

The Talents, in their Own Words...



Andreas Albert, watchmaker specializing in mainsprings

On his chosen profession:

“As a teenager, I didn't know what I wanted to do for a living. My father had been a watch collector for a long time and on his advice, I did an internship at the watchmaking school in the Black Forest. The master watchmaker I met there was super inspiring with his passion for our profession and shortly afterwards I started my apprenticeship.

In my everyday life, I get to work with a great team on the best watches in the industry. What's particularly exciting is that we sometimes recognize our parts in a shop window or on social media years after delivery, in watches that we wouldn't have expected to see them in.

Watchmaking is super versatile, there are many areas in which you can contribute your skills. You can have a lot of fun at the watchmaker's bench or it can be a perfect base for tasks in the whole industry. Be passionate and ambitious!”



Anita Porchet, enameller

On her chosen profession:

"I don't know how much of it is a conscious and personal choice; I would rather say that life offers us different paths and depending on what drives us at a given moment, we take a path and events follow ... more or less according to our will. In my family, it was my godfather who introduced me to different forms of art (music, painting, architecture, engraving, and enamel). He taught me the first steps of enameling and advised me on my professional choices. I started by teaching drawing, painting, and manual activities while creating enameled objects, then at a certain point, I decided to try dedicating myself solely to the craft of enamelling."

On the most unexpected detail of her day-to-day life:

"The unexpected awaits every day as it comes out of the oven."

Her advice for future generations:

"Gaining a broader perspective of the craft, travelling ... to then feel what suits you best. Enamel has many other applications beyond watchmaking."



Bastien Chevalier, marquetry craftsman

On his chosen profession:

“I have always loved drawing. I remember that at school I drew in my French notebooks. I also loved tinkering with wood. I remember when I was very little, making wooden swords and guns. Following my CFC as a cabinetmaker, I applied to Phillipe Monti in Ste-Croix, without knowing that Jérôme Boutteçon worked there and, thanks to my lucky stars, I was hired as an apprentice Marquetter.”

His advice for future generations:

“To first work in cabinetry because it is a very good foundation, then to train as a marquetry craftsman in France. Unfortunately, there is no such training in Switzerland...”



Isabelle Villa, miniature painter

On her chosen profession:

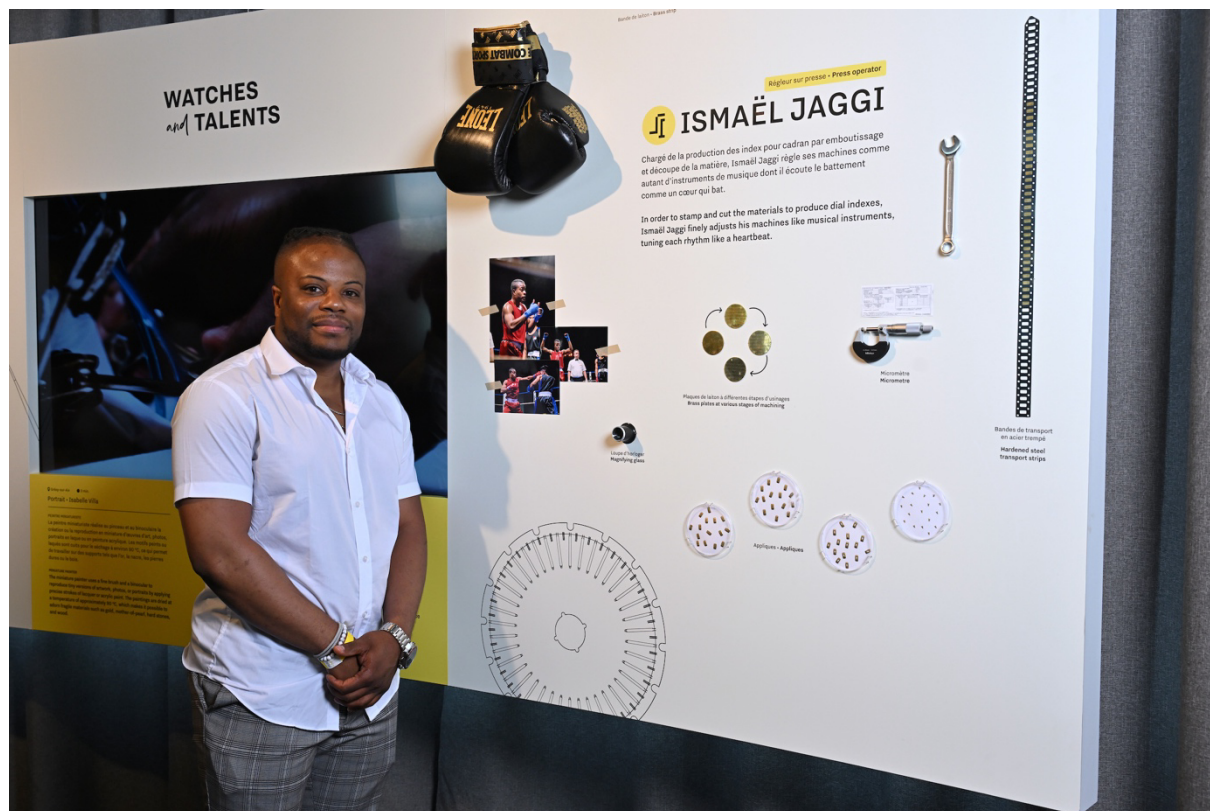
“I went to art school over a period of 4 years, and at the time, my father worked as a dialmaking director for a watchmaking company. He asked me if I was capable of painting on such small. He gave me a binocular and some lacquers intended for watchmaking. I completed a test and the watchmaking company bought my first piece which was a white tiger. Hence the presence of this tiger head on my logo, a little nod to this first piece which brought about my career as a watch miniaturist. After my studies, I started working for myself and approaching other watchmaking companies. Since 2007 I have continued to create micro-paintings and have made them my speciality.”

On the most unexpected detail of her day-to-day life:

“Having to pluck my brushes down to just a hair sometimes to do the smallest details.”

Her advice for future generations:

“I would advise not to be discouraged because miniature painting requires a lot of patience and attention. To paint as if it were for yourself, with love, with desire and to take the time necessary to do so with the greatest possible precision. Have the self-confidence to present your work with pride, but all the same with humility, because art is a very subjective notion and we must above all agree with the desire and the feelings of the customer.”



Ismaël Jaggi, press setter

On his chosen profession:

"I chose this profession with the help of my entourage, my friends. As I explained during the interview on the first day of filming, my professional journey began in the automotive world, in automobile repair. I then changed my vocation and entered the world of watchmaking, as a versatile worker (Galvano and later, CNC operator). I discovered this magnificent dial factory which is Metalem and this is where my adventure really begins. After ten years working as a press setter, I had the opportunity to become manager of the Raw Index Manufacturing department."

His advice for future generations:

"To have enormous patience and a sense of self-sacrifice."



Justine Jouanneau, case finisher

On her chosen profession:

"I chose this profession because I loved tinkering and creating things, I have always been manual. I did a CAP in jewelry over 2 years and a BMA in jewelry over 2 years as well and it was during this school course that I did an internship in a company with Bob, my internship supervisor at the case artisans, and today I succeed him because he retired."

Her advice for future generations:

"If I had to give advice it would be to follow specialised studies in jewellery and find internships in companies that are beneficial to learning the trade."



Philippe Dufour, master watchmaker

On his chosen profession:

“At the age of fifteen, I wanted to learn to be a mechanic. Following the entrance exam for the Ecole d'Horlogerie de la Vallée de Joux, I was made to understand that I had some deficits in mathematics and that I was just good enough to learn watchmaking. So I didn't choose my profession! From the first months of learning, I made my own tools and started my school watch. Creating an object or a watch element from a piece of material was a great discovery that I really enjoyed. I had somehow caught the virus and since then, I haven't come out of it. After the four years of apprenticeship, I obtained the diploma of watchmaker repairer in 1967. Following this, I was able to work for different watch manufacturers in Switzerland, Germany, England and even in the Caribbean! In 1978, on a whim, I became independent overnight. And for 5 years, I restored complicated pocket watches for an auction organisation. During this period, I learned a lot and realized that 7/10 watches that passed through my workbench were of Vallée de Joux origin.

One day I said to myself: “The old people did it, why not do it again!?” So I created my first Grande Sonnerie Minute Repeater movement, pocket watch (19 lines). Not being known, everyone congratulated me but I didn't have enough credit in the eyes of those in the know. I therefore chose to make five timepieces for a manufacturer in the region which says five years of work. But the desire to make timepieces under my own name was always present. So much so that in 1992, at the Basel Motor Show, I presented my first Philippe Dufour watch, a world first, a Grande Sonnerie Minute Repeater as a wristwatch. Followed in 1996 by the release of the Duality, a watch with a double regulator, and in 2000 the Simplicity model which, as its name suggests, a simple watch...”

On the most unexpected detail of his day-to-day life:

“I was surprised to see that people are able to wait years to get my timepieces. And for them, every day is a pleasure to wait for. The evolution of the media means that my watches are known all over the world, even in countries where I have never set foot! Despite my age, I still enjoy walking through the door of my workshop every morning, lighting a pipe and putting on classical music while looking at the chamois or cows through the window in front of my workbench.”

His advice for future generations:

“In 2013, when I received the special prize from the GPHG jury, in my speech, I said this: "To the young person I say to you, go ahead, achieve! There is room for you! Make your dream come true, because in every watchmaker's heart there is a dream, to make one's own watch." But independence comes at a certain price. Before you begin, you need to erase certain words from your vocabulary. The words: vacations, weekends and retirement! Once you've done this, you're good to go!”



Thierry Faivre, stampmaker

On his chosen profession:

“I didn't really choose this profession, it turns out that the nearest school taught micromechanics and at fourteen, my means of transport were limited. In my region, the industry was quite widespread and I liked the job. Two years later, I worked as an assistant turner then a polisher.

I then joined a large quartz watch movement factory which trained me on progressive cutting tools and then I went to work in the Vallée de Joux for two years.

I returned to La Chaux-de-fonds in a company that essentially made stamps for many fields (watchmaking, the medical field, aeronautics, etc.) where I learned to make punches by hand. Since 2006, I have been a stamp maker at the Bovet factory.

This profession is very interesting and evolving: you have to be perseverant, creative and have knowledge in many areas to create tools according to the characteristics of the parts to be stamped.”

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About the Fondation Haute Horlogerie

Founded in 2005 by Audemars Piguet, Girard-Perregaux and the Richemont Group, the Fondation Haute Horlogerie (FHH) has since focused its mission on the international influence of watchmaking culture, and positions the watch as an object of art and culture.

Point of reference and neutrality for all subjects relating to watchmaking, it relies for this on three complementary pillars intended for a wide audience, made up of industry professionals, individuals, insiders and of amateurs.

The first, Watches & Culture by FHH, created in 2021, aims to bring watchmaking culture to life through the creation of original content, events and international meetings, intended jointly for the general public and professionals.

As for the FHH Academy, it trains and certifies watchmaking knowledge for today's professionals and tomorrow's aficionados. Consisting of a rich and fun offering made up of training courses and certifications, its content is available in class or online in more than 20 countries, making watchmaking knowledge available to all.

Finally, the FHH Forum, a discussion and debate platform designed by the industry for the industry, informs, questions and connects the leaders of the sector with the aim of shaping the ecosystem of the future.

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