



*Close up detail of the
unique textured concrete
case and crown*

Over the years I have become absolutely captivated with modern architecture. This inspired me to write several books about the subject. Recently, I have started a book specifically about concrete residential homes, which is scheduled to be published in 2021. In total there will be 25 unique projects featured from around the world. Some of the properties have a very futuristic aesthetic that couldn't be achieved using any other material. Ultimately that is why concrete became a very popular choice in contemporary building design. This industrial fabric also is slowly filtering into the luxury goods industry and that's what inspired me to create a unique timepiece from concrete.

As well as being a published author, I also have a degree in art and am an industrial designer. In the last four years, I have created several watches from a diverse range of materials. That is why it seemed only natural to experiment with concrete because of its unique texture. However, finding someone to manufacture a case that actually looks like concrete, has structural integrity and is impervious was pretty challenging. At the time I had designed some bespoke leather jackets (with printed industrial textures) that required concrete buttons. After some extensive research, I discovered a UK based craftsman called George Slaughter who was experimenting with this material.

Originally George made me several buttons for my leather jackets that looked pretty cool. However, they didn't have the desired industrial aesthetic required for the 60mm hexagonal watch I created. In contrast to the concrete used in building construction (which is solid) for luxury goods products, the molecular structure has to be completely different. Therefore, George Slaughter needed to create a composite of resin and concrete fibres. The main issue is striking the correct balance. For example, too much resin would give the material a plastic-type of appearance and too little would have an impact on the structural integrity. After several trials (over many months) George finally achieved the perfect formula, which looks absolutely fantastic.

Previously I had used various custom made skeletonised Swiss made Unitas



Paolo Mathai Horology x Konstantin Chaykin 'The Edge'

Steve Huyton, is a published author who has written several books about architecture, horology and luxury design. He also has produced articles for high profile magazines like Esquire and has a global design website called Total Design Reviews. Unlike many other writers, Steve is an industrial designer specialising in products like bespoke Swiss mechanical watches and custom made leather blazers. This gives him a unique insight into the whole creative process, which gives his editorials more integrity:

(manual winding) movements to power my watches. Primarily because they look great, are large (36,60 mm) and exceptionally reliable. However, for this project, I wanted to use something extra special and exclusive. Therefore, I contacted my friend Konstantin Chaykin to ask if he would supply one of his extraordinary KMR 02-0 movements. Fortunately, he obliged and even agreed to customise the calibre to my specifications. This incredible crescent-shaped mechanism is at the heart of his sublime range of Mystery Levitas watches. For many years Konstantin has been a true inspiration and that is why I have featured his timepieces in several of my books.

There is no disputing that Konstantin Chaykin is a brilliant watch and clockmaker who is revered by his contemporaries. That is why it was the ultimate compliment when he agreed to be apart of my (now called) 'The Edge' watch project. The KMR 02-0 movement is a wonderful piece of mechanical art and the ultimate horological illusion. In Konstantin's sublime Mystery Levitas custom made watches the mechanism is concealed by various decorative dials so that the hands seemingly appear to be floating. To create this illusion (inspired by French illusionist and inventor Jean-Eugène Robert-Houdin) two sapphire discs (hours, minutes) rotate at different speeds.

has operated a highly successful watch restoring business in South Australia for several years. What he doesn't know about horology really isn't worth knowing and his technical expertise is truly world-class. So far we collaborated on numerous projects and have developed a symbiotic working relationship. This has yielded some exciting results and inspired me to be even more creative.

On the surface assembling 'The Edge' looked like a pretty straightforward proposition. Essentially, we had a beautiful case, a brilliant mechanism with integrated hour/minute hands, crown and custom sapphire crystals. However, even with these components, Ben still need to handcraft a movement support ring from a slab of solid aluminium. He also had to make several calibrations to ensure all the individual parts assembled correctly. This is no mean feat taking into consideration the hexagonal shape and unusual fabric of the watch. Fortunately, Ben relishes a challenge and his engineering background pushed this project over the line.

'The Edge' is one of the most rewarding projects I have been personally involved in. To combine my love of horology and contemporary architecture has been a very stimulating experience. I am also honoured to have worked with artisans like Konstantin, Ben, George and Ingomar Gaksch who created the custom made Grey leather strap with a matching buckle. Functionally the watch features hours, minutes, moon phase indication and a 33-hour power reserve.

One of my secret indulgences is the US Television show 'Magic's Biggest Secrets Finally Revealed'. In every episode, the 'Masked Magician' (AKA Val Valentino) divulges secrets behind the world's most famous tricks. For that reason, I wanted to reveal the illusion of the technically brilliant KMR 02-0 movement by exposing all of the mechanical elements. This calibre comprises 29-jewels and oscillates at a frequency of 18,000 vibrations an hour, which the same as the Unitas 6497-1. However, the KMR 02-0 is slightly larger at 38mm x 5.5mm. These proportions were ideal for 'The Edge' that has a diameter of 60mm (excluding the crown). On this unique 1/1 version, Konstantin Chaykin removed his logo from the sapphire crystal and crafted a bespoke pair of titanium hands to my design. With all the components manufactured I needed the assistance of my friend and co-designer Ben Birkett. Ben



The reverse of the case perfectly showcases Konstantin Chaykin's extraordinary 'KMR 02-0 movement



Close up detail of the moon phase indication, on the KMR 02-0 caliber