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HANDS-ON

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BY ARIEL ADAMS

18 COMMENTS



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**T**he most famous aesthetic element of **Andreas Strehler** watches is the butterfly (*papillon* in French) motif. It's sort of funny given that Andreas Strehler makes men's watches, and - at least in America and other parts of the West - butterflies are usually associated with more feminine items (and not men's watches). Lower-back tattoos and such aside, in the context of the horological world, think of fancy watches from Van Cleef & Arpels and their regular emphasis on butterflies. So, the question we ask is whether or not the Andreas Strehler Papillon d'Or ("butterfly in gold") watch does its job asserting itself as a masculine item?



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Perhaps more so than the butterfly-shaped bridge in the movement, Andreas Strehler watches are distinctive because of the case shape. Elegant and original-looking on the wrist, this hybrid "TV screen and cushion" case design works well and is also comfortable. The size of the Andreas Strehler Papillon d'Or watch is 41mm wide, but 43.40mm wide including the unique crown design. The watch further has a 47.2mm long lug-to-lug distance. Moreover, the lugs are curved, making for a comfortable fit on the wrist. I would suggest that given the design and size of the watch, for most men's wrists, the Andreas Strehler Papillon d'Or will look best if you are wearing long sleeves (but of course, that is a matter of taste).







Toward the higher end of the always boutique Andreas Strehler collection of timepieces, the Andreas Strehler Papillon d'Or attempts to celebrate the full spectrum of talents and skills offered by the independent watchmaker. Fit and finishing is quite good (as it should be for the price) and movement decoration and design is very attractive. In fact, the major reason for buying a timepiece like the Andreas Strehler Papillon d'Or is, of course, the mechanical movement within.

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Inside the watch is the "Calibre Papillon d'Or" (at least you know it isn't being used in other watches), and it is produced from 162 parts operating at a frequency of 3Hz (21,600 bph). The movement was first presented in 2015 - so as of writing, it is still a new caliber. While not incredibly complex, the movement is both useful and elegant. There is no running seconds hand, and time is indicated via the off-centered dial for the time placed toward the right of the dial. To the left is a view of the free-sprung balance system which has a Breguet overcoil on the hairspring.







The movement uses a double mainspring barrel system for a total power reserve of 72 hours (three days). There is also a handy power reserve indicator located on the rear of the movement - which I agree is a more or less necessary element for manually wound movements. According to Andreas Strehler, a very small (in their words, "perhaps the world's smallest") differential gear is incorporated in the power reserve display system as connected to the hand.



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Speaking of hands, all of them are beautifully produced and flame-blued. Back on the dial, you can see a machine guilloché engraved ring used as the minute and hour marker scale which helps to both make legibility high and make the overall design attractive and classic-looking.



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Much of the value in the Andreas Strehler Papillon d'Or movement is the finishing and decoration. Finishing is very good, and Mr. Strehler is not shy about the pride he has in his work. I appreciate that, in addition to aesthetic considerations, a number of steps have been taken to ensure that the movement operates as accurately and reliably as possible. The movement even includes an "Andreas Strehler escapement" which is unique to his timepieces. Also note the two gears in the movement produced from transparent sapphire crystal, something else which is rather special.



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In my opinion, the Andreas Strehler Papillon d'Or movement is quite beautiful, and as the name of the watch implies, the butterfly-shaped bridge is produced from 18k rose gold. Is the butterfly feminine? I wouldn't say so. In fact, I think Andreas Strehler succeeds in bringing a pleasant genderless celebration to the Lepidoptera order of flying insects. According to Wikipedia, there are actually 180,000 species of moths and butterflies within the order. I am sure more than enough lepidopterists who also enjoy timepieces will see appeal in this collection. And even if you aren't traditionally a butterfly fan, then the original take on the theme for a men's watch might be enough to garner interest in the watch (in addition, of course, to Andreas Strehler's demonstrated proficiency at movement decoration and polishing).



The deep view in the the skeletonized movement offers a rich opportunity to view the finely beveled edges and clever skeletonization techniques. In terms of mechanical movement architecture, the Andreas Strehler Papillon d'Or is top notch in its presentation. You might also notice that various Andreas Strehler Papillon d'Or watches out there are given slightly different decorative tech-

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niques. This version, for instance, has different finishing on the back of the movement than the one on Andreas Strehler's website.



While not strictly limited edition watches, I would imagine that most Andreas Strehler Papillon d'Or watches are produced on order only. That would translate into a rather high level of exclusivity for the brand which probably only makes a few dozen timepieces per year. The Andreas Strehler Papillon d'Or comes either with an 18k red gold case (as you can see hands-on in the article you are reading) or in platinum. Prices are **108,000** and **123,000 Swiss francs** respectively. [astrehler.ch](http://astrehler.ch)



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