

Introducing The GENUS GNS1.2, With An Exotic New Time Display

A serpentine take on the passage of time.



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Quick Take

The Genus GNS1.2 is the first production timepiece from Genus, which was co-founded in Geneva by watchmaker Sébastien Billières, and entrepreneur Catherine Henry. Billières is the son of a watchmaker who spent 35 years at Rolex, and he began his own career at Roger Dubuis in 1999. His career since then has included a stint at URWERK, as well as working on the Opus V project with URWERK's Felix Baumgartner, for Harry Winston. He is today still in charge of after-sales service operations for Winston. His company, [Geneva Made Time Industrial](#), which he founded in 2011 with partner Nicolas Commergnat, is a fairly large-scale complications specialist which currently has about 20 full-time staff. The GNS1.2 (which is submitted this year to the GPHG, by the way, [in the Mechanical Exception category](#)) is not a GMTI product per se but it certainly shows his expertise in micromechanics.

The focus of the watch is an aesthetic, rather than a functional complication. The hours are shown on an outer ring which

rotates clockwise, and which carries individual numbered elements for each of the 12 hours. There is a small, stationary arrow at 9:00 which functions as the hour indicator and the hour markers rotate so that the current hour is upright as it approaches the arrow.



This is a sort of variation on a wandering hours complication, but it's with the indications for the minutes that things start to get really out of the ordinary. There are two rotating minute rings which both rotate once every 30 minutes. As they rotate, they carry a snake-like, flexible chain made of 12 linked elements – it looks a bit like some prehistoric marine arthropod. The lead element wraps around each of the minute rings in succession, with the lead element indicating the minutes to the nearest 10-minute interval; the overall path of travel is a figure 8. Finally, on the right, at 3:00, another rotating ring with the

numbers one through ten on it, shows the exact minute within the 10 minute interval indicated by the traveling chain. The lead element is called the "Genus" which is a term some of us might remember from studying taxonomic classification in biology; the trailing elements are called "Genera." Whether or not you think the terminology is apposite for the complication, it is certainly unlike anything I have ever seen before in a watch. This is also one of those situations where if a picture is worth a thousand words, a video is worth a thousand still images (this is one of those watches, by the way, where judicious use of Super-LumiNova makes for quite a PM light show).

The watch is going to be produced, as no one will be surprised to hear, in a limited edition of 8; the case is 18, white gold and the watch is 43mm x 13.1mm. The movement is given the full haute horlogerie treatment in terms of finishing, with polished flanks and bevels, black polished steelwork, and so on.

Initial Thoughts

Whether or not you respond well to this sort of watchmaking, depends a lot on how flexible your views are on what a watch should be. Over the last five hundred years the word "watch" has been used to describe everything from high precision chronometers on whose performance the lives of thousands might depend, to so-called erotic watches in which mechanical figures, generally executed in dubious taste, disport themselves for the titillation of jaded aristos, and everything in between. I find this kind of watchmaking irresistible; there is something about the kinetic entertainment such a watch offers that really does have the potential to bring out the fun-loving kid in all of us, who revels in the uncomplicated, Rube-Golberg-esque pleasure of complexity as an end in itself, and who takes pleasure in the display of mechanical ingenuity for its own sake.



In that sense the GNS1.2 is merely a logical extension of the fascination of mechanical watchmaking itself. There is a lot of satisfaction to be had, of course, in a well-priced, sturdy mechanical watch from Rolex or Omega or Seiko or what have you, that serves faithfully and unobtrusively through the passing years and decades. But man doth not live on bread alone, as the proverb has it. While this brand of mechanical exuberance is no longer quite as abundant as it was in the halcyon days of the early 2000s, when so many brands were striving to outdo themselves in producing unheard-of new complications and the high point of every Baselworld was the new Opus watch from Harry Winston, it's still just as much fun to see it done well now as it ever was.

The Basics

Brand: Genus

Model: GNS1.2

Reference Number: GNS1.2WG

Diameter: 43mm dial side; 41.5mm underside (the case tapers slightly)

Thickness: 13.1mm

Case Material: 18k white gold

Indexes: separate indications for hours, ten minute intervals, and exact minutes

Lume: Super-LumiNova

Water Resistance: 3 bar/30 meters

Strap/Bracelet: navy blue calfskin, 18k white gold pin buckle (white gold folding clasp available on request)



The Movement

Functions: hours, ten minute intervals indicated by orbiting elements, exact minutes on minutes disk at 3:00

Diameter: 38mm

Thickness: 7.7mm

Power Reserve: 50 hours

Winding: manual

Frequency: 18,000 vph

Jewels: 26

Additional Details: hand finished with polished bevels and flanks, mirror polished steelwork

Pricing & Availability

Price: 288,500 CHF (about \$290,000)

Availability: Currently available

Limited Edition: 8 pieces

For more information and to contact Genus Watches, visit www.genuswatches.swiss.