The Piaget Scientific Award

Introduced in 2017 for the last SIHH, this award rewards a candidate whose PhD thesis presents a particularly innovative research result that may pave the way for major technological progress in the broad field of miniaturization. The competition is established in partnership with the prestigious Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL) in Switzerland and is open to anyone having earned a doctorate relating to this field within the last two years.

An international committee of five members has been set up to designate the competition winner. It is headed by Professor Yves Bellouard, who has since January 2015 been heading the Richemont Chair and the Galatea Lab within the Faculty of Engineering Science and Technology at the EPFL. He was joined on the committee by Professor Haixia (Alice) Zhang from Peking University, Beijing, China; Professor Joost J. Vlassak from Harvard University, Boston, USA; Mr Edouard Mignon, Group Research & innovation Director, Richemont; and Mr Rémi Jomard, Products & Innovation Director, Piaget.

The winner of this year’s edition of the Piaget Scientific Award is Martin COUX, 29 years old, engineer from AgroParisTech, ESPCI, and doctor at the Paris Sciences et Lettres university. The latter’s thesis work studies have been oriented on water-repellent smart materials. These particular substrates are covered with textures of micrometric size and are usually passive. The aim of this study is to create actuable superhydrophobic surfaces, whose wetting properties can be tuned with an external parameter. He creates and characterizes new and interesting situations with non-wetting materials that he either deforms or sets into motion.

This study is directly linked to watchmaking as it is related to mechanical miniaturization only (electronic subjects being excluded from the award selection). In the future, should the maturity of the study results allow it to register in the development strategy of the Maison, this technology could be applied to Piaget products.

The winner, Martin Coux, will receive a diploma as well as one-year post-doctoral fellowship funded by Piaget, during which he will have the opportunity of conducting his own research in cooperation with an EPFL laboratory.
About Piaget

It was in La Côte-aux-Fées that Georges-Edouard Piaget set up his first workshop in the family farmhouse and devoted himself to producing high-precision movements. This was back in 1874 and marked the start of an ever-growing reputation. In 1943, the company took a decision that would prove crucial to its future by registering its brand name.

Faithful to its pioneering spirit, Piaget in the late 1950s set about designing and manufacturing the ultra-thin movements that would become one of the Maison’s signatures and leave a lasting impression on watchmaking.

Piaget was also a style: a marriage of gold and an explosion of color, new shapes, precious gems, and dials made of hard stones. Carried along on the wave of extraordinary creativity driven by Yves G. Piaget, the brand’s jewelry collection grew in an original direction with a resolute emphasis on color.

Rich with more than 140 years of history, the always bold brand, continuously innovated by offering jewels in motion, extravagant Haute Joaillerie collections, and incredible timepieces, thereby becoming one of the world’s most prestigious jewelers and watchmakers.

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