



PRESS RELEASE

The Creative Minds Behind the Leica Watches

Wetzlar, 19th September 2024. Time has always played a central role in photography. While a camera captures fleeting moments, Leica watches embody the pursuit of precision and craftsmanship that has defined the brand since the 20th century. The Leica ZM watch collections continue this legacy – "ZM" stands for "Zeitmesser" (timepiece), and that is exactly what these wristwatches represent: a fusion of technical sophistication and understated elegance, allowing the wearer to carry a piece of Leica history on their wrist.

Back in 1863, at the age of 20, company founder Ernst Leitz I gained valuable experience working for a Swiss watchmaker. These skills laid the foundation for the establishment of his own company in 1870 known as Ernst Leitz which later became Leica. A century and a half later, Leica ZM watches reflect these roots: they stand for ultimate precision, reliability, and craftsmanship. Each watch is made with the same passion that goes into every Leica camera.

Leica ZM 1 and ZM 2: Precision and Craftsmanship Made in Germany

Focusing on the essentials is at the core of Leica's design philosophy. This principle of timeless elegance, embodied by Leica cameras, is reflected in the design of the ZM 1 and ZM 2 watches. These exquisite timepieces are characterized by Leica's distinctive aesthetics, combined with an innovative approach to classic timekeeping functions, brought to life by Leica designer Achim Heine.

Leica ZM 11: A Tribute to Photography and Precision Mechanics

Uncompromising quality at every second – the Leica ZM 11 is a tribute to a legacy of innovation and a love for watchmaking. Timeless design, meticulous craftsmanship, and a play of light and shadow make the ZM 11 a symbol of transformation, movement, and time itself. It represents the pursuit of discovering something extraordinary in every moment and every second.

“When I look at it, when I wear it, I can say, yes, this is a Leica watch.”

– Dr. Andreas Kaufmann

Dr Andreas Kaufmann, majority shareholder and chairman of the supervisory board of Leica Camera AG, is reviving Leica's history and connection to watchmaking with this new endeavour. He also has a clear vision for Leica's future in the watch industry.

“I'm very pleased that watches are now part of Leica's product portfolio. Watches are incredibly fascinating, true masterpieces. They're the Leica for the wrist.”

– Henrik Ekdahl

Henrik Ekdahl is the Managing Director of Ernst Leitz Werkstätten GmbH, located at Leica's impressive headquarters, Leitz Park in Wetzlar, Germany. He oversees the collaboration process between designers, manufacturers, and distribution teams, shaping Leica's watch and accessory business.

“Every project presents its own technical challenges, but beyond that, it's also about identifying with the brand, its context, and its needs.”

– Jean-François Mojon

The intricate movement of the Leica ZM 11 is the result of a collaboration with Chronode SA and its founder **Jean-François Mojon**, renowned for his expertise in crafting high-end mechanical movements. Mojon and his team worked closely on these luxury watches with Leica to develop a highly precise Swiss automatic movement.

“We are looking back at a 100-year history, culture, and design philosophy that we wish to respect and further develop in our work. It was important to incorporate iconic elements into the design, such as the red dot.”

– Marcus Eiling

Industrial designer **Marcus Eiling**, who has had a remarkable career in the Swiss watch industry, now serves as Creative Director at Ernst Leitz Werkstätten. He played a key role in designing the Leica ZM 11.

“I'm proud of this watch because it represents a counterpoint to the increasingly fast-paced digital world. It embodies Leica's core values – the focus on essentials, minimalism, and the tangible mechanics of its elements and controls.”

– Achim Heine

Achim Heine founded the design agency Heine Lenz Zizka in 1989. In 2014, Dr Andreas Kaufmann brought him on board as a product designer for Leica watches. Prior to that, Heine had already designed cameras for the company. With his unconventional design approach and deep connection to the brand's philosophy, Heine has profoundly influenced the design and functionality of Leica's elegant wristwatches.

“This watch doesn't just contain Leica's DNA, but also my heart and soul. I've been involved from the very first second, from the initial sketches to the last screw we've produced.”

– Markus Lehmann

Leica can proudly claim that the ZM1 and ZM2 watches are “Made in Germany.” **Markus Lehmann**, Managing Director of the traditional Black Forest company Lehmann Uhren, has been a driving force behind the development of the Leica ZM 1 and ZM 2, as well as the production of these highly precise timepieces.

Leica Camera – A Partner for Photography

Leica Camera AG is an international, premium manufacturer of cameras and sports optics. The legendary reputation of the Leica brand is based on a long tradition of excellent quality, German craftsmanship and German industrial design, combined with innovative technologies. An integral part of the brand's culture is the diversity of activities the company undertakes for the advancement of photography. In addition to the Leica Galleries and Leica Akademies spread around the world, there are the Leica Hall of Fame Award and, in particular, the Leica Oskar Barnack Award (LOBA), which is considered one of the most innovative sponsorship awards existing today. Furthermore, Leica Camera AG, with its headquarters in Wetzlar, Hesse, and a second production site in Vila Nova de Famalicão, Portugal, has a worldwide network of its own national organisations and Leica Retail Stores.

Please find further information at:

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