
WATCHES



What happens when the finest practitioner of Germany's democratic design movement toys with the cardinal rule?

In a year of safe vintage throwbacks and evolution over revolution, it was heartening to step onto Nomos Glashütte's bright and breezy pavilion at this year's Baselworld and discover the most controversial release of its 28-year history. Southeast Germany's horological purveyor of Bauhaus purism, where form and function remain in perpetual balance, may have started playing with pastel colours and eccentric layouts in recent years, but, as with the monochrome minimalism at the core of the brand catalogue, everything has always been in service to the task at hand: telling the time.

So what's the deal with the new Autobahn's luminescent semi-circular motif? Nothing much more than whimsical décor, in allusion to long-haul nighttime driving. (Admit it: the Kraftwerk tune is playing in your head right now, isn't it?) There are also garish colours that leave the usual Nomos pastels decidedly in the pale, and the dial relief is a swooping, scooped-out flea-circus skatepark.

It might be controversial to Nomos purists, but four years in gestation at the hands of star designer, Werner Aisslinger really have paid off. Form ever follows function, but also fun in this case.

nomos-glashuette.com