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MEET

Kacper Hamilton

WHO Kacper Hamilton
WHAT Designer
WHERE London
WHEN Founded 2009

With a passion for storytelling, narratives, tradition and rituals, London-based designer Kacper Hamilton creates unique products that seek to balance a respect for the past with contemporary contexts. Since working under his own name from 2009, he has collaborated with brands ranging from Clarks and Baccarat Crystal to Pernod Ricard and Ballantine's Whisky on bespoke experiences, installations and curious artefacts — all characterised by a refined, timeless aesthetic. 'A lot of the products or work I do ties in to a certain culture or the gentleman's way of life,' he says. 'My work is about going on an emotional and spiritual journey.'

Hamilton studied product design at Central Saint Martins and later luxury and design at ECAL in Renens, Switzerland, before being snapped up by Louis Vuitton as a visual merchandising designer in Paris. Shortly after leaving the global fashion brand to work for himself, he was approached by Ballantine's to reinvent the ritual of drinking whisky with L'Art de la Degustation (The Art of Tasting), a limited edition set of glasses, carafe and serving tray (2010). Inspired by the concept of equilibrium, these conical-shaped glasses feature a hole in the middle, encouraging the user to circulate and observe the whisky more closely.

A similar project in 2013 created an elegant drinking set for a private client with a passion for port. Influenced by and named after the quintessentially British tale of the Bishop of Norwich — a 19th-century gentleman notorious for falling asleep at the dinner



table and forgetting to pass the port — the set features a decanter and glasses with pointed bases to encourage drinkers to finish their port before returning the vessels to their brass holders. 'I absolutely love these old traditions, which are so distant from our 21st-century digital world. I thought it would be wonderful to create a new unique ritual and ceremony for enjoying port,' he explains. Produced as a limited edition of 12 sets, one is now a world away from the British dining table and part of the permanent collection at the Shanghai Museum of Glass.

Other projects include a set of wine glasses

1 - Kacper Hamilton
2 - Mass of Time (2015), a touchy-feely time machine
3 - Bishop of Norwich port decanter and glass (2013)

based on the seven deadly sins (2008), a collection of intricate crystal vases and an iPad app for Baccarat (2012), and a collection of tools influenced by the traditional Japanese higonokami pocket knife for Swiss ski company zai (2012). More recently, it was fictional character Don Quixote that inspired his design for a pair of desert boots for Clarks: 'I wanted to create a pair of shoes that evoke the surreal adventure and the willingness to go out into the world, be it fictional or real,' he says.

A Mass of Time (2015), meanwhile, is a conceptual instrument that weighs predefined periods of time using a set of scales and a sand timer — again, an exquisite and finely crafted object focused around a ritual. Says Hamilton: 'I have always had a strong personal interest in the concept of time. This project is both mythical and historical; I wanted to question how we perceive time, by creating an instrument that allows one to touch and feel time. Time is relative and also invisible; in this piece of work, time is represented as solid matter.'

All of these projects thus far have been bespoke expensive pieces. Looking forward, Hamilton is aiming to produce a higher production — and more accessibly priced — glassware collection and launch an online shop soon. 'I absolutely love doing these one-off objects, they're great conceptual pieces to work on, but I think that in order to develop and expand, I'm looking for clients and manufacturers who want to work on something bigger.' Anyone listening out there? **CSH**

