**LOGICAL ONE SECRET KAKAU HÖFKE**

**A stunning *objet d’art* paying tribute to Rio de Janeiro**

With Logical One Secret Kakau Höfke, Romain Gauthier has created the ultimate synthesis of art, craftsmanship and *haute horlogerie* to produce a stunning objet d’art that pays tribute to that most vibrant of cities, Rio de Janeiro.

On one hand, Logical One Secret Kakau Höfke is a resplendent expression of contemporary art. Adorning its integrated 18k white gold cover, hour-minute subdial and small seconds is a mesmerising, modernist depiction of Rio de Janeiro, designed by Kakau Höfke. This Brazilian artist is a long-time friend of the Gauthier family and responsible for designing the Romain Gauthier logo when the brand was founded in 2005.

Originally featuring in her series of acrylic-on-canvas artworks, Höfke’s signature portrayal of her native city Rio not only evokes Corcovado – the iconic mountain on which proudly stands the ‘Christ the Redeemer’ statue – but also the pattern that features on the promenade (*calçada*) bordering Ipanema beach.

At the same time, this piece is a consummate celebration of time-honoured craftsmanship. For Höfke’s design has been beautifully adapted and recreated using an intricate micro-marquetry technique based on traditional stone marquetry, carried out by artisans at the Geneva atelier of Olivier Vaucher.

No fewer than 352 unique, mirror-polished, miniature tiles of jade and agate – each one 0.5mm thin and painstakingly hand-finished and hand-applied – make up this exceptional micro-marquetry, which required three months of solid work to create. The sheer complexity of the marquetry is evidenced by its bombé profile and double layer of tiles.

Light and dark tiles cut from the same lavender jade stone form the Ipanema promenade pattern; tiles cut from blue agate compose the Corcovado scenery. Where the two motifs overlap, the cover has been delicately recessed to accommodate a second layer of tiles, with the ethereal transparency of the blue agate allowing the lavender jade marquetry below to remain visible.

The effect is remarkable, for the beholder can appreciate not just the varying hues of the different stone types, but also the contrasting, fragmented patterns of the two tile layers. That the marquetry seamlessly flows onto the subdials is another outstanding feature.

The artisan has displayed an extraordinary level of skill to pull off this feat: using their dexterous hand and experienced eye to fine-tune and place the tiles so that the joins are barely perceptible, while at the same time ensuring that the overall artwork boasts a subtle three-dimensional relief.

Indeed, the tile facets act like tiny angled mirrors, with light shimmering off of each one, endowing Logical One Secret Kakau Höfke with an effervescent vitality in keeping with the spirit of Rio de Janeiro and its people.

The visual splendour doesn’t stop there. A gentle squeeze on the pusher integrated into the white gold case unlocks the cover engraved on the inside with the Romain Gauthier logo and Kakau Höfke’s signature.

Lifting up the cover reveals Logical One Secret’s multi-patented, in-house movement featuring flat chain-and-fusee style constant force system with ruby-link chain, highly visible balance wheel boasting a gracefully curved bridge, and ergonomic push button winding system.

The sapphire crystal display back affords further views of this mechanical art, with the superlatively hand-finished movement on full show, in addition to the 46-hour power reserve indicator. Logical One Secret Kakau Höfke is a unique piece, created as part of Manufacture Romain Gauthier’s 10th anniversary celebrations. It is accompanied by a unique acrylic-on-canvas Rio de Janeiro artwork that Kakau Höfke painted especially to complement the timepiece.

**LOGICAL ONE SECRET KAKAU HÖFKE IN DETAIL**

**Romain Gauthier and Rio de Janeiro**

Rio de Janeiro is a place that Romain Gauthier holds dear. The Swiss watchmaker has visited this iconic Brazilian city annually with his family since meeting his Rio-born wife Ana at the turn of the millennium.

“Undeniably, Rio de Janeiro has a special place in my heart,” he says. “The diversity and exuberance of its people – the Cariocas – coupled with the beautiful, dramatic cityscape never ceases to fascinate me. There is no other place like it in the world.”

As a tribute to the city that has given him so much – not least his beloved – Gauthier decided to create a timepiece that pays homage to Rio de Janeiro. And he has done so by harnessing the talents of acclaimed artist Kakau Höfke.

“Kakau Höfke has been a friend of my wife and our family for a long time, and I asked her to design the Romain Gauthier logo when I founded the brand in 2005,” says Gauthier. “While I admire her as a person, I also have great admiration for her as an artist, and I have collected several of her paintings over the years. Her idiosyncratic style and colourful depiction of Rio is a joy to behold. I always feel transported to this magical city when I view her artwork.”

He continues: “My idea was to use the gold cover of our Logical One Secret as a canvas on which I could incorporate an adaptation of Kakau Höfke’s emblematic depiction of Rio de Janeiro.”

**Kakau Höfke’s Rio**

Artist Kakau Höfke has become known for her modern, pop art style featuring colourful palettes and overlapping transparencies, with Rio de Janeiro her habitual, glorious subject. “My artistic inspiration is the love I have for my hometown,” she says. “My work is based on the mountains and the promenades of Ipanema and Copacabana, which are icons of Rio. The best-known mountain is Corcovado that you can see from virtually anywhere in the city. It transcends religion – it is the symbol of the city. The promenades too have become known worldwide as a symbol of Rio.”

“Rio is a very beautiful city. Not only because of the splendid nature, mountains, forest and beaches, but also the atmosphere, the joy of the people who live there, despite all the challenges they face every day. Rio does have its problems and social injustices, but I prefer to paint it happy and colourful, as I wish it were in reality.”

She adds: “I was thrilled when Romain proposed to feature my artwork on one of his timepieces. It was almost surreal. I know how hard he has worked to create *haute horlogerie* of the very highest level, and so to now play a part in his adventure was a real honour.”

**Adaptation of Kakau Höfke’s Rio artwork**

With Kakau Höfke on board, Romain Gauthier asked her to adapt her Rio artwork so that all its main elements – the depiction of Corcovado and Christ the Redeemer statue, and the Ipanema promenade motif – would comprise a design that could decorate the gold cover of Logical One Secret.

After that, it was a question of choosing a suitable medium of expression. Micro-painting? Hand-engraving? Gauthier decided on an intricate micro-marquetry technique based on traditional stone marquetry, comprising hundreds of uniquely shaped fine-stone tiles, including a double layer of tiles where the Corcovado motif overlays the Ipanema pattern. Not only would it look spectacular, but also it would evoke the calçadas – promenades of Rio – including that of Ipanema beach as well as the strand along Copacabana beach.

Kakau Höfke explains: “What Romain did was simply amazing. He managed to add one more characteristic of Rio to this timepiece through choosing stone micro-marquetry to express my artwork. The marquetry features irregularly shaped tiles of fine stones, in a similar way to the promenades of Rio, which are composed of irregularly shaped ‘Portuguese stones’. Fantastic!”

**The stone micro-marquetry in detail**

Romain Gauthier enlisted the renowned skills of the artisans at the Geneva atelier of Olivier Vaucher to create the stone micro-marquetry adorning Logical One Secret Kakau Höfke’s cover. It was a challenge that Vaucher and his team relished.

“When Romain approached us to carry out the stone marquetry for this timepiece, we were really impressed by the idea and were eager to do it. But we knew it would not be without its challenges,” says Olivier Vaucher. “It was going to be highly complicated. A single layer of marquetry on its own is a challenge, but a double marquetry – one layer on top of the other – is virtually unheard of, especially on this micro scale.”

Vaucher continues: “The bombé profile of Logical One Secret’s cover added to the complexity of the task because the tiles themselves have a flat profile. That meant the angle of the sides of each tile needed to be carefully hand-adjusted, tile by tile, as the artisan applied each tile to the marquetry.”

First, Olivier Vaucher’s team theoretically tested different combinations of tile shapes and sizes before settling on a harmonious fragmented pattern of 352 irregularly-shaped tiles, a pattern that was both aesthetically pleasing and workable. These three- to six-sided tiles are all 0.5mm thin and their sides 1mm to 2mm long.

From their repository of fine stones, Vaucher and his team carefully selected stone types that corresponded to the hues and shades of Höfke’s design. They chose light and dark slices cut from the same piece of lavender jade for the Ipanema pattern and a specific slice of blue agate to portray the Corcovado scenery.

One of the factors in determining the stone was its workability at a thinness of 0.5mm. If the stone were too fragile at this thinness, cutting and hand-adjusting such fine tiles would be impossible.

What’s more, the Corcovado scenery needed to be represented by a genre of see-through stone, to allow the layer of marquetry below to remain visible. This was the first time Olivier Vaucher’s atelier had superimposed a layer of transparent stone marquetry over an underlying layer of marquetry.

The selected slices of stone were mirror-polished and then precision-cut by laser into the 352 tiles. Each tile was purposefully created ever so slightly larger than needed so the artisan could later adjust it manually to fit the curved profile of the gold cover.

It was important that each tile side touched an adjacent tile side, with no gaps between them. This was no easy feat to achieve, and here the artisan’s skill and savoir-faire really came into play. Working tile by tile, the artisan adjusted the angle of each side of the tile with a small hand-held grinding wheel, before applying a little watchmaking glue to the tile and fixing it in place on the gold cover. All in all, the magnificent stone micro-marquetry took three months’ solid work to create.

**Logical One Secret’s mechanical art**

With the stone micro-marquetry of Kakau Höfke’s Rio de Janeiro taking centre stage, it is easy to forget that Logical One Secret Kakau Höfke also features a mechanical work of art – the innovative, Grand Prix de Genève-winning movement of Logical One which was conceived, developed, produced, decorated, assembled and regulated in-house at Manufacture Romain Gauthier.

This pioneering movement features Romain Gauthier’s 21st-century reinterpretation of a traditional chain-and-fusee style constant force mechanism. Gauthier’s invention contains a revolutionary ruby-link chain, snail cam and sapphire-lined mainspring barrel to offer nearly two days of constant force – the holy grail of precision watchmaking.

Pressing the caseband pusher at 4 o’clock unlatches the cover, allowing the wearer to lift it up and admire Logical One Secret Kakau Höfke’s palladium-treated movement through the sapphire crystal. The snail cam and ruby-link chain are on full show, as are bespoke gear wheels with graceful circular arms; polished screw heads with distinctive s-slot; balance wheel with curved arms and calibrated eccentric weights; hand-frosted bridges; and Romain Gauthier-invented triangular pallet lever.

More of the outstanding movement can be viewed through the display back; bridges and plates bearing a number of angles – including several sharp internal angles – feature rounded bevels that have been meticulously created by hand. This type of eye-catching anglage brings out the inherent beauty of the components.

Logical One Secret Kakau Höfke is a unique piece.

**LOGICAL ONE SECRET KAKAU HÖFKE BY ROMAIN GAUTHIER**

**Technical Specifications**

**Unique piece**

18k white gold case, featuring jade and agate micro-marquetry

**Features and indications**

Intricate stone micro-marquetry adaptation of Kakau Höfke’s Rio de Janeiro artwork on white gold cover, hour and minute subdial and small seconds

Movement features chain-and-fusee style constant force system, push-button winding and superlative hand finishing

Hours, minutes, small seconds and 46-hour power reserve indicator

**Stone micro-marquetry on white gold cover, hour and minute subdials and small seconds**

No. of lavender jade tiles: 270

No. of blue agate tiles: 82

Tiles cut by laser then adjusted, finished and applied by hand at Olivier Vaucher’s atelier

**Dial and hands**

Lavender jade marquetry on hour and minute subdial and small seconds

Skeletonised hour and minute hands in 18k white gold

Solid small seconds hand in 18k white gold

Subdials fixed via Romain Gauthier polished screw with distinctive s-slot

**Movement and finishing**

Dimensions: 35.5mm x 10.5mm

Power reserve: 46 hours

Number of jewels: 63 in total, including 26 for the constant-force chain

Number of components: 359

Balance frequency: 28,800 vph / 4Hz

Movement components in: steel, stainless steel, beryllium copper, brass, titanium and German silver

4 patents: The specific composition and construction of the chain; the constant force system; the push-button winding system; and the high-efficiency profiles of the gear teeth

Finishing: Highest-level *haute horlogerie* finishing

**Case**

Case material: 18k white gold

Dimensions: 43mm x 15mm

Water resistance: 30m/3atm/100ft

Sapphire crystal with interior anti-reflection coating, front and display back

Crown for time setting at 2 o’clock

Push button for winding at 9 o’clock

Pusher for unlocking cover at 4 o’clock

**Strap and buckle**

Alligator leather strap hand-stitched in Switzerland with 18k white gold pin buckle

**PROFILE OF ROMAIN GAUTHIER**

Romain Gauthier was born in 1975 in the Vallée de Joux, the heart of fine Swiss watchmaking. It was in this picturesque valley that Romain developed his passion for traditional *haute horlogerie*, his grasp of mechanics and engineering, and his eye for design.

Having studied precision-mechanics at technical college, Romain qualified as a constructor of precision machinery in 1997. A year later, he started his first job as machine programmer-operator at a horological components manufacturer that he helped turn into one of the best-performing facilities in Europe.

Determined to build from scratch not just his own high-end watch, but also his own high-end watch brand, Romain completed an MBA in 2002. His final thesis was the business plan for his own watch company. After working behind closed doors on his own timepieces for three years, he launched the Romain Gauthier brand in 2005.

Romain has since developed the brand’s exclusive collections to include classically refined pieces, contemporarily casual creations and ethereal *objets d’art*.

In 2013, the jury of the Grand Prix d’Horlogerie de Genève – the Oscars of watchmaking – awarded Romain Gauthier’s Logical One the prize for Best Men’s Complication.

**PROFILE OF KAKAU HÖFKE**

Kakau Höfke was born in 1967 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. At the age of 16, she moved to Europe where she completed secondary school in Geneva before spending four years in Paris as a student at the Parsons School of Design. On gaining her graphic design degree, Höfke taught silk painting in Morocco and carried out design work in Portugal and France.

In 1992, Höfke returned to Rio where she worked for a decade in design and advertising agencies. With computer graphic design becoming her sole means of artistic expression, Höfke felt her creativity was being restricted and so abandoned her design career to return to her artistic roots, devoting herself full-time to painting. She eventually developed an idiosyncratic pop art style, fusing the fine arts with computer graphics, out of which her colourful pallets and transparencies joyfully celebrating Rio de Janeiro became her trademark.

As Höfke began to receive increasing recognition for her art, in 2012 she was invited to design the motif on the shopping bags of leading American department store Macy's for their “Brazil: A Magical Journey” campaign in addition to creating the designs to decorate the Brazilian house during the 2012 Olympic Games in London.