

## The Blancpain Métiers d'Art Studio pays tribute to Switzerland

**Blancpain and its Métiers d'Art Studio present a new one-of-a-kind model crafted in gold and in the brand's cherished *shakudō* alloy, depicting a "battle of the queen cows" staged in front of the iconic Matterhorn.**

This breed of cows from the Val d'Hérens have been part of the Swiss national heritage since 1861. Their ancestors were already present in the Valais in 3000 BC. Thanks to their sturdy nature and their short legs, these animals are capable of climbing to heights of 3,000 meters and more, and are above all known for their traditional fights held each spring as part of the ritual of taking them up to the alpine meadows. These bovines with their strong and combative personality vie with each other to establish a hierarchy among the herd, by butting each other with their head and horns. A cow is declared the winner when its opponent turns away or refuses the fight in a token of submission. At the end of this face-off, the herd's "queen of queens" is thus designated. This status enables it to lead the others in the common quest for lush pastureland. On the dial of this model, Blancpain pays tribute to another national emblem: the legendary Matterhorn. Towering to an altitude of 4,478 meters above sea level, it is Switzerland's best-known mountain due to its pyramid shape, and its ascension remains a powerful symbol for alpinists the world over.

### Shakudō and rokushō

*Shakudō* is an alloy composed of gold and copper. Historically it was employed to adorn sword sheathes, decorative objects and jewelry. The artisan engraved the *shakudō* and added other ornamentation. On this new Blancpain timepiece, the dial appliques depicting the cow fight are fashioned in gold and hand-engraved. They are affixed to the *shakudō* dial and held in place by miniature feet. Once joined together, these three elements of the dial are given a *rokushō* patina, which is a copper salt bath into which the dial is dipped. It is the studied eye and artistic sensitivity of the engraver that determine the nuances and depth of the *rokushō* treatment. The Blancpain logo and the Matterhorn are hand-engraved on the *shakudō* dial by an in-house artisan working with extremely accurate tools.

The cows' necklace is in yellow gold, incorporated into the red gold cow applique using the damascening technique, which consists of hollowing a cavity into the applique to be filled with another metal, in this case yellow gold. The latter is then meticulously hammered into the cavity in order to spread it uniformly and thereby smoothen the surface of the applique that will then be engraved and polished, also by hand.

### The movement

This new Blancpain timepiece is as distinguished technically as it is aesthetically. This 42mm timepiece is fitted with the manual wind caliber 13R3A. In this watch, the power-reserve indicator is placed on a bridge on the reverse of the movement, visible through the sapphire case back. This movement achieves an 8-day power reserve thanks to its construction with three series-coupled mainspring barrels that unwind in succession. The second barrel takes over from the first before its strength is depleted, and then the third barrel does the same. This construction thereby guarantees the movement's precision.