



HANDMADE IN GERMANY

PRESS RELEASE
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Glashütte Original dedicates new building in Pforzheim 1.300 m² surface for production of sophisticated dials

On March 6, 2013, Günter Wiegand, Managing Director of Glashütte Original, presided over the opening of a modern factory in Pforzheim, Germany, for the manufactory's own production of watch dials. Together with the facility manager, Kurt Müller, Mr Wiegand led guests on a tour of the well-lit rooms, around 1,300 square metres in all.

Following substantial investments the dial manufactory at Stuttgarter Straße 24 is equipped with advanced machinery dedicated to the production of watch dials; nevertheless, as in the past, a great deal of the work is still performed by hand.

Since mid 2006, the dial manufactory has been owned by the Swatch Group; at the outset of 2012 it was merged with the Glashütte Original manufactory. Given the limited space and plans to expand production, Glashütte Original management decided to restructure and modernise the old dial factory. There are currently 48 employees working in the Pforzheim site; this number is expected to double in the coming years, and five trainee positions are planned as well.

Commenting on the dedication of the new building, Günter Wiegand said: „The production of dials is undoubtedly one of the most difficult tasks in the making of high-value watches. For this reason we shall take advantage of the dial making traditions and competencies of the Pforzheim site, which will be expanded further in the future.“



Background information on the production of dials

The Glashütte Original dial manufactory is one of the few to produce its own blanks. Depending on the dial, the blanks are made of such noble materials as yellow gold, white gold, sterling silver or mother of pearl. On average, dials are only 0.8 mm thick. Special editions such as dials made of fragile mother of pearl generally consist of a 0.4 mm base plate and a 0.4 mm layer of organic material affixed to it.

Most of the work involved in making a dial is performed by hand, whether this is the application of appliques or monitoring of finishings. The blue dials of the Seventies Panorama Date, for example, are given a sunburst finish, which is applied using rotating brass brushes. Colour is then added to the dial using a varnish (lacquer) or galvanization process. The colours applied in this way are then fired in an oven for two hours at temperatures ranging from 110 to 140 degrees centigrade.

One of the most difficult steps in the process demands many years of experience: printing. With some dials such as that for the Senator Observer, the indexes and numerals are printed rather than applied. This is done using what is known as „pad printing“. The pad takes up ink from an engraved negative and then transfers it, like a rubber stamp, to the dial. Before a dial is finished it must pass six quality tests. Altogether a dial, with its numerous details, is the object of some 75 separate operations before it is considered complete and qualified to serve as the face of a Glashütte Original timepiece.

For additional information please contact:

Glashütte Original | Press Office

Altenberger Straße 1 | D-01768 Glashütte i. Sa.

Telephone: +49 (0) 350 53 46 - 0

E-Mail: pr@glashuette-original.com

