

SARPANEVA

SARPANEVA WATCHES OY
TALLBERGINKATU 1, P.O. BOX 41
FI-00180 HELSINKI, FINLAND
WWW.SARPANEVAWATCHES.COM

BUSINESS ID: FI18044044
DOMICILE: HELSINKI

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For press and media enquiries, please contact: press@sarpanevawatches.com

SARPANEVA KORONA RG AND KORONA WG

It was quite a while since the first Stepan Sarpaneva watch, the TIME TRAMP was created, using a pinion gear from a Harley Davidson motorcycle. At that time no one knew what the future would hold for watches created in Finland, certainly not for mechanical watches created with a different vision and such a distinctive Finnish design pedigree. Now, some 10 years later anno 2009, Sarpaneva Watches has started to establish itself as the renegade alternative to the 'Swiss-only' mentality, offering collectors and watch lovers something new and different from the rest whilst keeping all the best qualities of watchmaking tradition. For Stepan this is definitely something worth celebrating in an exclusive manner.

2009: THE FIRST SARPANEVA WATCHES IN 18-CARAT RED OR WHITE GOLD

For the past 10 years, the Sarpaneva workshop has been creating a name for itself producing unusual, limited series of watches – exclusively in different types of steel. There were a number of reasons behind this concept.

Stepan Sarpaneva: "I have always liked, even preferred the 'essence' of steel cased watches, as it fits with my desire for simplicity and the beauty you can find in essential and basic materials and designs – whether inspired by man made or natural elements. With my hobby and passion for motorcycles from an early age, steel is also a material I know and love intimately. So I never felt that steel was less interesting or less valuable to me than any other metal.

So what was behind this new development for the workshop?

Stepan Sarpaneva: "One reason was that I made my first watch exactly 10 years ago: the TIME TRAMP – and back then I never thought it might mark the beginning of where I am today. In addition a number of clients have been asking me regularly for a gold watch, so all this meant that the time was ripe for it now. Another reason was a more emotional one for me. My father designed jewelry, and in the back of my mind I still

have plans to also create some jewelry, either stand alone items or combined with watches. So that means that the next step has got to be working in precious metals of course."

A NEW CASE DESIGN

However, this didn't mean that the new KORONA would simply be the same watchcase, merely in gold. Stepan took the decision to review the design; the case, with its slightly smaller 42 mm diameter compared to the previous KORONA K3 models of 44 mm, is just right for today's tastes. The evocative scallops that are such a part of the exterior edges visual look are now cut right through the case from front bezel to back bezel, making the case even more distinctive. This, in combination with the skeleton dial has the effect of making the watch appear bolder and more uniquely Finnish in its design imagery, without it being perceived as either too large or too small.

Stepan Sarpaneva: "With this new, fuller case design, the lugs have also undergone some slight changes that allow me to use a shaped strap. This means the case and strap form a fluid line, giving a real visual and physical continuity between the watchcase and strap design, resulting in a truly relaxed fit. You can almost forget you have it on."

A WORLD WITH THREE MOONS

The Moonphase indicator of the KORONA RG and WG, with its eternally somber face has become a hallmark of the entire series of KORONA watches, and perhaps Finland itself.

Stepan Sarpaneva: "You know, here in Finland, we are not a very extrovert kind of people. Maybe it has to do with our past history, as well as the cold combined with the extremely long winter nights and the extremely long summer days. You have to learn to remain in balance. So everyone here floats around with an aura of slight melancholy – I don't know how else to describe it. So for me a smiling moon was out of the question, also because a Moonphase smiling all the time is too much like those yellow smiley faces they put in emails. This Moon has an aura of aristocratic melancholy; with a bit of indecision as to whether he is basically happy or sad in nature. The expression of the Moon on my watches just 'is' – same as the Finnish people here."

Creating these Moonphase discs is as complex as the realization of the watch's Moonphase mechanism. The first dilemma concerns the dimensions, as the face is only 0,4 mm thick yet contains four levels of elevation. The first step requires creating a drawing six times actual size, followed by cutting a rough model from plate stock, one piece corresponding to each level of elevation of the oversized model. These parts are then fixed together to form the model plate for the pantograph, which will mill the various shapes into a small piece of copper the

actual size of the Moonphase. This copper version, which will serve later as an electrode, is then cleaned up and 'fine-tuned' by a master engraver before the contours are electro etched into a steel-pressing block, thus creating a negative image of the face. Last but not least, the eyes are modeled by hand into the negative image and the whole is finished by a master engraver and diamond polished before undergoing hardening, followed by yet another polishing.

The Moonphase of the watch requires two of these Moon faces to be created, but the winding rotor, responsible for helping automatically wind the watch with each movement of the wearer's arm, also needed special treatment in order to be in harmony with the dial side view.

Stepan Sarpaneva: "Since the KORONA RG and WG are such special Moonphase watches, I felt that the rotor also had to be part of this special atmosphere. So I added another Moonphase on the rotor. It has the added effect of providing additional weight for the rotor, and it is always trapped in orbit around the watch's center. Here again you sense my custom motorcycle building background – I see no reason why even the more functional parts can't be attractive and nice to look at. So in total this is a Moon phase watch that has actually has three Moons on it, all in the same 18-carat gold as the case of the watch, either red or white."

DIAL & ROTOR

The skeletonized dial and rotor in every KORONA RG and WG look so simple that one can easily forget the amount of work involved in producing them. Once the dial and rotor have been correctly sized in all dimensions, 260 individual holes need to be cut out of the dial, whose thickness measures a mere 0.3 mm. After this, each individual hole must be filed and finished, from both sides, therefore even the side that you will never see.

Stepan Sarpaneva: "This seems like a small thing, but if you don't do it this way there is chance that light will catch in some holes and not in others, producing an uneven visual effect."

The production of a completely assembled skeletonized dial and rotor, with all the additional parts and Moon faces installed takes a total of about a week of work to complete.

MOVEMENT

The watch's base caliber is a new independent movement from the well-known and highly regarded Swiss manufactory Soprod S.A., who also provide movements and watches to several haute horlogerie brands today.

The base caliber is then further modified at the Sarpaneva workshop and fitted with new parts, all of which are manufactured in Finland. The entire movement is also re-finished, starting from the main plate, which receives gilding after hand finishing. The entire Moonphase mechanism

gearing and parts are all designed and made in Helsinki as well. It includes quite a few parts with very small tolerances to insure perfect functioning, the smallest of which being only 0.15 mm thickness.

Different from other Moonphase calibers, the Sarpaneva design features correction via the crown, thus eliminating the need for any pushers on the case, greatly simplifying any correction if necessary. However, it should be noted that if the watch is regularly wound, the next correction for the Moonphase would only be in another 122 years!

Although the workshop is small and independent, the philosophy is for long-term results. For this reason a well-tested caliber was chosen for which there are always spare parts available, or parts that can be manufactured right in the Helsinki atelier.

SCOPE OF DELIVERY

For the new gold watches a special presentation box was designed and created by Stepan Sarpaneva, and is also manufactured in Finland. This wood and aluminum creation, embodying all the stylistic directness and raw energy of the timepieces, are also made by hand in small numbers that follow the limited production of the KORONA. An instruction booklet and guarantee certificate is included with each timepiece, covering a guarantee period of two years from the date of purchase.

SARPANEVA WATCHES

Sarpaneva Watches is Finland's only mechanical watchmaking company, solely dedicated to the design and production of mechanical wristwatches. Located in the country's capital Helsinki, the workshop was started in 2003 by Stepan Sarpaneva after years of training in both Finland and Switzerland that covered watchmaking in all its varieties, including hands on experience at several of Switzerland's major houses with highly specialized work on complications. The Sarpaneva workshop's philosophy towards watchmaking is firmly anchored within Stepan Sarpaneva's deep desire to express himself in more ways than solely through the purely mechanical side of watchmaking. For this reason his firm's foundation is to unite a long-term and timeless visual design concept together with that of high quality mechanical watchmaking. Unlike the majority of brands on the market today, this is a fundamental aspect that sets Sarpaneva Watches apart from the rest; here is one man with the ability to create novel wristwatch designs as well as unite them with the mechanical know-how of a master watchmaker.



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