

ONLY WATCH 2011 for research on Duchenne muscular dystrophy

Launch event in Geneva in the presence of H.S.H. Prince Albert II of Monaco and representatives of prestigious watchmaking manufactures

Audemars Piguet, Bell & Ross, Blancpain, Bovet Fleurier, Breguet, Celsius, Chanel, Chaumet, Chopard, Corum, De Bethune, Delacour, De Witt, Franck Muller, Frédérique Constant, Girard Perregaux, Harry Winston, Hermès, Hublot, Ikepod/Marc Newson, Jaquet Droz, Laurent Ferrier, Louis Vuitton, Maurice Lacroix, MB&F, Mont Blanc, Patek Philippe, Piaget, Richard Mille, Romain Jérôme, Tag Heuer, Ulysse Nardin, Urwerk, Vacheron Constantin, Van Cleef & Arpels, Vulcain, Zenith

Some of the most prestigious Swiss watch manufacturers have once again renewed their participation in the event organised by the Monegasque Association against Muscular Dystrophies (AMM) to support long-term, in-depth research on Duchenne muscular dystrophy, the extremely invalidating neuromuscular illness that affects one boy out of 3500, with a total of 250 000 children, teenagers and young adults affected the world over.

Representatives of the watch manufactures, partners, and donators all came together in Geneva on Monday 29 November 2010 for the launch of the fourth edition of the bi-annual Only Watch event. The auction will take place on September 22nd, 2011 during the Monaco Yacht Show in the Principality of Monaco.

Luc Pettavino, President of the AMM and initiator of Only Watch, warmly welcomed and thanked H.S.H. Prince Albert II of Monaco for his presence and exceptional support of the project and then addressed the audience:

“Your presence is stimulating because all of us are eager to see these unique pieces, a result of your know-how, your creativity, and your striving for excellence.

Your presence is reassuring because it demonstrates that you were wisely able to turn competition amongst each other into a healthy ambition and enthusiasm for a noble cause.

Your presence is moving because even if this disease does not affect you directly, your generosity and good-heartedness will help to save lives.

In 2009/2010 over 3 million euros were donated to 15 scientific partners and their teams - including 90 researchers and clinicians in 5 countries (France, Italy, Switzerland, United Kingdom and United States). It is rare to be able to contribute so effectively to exploring and developing new therapeutic treatments for Duchenne muscular dystrophy. And how is research progressing?

When will we have a treatment that will, in the first place, stop muscular degradation and then regenerate muscles? Have clinical tests begun? What are the most promising techniques today?”

These questions were answered by Luis Garcia, Research Director at the CNRS, who explained the reasons behind the acceleration of clinical developments on Duchenne muscular dystrophy over the past two years, especially with the beginning several clinical trials on Exon Skipping, some already entering phase 3. He concluded as follows:

“For all these research paths, synergy of the different scientific approaches, co-ordination between the various teams, and collaborative efforts and partnerships have all been decisive. Therefore, in the name of all the researchers and clinicians, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the high-end watchmaking industry for its extraordinary collaboration on this fantastic scientific and human project.”

Julien Schaerer, CEO of Antiquorum Geneva, the auction house that is co-organising the event, then presented the main highlights of the action plan of Only Watch 2011. He cited the world tour of the collection, with stops in Asia, the United States, and Europe, the auction catalogue and iPhone and iPad applications, and the creation of a dedicated website: www.onlywatch2011.com. He also encouraged the watch manufacturers to be creative and audacious in order to appeal to the community of collectors, thus ensuring positive results for their respective brands and consequently for scientific research.

The Head of State H.S.H Prince Albert II of Monaco concluded, warmly thanking returning participants for their loyalty while welcoming the newcomers to the Only Watch adventure. He likened the participants in this unique project to links in a chain, each link playing its own important role, in order to raise the maximum amount of funds to be donated entirely for research on Duchenne muscular dystrophy.

A 15 year-old teenager named Paul, who happened to be celebrating his birthday that day, travelled especially from Monaco to represent the 250,000 victims of Duchenne muscular dystrophy around the world. His mere presence was a gentle reminder that time is of the essence in fighting this disease.

