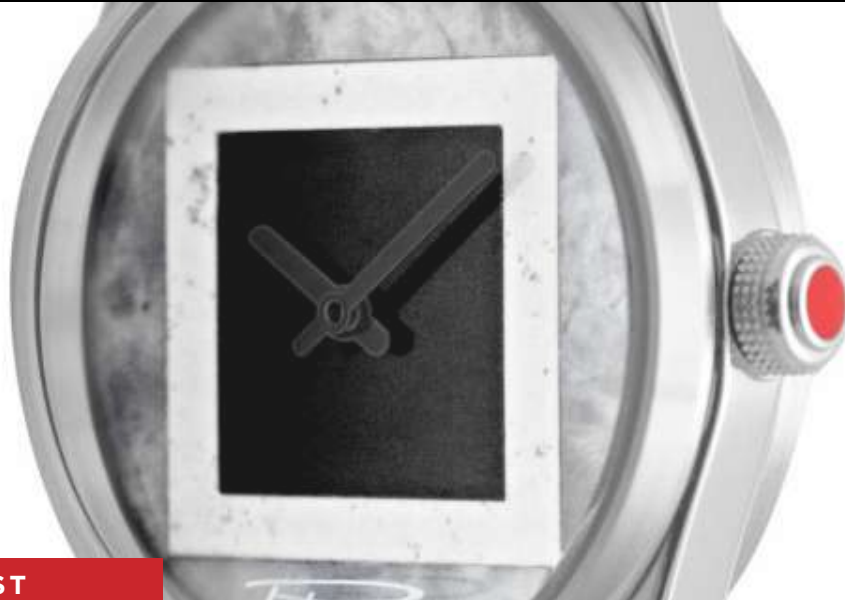




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Raketa BIG ZERO Malevich Watch Produced In Collaboration With Russian National Art Museum

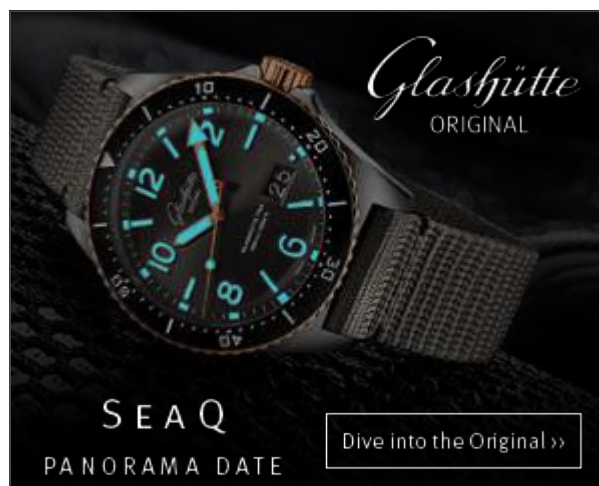
October 26, 2020 |  | by [SponsoredPost](#)





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St. Petersburg, Russia is home to the historic watch manufacture **Raketa**. Today, the watchmaker continues to produce its own movements and creates enthusiast timepieces that have a direct lineage to some of the greatest watches of the Soviet Union and Russian culture. Now toward the end of 2020, Raketa would like to offer a distraction by putting an abstraction from 1915 on a watch dial. The resulting product is a special collaboration between Raketa and the Russian State Tretyakov Gallery (Russian's main national art museum according to Raketa). On the dial of this particular version of the Raketa BIG ZERO watch is a recreation of a work by avant-garde artist **Kazimir Malevich** known as "Black Square."



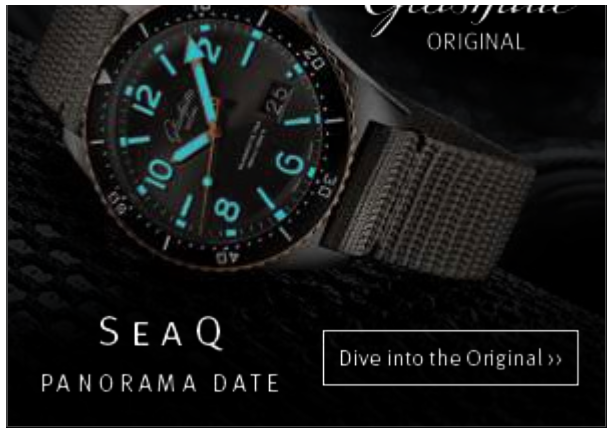
Born in 1879, Kazimir Malevich is a worthy artist to inspire a watch from a company that already employs the concept of “avant-garde” in some of its watches. Born in Ukraine to a Polish family that later moved to Moscow, Kazimir Malevich was a well-rounded artist who ended up focusing much of his time on surrealism and abstraction. In 1915, he painted the first of a few “Black Square” paintings, which (as the name implies) were large black squares painted on canvas. In retrospect, many art historians credit Malevich as the artist who formally began the era of abstract art as we know it. The black square was specifically designed so that its meaning was not absolute but rather could be (needed to be) interpreted by the viewer.





Raketa could have produced a satisfying watch merely by reproducing Malevich's Black Square in print form on a watch dial. It did not do this. Instead, the BIG ZERO Malevich limited-edition watches have special marquetry dials that use hand-selected and assembled pieces of cut stone to beautifully recreate the seminal work of artistic abstract expression. Viewed from another angle, the BIG ZERO Malevich is Raketa's answer to the famed Movado Museum Dial watch — made with a design by the 20th-century designer and artist Nathan George Horwitt (who himself was a Russian immigrant to America).

To create each of the unique-looking (due to the natural materials used) BIG ZERO Malevich watches, Raketa's craftspeople use thin, carefully cut pieces of black jade, jade, and violan. The result is a composition eerily similar in presentation (only sized for one's wrist) to the original Black Square work by Kazimir Malevich. What completes the story circle for this Raketa timepiece is that the "BIG ZERO" name (a greater family of products by Raketa) also supports a reference to a nickname given to the Black Square painting by art critics, who refer to it as the "zero point of the abstract art movement."





The Raketa BIG ZERO Malevich watch itself is produced from stainless steel and is water resistant to 100 meters. Over the dial is an anti-reflective-coated sapphire crystal, with another crystal over the rear of the case offering a view of the movement. On the wrist the Raketa BIG ZERO Malevich watch is 38.8mm wide and comes paired to a 20mm wide black leather strap. The strap is somewhat special not only for being fitted to the case, but also for its bright red lining which has a spark of warmth and modernity to this otherwise extremely accurate horological depiction of abstract art circa 1915.

Powering the BIG ZERO Malevich watch is an automatic mechanical movement produced by Raketa known as the caliber 2615. The movement operates at a steady 2.5Hz (18,000 bph) and has a power reserve of 40 hours. The movement is also thoroughly hand-decorated with “Neva watches.” The rear of the watch case bears an inscription in Russian that roughly translates into “everything massive in the world can be reduced to

one big zero.”





Some of the proceeds from the sale of each BIG ZERO Malevich watch will be given to the State Tretyakov Gallery in Moscow. These will go to art preservation, which is very important for the original Black Square painting (currently known to be in need of serious restoration work). Raketa will produce 300 pieces of the limited-edition BIG ZERO Malevich watch. Price for each is **1,208 Euros** (without any applicable taxes or VAT). [Learn more or order at the Raketa website here.](#)

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How Do You Feel About This?

24 Responses



This Is Cool!



I Will Get One



Not For Me

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Svetoslav Popov • 9 days ago

I like the watch very much and I like that many do not like it too. It is strikingly different and original. Pretty tired lately of reissues and the fake vintage look of tribute watches. At first I thought the price is way too high, but mainly because I am historically used to dirty cheap Russian watches. Comparing the features and craftsmanship to other contemporary models from Seiko and Swiss low to middle tear manufacturers It becomes obvious that the price is even pretty low for what you actually get. I solute Raketa effort to elevate the brand market positioning.

^ | ▾ • Reply • Share ›



Christopher Horan • 10 days ago

The Black Square painting was recently discovered to have a racist message hidden within it. I'm not sure that it's a great source of inspiration for a watch, or, well, anything.

^ | ▾ 2 • Reply • Share ›



Ariel Adams moderator → Christopher Horan • 10 days ago

When judged by today's sentiments - a lot of historic things probably look racist or at least insensitive. I personally think it is unfair to judge statements and actions by people 100 years ago (for example) without us being there in the context. I'm not sure it would be fair to cast a modern judgement over something historic in that way. Everyone is free to come to their conclusions

of course, but I don't think the complex needs of society today are best served by our admittedly inaccurate ability to understand what was going on in people's minds a long time ago when measured by then norms and community standards. aBlogtoWatch is all about inclusion and focusing on a love of watches and not division between people. But accusations of "racism" are too easy to make these days absent what most people would consider "direct evidence." Raketa seems to have embraced the heated conversation about this watch and indeed it has its fans and its detractors. That passion is what helps keep us interested in watches - and us media hopes that as little offense as possible occurs during the course of presenting artwork. I too have been incensed by what is cast as art, so I do understand the sentiment. This will no doubt be part of an important conversation about shared social experience for years to come.

8 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



Christopher Horan → Ariel Adams · 9 days ago

Thank you for the thoughtful response.

^ | v · Reply · Share ›



Raketa · 10 days ago

Hello: this model has indeed generated very heated debates in forums and social media. We always knew that most people wouldn't like it. We actually didn't try to do a beautiful watch. We tried to do a radically abstract watch that doesn't follow the conventional rules of classic design aesthetics. Exactly like the Avant-Garde artist Kazimir Malevich did when he painted his Black Square: the most abstract painting in the world. Most people hated his painting at the beginning. But with time it had a tremendous influence on modern art and became one of the most iconic paintings in the world. Most of the people who actually wear this watch agree to say that it looks stunning on the wrist. Anyway, it's a love or hate watch!

6 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



Mark Carson → Raketa · 9 days ago

I'm all for love it or hate it watches - at least they have some personality for people to be divided upon. There are some strange watches out there that I wouldn't wear but I'm glad that they exist.

1 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



BNABOD → Raketa · 10 days ago

A for effort , enjoyment.....is in eye of the beholder.

1 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



Berndt Nortén → Raketa · 10 days ago

“The most abstract painting in the world.”

Art historians take note.

1 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



Patrick Kocn • 10 days ago

So is it meant to be a struggle to read? Kind of a performance art piece, but you take it with you?

I'm really not a fan of simple abstract art that requires some meaningful description or story to validate its existence, though I do like the watch, but would prefer maybe syringe hands that at least contrast the black square.

1 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



BNABOD • 10 days ago • edited

Yeah it is a big donut alright and 1280 bucks must be some sort of Russian joke .

I mean it is thick as a Typhoon class

boat, it is as legible as well you get ,we can't read the time , and the movement specs are just abysmal. Just a big fat NO kind of like all the hardware coming out of Russia, big clunky and ineffective

3 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



Lincolnshire Poacher • 10 days ago

British brands can go off at the deep end with militarism, and faux historicism.

I suppose this must be a Russian equivalent, of some variety. An appeal to Russia's highly deserved reputation for artistic and literary genius.

Not for me.

3 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



Андрій Коломієць → Lincolnshire Poacher • 10 days ago

The authors of the article forgot to mention that Malevich is a Ukrainian artist who emigrated to Moscow. Although, for some reason, they haven't forgotten about the "Russian designer and artist" Nathan George Horwitt who emigrated to the United States.

Absolutely not for me.

1 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



Mark Carson → Lincolnshire Poacher • 10 days ago • edited

But was it made with cement? :-)

3 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



Lincolnshire Poacher → Mark Carson • 10 days ago

Lol .. you made me spill my morning tea.

1 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



Mark Carson • 11 days ago • edited

I appreciate the dial materials and construction but those hands - they look to be poorly made and are nearly impossible to read and with rounded tips they don't play well with the square theme. And as Nathan noted, the case is a bit small and the fitted strap is well done. A square case or even squared off design elements on the case would have completed the picture. As is, the case is both boring and incongruent with the dial and overall theme.

2 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›

3 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



Mark Carson → Mark Carson • 9 days ago

Since Raketa is being so cool with comments made here in the peanut gallery, I've taken the liberty of doing their dial with a case and hands I have in development. Still black hands, but some lume lets you read the time (if only, ha ha). I think the square case and dial speaks to the painting better.



[see more](#)

2 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



Mark Carson → Mark Carson • 9 days ago • edited

Wow - Raketa "liked" my comment (I was rather critical of this watch). But I hope that is an indication that they are open minded and perhaps will do another version with some revisions (I hope so anyway). Thanks Raketa for not being defensive!

^ | v • Reply • Share ›



Panagiotis • 11 days ago

They could've cut costs down a bit if they removed the hands...it's not like you can read the time with them or anything.

3 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



Anthony Gopniks • 11 days ago

I don't understand why you review these very particular models from Raketa while they have cool 24 hour and dive/military watches which you completely ignore?

1 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



Sheez Gagoo • 11 days ago

I think Russian watches are fun. But not up to 1000 euro fun. Not without a real Malewich on the dial. I much prefer the last Raketa on this blog (aka superduper missile). Looked very Sovjetic. Something you would expect on the wrist of the invaders in Red Dawn.

1 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



Nathan Likes Watches • 11 days ago

Case size too small :(also it looks quite thick? I do like the integrated look of the leather strap. I know nothing about this artist!

1 ^ | v 1 • Reply • Share ›



Semido → Nathan Likes Watches • 10 days ago

There's something for every taste... I like the size a lot and I'm happy to see a move away from bigger and impractical watches.

^ | v 1 • Reply • Share ›



Nathan Likes Watches → Semido • 10 days ago

Indeed, some wrists are better suited to smaller case watches. For me, the sweet spot is definitely between 41-43mm.

^ | v • Reply • Share ›



Charlie Sherlock • 11 days ago

I love the writing on the back of the case. A lot of thought has gone into this watch for the money. Dial doesn't do it for me though.

1 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



Mikita • 11 days ago

Never new that Kazimir Malevich was a Russian guy :) why did he have Belarus family name then?

1 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



SuperStrapper → Mikita • 11 days ago

Heritage and nationality aren't mutually exclusive ;)

^ | v • Reply • Share ›



Panagiotis → SuperStrapper • 10 days ago

That's true...look at Depardieu.

1 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



Playboy Johnny - Team Mariu\$ • 11 days ago

I agree. It is a BIG ZERO.
Best of luck.

2 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



Polerouter • 11 days ago

I kind of like it, and I appreciate the work on the dial, but I still feel uneasy with the fact that Raketa recently went strongly upmarket while not changing anything to their old rustic movements.

2 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



SuperStrapper • 11 days ago

I love art in almost every form, most certainly dedicated artworks, and I love



watches. I can't think of ever enjoying them both in the same sandwich.

2 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



MarkB • 11 days ago

As much as I appreciate the contribution of Malevich to modern art, it's not really working for me in watch form.

^ | v • Reply • Share ›

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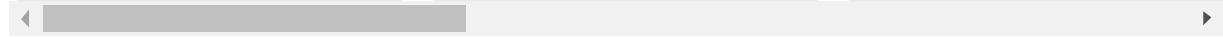
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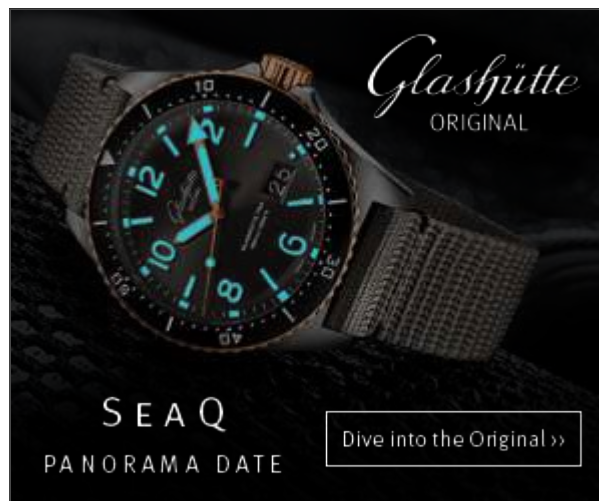


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