

# SILLENTO



spécial

HUBLOT



Veronica Varekova,  
in Basel, February 2010.  
On her wrist, she wears the  
Big Bang Out Of Africa,  
created to benefit  
the African Wildlife  
Foundation.

# WRIST POWER

PHOTO: ALEXANDRE GUIRKINGER | TEXT: LAURENCE BENAÏM

**Hublot's first official female ambassador, VERONICA VAREKOVA, also serves as ambassador of the AFRICAN WILDLIFE FOUNDATION, defending its colors with passion and determination. Manufacture Hublot supports this non-governmental organization, acting on several fronts in Africa to maintain the ecological balance between the earth and mankind. Encounter.**



The sun is shining above the Rhône River. The day glows like a smile – that of Veronica Varekova, who welcomes us, in a contagiously cheery mood, in her suite at the Hôtel des Trois Rois. On her wrist is her Big Bang Out of Africa, a model launched by Hublot in 2010 featuring an elegant 38 mm case set with red spinels. In a few hours, Veronica will take the microphone for a momentous event: her first personal appearance in Switzerland as the Manufacture's new official muse. Veronica, an Amazon who sometimes hides her huge eyes behind glasses, emits a fiery energy. *"We chose her because she is really passionate and very committed to her cause."* This marks the first time ever that the brand has associated itself with a top model in the name of common values and a shared conscience of the need to protect the environment. Intended for (increasingly numerous) female customers, a portion of the sales of the Big bang Out of Africa timepiece will be donated to AWF, which fosters initiatives to protect Africa's communities, wildlife, endangered species and landscapes. The mission: to protect and conserve both ecosystems and habitats and establish programs devoted to research, education and natural resource protection through scientific, legal and political partnerships. To help raise awareness of the organization's actions, Hublot displays AWF's logo on all its advertising campaigns featuring Veronica.

After New York in February 2010, it is in Basel, on the first floor of the Hublot stand, that the beautiful Czech (a native of Olomouc) is scheduled to speak and pose for photographs with Hublot CEO Jean-Claude

Biver and African Wildlife Foundation CEO Patrick J. Bergin. Far from the pages of *Vogue*, *Marie Claire* or *Cosmopolitan*, the cover girl – who has posed for Ellen Von Unwerth, Patrick Demarchelier, and Peter Lindbergh – reveals the full extent of her beliefs. Singular, different, uncompromising – that is the real Veronica, who defines herself first and foremost as a "nomad" who landed in New York at the age of 19 to invent her life there.

*"What is important is to use your personal strength – to continually recharge your batteries, so that you can give more."* In the midst of a voyage that is taking her from New York to Zurich and Stockholm to London, with a stopover in Mexico City, she radiates that extraordinary energy which spurs her to repeatedly challenge herself. That energy propelled her to the top of Tanzania's Mount Kilimanjaro in 2008 after an intensive six-day hike. It was on that trip that she met the leaders of the African Wildlife Foundation. One year later, she was named goodwill ambassador to support the fundraising efforts of this Washington, D.C.-based nongovernmental organization, which will celebrate its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2011. AWF's vocation is to protect natural areas, safeguard the survival of endangered species (there are only about 10,000 rhinoceros left in Africa) and ensure a better balance between man and nature. The organization employs 180 people worldwide and has an annual budget of 25 million dollars; 50 percent of its funding comes from public sources and 50 percent is privately raised. For Veronica, deeply stirred when visiting a school built for Massaï children, this was the beginning of a new adventure.

In 2010, her meeting with Jean-Claude Biver, whose energy she finds "inspiring and extraordinary" heightened her resolve. In New York, she did not hesitate to call on friends, from Lapo Elkann to Chelsea Clinton, to participate in AWF's benefit dinner. In Olomouc, she continues to act as godmother to an orphanage, of which she says, *"It used to be a hospital; it has become a home."* There, she is known simply as "Aunt V." Certainty shines through Veronica's eyes: *"When I was 20, I was more reserved, more timid,"* she says. *"Real luxury is to know yourself. To listen to your heart in order to move forward. To accept yourself."*

# ONE YEAR OF EVENTS

More than just a way to tell time, Hublot offers a way to defy it and live each moment generously. The brand's parade of store openings, auctions, sporting events and more is winning the race against the gravitational pull of time and space.



## Moscow - September 29, 2010

Diego Maradona took up the challenge of the Hublot Million Dollar Wall: he had 10 balls to hit 10 targets from a distance of 10 meters, each of them a different diameter and worth a different amount. He raised the total sum of 500,000 dollars, which was paid in full by Hublot to the Raisa Gorbachev's Children's Institute of Transplantology and Haematology.



## Basel - March 18, 2010

A big bang out of Africa to support the African Wildlife Foundation, represented by Veronica Varekova; the first ever UNICO movement to be completely manufactured in-house; the announcement of Hublot's Confrérie Horlogère division; several new models of Tutti Frutti watches... For Hublot, Baselworld 2010 was one of the busiest shows in the company's 30-year history.



## Singapore - September 24, 2010

A new flagship store was inaugurated at the Marina Bay Sands luxury resort complex in the presence of Jean-Claude Biver and Bernie Ecclestone, CEO of the Formula 1 Group. The store is the 26th exclusive Hublot boutique in the world and the 6th in Asia. Hublot, the official timekeeper for Formula 1, took advantage of the occasion and the Singapore Grand Prix to unveil the first timepiece of the King Power F1 Limited Series, a worldwide exclusive.

## Lyon - June 9, 2010

This year's Bocuse d'Or, the most prestigious culinary competition in the world, featured 12 passionate young chefs. As the official timekeeper of the event, Hublot timed each challenge (precisely 5'35"). The winner, Danish chef Rasmus Kofoed, was presented with a big bang by Jean-Claude Biver himself.



## Palma de Mallorca - August 8, 2010

The 29th Copa del Rey race in Palma de Mallorca was a memorable regatta, perhaps the most prestigious in the Mediterranean, thanks to its 90 contenders and varied weather conditions. Each winner received a Hublot chronograph from the hands of King Juan Carlos of Spain himself.

