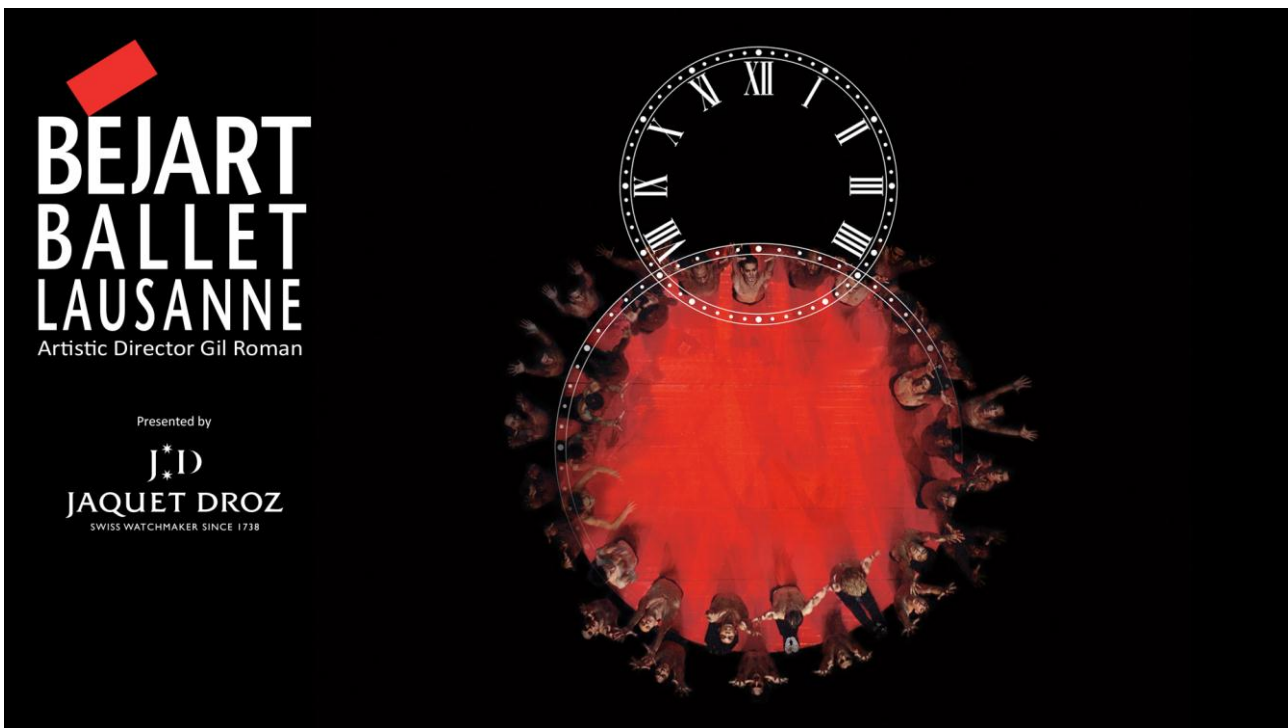


## JAQUET DROZ AND THE BÉJART BALLET LAUSANNE: ART OF ASTONISHMENT



Jaquet Droz and the Béjart Ballet Lausanne have signed an other-worldly collaboration. A collaboration of two worlds that bring magic to the present moment and share a common vision of a rich past and promises for the future.

Some collaborations are more precious than others: for example, one between a passionate avant-garde watchmaker and an exceptional artist, sharing their unique vision of life, their creative history and their projection into the future.

Now, by becoming the exclusive *Presenting Partner* of the BÉjart Ballet Lausanne, directed by Gil Roman, Jaquet Droz fulfills this promise. Beyond traditional sponsorship, the collaboration between the historic watchmaking firm in La Chaux-de-Fonds and the artistic company that is the custodian of Maurice BÉjart's legacy is not just a first; it is the collision of two worlds that are perfect artistic counterparts. It is a creative and luminous impact, the fusion of personalities that share the same passion for movement and the inestimable value of these rare and fleeting moments where Beauty occurs.

On the one hand is the dance phenomenon Maurice BÉjart, a guiding light in the art of contemporary choreography. Fundamentally liberated, authentically visionary, he was one of the "monstres sacrés" of dance until his passing in 2007. Born in Marseille in 1927, he made his debut in Paris in 1946. After 30 years in Brussels with the famous Ballets du 20ème siècle, in 1987 he created the BÉjart Ballet Lausanne, and in doing so, anchored in Switzerland a revolutionary approach

to live performance. Tirelessly, during his travels and tours in Africa, Asia, Iran and the United States, he demonstrated his quest for ultimate perfection, expressed in this unique crucible of the stage. His performances, such as his extraordinary *Sacre du printemps* (1959), his *Symphonie pour un homme seul*, his *Oiseau de feu* are all inescapable points of reference in the world of dance, today perpetuated by Gil Roman and the dancers of the BÉjart Ballet Lausanne.



On the other hand is a man from another time. Pierre Jaquet-Droz, born in 1721 in the Swiss Jura, was soon to become one of the most virtuoso watchmakers of the Enlightenment. An excellent technician, an astute businessman, he was also a true artist who knew how to understand, and even to anticipate, the taste of men and women of his time. His clocks, singing watches, objets d'art and humanoid automata were the fascination of Europe's royal courts. Today, thanks to the vision of Marc Alexander Hayek, President of Jaquet Droz, the brand has reconnected not only with its own illustrious past, but also with a quest that has been ever-present since its creation: the quest for excellence at every moment, where the watchmaker's ability to surpass limitations is aligned with the best of the decorative arts.

This collaboration is also an astonishing voyage in time, arching over centuries to make possible the encounter of two parallel and completely consistent philosophies. On the one hand, the mastery of the body, the perfection of an impeccably choreographed movement, the phenomenal power of a creative vision that is authentic and bold. On the other, this "intimate impact" that Pierre Jaquet-Droz referred to, "the amazement of the encounter with uniqueness and harmony,"

the constantly renewed quest to "transcend the work and achieve the opus." For both Maurice BÉjart and for Pierre Jaquet-Droz, the moment of aesthetic revelation – this immediate sensation of attaining complete harmony – has always been accompanied by an incredible obsession with effort and surpassing limits. The iron discipline of dancers is well known; and the same determination is shared by watchmakers in their imaginative challenge of creating ever-more complex movements.

Beyond geographical proximity, a shared sensitivity to landscapes, the sky and nature, it is only when one plunges deeper into each of these two worlds that one fully grasps the way they resonate with each other. A veritable magician of the human form, Maurice BÉjart expressed a lifelong sensitivity that is never far from the unique poetry of the Musician, the Draughtsman and the Writer, these three automata designed by Pierre Jaquet-Droz that capture with astonishing realism each movement of the hands, eyes and arms. This technical challenge is accompanied by remarkable subtlety, like all the timepieces that bear the two-star stamp of Jaquet Droz, like the famous automaton timepieces, "The Bird Repeater" and "The Charming Bird," where the birds actually seem to come to life.

But this partnership also represents a shared vision of a legacy, succession, and the way of ensuring the transmission of a living history. At La Chaux-de-Fonds, Montres Jaquet Droz SA has ensured that the exclusive know-how of the brand has been kept intact, in the image of the Ateliers d'Art. It has also seized the opportunity to espouse the modernity of the 21st century, just as Pierre Jaquet-Droz espoused the modernity of the 18th century. In Lausanne, Gil Roman is the custodian of the life work of Maurice BÉjart. His passion for dance and his career began at the age of seven. From the 1980s, he joined Maurice BÉjart, and became famous as he performed all the master's works, from *Pyramide* to *Le Mandarin merveilleux*, as well as *La Route de la soie*, and *Dibouk*. For this unusual artist, who also choreographs his own performances, this legacy is an extraordinary challenge, because by its very essence, movement escapes any attempt to be archived. But the BÉjart Ballet Lausanne knows how to infuse each of its performances with the legacy of Maurice BÉjart in a permanent present, and to project its formidable evocative power into the future. Each in its own way, Jaquet Droz and the BÉjart Ballet Lausanne have been able not to stop time, but to accompany its passing, and enchant each moment of history, of imagination and of the talents to which they are heirs.

Between a star-studded past, a successful present and a future that is rich in promise, this one-of-a-kind partnership highlights the full relevance of the words of Maurice Bégart, written in his memoirs entitled *Un instant dans la vie d'autrui*:  
"Escaping one's own chronology is a joy that dreams bestow."