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About Franc Vila

Usually the history of the greatest brands starts with a dream, and FRANC VILA's is not different. Its history is the one of the passion of a child whose love for High-End Watchmaking started when he saw his stopped father's automatic watch come to life. Franc Vila got warmed up for High-end Watchmaking when his father told him that the watch only ran when in contact with humans. Thereby he understood that there is a magic relationship between men and watches, and that are we who give them life. At that time he didn't know where he would be driven by his astonishment. Today, though the child is an adult and his mission is clear, his sight is still the one of that child who, collector of watches and other art objects, dreamed up his ideal watch. But his dream was not fulfilled and after studying Biochemicals, Fine Arts and Philosophy, Franc Vila embarked on the realization of his obsession: to create the watch of his dreams.

Franc Vila's Bio

Franc Vila was born in Valencia, in the eastern Spain. He became passionately interested in art, design, watches and fountain pens at a very early age as well as collector of watches and fountain pens. He has formal education in art, philosophy and science. He was shareholder and creative producer in a film production company called "NEP". He has worked as biochemistry investigator in the Valencia Biotechnology Institute, as the director of a chemistry laboratory, as science profesor, and as the creative director of a luxury leather raw goods company. Franc Vila started to design watches on 2000, when committed himself to create high quality mechanical watches only, and to create some of the best timepieces ever made. Due to his education in chemistry he has a well knowledge of materials, and thanks to it he created his first wristwatches with a very special stainless steel with an innovative case structure of two pieces. His education in arts allowed him to design a watch case that evolved later in the "esprit unique" shape characteristic of the FRANC VILA watches. The first Franc Vila timepiece was a minute repeating wristwatch with perpetual calendar and moon-phases with a world premiere slide mechanism positioned inside of the case. Franc Vila showed officially for first time his first collections in Baselworld 2005 with big success thanks to his original case and dial designs. Since then, Franc Vila has been presenting timepieces with his characteristic "esprit unique" design housing the most prestigious complications in horology such as Perpetual Calendars, Flyback Chronograph watches and tourbillons with minute repeater or with chronograph. His absolute passion for excellence and for exclusivity leads to ultra limited collections of numerated timepieces with their movements accurately detailed in luxury finishes and decoration, adopting in the case of the tourbillon movements the "esprit unique" shape.

Franc Vila's interview

DATE OF CREATION OF THE BRAND/COMPANY ? The brand was created in 2004 but I introduced my first collection of complicated ultra-limited mechanical watches in Baselworld 2005. WHAT MOTIVATED YOU TO LAUNCH YOUR OWN BRAND ? Since I was a child I've been collector of watches and other art objects. My passion for watches started when I discovered my father's sport watch stopped and he told me that the watch only ran when in contact with humans. This magic way to show the operating of a manual mechanical watch revealed to me that there is a magic relationship between men and watches by virtue of which we give them life with our own movements, with our own life. They live alone but thanks to us. Thereby, with the passing of time no watch could satisfy my own tastes. I couldn't find the perfect watch. It was not enough for me to wear the gorgeous watches that previously had worn our grandparents and great-grandparents. I needed a watch not only technically perfect, but also built in the highest quality standards, that reflected the contemporary spirit. We live now, in our time, and our watches should be contemporary, but respecting the tradition and the exclusivity, the principal characteristic of luxury, together with

excellence. Thus I started to think in building my own watch, but only for me and my friends. In the beginning I didn't have the idea to sell my watches. In fact, even now, I design my watches to satisfy my needs and tastes about time and exclusivity, which fortunately match my clients wishes. I have never designed a watch to satisfy the needs of my clients, I can't and I won't. I just do watches I love to wear myself. **WHY DID YOU GO FOR THIS PARTICULAR DESIGN ?** My initial intention was to create an exclusive and contemporary watch built with excellence criteria even in the smallest details. I wanted to create something innovative and absolutely new and original, something never done. But innovations cannot be created from scratch. They must be anchored in the past in order to take roots. When I started designing my watch I had one foot in the past and the other one in the future. I created it in the future but on the basis of the essential and basic shapes in watchmaking. The more classical design, the most used for functional reasons, is derived from the seconds indicator invention, which generated dual dials: one for the hours and minutes and a smaller one for the seconds. Due to its functional conception the seconds dial matches the position of the tourbillon, from which I took the screws of the bridge. My innovation was to take this design but moving it outside the watch. This basic design was the base on top of which I created a contemporary timekeeper concept with a completely integrated design in which all the elements form an inseparable whole that, while being complex, displays pure and simple lines and generates an architecturally strong design with personality and instantly recognizable. Thereby it is an extremely contemporary design that keeps its classic spirit. **COULD YOU EXPLAIN YOUR OWN ANALYSIS ABOUT YOUR START-UP AND YOUR FIRST STEP IN THE WATCH BUSINESS ?** The beginnings were complicated when I decided to extend the manufacture to start the commercialization due to the fact that I have never used any standard piece and all has been conceived or modified to be adapted to my needs and personal tastes, with absolute passion for excellence including details. The big advantage and what has helped to the big growth experimented by the brand in such a few years is that I have started from a clearly defined, very consistent and with a lot of personality concept, which has endowed a concret and strong philosophy to the brand. This philosophy has driven the evolution of the brand since the beginning, when I had the initial idea to create a watch with the greatest exclusivity and excellence to reinterpret in contemporary terms, with our time's spirit, the greatest watch complications. That has been the idea which has inspired my evolution and that will guide always the development of the brand in the future. **HOW DO YOU SEE THE FUTURE OF FRANC VILA ?** The future of the brand, as I have explained, is very clear because it's defined in our foundational philosophy. My watches will be always very exclusive because their production is limited by the required complexity, by the great amount of handcrafting involved and by the uncompromising insistence on the highest quality standards. In my watches all is complex, from the concept of the solid case to the mechanisms manufacture. I can't make simple watches. Thereby, we will maintain always a very limited production and a very selective distribution through the best sales points and our own boutiques, like the first that we will open in the heart of Geneve old town this year. Also in 2007 will be perceivable the brand's turn to our "open manufacture" concept with the launch of 5 models with exclusive manufactured movements, developed in collaboration with the best watchmakers and making use of the best manufacture, equipped with the most advanced technologies to build mechanisms. It doesn't make sense to endeavour following the "in-house making" trend when you can work with the best specialists so that you establish a creative relationship of team work in which you jointly obtain results which match my excellence criteria regarding quality, technique, design and exclusivity. Of these 5 movements, 4 of them incorporate tourbillon equipped with minute repetition with cathedral gongs in one case, with chronograph monopusher in another case, or with second time zone in another one. Finally, we will present a manual mechanism with a large power reserve and an innovative technology which allows the movement to self-regulate its precision. This movement will be the basis of a future collection of manual timekeepers. **WHAT DRIVES YOU TO DO WHAT YOU DO ?** I just want to create 21st century timepieces, building into the future by respecting the past, to do wristwatches that I love my self and trying to do things that no one has done before. Fundamentally reinventing forms, because nothing

is created, everything is transformed. I want to introduce new classics. DO YOU FOLLOW A STRICT PHILOSOPHY WHEN IT COMES TO YOUR VISION OF WATCHES ? Yes, I just do watches I love to wear myself and hopefully other people like it as well. I want to describe my own highly personal feelings about the watches with absolute passion for excellence and uncompromising insistence on the highest quality standards including details. When I design and produce my watches, I focus in several points, I want to create timepieces that are so strong that people fall in love with them. I create unique designs, I don't joke with the customers. My watches are created with the highest quality standards and absolute passion for excellence. I want to introduce new classics with the understanding of the contemporary world and I want to focus always in the exclusivity. That's why I make only strictly limited series of few pieces. From 8 to maximum 88 pieces, which is totally ridiculous when we consider than in the deluxe market, watches are made in hundreds of thousands, destroying the exclusivity. My aim is to keep production very limited and the distribution very selective. Because I love complicated and technical watches, I can't make simple watches. So production will always be limited. DO YOU WANT TO REMAIN INDEPENDENT ? The most important reason for remaining independent is that my identity will always be strong. HOW DO YOU DESCRIBE YOUR DESIGN? The shape is original and instantly recognizable. I think it is strong architecturally and has personality. My watches are aesthetically strong and advanced, but that was never my sole objective. I wanted to create something technically perfect. Technical strength was always the main consideration. WHAT DO YOU MISS IN HIGH-END WATCHMAKING ? I miss, contradictorily, tradition. But, obviously, through the understanding of the contemporary spirit. I think it's good to learn the norms and then try to break them, interpreting and adapting them to your own criteria. But if you don't know the norms you follow them not being aware. It's always funnier to know what you are faced with, so that you can transform it with a justification.