

SPECIAL ADVERTISING SUPPLEMENT TO
THE NEW YORK TIMES



WATCH YOUR TIME

SPECIAL WATCH PORTFOLIO

John Simonian, his wife Barbara, and now son Greg have made Westime, established in 1987 in Los Angeles, the ultimate destination for aficionados of extraordinary timepieces on the West Coast. As the authorized dealer for 50 brands and distributor of many independent watchmakers, this family business leads the way for Fine Watchmaking in the United States.

He has a reputation as a mover and shaker of watchmaking, a man with an uncanny knack for picking out talented new names and bringing them to an audience in the United States. Over a twenty-year period, John Simonian has made Westime and its two Los Angeles boutiques – the first in the Westside Pavilion and the second, opened in 2003, on Beverly Hills' Rodeo

WESTIME: A PASSION FOR WATCHES

Drive – a haven for anyone with a passion for beautiful timepieces. Only a handful of retailers anywhere in the world can claim this kind of status. As the authorized dealer for some 50 brands, Westime is regarded as one of the most influential shops of the watch planet.

A FAMILY BUSINESS

Despite this success, John Simonian, who was born in Beirut of Armenian descent, has never departed from a philosophy that combines passion with professionalism in a business led by traditional family values. "I was born into watchmaking," he says. "My father and his uncle both imported Swiss watches. Very young I did deliveries for him. I was only 12 when I went with him to the Swiss factories. I guess this is genetic. Now my son Greg has joined the group; he was appointed President of Westime this year. Right after his last day of university, that same afternoon he was

VACHERON CONSTANTIN AMERICAN 1921. A REINTERPRETATION OF A 1921 VINTAGE MODEL, THEN THE PERFECT DANDY WATCH AND NOW APPEALING TO A BROADER PUBLIC. ROSE GOLD CASE MEASURING 40 MM IN DIAMETER, WINDING CROWN SET AT AN ANGLE AND DIAGONAL DIAL READ-OFF, BLACKENED GOLD HANDS. MECHANICAL HAND-WOUND CALIBER BEARING THE POINÇON DE GENEVE QUALITY HALLMARK.



in Vegas to attend JCK with my team and myself. He already spent a year in Switzerland, working at Longines and Blancpain. Like me, he grew up with watches. He was always around in the store when he was a kid, even helping customers, and traveling with me to Switzerland."

"As the fourth generation of a family that has such strong associations with watchmaking, I had to understand the business from the inside," Greg Simonian explains. "My impression is that we are experiencing a revolution in the watch industry. I'm constantly amazed by the innovation, inventiveness and complexity these companies deliver. Contemporary watchmakers are creating unprecedented concepts for their timepieces' movements and indications, yet at the same time virtually all of them use the barrel, a centuries-old mechanism, to supply power. It's this fusion of old and new technologies that is driving watchmaking forward. This is something we at Westime support. I believe a watch is a unique means of expressing an individual's personality." This is the attitude that has earned Westime its loyal clientele, often serving the Children of the very first customers.



GREG SIMONIAN, PRESIDENT OF WESTIME, REPRESENTS THE FOURTH GENERATION OF HIS FAMILY INVOLVED IN THE WATCH INDUSTRY

A GRADUAL PROCESS

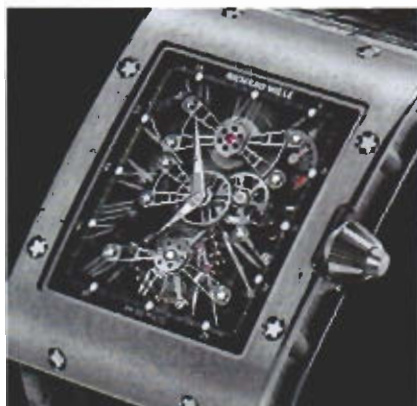
John Simonian has been instrumental in bringing fine watchmaking to the United States since the opening of the first Westime store in 1987, a year after the family moved to Los Angeles. "Americans didn't have yet a great culture of watches at the time," he recalls. The move into Fine Watchmaking would nonetheless be gradual. "You cannot enter this business at the high end. You cannot just come in and say, hey I want to become an Audemars



THE ORIGINAL 6,000-SQUARE-FOOT WESTIME BOUTIQUE AT WESTSIDE PAVILION OFFERS A WIDE SELECTION OF NEARLY 50 TOP WATCH BRANDS AT EVERY PRICE POINT.



OPENED IN 2003, WESTIME BEVERLY HILLS IS AN INTIMATE, MULTI-LEVEL BOUTIQUE ON RODEO DRIVE, LOS ANGELES' MOST GLAMOROUS SHOPPING DISTRICT.



RICHARD MILLE RM 017 TOURBILLON: A NEW VARIATION ON THE EXTRA-THIN RECTANGULAR CASE. AT JUST 8.7MM, THIS HIGH-TECH TIMEPIECE IS ONE OF THE THINNEST TOURBILLON CONSTRUCTIONS AVAILABLE. THE TRANSPARENT DIAL REVEALS THE HAND-WOUND MOVEMENT WITH VARIABLE INERTIA BALANCE, CARBON NANOFIBRE BASE PLATE, PUSHBUTTON FUNCTION SELECTOR IN THE CROWN FOR FAST TIME-SETTING OR WINDING. HOUR AND MINUTE HANDS CAN BE INDEPENDENTLY SET. 72-HOUR POWER-RESERVE INDICATOR.

dealer or a Breguet dealer. You have to start low and climb up. It takes time and effort, and some people are not willing to pay the price. I remember our first Swiss brand was TAG Heuer in 1987. Going from Japanese to TAG Heuer was a big deal for us. Next came Rado, then Tissot. Our first luxury brand was IWC in the early 90s. Frank Muller was then added and more brands followed. It's a process."

TALENT SCOUT

Becoming an authorized dealer of prestigious brands wasn't the end of this process. John Simonian, his son Greg care as much about personal relationships as he does about business, and for the past several years he has used his "nose" to sniff out the rising stars of contemporary watchmaking who had yet to make a name in the US market. In 2001, he became the

first North American retailer for Richard Mille. The two are now good friends. Six months down the line, he was given the distribution business for the brand in the United States and Canada, then in 2005 the rights for the rest of the Western Hemisphere.

Greubel Forsey, MCT, Urwerk... other names followed, all at the forefront of watchmaking technology yet totally unknown to the American public. John Simonian distributes these brands via his company, Ildico. "A lot of brands or groups are coming with their own boutiques. This helps newcomers in the market by making room for them at retailers. You just have to find those newcomers before someone else does and, most importantly, like the person behind the products. One of the reasons I went with independent brands is because my good customers all had their Breguet, their Vacheron Constantin, their Audemars Piguet and Richard Mille. I brought them something new." West Coast watch aficionados have a lot to thank John Simonian for.

Christophe Roulet

BOUTIQUE RICHARD MILLE
FALL 2010

BOUTIQUE HUBLOT
DECEMBER 2010