



Press release

Gaïa Prize 2007

The judges unanimously awarded the Gaïa Prize 2007 to

Mr Paul Gerber

Winner in the Craftsmanship and Creation Category

Born in 1950, this watchmaker dedicated the early part of his career to overcoming technical challenges in his field and, although he was entered in the Guinness Book of Records in 1989 for crafting the world's smallest clock with a wooden movement, he is best known for his involvement in the creation of the most complicated wristwatch in the world to date. Based on a movement by Louis Elysée Piguet and initially reworked by Frank Muller, this 19th century complication pocket watch featured many of Paul Gerber's ingenious additions, including the world's smallest flying tourbillon!

Paul Gerber has been a member of the AHCI (Académie horlogère des créateurs indépendants) - the organisation for independent clock and watchmakers - since 1989, and has subsequently continued to develop his technical prowess, creating many prestigious timepieces: mystery clocks, retrograde watches with dual rotor systems, flying tourbillons and three-dimensional moon phases, etc.

The judges awarded Gerber the Gaïa Prize 2007 in recognition of his achievements as one of the most gifted watchmakers of his generation who, through his technical and artistic creations, fires the imagination and conjures memories of the greatest moments of our time.

The 13th Gaïa Prize will be officially awarded at the Musée international d'horlogerie (International Watchmaking Museum) on Thursday 20 September 2007.

Presented as a mark of distinction and honour, the Gaïa Prize celebrates all aspects of watchmaking ingenuity – technical, cultural, historical, economic – and is sponsored this year by the Swiss bank Julius Baer.



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Jury Gaïa 2007

- Mmes et MM. Ludwig Oechslin, président du jury, conservateur du MIH
- Jean-René Bannwart, président de la commission du MIH
- Nicole Bosshart, directrice adjointe du MIH
- M. Denis Pury, Executive Director, Head of Entrepreneurs & Executives
Suisse Romande, Banque Julius Baer & Cie SA, Genève
- M. Patrick Reithaar, Executive Director, Banque Julius Baer & Cie SA,
Genève
- Timm Delfs, journaliste, Bâle
- Paul-André Hartmann, directeur Ecole technique-Cifom, Le Locle
- Marc Pfister, directeur Ecole d'art-Cifom, La Chaux-de-Fonds
- Kurt König, directeur de la bijouterie Embassy, Lucerne-St.Moritz
- Corrado Lafranchi, doyen filière Design industriel,
Haute Ecole d'arts appliqués, La Chaux-de-Fonds
- Jean-Claude Sabrier, expert près la Cour de Paris, Louviers/France
- Nadège Soury, professeure assistante d'histoire moderne
contemporaine Institut d'histoire, Université de Neuchâtel
- Gérard Triponez, président du comité du Musée d'horlogerie du Locle



REGULATIONS

GAIA Distinction awarded by the Musée international d'horlogerie
La Chaux-de-Fonds

Preliminary

Gaia, mythical personification of the Earth, universal mother, gives her name to the "objet d'art" which rewards the winners.

1. Every year, in autumn, on Thursday before the change of equinox, the Musée international d'horlogerie awards the Gaia Prize, to give credit to activities, work or studies connected with time, such as history-research, craftsmanship, spirit of enterprise. Considering the numerous sectors represented the jury gives itself the right to award a prize in several disciplines.
2. The nomination of the winners by the jury is irrevocable.
3. The candidates are chosen regardless of nationality.
4. Through the press, the general public is requested to propose candidates.
5. The jury, presided over by the curator of the Musée international d'horlogerie, comprises prominent figures from Switzerland or abroad. Amongst them there is an expert panel from the University of Neuchâtel, the High School of Design of La Chaux-de-Fonds, the Formation Center of the "Montagnes Neuchâteloises" as well as authoritative figures in cultural, journalistic, scientific and economic circles.

The jury can debate legitimately if five members at least are present. The president of the Jury, who is the curator of the Musée international d'horlogerie, has no vote unless he has to cut short. In this case, he has a casting vote.

6. The members of the Jury are requested by the above mentioned personalities (see point 5) and the curator of the Musée international d'horlogerie to act for a period of one year. On request of the president of the jury, one or another mandate can be renewed.
7. In case of legal dispute or doubt with regard to the interpretation or application of the present regulations, the matter is settled by the president of the jury.

Regulations modified the 14th of May 2007



STORY OF A PRIZE

It was in 1993 that the curator and the directors of the Musée international d'horlogerie decided to found a prize in homage to Maurice Ditisheim, one of the earliest patrons of the museum and a president of the board of directors of the Bureau de contrôle des ouvrages en métaux précieux. It was to be awarded to those who had, by their work and their studies devoted to the subject of time, promoted horology and its arts beyond the limits of national boundaries. Thus was born the Gaïa Prize.

The symbol chosen for the award is a translucent sphere which evokes Gaïa, a primordial power, the Greek goddess of the earth and the mother, by Ouranos, god of the heavens, of the Titans and the Cyclops.

According to the version given by Hesiod in his *Theogony*, Gaïa was the first creature born of Chaos; she thus preceded Tartarus (the Underworld), Nyx (Night), Erebus (Darkness) and Eros, god of love and desire.

The model for the award is the work of Valérie Salvisberg, who won the competition organised by the Art School in La Chaux-de-Fonds.

These prizes, offered to craftsmen, historians, researchers and scientists, symbolise the Musée international d'horlogerie's gratitude to and respect for those who have advanced the cause of horology, its history and its culture, which represent the museum's main areas of interest.

The prize winners are chosen by a jury composed of prominent figures drawn from the sphere of higher education, including representatives from both technical and academic institutions. The jury is presided over by the curator of the Musée international d'horlogerie.

A member of the board of directors of the Bureau de contrôle des ouvrages en métaux précieux attends the meetings of the jury. The Bureau de contrôle des ouvrages en métaux précieux has always maintained close links with the Musée international d'horlogerie, and sponsors the Gaïa Prize ceremony.

2003 witnesses a significant change in the prize rules

Since 1993, it has been customary for the Musée international d'horlogerie in La Chaux-de-Fonds to award three prizes on an annual basis. A working-group composed of former prize winners decided that the prize should henceforth be awarded every eighteen months, to coincide with either the spring or the autumn equinox. A further significant change is that only one prize will now be awarded. Nominations (to be submitted by a given date) will be invited; the details of the competition and the deadline for the submission of dossiers will be advertised in the press. The jury will be permitted, under exceptional circumstances, to award as many as three prizes.



SCHEDULE FOR THE NEXT PRIZES

The schedule for the Gaïa Prize is established by the Keeper of the Musée international d'horlogerie. The dates for the next six awards are as follows (the dates within parentheses indicate the closing date for submissions of dossiers):

- Thursday September 20 2007 (beginning of June 2007)
- Thursday March 19 2009 (beginning of December 2008)
- Thursday September 16 2010 (beginning of June 2010)

2007

THE THIRTEEN GAÏA PRIZE WILL BE AWARDED TO ONE OR MORE CANDIDATES ON SEPTEMBER 20 2007.

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