

# BOVET

1822

*Château de Môtiers*



**FOR ALL TO SEE**

The BOVET 1822 Virtuoso XI



# Virtuoso XI

FOR ALL TO SEE

"In today's world of mass-produced luxury, here at BOVET we focus on handcraftsmanship and the human touch," says Mr. Pascal Raffy, owner of BOVET 1822. "I am proud to introduce the Virtuoso XI, which combines contemporary high watchmaking with artisanal hand-finishing and hand-engraving. This piece is an ode to BOVET's artisans, who take such pride in every step of the process."

People all over the world love to admire the mechanical mastery of a high watchmaking movement. Fascinated by the spinning and turning of the tourbillon, they delight in the intricacy of the gears, the sensuous lines of the bridges, the finishing on the plates, and in every spectacular detail.

It stands to reason that skeletonized timepieces particularly appeal, for they put all the mechanical complexity on full display. In the 22 years since Mr. Pascal Raffy took the helm of BOVET, he has insisted on making sure the movement is visible, its high watchmaking pedigree open to be admired, while at the same time reinforcing the House's commitment to the decorative arts.

Given this focus on mechanical artistry, it might seem a bit surprising that the new BOVET 1822 Virtuoso XI is the very first full skeleton timepiece the House has ever introduced.

And what a skeleton it is.



## Virtuosity

The Virtuoso collection from BOVET 1822 gets its name from the designation given to those with the ultimate level of skill in a particular art or field, and this truly represents the level of the artisans in the House. Mr. Raffy considers every member of the House as an artisan and a virtuoso. The timepieces produced by these virtuosos are not just time keepers, but instead works of art.



## Inside Skeletonization

The delicate dance when skeletonizing a movement is to remove enough material to enhance the aesthetics and completely show the inner workings, while still keeping the movement robust enough to function impeccably. Take away too much material from the bridges, for example, and they could deform and damage the performance of the movement.

For this reason, the Virtuoso XI flying tourbillon movement, first used in the Virtuoso VIII (2017), already endowed with beautiful and finely finished details, was re-engineered specifically to be open worked. The original movement's Grand Date was removed and the gear train relocated to a more aesthetic position, and the entire movement was designed to be skeletonized. The bridges and plates were made as thin as possible from the start, and where they couldn't be made any thinner due to structural requirements, angling and beveling makes them appear thinner than they actually are.

However, Mr. Raffy wasn't content with just applying the art of skeletonization for this timepiece. He was determined to do something that had never been done before and his mandate was to engrave both sides of the movement's components. In normal skeletonized watches, the movements are often tightly packed without much room in between the bridges and wheels, so engraving both sides is too difficult and would be pointless because it would not be visible.

With the Virtuoso XI, the movement was specifically conceived and designed from the start to have enough space to engrave both sides of the bridges and plates, and room to admire them, and the result is exceptional. More transparent than any timepiece that BOVET has ever produced, every aspect of this high watchmaking movement is on full display.

This allows you to dive into the movement, letting your eyes wander throughout its construction, admiring the transparency, the attention to detail, the high finishing, as well as the overall ethereal effect.

Mesmerizing and captivating, the Virtuoso XI is a wonder to behold. Stare too long at the magnificent artistry and you will get lost in its spectacular details. BOVET 1822 will not be held responsible for the consequences when you become distracted by your timepiece.



## Hand-Finishing

The first step once the components are produced is to finish them all by hand. They are beveled and angled in preparation for the next step, the engraving. The finishing is all done thanks to the expertise of the artisans, who know just how much material they should remove to achieve the perfect symmetry and shape. Some of the parts can take hours to bevel and angle to get them just right. Remove too much material and the piece has to be discarded and the process starts over.



## Traditional Hand-Engraving

Metal engraving has been around since the 5th century, usually as a way to signify wealth and to add decoration to jewelry and other objects. BOVET 1822 first engraved movements and cases in the early 1800s, and in fact was the first House to use an exhibition back, as customers loved to admire the highly-decorated movements.



Keeping this tradition alive, BOVET 1822 has a complete hand-engraving and finishing workshop within the Tramelan manufacture. The Virtuoso XI was realized in this workshop, done just as it was performed hundreds of years ago. The only difference is that the gravers and chisels, which are often hand made by the artisans themselves, are more effective and use today's metals, and the work is done through modern microscopes.

The engravers at BOVET love a challenge, and the start of the engraving for the Virtuoso XI -- even the *pont de minuterie* (the minute train bridge) is engraved -- resulted in a lot of consternation, wringing hands, shaking heads, and repeated use of the word *folle* (French for "crazy"). Once they started, however, the artisans took up the gauntlet and the finished movement is a triumph of the human touch and the artistry of the engraver.

The hand-engraving for the Virtuoso XI takes around 60 hours for the movement and the Writing Slope case. The engraving is done free-hand and leaves no room for mistakes. Surprisingly, the engravers, sitting quietly in the well-lit atelier, don't seem to feel any pressure, though anyone watching them certainly does. The artisans delight in the dance of their tools as they transform a plain bridge or plate into an engraved objet d'art.

The decoration is BOVET's own Fleurisanne motif, one that the House has used for decades. Inspired by the tree leaf pattern on Greek columns from centuries ago, this theme is one of the signatures of BOVET. The name of this motif recalls that the House is still based a stone's throw from where it was founded - a small village named Fleurier.

The production of the Virtuoso XI is severely limited, due to the time it takes to engrave and finish each movement and case, and the meticulousness needed at every step -- the artisans at BOVET can only produce one or two a month.



## The Manufacture Movement

The flying tourbillon movement that drives this exceptional timepiece meets BOVET's demanding criteria of chronometry, reliability, and expression. It draws its energy from a single barrel that ensures more than 10 days of power reserve (240 hours, when the industry standard is 42-48 hours), all while maintaining the balance wheel's oscillations at 18,000 vph.

Finally, the long power reserve, provided by a single barrel, would require meticulous winding if not for the spherical differential winding system. The application of this ingenious mechanism, and the multi-gear three-dimensional teeth of one of its pinions, has received two patents. Because of this system, the number of crown turns needed for full winding of the mainspring is halved without increasing friction and forces exerted on the gears.

The power reserve barrel is laser-engraved with the Fleurisanne pattern. Due to the barrel's thin metal, hand-engraving was impossible, as the metal would have deformed under the engraver's pressure.

The Virtuoso XI's movement uses BOVET's patented double-side flying tourbillon, and the hair spring and regulating organ used are entirely made in-house.



## Two Versions Available

The new Virtuoso XI comes in a 18K white gold case, with the option for engraved or high polished, and set with brilliant-white diamonds or unset.

The Virtuoso XI is a triumph of high watchmaking, skeletonization, hand-engraving, and hand-decoration. All told, more than 60 pairs of human hands have come together to transform this timepiece into a true work of art.



## Virtuoso XI



### At a Glance

- First full skeleton timepiece from BOVET 1822
- Incredible transparency
- Every plate, bridge and other surface fully hand-engraved
- 60+ hours to engrave the movement and trademarked Writing Slope case
- Re-imagined and Re-engineered Virtuoso VIII manufacture movement
- Patented double-sided flying tourbillon
- 10-days of power reserve
- Patented spherical rewinding system

### Technical Specs

Case	44mm 18K White Gold Writing Slope case; available fully-engraved or high-polished, and set with diamonds or unset
Movement	38mm, 16½ lines, 6.7mm high
Features	Completely skeletonized and hand-engraved; hours, minutes, seconds; 60-second flying tourbillon
	Number of jewels 36
	Components: 283
	Frequency: 18,000 vph/2.5 Hz
	Power Reserve: 10 days with a single barrel
	Water Resistance: 30 meters

