

March 24, 2011

The Credor Spring Drive Minute Repeater

SEIKO WATCH CORPORATION is proud to announce the creation of the Credor Spring Drive Minute Repeater. It is the first minute repeater watch ever built by SEIKO and, alongside the Credor Spring Drive Sonnerie, marks another milestone in the developing tradition of SEIKO as a leading manufacturer of 'complication' timepieces.



The Credor Spring Drive Minute Repeater

The miracle of pure sound

In every aspect of its creation, total purity of sound has been the goal. The result is a lingering, clear and haunting sound which has a uniquely Japanese character. This beautiful sound has been achieved by the magic of the totally silent Spring Drive mechanism allied to the use of a special steel forged by a celebrated Japanese steelmaker, Munemichi Myochin. For fifty two unbroken generations, members of his family have been master blacksmiths and they have been making steel for over 850 years.

The Myochin Wind Bell

The Myochin family's steel forging tradition started with the manufacture of armor for soldiers in the Heian era (late 8th – late 12th century). Over the centuries, their skill has led the family into many other areas of steel production, including fire tongs, or "hibashi". It was found that these tongs, when tapped together, produced a wonderful sound and the family started to make wind chimes in which two or more hibashi are hung together allowing the wind to create a uniquely clear and pleasing sound. When the master craftsmen in the Micro Artist Studio at SEIKO's Shiojiri facility looked for a special material for use in the minute repeater bell gongs, Myochin steel was their natural choice but it took many months of experimentation to find the perfect steel and perfect shape. The sound frequency, volume and attenuation rate were repeatedly monitored on equipment built by SEIKO EPSON to create the closest possible replica of the Myochin wind bell's sound.



The Myochin Wind Bell

The silence of high technology

To preserve the enchanting purity of the traditional wind bell sound, SEIKO's Micro Artist Studio used two high-level technologies that ensure that the movement is completely silent. First, the movement is Spring Drive, the only mechanical movement in the world to measure time silently and continuously with no tick. Second, an ingenious and unique 'silent governor' uses the viscosity of air to control the speed of the striking gongs. Together, these technologies, both unique to SEIKO, provide perfect timekeeping in perfect silence so that the beauty of the minute repeater's sound is never compromised.

The decimal decision

While most minute repeaters follow the traditional hour, quarter and minute system, the Credor Spring Drive Minute Repeater has a decimal system such that the hammers strike with one-hour, ten-minute and one-minute sounds. This system was chosen as being more in keeping with the high technology character of the movement. It is perfectly logical and simple. At one fifty nine, the hour sound is struck once, the ten-minute sound is struck five times and the one-minute sound is struck nine times. Ever since the first decimal minute repeaters in the 18th century, this system has had its devotees, and today, when decimal systems are almost universal, it seemed to the Micro Artist Studio watchmakers to be the perfect choice.

The craftsmanship of the Micro Artist Studio

The Credor Spring Drive Minute Repeater has no less than 660 components. All the major components are hand-polished by the master craftsmen in the Micro Artist Studio and are visible through the sapphire crystal and case back. Of particular beauty is the high-speed 'flight' of the blades of the silent governor, visible from the front, and the striking of the hammers which can be seen through the case back.

The striking of the hammers can be seen clearly through the sapphire caseback.



Exquisite, but also a joy to wear.

Of course, it is the beauty of the sound and of the watch's appearance that strike the observer first, but on closer inspection, it becomes clear that this astonishing new timepiece is a truly practical watch. The crystals, front and back, are sapphire and it has a safety system that prevents malfunction if the crown is pulled out when the minute repeater is activated. It is moderate in size, as the case is just 42.8 mm in diameter, and it is practical to use as it has a power reserve of 72 hours when the minute repeater mechanism is not used. The first Credor Spring Drive Minute Repeater will be available in December. Just three pieces can be produced in the initial year.

Credor Spring Drive Minute Repeater

Ref. GBLS998

Caliber 7R11

Manual winding

Hour, minute and second hands

Power reserve indicator

Decimal minute repeater

112 jewels

Power reserve: 72 hours (without using the minute repeater mechanism)

Accuracy: ± 15 seconds per month

Movement diameter: 36.6 mm, thickness: 7.8 mm

Case: 18 karat rose gold

See-through case back with sapphire crystal

42.8 mm in diameter and 14.0mm in thickness

Band: Crocodile with 18 karat rose gold three-fold clasp and push button release

Glass: High definition dual-curved sapphire crystal with anti-reflective coating

Recommended retail price in Japan: JPY 34,650,000