



STEINER MAASTRICHT - A DUTCH TOP SHELF VERSION OF SKATE PUNK.

## GOING DUTCH

**– Look at some of the big brands that say that they are exclusive. Some sell hundreds of thousands of watches a year. How exclusive is that? asks Philipp Stahl, CEO of Steiner Maastricht.**

Steiner Limited is Holland's most exclusive watch brand. In 2006, Philipp Stahl and Romina Steiner decided to reinvent the brand, which was founded by Romina's father in 1980. It wasn't really until 2006 that Steiner Limited became a real brand; previously they bought finished movements and parts, assembled them and put their own name on the result. But now 37-year-old Stahl designs all the parts himself and then has them manufactured in Switzerland. Stahl, who incidentally has an impressive Rolex collection, doesn't want to name his suppliers.

– The big groups buy up manufacturers when they become well known. It's hard to be small. There are parts that I want 250 of, but I have to order 500 because that's the minimum. But if you contact ETA they won't answer your emails unless you order 15 000, says Stahl.

Steiner Maastricht watches are available in steel, red gold, white gold and platinum. Dials come in

various colours and designs, but are based on the same watch in two sizes, 39 and 42 millimetres.

– They are good sizes. 45-46-47 millimetres is too big. It doesn't wear well. Then it's not about wearing a watch, it's just about showing off. And the strange thing is that the movements inside the watches aren't getting any bigger... It's like driving Jeeps in town, completely unnecessary and silly. Everyone is starting to get tired of supersized watches, says Stahl.

**Your watches are only available from your shop in Maastricht. What do you do to keep your customers?**

– If they want variation then all our customers can change the dial once for free. We will take the watch back for its full value if they want to buy another one. We throw in a winder for free. If they break their watch we can service it within a week or two at no extra charge. Then they keep coming back, and the customers become our ambassadors.

**What is your company doing to ensure that you keep developing?**

– We develop the design, and we're bringing out new models. Soon we will add a sports model, a rectangular model and a ladies model.

**How much do you expect Steiner Maastricht to grow because of this?**

– I want to grow my way, and I'm hoping that we can double production next year and then double it again the year after that. You have to plan ahead and buy the parts well ahead of time, because there's a 12–24 month delivery time for all the parts. For example, at the moment we can't make any new watches because they are sold out. However we will never consider making 5 000–10 000 watches per year. We are not interested in making stainless steel unlimited editions for 1 000–2 000 euros either. I make small editions which really are limited. Not like some brands which call 5 000–10 000 watches a limited edition. What is a limited edition really?

COMPANY WEBSITE: WWW.STEINERLIMITED.NL  
WATCHES PER YEAR: 250  
PRICE RANGE €4 500–€17 500 + VAT  
POINTS OF SALE: 1