

## THE RM 52-05 TOURBILLON PHARRELL WILLIAMS

The talented, multi award-winning singer, songwriter and producer has long been a friend of the brand, sporting many of its iconic timepieces. And when Richard Mille suggested they work together on the first watch to bear his name, Pharrell looked deep into his childhood for inspiration.

*'I've always been fascinated by looking up at the sky. What could be more inspiring than all that ever was and all that ever will be? Space, before your eyes. It's yours to see. It was here before the Earth, before this Solar System. It'll be here after us and nothing's more meaningful than that. When I look up at the sky I'm looking at God. I feel part of so many different parts of a whole. This is the Alpha and the Omega.'*

The word Pharrell uses to describe his music is 'subversive.' His artistic world is all about shifting focus, looking for new perspectives in unexpected partnerships. 'If it's not subversive, it's just plain. We need things to "pop" in this world.' As humans, we spend our time looking out at the cosmos. The 'pop' on the RM 52-05 comes from totally changing our perspective a full 180°. It's the moment we realise, staring at the watch's face, that what we are peering at, through the vastness of space is ... ourselves. Earth as seen from Mars. A distant and beautiful reflection trapped in the helmet of an astronaut.

But how to capture this sheer vastness within the confines of a watch face? The RM 52-05 rises to this artistic and technical challenge with the kind of ground-breaking ideas devotees of the brand expect from the Richard Mille Creative Development team. High-tech materials handled in miniature, using state of the art technology and honed by the partnership of an engraver, an enameller and a painter.

The technical innovations of the RM 52-05 tourbillon calibre are mind-bendingly innovative. Equivalent to a space shuttle, the baseplate that carries the movement is machined of grade 5 titanium through which it is possible to glimpse the grade 5 titanium bridges, skeletonised to evoke rocket launch platforms. It features large inserts in dazzling blue aventurine glass that evoke outer space and the confines of the universe with all its stars.

## RICHARD MILLE

The astronaut's helmet is sculpted in grade 5 titanium, hand painted using indestructible paint to hint at all-pervading timelessness. As for the Red Planet itself, only red gold could bring to life its unmistakable hues. We are drawn into the dramatic Valles Marineris, named for the Mariner 9 Probe, humanity's first envoy to our distant neighbour. The engraving captures the overpowering rock face, rising a daunting 7 kilometres above the russet sandscapes below. For this it was necessary to achieve multiple colour changes in the enamel. Unlike traditional grand feu enamels, obtained by adding different pigments, the orange to red and blue to black gradients were made by superimposing layers and increasing the number of firings at 850 °C.

We become the astronaut. In the helmet, two white gold elements containing a black sapphire and two diamonds evoke the floodlights that light up our immediate surroundings. Against the skin, we feel the spacesuit composed of grade 5 titanium, painted white using an airbrush.

Other innovations complete this cosmic timepiece. The brown Cermet combines the lightness of titanium with the hardness of a ceramic. It consists of a metallic zirconium matrix associated with high-performance ceramic that gives the material its incredible brown hue with metallic reflections. The caseband is made of Carbon TPT®, well known in the field of aerospace. The hands and bridges on the back of the model have been skeletonised to evoke rocket launch platforms or satellite arms. The crown is based on the design of a rocket capsule. Even the rubber surrounding it sports the distinctive profile of a Martian rover tyre.

Only a very small crew of astronauts will be on board this unique mission to Mars. The RM 52-05 Tourbillon Pharrell Williams will be produced in an edition of 30 pieces. The little boy who grew up watching Star Trek in Virginia Beach is more than excited to be piloting the expedition...

*'In every aspect of my work, I always look for something different, something new. Working with Richard Mille provided an opportunity to go where no one else has ever gone before. Mars, for instance. Creating is about shifting the perspective from which we look at things, that's really the only difference, and with the RM 52-05, we've looked at Mars from a different angle, an unexpected first-person point of view. In doing so, we're breaking the mould. We have the best timekeeper in the world. We have Mars. And we have an African-American man from Virginia, all connected.'*