



# The Millenary Post

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The Watch Collector's Guide to Good Living

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## TWO FACES OF WATCHMAKING

Discover the real secret to Patek Philippe's unassailable reputation in the realm of *haute horlogerie*.

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## BEST FOOT FORWARD

The tale of how Gucci changed the course of men's footwear.

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## NOW U KNOW

Insights into why U-Boat is the chosen timepiece for one of Forbes' 50 most Powerful Business Women – Ms Ong Chih Ching.

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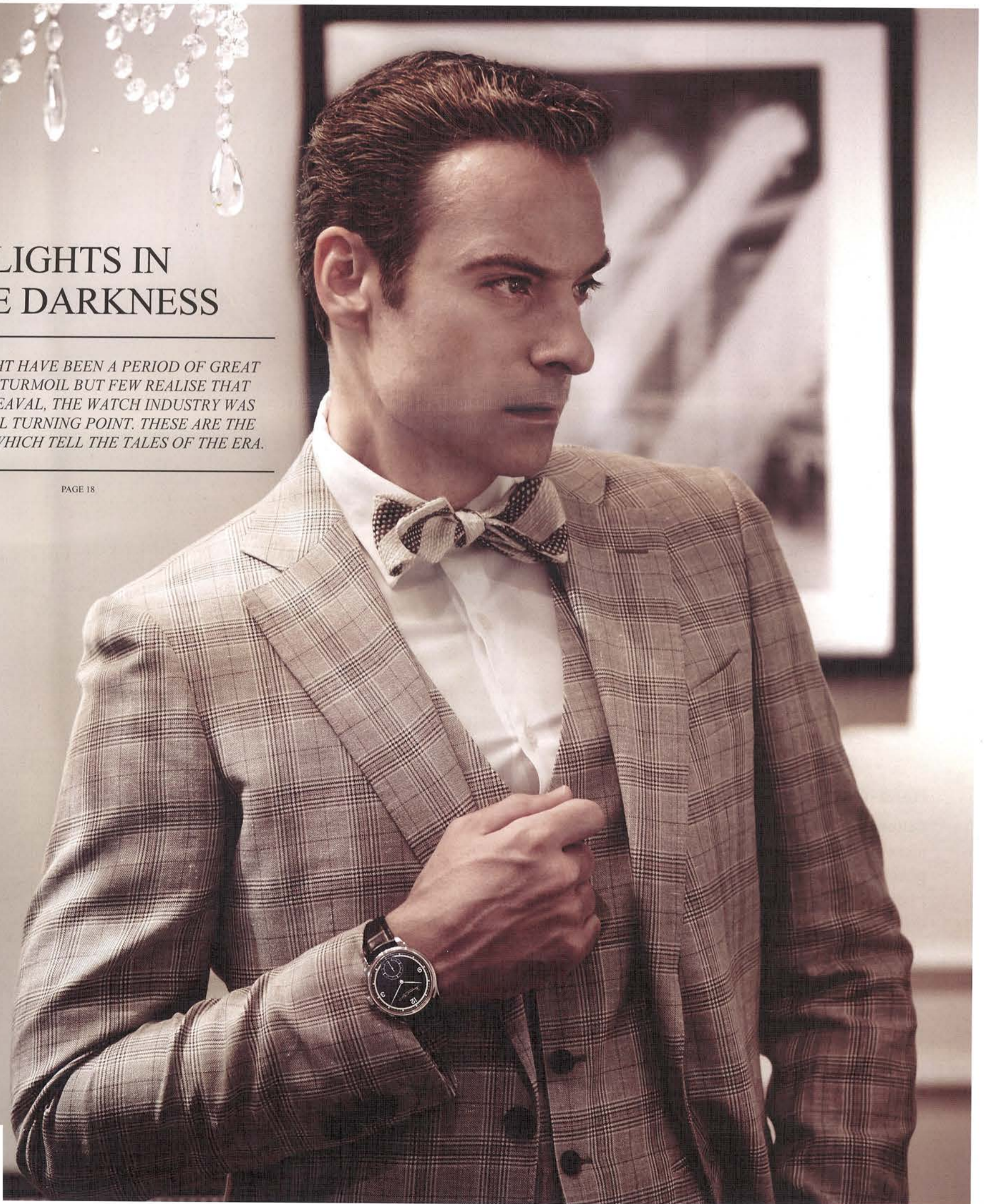
ASIA EDITION

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## LIGHTS IN THE DARKNESS

*THE 30S MIGHT HAVE BEEN A PERIOD OF GREAT ECONOMIC TURMOIL BUT FEW REALISE THAT IN THE UPHEAVAL, THE WATCH INDUSTRY WAS AT A PIVOTAL TURNING POINT. THESE ARE THE TIMEPIECES WHICH TELL THE TALES OF THE ERA.*

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# DEITY OF FUTURE PAST

JANICE FELDMAN, CEO AND FOUNDER OF JANUS ET CIE DEFINES THE FUTURE OF MODERN HERITAGE DESIGN.

By Jonathan Ho

In Roman mythology, Janus, is a god with his eyes on both the past and the future; and it was this philosophical concept that led Janice Feldman to found her aptly named label, championing a style of in/outdoor furniture design oriented around deeply cultural themes backed by technically sophisticated materials like recycled plastic lumber.

A creatively commercial maverick, Feldman's extensive experience and role in product development has led to numerous awards and more importantly, given her the nuance required to be one of the earliest pioneers in a trend of "home away from home" concepts for hotel groups. Thus, when an once-in-a-lifetime designer like her speaks about her craft, you should well listen.

## On the state of culture today

There's a lot of new money and most (of them) didn't grow up around beautiful things or get educated culturally. They have no idea where to start. Part of my job in the world of cultural luxury is to help people understand what's really good, not just a label.

## On fashion labels entering the field of housewares

We've always been a leader and I would say it's tougher for them to get into my business as we've been doing this for 37; We make well engineered technical products suited for environments and climates from Dubai to Shanghai and even the marine industry.

## Whether it bothers her when a Bottega sofa would be better recognised than something she would make

No it wouldn't. It would be very beautiful but also very expensive.

## The importance of the right mix of heritage and craft

If you're going to put down good money on a piece of furniture, you should want it from someone who has been making it for over 30 years than as part of a brand extension plan. Janus blends heritage, craft and industry. There are very few people who can make our table and for the value we sell it at. When someone like Bottega enters the industry, it raises the bar for luxury.

## Whether artisanship equates to being 100% handcrafted

There has always got to be a blend. No one can't make flat plates of aluminum by hand, there has to be a machine involved but then I would say that the artisanship lies in the choice of special materials like robust aeronautical aluminum and the assembly and finishing at execution. What there really should be is some honesty when the message is conveyed.

## On the trend of some people wanting their homes looking like hotels and vice versa

I would say that we were slightly responsible for that. Over three decades ago when I first started, hotels were much more standardised: a Hyatt would look similar everywhere in the world. Then, I started speaking to lead designers and operators in the industry and we got to thinking about how we could keep people interested in the brand for their next stay because we realised that if you have the same experience in a different city, you'd probably get very bored. We started using elements of high design residential furniture in hotels and that spawned the beginnings of "my hotel, my home."

## Isn't branding about the uniformity of experience?

I'm not going to take full credit for this [laughs]. Howard Hirsch of HBA was one of the earliest pioneers and he was instrumental in modifying the hotel concept. Business travellers want consistency, not in the experience but in the technology: how their devices connect to the internet and how they interface with their printer. A vacationer on the other hand, will want an experience culturally suitable for the region.



## Design for the people or the space?

The most important thing when you enter the room is that you feel "this is a place I want to be". Until you feel comfortable, you're not going to go to the next step. You must feel inspired by how it looks, only then will people develop an emotional connection.

## On the commonality of the human experience of style

Great style is universal. If you have great taste, you'll have great style. People like the French have had style for so long, it's become inbuilt in their cultural DNA. Historical Asian sophistication exists but it's been suppressed for a long time, a lot of your antiques represent centuries of taste and craft; so when I do a Chinese inspired piece, I avoid the blue flowers and distill it down to its essence like a perfume.

“ *Great style is universal. If you have great taste, you'll have great style. People like the French have had style for so long, it's become inbuilt in their cultural DNA.* ”

## On the difficulty of originality today

It's not easy because so much has been done; and we also have the tension between having the balance between what is most unique, luxurious and rare and having the client for that versus having a commercially viable business. ♡

\*this interview has been edited for brevity and clarity.  
Read her full thoughts on themillenary.com



Janice Feldman, CEO and Founder of Janus et Cie





The Quadrati Collection, by Orlando Diaz-Azcuy



Textiles from Janus et Cie



Vantana Daybed, by Fibonacci