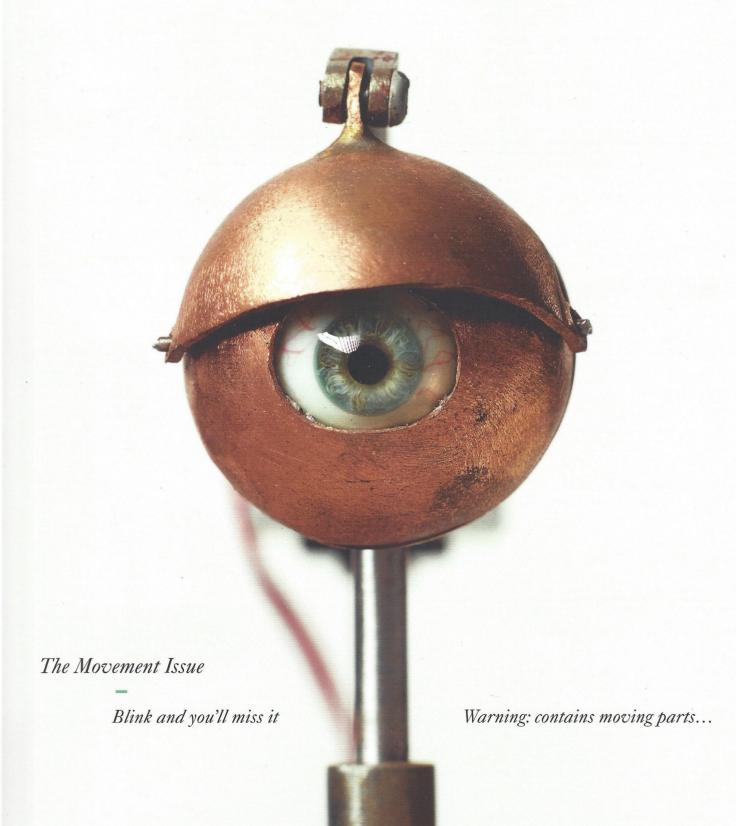
## hole celebrating craft, beauty, passion and skill CCOTNET



Interviews Josh Sims Photographs Laurence Ellis

## TIME IS ON THEIR HANDS

Working with incredible accuracy, cocooned from the outside world,

knowing that they have all the time they need to get things exactly right:

the best watchmakers share many qualities that make their job

a unique and specialised one. Hole & Corner takes to the road,

from London to Switzerland,

on a quest to see the most precise hands in the world at work...

Hands up for expertise: Luc Hiegel of Hermès Watches, photographed at 12pm, Wednesday April 20, in Brügg 'You can go a bit crazy if you spend too much time out of other people's company...'

Ludovic Ballouard is an independent watchmaker, best known for his award-winning Upside Down watch

What do you like about being an independent maker?

'I'd always wanted to be an independent maker – it leaves you the space to push ideas that bit further than you can at a big-production company. Certain things happening in my life confirmed that you should just do what you love doing. Life is for living. It does mean that a good part of my day is spent alone, at the workbench; you need the quiet and introspection to create. You can go a bit crazy if you spend too much

time out of other people's company, though, as many craftspeople do. You have to get out and see someone.'

What constitutes a successful watch design for you?

'I think a watch should be about more than telling the time. It should have a story. With my Upside Down watch, for example, the only numeral ever facing the right way up is the one that the hour hand is on. It's much like life; you can be the right way up but it feels like everything around you – your relationships, the economy, whatever – is not. It's a more poetic approach.'

Are you mechanically minded in all your interests?

'Jobs were scarce after I'd trained as a watchmaker, so my first job was actually making cockpit displays. It required a similar kind of precision, of course. Since I was a kid I'd always loved model aircraft. More recently I've really got into flying drones. I build some myself but, even if it's a kit, I can't help adding something to it. I love the real sense of freedom drones give – add a camera and it's like being part of nature.' ballouard.com; williamandson.com



Left: Ludovic
Ballouard for William
& Son, photographed
at 5pm, Wednesday
April 20, in Geneva,
Far left: Ballouard's
tool set in its stand,
under the watchful
eye of his loupe

