

Starstruck

IWC aims for the stars with the Portuguese Sidérale Scafusia, its most complicated watch ever.

| By Laurie Kable |

Sometimes a watch is a statement. And not just for the wearer, but for the manufacturer as well. IWC devoted a decade to realizing its new Portuguese Sidérale Scafusia, the most complicated timepiece the company has ever built. What started as a constant-force tourbillon, a daunting technical task in its own right, evolved into a mind-boggling astronomical instrument for the wrist.

From the front, the Sidérale looks rather subdued for a made-to-order timepiece priced at 750,000 Swiss francs, or about \$835,000. An enormous tourbillon dominates the dial, which also features a subdial for

“sidereal time”: a measurement used by astronomers based on the movement of the stars. While we measure time based on a 24-hour solar day, the sidereal day, which refers to the time it takes for the stars to return to the same positions, is actually 23 hours, 56 minutes and 4.1 seconds. On the reverse, the watch reveals an entirely different personality with a celestial map and an array of astronomical functions, plus a perpetual calendar. IWC commissioned astrophysicist Ben Moore, director of the Institute for Theoretical Physics at the University of Zurich, to produce custom star charts for each client.

While a handful of collectors will possess this masterpiece, the rest of us can merely admire the genius involved in getting so much engineering into such a small package. ■



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