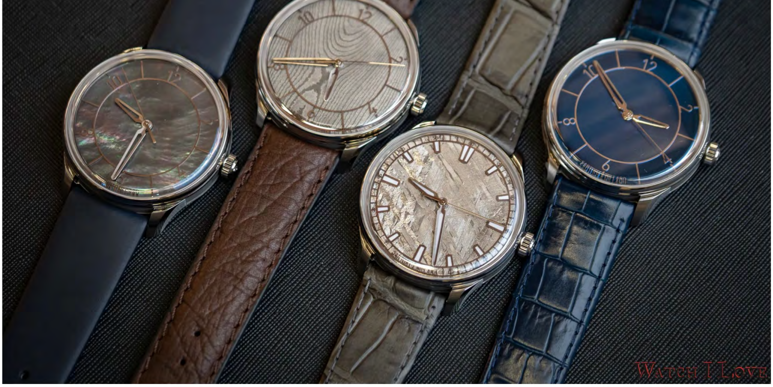
Unique by chance, unique by execution, unique by personalisation

The dials of the Sartory Billard SB04 Collection are unique. Each dial is manually worked and finished.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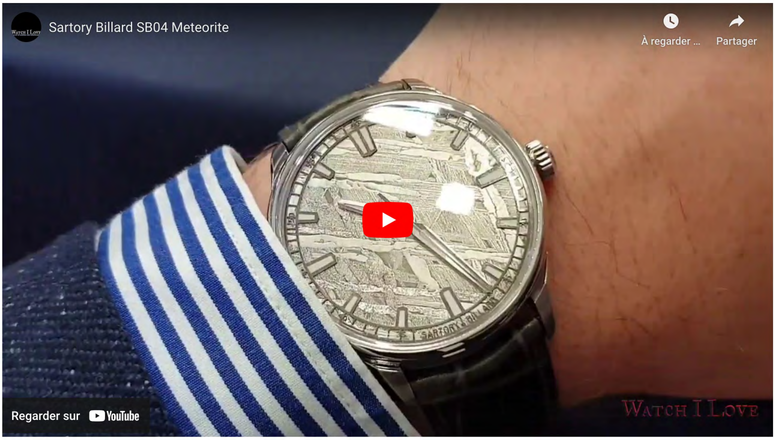
The meteorite dial texture is given by its origin. Each dial is shaped by nature. Its uniqueness is guaranteed by nature’s apparent chaos. Chaos just because we cannot understand it…


Sartory Billard SB04 Meteorite
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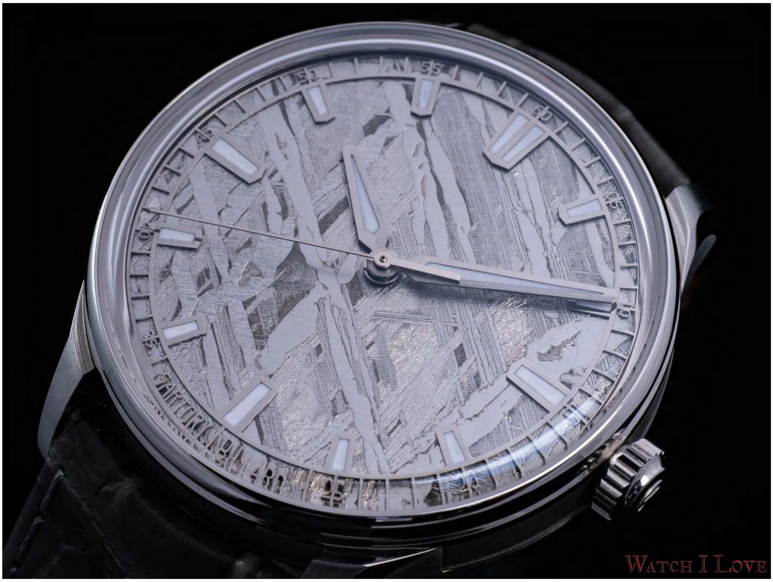
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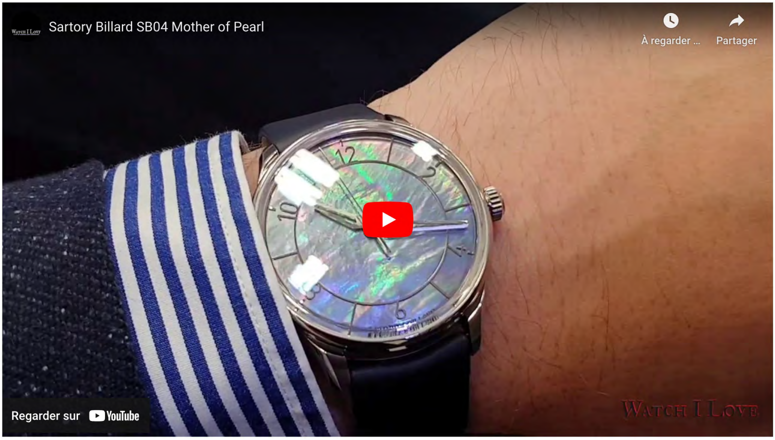
The mother of pearl dial is carefully chosen to have a spectacular but perfect appearance. Again, nature plays a major role in its originality.


Sartory Billard SB04 Mother of Pearl
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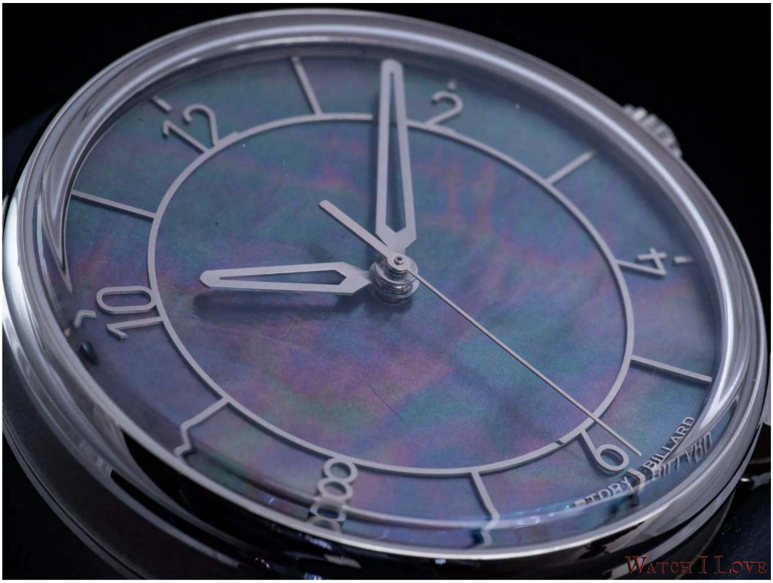
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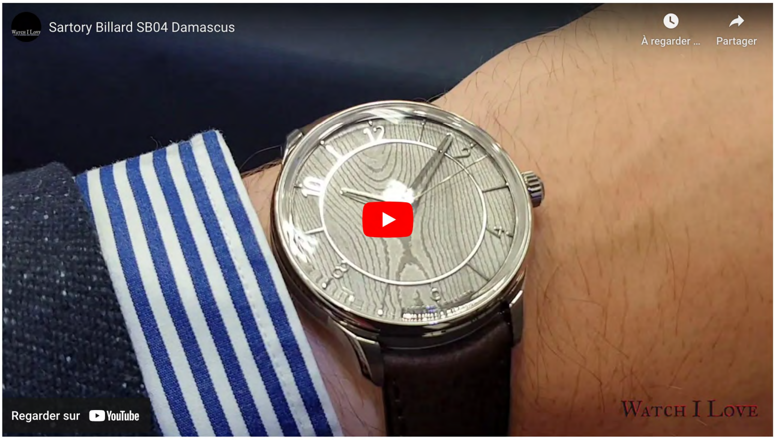
The Damascus dials are made by the famous French knifemaker Frank Souville. The technique creates dramatic steel patterns. Two"sister" dials will look similar, but just like in nature, they will have their own distinctive patterns.


Sartory Billard SB04 Damascus
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The polished titanium dials are the only ones that have the chance for a “look-alike”. But since the dials are received as “blanks” and all the polishing and the thermal bluing is done by hand, there are quite big chances that the dials will have their particularities.

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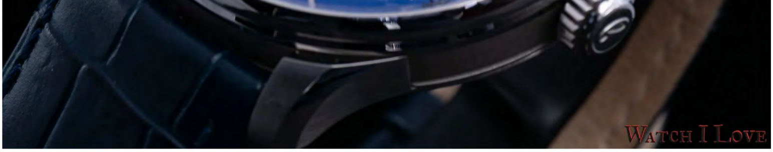
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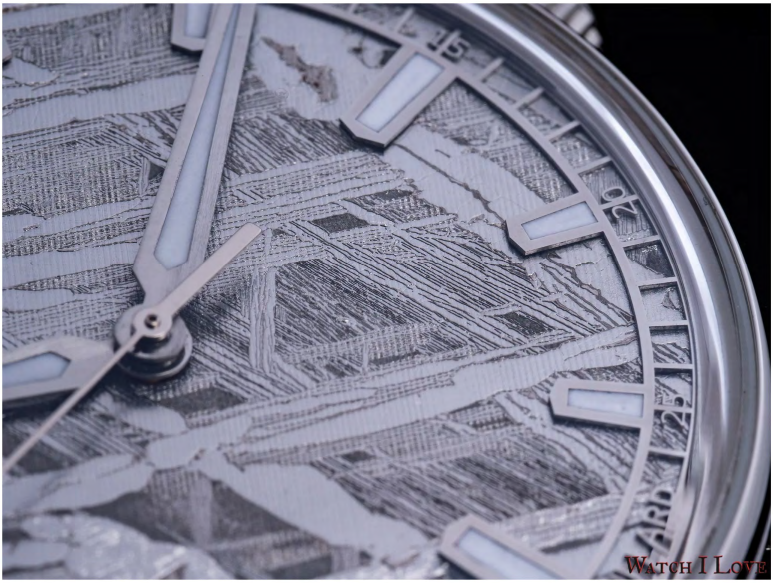
The dials are further personalised with chapter rings. Regardless of indices, Arabic numerals or other design, the dial personalisation is made in house. That means you have the possibility to choose how the time indexes are displayed.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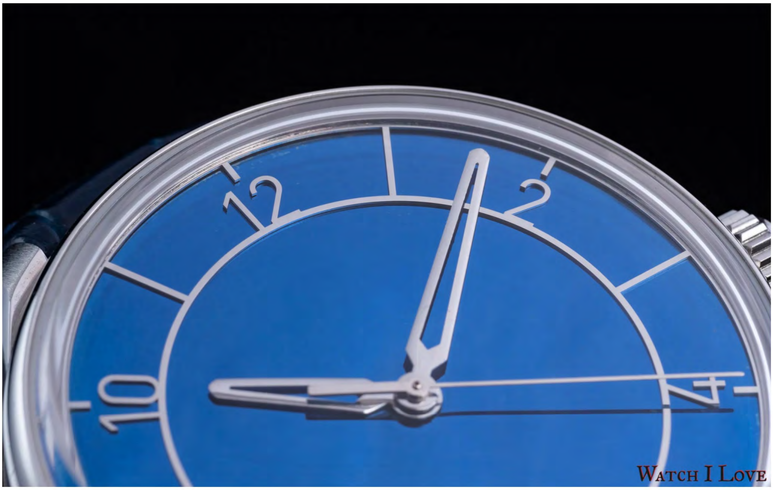
Sartory Billard manufactures their own watch hands. Cut from a piece of steel, the hands are shaped and polished in the final form by hand.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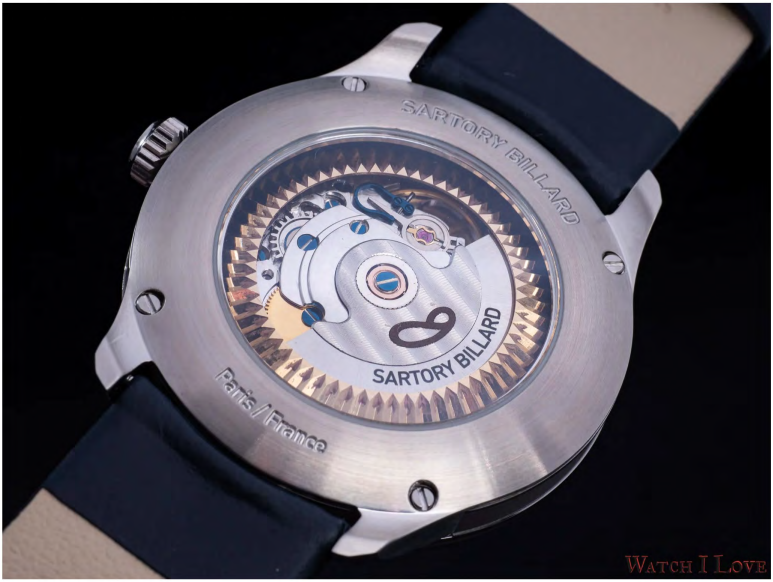
Swiss Made Movements

The French brand uses Swiss movements. Even if the ébauche movements have their own set of finishes, Sartory Billard is in continuous quest of improving and personalising the look. As an example the personalised (prototype, the shape and finish can vary) rotor visible below.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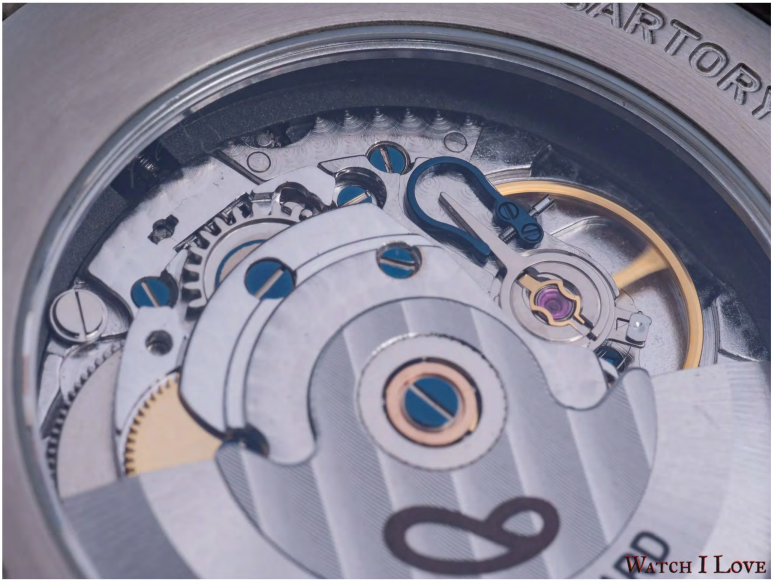
WATCH I LOVE

The movements are decorated with a subtle perlage. Blue screws keep everything in place. The rotor-weight is decorated with the brand's name and logo. The most spectacular detail is the blued swan neck. That is a lovely detail, not often seen in this price category.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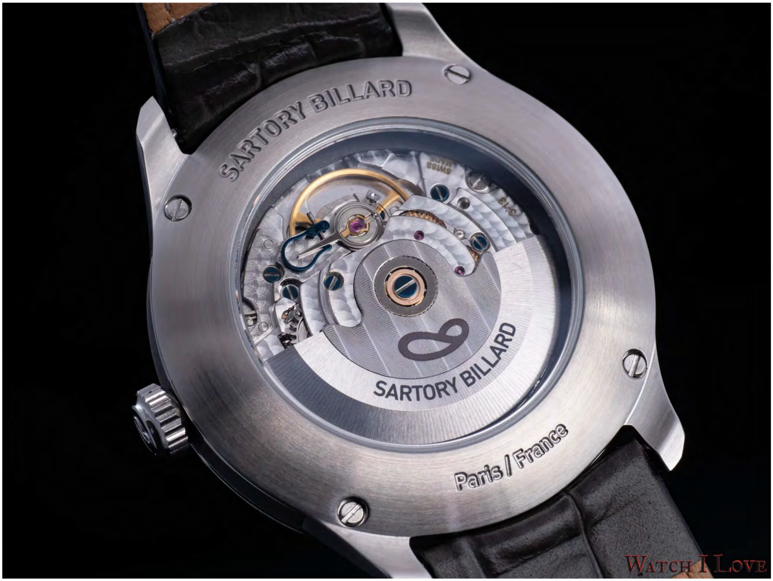
The movement is a classic 4Hz beater with 44 hours of power reserve – the STP 3-13. The bidirectional self-winding movement was left without the date module to make the dial face as pristine as possible. And I couldn't agree more. A date will spoil the dial's beauty, regardless of the material or finish.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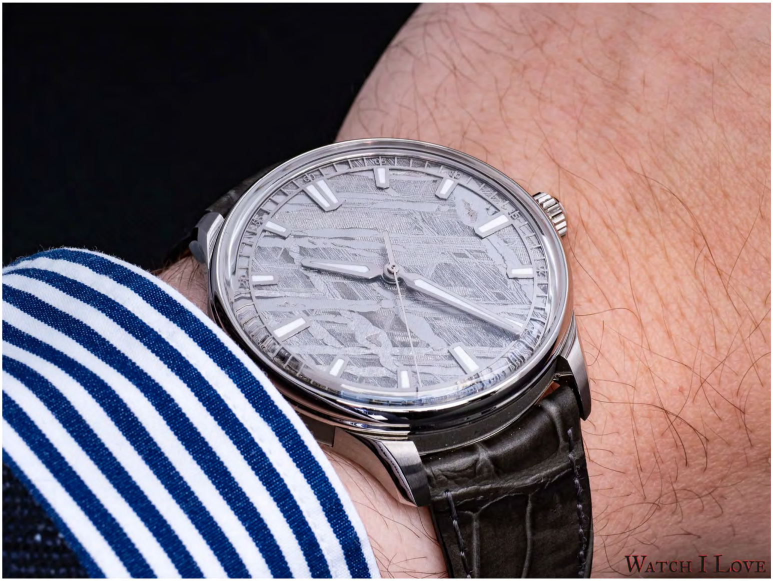
The French connection

It’s not about Gene Hackman’s staring 70’s movie. It is about two friends that make watches with passion – Ludovic Sartory and Armand Billard.


WATCH I LOVE

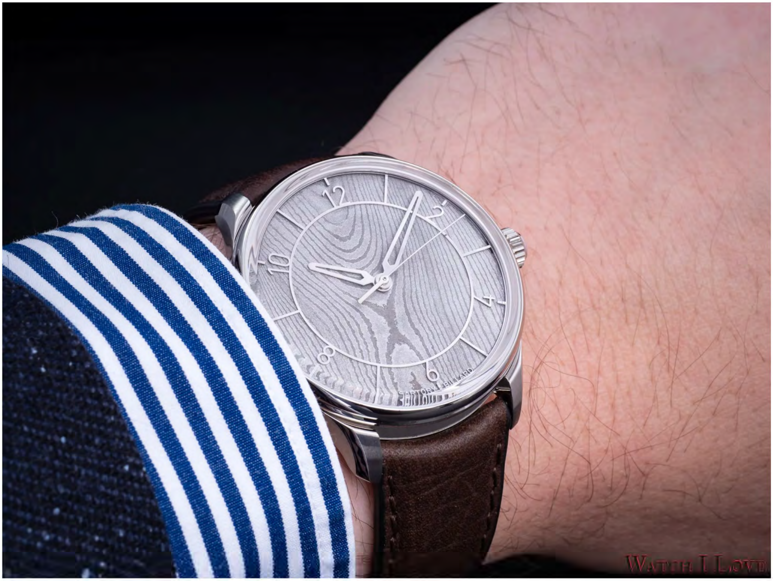
While all their collections are nice and highly personalisable, the Sartory Billard SB04 is the closest to my hearth. The watches are nicely executed. Even if some ideas are not the newest or the most spectacular (there are several meteorite, mother of pearl, Damascus, titanium dials models in the wild), their implementation is sweet and with a nice price point.

WATCH I LOVE

There is a lot of heart put into work and a lot of passion invested. You can have wild ideas and they will fight to find the right solution to have your dream watch.

WATCH I LOVE

Coming back to the presented models, the meteorite is my favourite. Maybe because of its exotic origin, but more than sure because of its look. I am impressed by the blue titanium dial. I have an idea of how much work is involved – that gives some extra points in my mind. But these are just personal preferences.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So have a look at their watches on the Sartory Billard Website and think at your own personalised French watch.

Sartory Billard SB04 Technical Specifications and Price

An automatic watch designed and assembled in France.

Dial:

- Meteorite – 4 billion old piece, discovered in the last century
- Titanium – less than 0.5mm, black polished in blued by flame
- Mother of pearl – black mother of pearl handworked
- Damascus steel – made by the famous French knifemaker Frank Souville

Movement:

- Automatic Swiss movement,
- 26 jewels,
- 4Hz.

Case:

- 316L steel case.
- Width 40mm out of crown.
- Thickness 11 mm.
- Sapphire crystal front and back

Production Lead Time:

- Time of realization 6 weeks approximately.

Price:

- Meteorite – starting at 2500€ incl. E.U. VAT / 2500US$ excl. VAT
- Titanium – starting at 3200€ incl. E.U. VAT / 3200US$ excl. VAT
- Stone or mother of pearl – starting at 2500€ incl. E.U. VAT / 2500US$ excl. VAT
- Damascus – starting at 3000€ incl. E.U. VAT / 3000US$ excl. VAT

Sartory Billard SB04 Gallery

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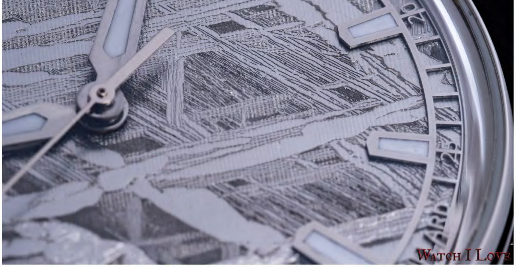
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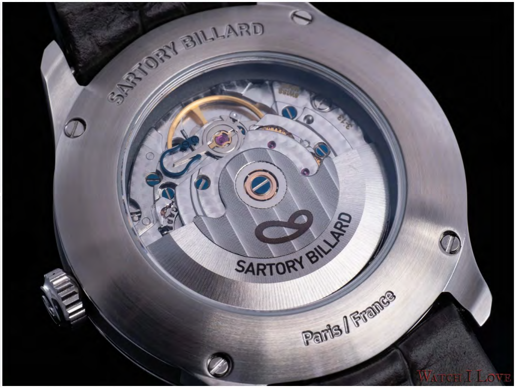
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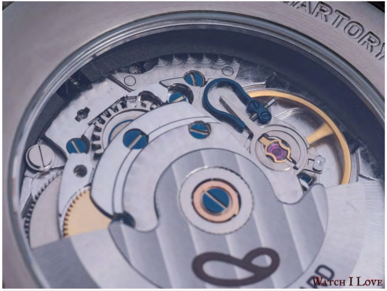
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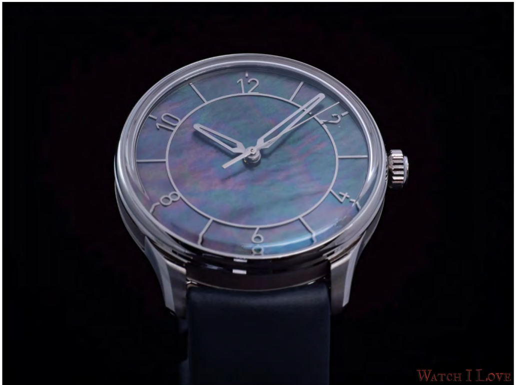
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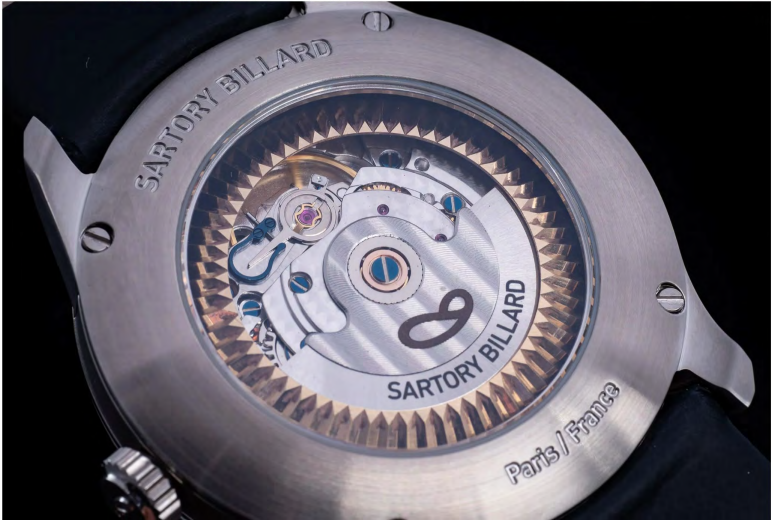
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