

McGonigle Brothers Tourbillon



In his seminal love song *Queen of the Slipstream*, Ireland's greatest living songwriter Van Morrison spoke of a place "where the poetic champions compose". He could have well been referring to the workshops by the river Shannon where Irish watchmakers, Stephen and John McGonigle craft lyrical expressions of time telling. Both brothers received their training in Switzerland and labored in the horological hotbed of the Vallée de Joux restoring vintage clocks and watches, as well as specializing in high complications for well known manufactures. John McGonigle graduated from the WOSTEP School in Neuchâtel, after which he worked at Audemars Piguet before venturing into prototyping for Christophe Claret. Stephen joined his brother at Claret S.A. before moving on to Franck Muller. He was also, for a time, head of complications in the after sales department of Breguet. After their Swiss work experience, both brothers moved back to Ireland with the vision of creating haut de gamme watches incorporating materials and motifs native to Ireland.

Their collaboration has yielded an exceptionally beautiful tourbillon expressing the virtues of elegant simplicity and artisan craftsmanship. The main plate is constructed from German silver and features hand engraving inspired by the art of their sister, Frances McGonigle. The plate is left in untreated German silver, which requires a fantastic amount of care, as even the slightest contact with skin will stain its surface. The tourbillon bridge and other key components are handmade, polished and bevelled by the brothers while other components are sourced from Switzerland. All gearwheels use the 'dents de loup' or 'wolf's teeth' variety that was particularly in vogue in watchmaking during the 19th century. Because these teeth (often used by Claret as well) are not uniform, they require a vast amount of manual labor to finish them. The unusual dial is constructed from a piece of sapphire crystal. The overall effect is a timepiece with a distinctive Irish capriciousness and charm while retaining all the hallmarks of Swiss haut de gamme watchmaking. ★