

TIMELAB



POINÇON DE GENÈVE

THE NEW HALLMARKING SYSTEM FOR THE POINÇON DE GENÈVE

The *Poinçon de Genève* (the quality hallmark for Geneva watches) reveals its new hallmarking technique known as nanostructural marking. This revolutionary and extremely precise technology gives the Geneva watch industry the freedom to innovate and demonstrate its creativeness.

The *Poinçon de Genève*, which was introduced by the Canton of Geneva in 1886 as a standard of excellence, has since moved with the times to develop a clearer and more precise hallmark that has no effect on the surrounding material. The patented technology comes from a laboratory in the science faculty of Geneva University (UNIGE) and MaNEP, a national centre of competence in physics supported by the national fund for scientific research from 2001 to 2013. It was developed in partnership with PHASIS, a UNIGE spin-off company.

The *Poinçon de Genève* certifies the workmanship, reliability and provenance of a watch movement, which has to go through a specific process, including compliance with 12 conditions, to qualify. It is up to the brand to submit a complete kit of all the movement parts as well as blueprints of the components for TIMELAB to be able to determine whether or not the watch can receive the *Poinçon de Genève* certificate.

The criteria and rules of the *Poinçon de Genève* remain unchanged.

UNCOMPROMISING TECHNOLOGY

PHASIS, which specialises in nanotechnologies, positioning, metallurgy and new materials has long been researching the development of applications that are useful for the Swiss industry in general and Geneva's industry in particular.

The project has evolved over several years and has involved a variety of capabilities, including material physics, micro-positioning techniques and high-speed electronics. The technology will enable the marking of precious metal objects and components where authenticity is essential for security. Examples include jewellery, high-security aerospace parts, medical prostheses and instruments.

The process alters metal surfaces at a microscopic level enabling the marking of tiny mechanical parts. This hallmarking method can be applied directly to uncut plates of metal or to the finished part, enabling manufacturers to decide the stage at which the part is to be marked.

There are three standard print sizes available for hallmarking.



THE CONSIDERABLE ADVANTAGES OF THE NEW HALLMARK

- This new technology involves no contact, which means that extremely thin and delicate metallic parts can be hallmarking.
- The resulting engraving leaves no clearance angle. Manufacturers can proceed with finishing stages without the risk of diminishing the hallmark.
- The new hallmark is much sharper with a perfect definition of its outline.
- There will no longer be the displacement of matter or distortion of the plate resulting from the hallmark punch.
- Different types of steel, hard metals and precious metals such as platinum can now be hallmarking.
- This improvement totally preserves the physical integrity of the part.

ABOUT THE TRADITIONAL POINÇON DE GENÈVE

The former *Poinçon de Genève* hallmark, created in 1886, was struck mechanically by a press in which the force of the impact could be adjusted. The parts to be stamped were placed on a special support and the position of the hallmark was determined by X and Y coordinates. The die was engraved by specialists.



PICTURES

High-definition pictures are available on : <http://bit.ly/1AMFzX1>

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