



ACCESSORIES

Watches with their own bags

Louis Vuitton bags act as a display for one-of-a-kind timepieces

BY MING LIU

Louis Vuitton has long leaned into its trunk making origins, with offerings such as its Petite Malle, or Little Trunk, handbags and its Objets Nomades furniture and objects inspired by travel.

Now, its new Escales Autour du Monde collection features two automaton pocket watches with landscape scenes on their dials. One displays an Amazon forest; the other shows Pont Neuf, the bridge over the Seine that is adjacent to Louis Vuitton's headquarters in Paris.

And both watches were designed to sit prominently on the exterior of a leather bag, a reproduction of a motorizing bag Louis Vuitton created in the early 1900s in response to the sudden popularity of automobile travel.

The house said the bag, which looks much like a doctor's bag, was rediscovered during a search of the archives and would be created in exclusive versions for the watches' buyers. Matthieu Hegi, the artistic director of La Fabrique du Temps Louis Vuitton, the brand's high watchmaking division, added that buyers would also have the choice of two other bags: one that resembles Louis Vuitton's popular trunk-inspired Malle bag or a more rounded design.

The idea was to offer options to the client, said Mr. Hegi, who added that the original bag was his favorite. "It's very unique," he said. "It tells a story of the past coming to the future."

He likened the bag to the stands traditionally used to display pocket watches. "We realized we don't need a stand — we have it," he said of the bag.

The 50-millimeter white gold watches feature complications including a tourbillon and a minute repeater, which allows the time to be sounded by chimes. Each watch dial is ringed with a bezel of 60 baguette-cut gemstones, with the Escale en Amazonie in a green palette and the Escale au Pont-Neuf in a blue one.

To match the colors, the buyers'

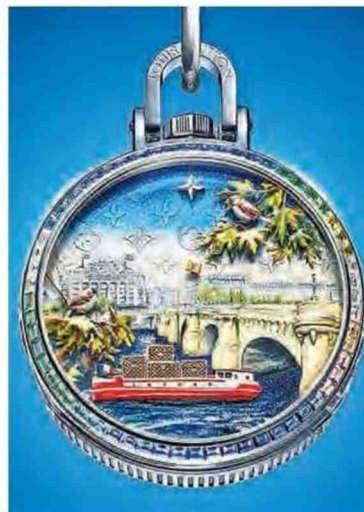
choice of bags and custom-made miniature storage trunks, an alternative to traditional watch boxes, will be covered in emerald green or saffron leather, colors that the house said would not be used on any other Louis Vuitton leather goods. Handcrafted gold watch chains will also be included.

The watches themselves feature 3-D-like scenes with seven automations and were created with métiers d'art techniques such as engraving and enameling.

The Escale en Amazonie depicts a wooden boat that moves from right to left. It is carrying several Louis Vuitton trunks that open and close, the entire scene observed by a monkey, a pair of parrots and a snake.

The Pont Neuf design also features a boat, a cargo barge floating on the Seine, with the historic bridge and Parisian cityscape in the background.

Mr. Hegi said he personally is a fan of pocket watches. "I consider it the most elegant way to wear a watch," he said. "I like the idea of having the watch somewhere else than the wrist — either in your pocket or displayed on a bag, as we did."



Details

The Escale en Amazonie, top, and the Escale au Pont-Neuf, bottom, feature 3-D-like scenes with seven automations and were created with métiers d'art techniques such as engraving and enameling.