

One Gold Bridge



One of the 1,791 silver fountain pens being made (SFr.2,480). Fifty yellow-gold and pink-gold pens will also be made (SFr.7,750), plus 400 silver rollerball pens (SFr.2,240).

Girard-Perregaux pays tribute to its tourbillon with a new fountain pen

Ken Kessler

Following April's fairs, one trend this writer is pleased to see continuing is the launch of pens by watch manufacturers. After all, pens are an extension of the 'portable treasures' mentality that encompasses wristwatches, alongside lighters, money clips, cigar cutters and anything else that qualifies as an executive toy you shouldn't leave your desk without. A proliferation of writing instruments is OK, provided that one thing is kept in mind: that the pen reflects the quality and attitude of the parent.

Think of the Breguet pen: ornate, exclusive, with a pocket clip representing the Breguet hour hand. Cartier pens usually feature a cabochon somewhere, while models in the new range from Chopard even sport tyre treads, Mille Miglia-style. But what qualities would constitute a pen suggesting 'Girard-Perregaux'?

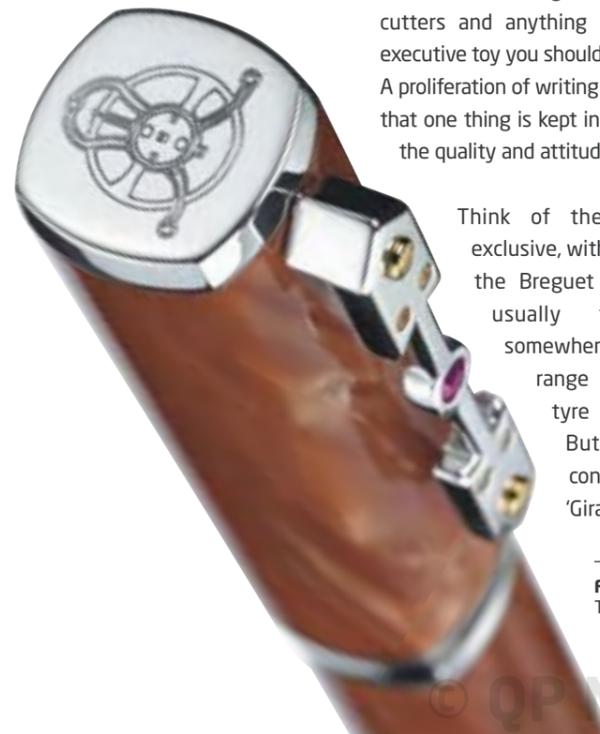
Personality traits

Among the many aspects of 'Girard-Perregauxness' are superb finish, a proud history of tourbillons, exclusivity, and an *éminence grise* in Luigi Macaluso - the CEO with a motor-racing pedigree and a degree in architecture. You should expect a limited edition that suggests refinement and subtlety. And that is what you get with the Tourbillon Pen - right down to its roll-top 'coffin'.

There are two instant giveaways. Firstly, the top of the cap is engraved with the image of a Girard-Perregaux tourbillon cage. Far wittier though is the clip, which resembles the trademark G-P tourbillon bridge, set with a ruby.

G-P has adhered to all of the toughest rules in pen-making, using, for example, a body fashioned from light brown celluloid - the material favoured by Montegrappa, Delta, Marlen and other upper-echelon pen houses. Unlike plastics, celluloid is an organic material that takes a year to shape into the coloured rods from which pen barrels and caps are made. Celluloid also possesses a certain amount of shock resistance, and it is light, 'pleasing to the touch' and extremely durable.

Instead of a cylindrical barrel, G-P's pen has four sides, contoured to a 'cushion' shape. It houses an integrated piston reservoir, feeding an 18-ct gold nib available in EF, F, M and B sizes. G-P supplies the pen (or roller ball version) in a cherry-wood 'writing box' case. Expect them to sell out as quickly as the watch marque's Ferrari pens. But note, too, that there were enticing hints of another collection. So perhaps there will be a permanent part of the Girard-Perregaux stable for pens? Here's hoping... ○



Further information: Time Products, 23 Grosvenor Street, London W1X 9FE. Tel: 020 7416 4160, www.girard-perregaux.ch