



Louis Moinet celebrates the Apollo-Soyuz mission that changed the face of the world

“The space age may well be a technological saga, but above all it’s the story of individuals achieving the impossible, and in doing so accomplishing giant leaps for humankind as a whole. Skylink is our celebration of that spirit, championed of old by watchmaker and astronomer Louis Moinet himself.”

Following on from SpaceWalker, the satellite tourbillon dedicated to Alexey Leonov’s 1965 space mission, Louis Moinet is now unveiling a second creation commemorating the great Russian cosmonaut’s 1975 Apollo-Soyuz adventure – the first joint space mission between the Soviet Union and the United States of America. Soyuz 19 was launched from Baikonur Cosmodrome, and Apollo from Cape Canaveral, Florida, before the two met up for mankind’s first ever rendezvous in space.

A turning-point after 50 years of Cold War

The event stands out as an oddity for historians and space buffs alike. Apollo and Soyuz were space travel codenames in the USA and the former USSR respectively – and in 1975, the world was in the throes of the Cold War. The two superpowers were opposed in every way, not least in a frenetic space race. How could the two self-declared enemies establish an alliance at the heart of one of their arenas of conflict? Enter Alexey Leonov.

A champion of the hopes of mankind

The cosmonaut was to change the face of the world at 7.20pm on July 17, 1975. At that precise moment, both spaceships were docked in space; only the hatch of Soyuz 19 separated it from Apollo. In opening the hatchway, Alexey Leonov also opened up a new world of peace and cooperation; his first interstellar handshake with Commander Thomas Stafford was an unforgettable moment.

Today, Louis Moinet is proud to be celebrating this achievement in the conquest of space – and, more importantly, in human relations – with a timepiece called Skylink, recalling the link that was quietly forged between two men, each representing their nations, in the depths of space.

The Skylink’s dial depicts this sidereal expanse. A graphic process that is exclusive to Louis Moinet allows the creation of colours reminiscent of a nebula – a collection of interstellar dust and gases of infinite hues. Two of Louis Moinet’s hallmark “dewdrop” hands glide over this composition. The raised three-dimensional hour markers reaching out across this dial give the piece a real sense of depth – an architectural aspect that further enhances their very special finish. Their sides feature a diamond-cut, satin-finish section that reflects light deep, deep into the dial, setting the timepiece sparkling with life. The colour contrast is enhanced by each hour marker being lacquer-coated. The seconds are marked off on their counter at 9 o’clock; subtle changes in its hue, from dark blue through to purple, can be seen as light strikes its fine metallised coating.

At 3 o’clock sits a special, exclusive Skylink feature: a micro capsule containing, for all eternity, a fragment of Kapton foil – the polyamide fabric which protected Apollo on its return to Earth on July 24, 1975 – together with fibres from the Russian Sokol-K spacesuit. Used for the first time on Soyuz 12 in 1973, the same model is still in use today. Louis Moinet’s capsule establishes a physical link



connecting the adventure of 43 years ago, space itself, the astronomy from which watchmaking originally derived, and each of the owners of the watches in this unique collection.

This very limited edition of 19 white gold, 19 rose gold and 75 steel watches comes on a dark blue or black strap. The numbers are a tribute to 1975 – the year of the Apollo-Soyuz mission. The dial of each piece bears an authentic reproduction of Alexey Leonov's signature.

About Louis Moinet

*Ateliers Louis Moinet was founded in Saint-Blaise, Neuchâtel, in 2004. The fully-independent firm was established to honour the memory of Louis Moinet (1768-1853): master watchmaker, inventor of the chronograph in 1816 (certified by Guinness World Records™), and pioneer in the use of very high frequencies (216,000 vibrations per hour). Louis Moinet was a watchmaker, scholar, painter, sculptor, and teacher at the School of Fine Arts – as well as the author of *Traité d'Horlogerie*, a watchmaking treatise published in 1848 that remained a definitive work of reference for almost a century. Today, Ateliers Louis Moinet is perpetuating this legacy. The firm's timepieces, produced in limited editions only, have won some of the most coveted honours, including a Red Dot Design Award (Best of the Best category), gold and bronze medals in the Chronometry Competition, a Robb Report "Best of the Best" award, a "Chronograph of the year" distinction from *Begin* magazine, Japan, and a recent UNESCO Award of Merit. Louis Moinet creations often make use of unusual materials, such as fossils and meteorites, combined with bespoke fine watchmaking complications in a unique creative approach. The brand's core values are creativity, exclusivity, art and design.*