

**Attention!**  
**Embargo until 1 p.m. CET (2 p.m. Moscow Time)**  
**on August 29, 2023**

## **Kolobok**

*I got away from Grandpa, I got away from Grandma...  
But there's no escaping recognition in the watchmaking world!*

Unknown manufacture  
employee

### **Tale of How the Watch Acquired a Face**

In 2013, watchmaker, inventor, manufacture founder, and member of the Academy of Independent Watchmakers (Académie Horlogère des Créateurs Indépendants) Konstantin Chaykin brought his watch Cinema with a built-in mechanical movie projector to the BaselWorld exhibition. The unusual model stirred up strong emotions among visitors. *"I realized that people don't simply want perfect mechanics in a watch, but also magic, wizardry, amazement, and the expectation of a surprise. I decided to create just such a model,"* Chaykin said later.

The master brought a watch to BaselWorld 2017 that caught the imagination of everyone who saw it. It was his first watch with an anthropomorphic (face-like) dial, which inevitably evoke an emotional response at first glance. Chaykin called the watch a Wristmon, in other words, a "wrist monster". The first so-called Wristmon, known as the Joker, became a forebearer to an entire family of recognizable characters with their own features and stories. Several of them are based on fairy tales, such as the Mouse King watch inspired by Hoffman's magical story about the Nutcracker, while Santa is associated with the miracle of Christmas.

Almost immediately thereafter Chaykin decided that a hero from Russian fairy tales should appear in his Wristmons collection. *"You can find a variety of figures in my records over these past six years, including warriors, mermaids, and nesting dolls. That's how we came up with the One-eyed Likho image that later turned into the Time-Eater collaboration with Louis Erard,"* the master recalls. *"But there came a moment when I figured out that Kolobok (name of fairy tale hero Little Round Bun) was the ideal starting point for a series of Russian Wristmons. I was so inspired by this image that I drew 3-4 versions of sketches in a couple of days. The hero turned out to be so captivating and positive that I could no longer put this idea aside and returned to it, finalizing the design again and again."*

### **Story About Where Fairy Tales Come From**

When it comes to fairy tales, it is typically the simplest stories that come to mind, and this holds true for people of all ages — individuals who first encountered folklore stories during their childhood. In the case of Russian fairy tales this is "Ryaba the Hen", "The Gigantic Turnip", and "Little Round Bun" ("Kolobok"). So it should come as no surprise that Chaykin recalled exactly the tale of the Kolobok. He's round, cheerful, sly, and even a little cheeky, which is why "he managed to escape from his

grandmother and his grandfather". A real "trickster for children" that provokes an emotional reaction. In other words, a worthy candidate for a Wristmon!

Like with all real fairy tales, this simple story possesses deep historical roots and meanings woven within it. According to the "Folklorist Bible" — the Aarne-Thompson-Uther tale-type index (ATU Index) — most of the fairy tales familiar to us since childhood have analogues in other cultures as well. Sometimes the plot may coincide down to the smallest details, sometimes in broad lines only — the plot is similar, but the characters are different.

"Kolobok" can be found in the ATU Index under number AT 2025. It's not just Russian fairy tale about the Little Round Bun, there is an entire combination of fairy-tale texts about ungrateful bakery product that escaped from their creators, who then went on to deceive and tease several characters in succession (in Russian history this a rabbit, wolf, and bear), eventually paying for their self-confidence by being eaten. In American culture, the Gingerbread Man acts as a brazen runaway food, while in Britain it is Johnny-Cake, and the list goes on. Folklorists have counted more than 15 Russian variants of the "Kolobok". The textbook literary version of the fairy tale was recorded and processed as far back as in the 19th century by the educator Konstantin Ushinsky.

From Ushinsky's day to the present, the image of the Kolobok has been personified by many artists, ranging from the famous illustrator Elisabeth Boehm to no less famous directors/animators Vladimir Suteev and Roman Davydov. The Kolobok looked different, but his main features remained unchanged: he was round, golden yellow (as befits the bun he, in fact, is), wide-eyed, and with a broad smile. Konstantin Chaykin saw these pictures and cartoons as a child, and to his already adult imagination the Kolobok seemed exactly like that.

Another source of inspiration for Chaykin in his work on the Wristmon was the well-known yellow smiley face. *"During my younger days in the 1990s I dealt intensively with Western mass culture. It was the first time I saw the 'smiley face', that bright yellow 'face' with dots for eyes and curved line for a mouth,"* the watchmaker recalls. *"The smiley face was everywhere back then: on pins, cassettes, and t-shirts. This is the most schematic of anthropomorphic images, but it nevertheless evokes a response. When I began working on my 'Kolobok' I thought of it as a hero, perhaps even as being a prototype of the smiley face."*

On a side note, the smiley face is indeed much "younger" than the Little Round Bun. A graphic drawing (a circle with eyes and a mouth) in its familiar form first appeared in an ad for the American film "Lili" (1953). It "turned yellow" around ten years later, when American artist Harvey Ball received an order for drawings to be printed on button pins. Ball drew a smiley face and the buttons were colored yellow. The combination was liked by the customer and quickly skyrocketed in popularity. Who knows, maybe Ball was inspired by images from Slavic culture? This is in fact what distinguishes complicated artistic images. Creators from different corners of the globe come up with similar solutions, because their ideas are perfectly expressed.

### **Tale About How the Kolobok Became a Watch**

The image at the so-called "crossroads of meanings" was chosen, with Konstantin Chaykin facing the task of how to bring it to life. The Kolobok is quite similar to cartoon characters, so the master made him especially "wide-eyed" by enlarging the dimensions of the pupils — the hour and minute indicators of his Joker-indication module. The pupils are bright blue on a glossy white background, with the rim of the hour and minute scales slightly protruding above the surface of the dial as if the Kolobok's "eyes"

are bulging after being pleasantly surprised. The character's nose resembles a small lump of dough. Chaykin made the dial somewhat convex, rounded in order to give it the feel of plump dough.

Chaykin wanted the dial to look like the ruddy crust of warm, freshly baked bread. To achieve this effect, the watchmaker wanted to attain the perfect gradient. The dial is lighter in the center and darker closer to the edges. *"The choice of the desired hue for the dial took several weeks, but in the end, in my opinion, it was a perfect result,"* says Chaykin. The addition of mother-of-pearl dust gives the dial a soft, warm, and very attractive glow.

The Kolobok's smile is broader and more cheerful than that found on other Wristmons. It may even be argued that he's the most positive personality in the entire collection. His white-toothed "mouth" isn't only the familiar moonphase indicator (depicted by an open-worked yellow circle), but simultaneously the day of the week indicator. Their role is played by the iconic heroes of the fairy tale that is, the Grandpa, Grandma, the rabbit, wolf, bear, fox, and even the Kolobok himself. The owner of the watch decides which of the characters will designate the first day of the week.

The 40-mm steel encased watch features a K.18-20 caliber with automatic winding based on the modified Swiss-made ETA 2892-A2, supplemented by a manufacture produced module.

Another striking detail in the design will only be available to the owner of the watch — a complicated gilded rotor assembled from 15 parts. It can be viewed through the transparent sapphire crystal caseback. The watchmaker made room for an entire story on the rotor, as if inviting one to dive into the atmosphere of the fairy tale. Right in the center is the sun radiating like a medieval print with almond-shaped eyes under rounded eyebrows, clearly defined lips curled in a slight smile, and short triangular rays. In Slavic tradition, round pastries like pancakes, loaves of bread, and those little round buns symbolized exactly the sun. On one side (right next to the sun) is a cozy hut, with a birch tree on the other.

The rotor is a blend of gilding and several different types of finishes. The sun, the hut, and the birch tree are polished and contrast with the rest of the surface of the sandblasted rotor. The lower portion of the rotor contains a curved polished plate with the engraved name of the watch, typed in stylized Cyrillic letters. The engraving is repeated at the top of the steel rim on the back cover of the Wristmon's case.

The crown also has its own backstory. It was created by Konstantin Chaykin for his watch Stargazer – the most complicated model at Only Watch 2023 and one of the most complicated wristwatches in the world. The part is made in the shape of the sun with rays of various sizes and a traditional engraved logo in the center. If for Stargazer it references a celestial object, then for Kolobok it is a homage to an image from folklore, complementing the mood the master conveyed via the unusual watch rotor.

The watch is outfitted with an alligator leather strap with a bright yellow lining and stitching. The buckle, produced by the Konstantin Chaykin manufacture, is classic in style, made of stainless steel.

## Technical specifications

Limited-edition series	99 pieces
Caliber	K.18-20 with automatic winding
Basic movement	modified Swiss-made ETA 2892-A2
Joker display module	produced by the Konstantin Chaykin manufacture
Movement dimensions	31.5 mm diameter, 9.03 mm thickness (with display discs), 7.65 mm (without display discs)
Escapement	anchor
Balance wheel frequency	28,800 VPH
Power reserve	42 hours
Number of jewels	29 (basic movement – 21 jewels, module – 8 jewels)
Number of module parts	80
Functions	Joker-time with disc indicators for the hours (left) and minutes (right); moonphase indicator; day of the week indicator
Case	stainless steel; caseback with a sapphire crystal
Case dimensions	40 mm diameter, 12.6 mm thickness
Watch crystal	sapphire crystal with anti-reflection coating
Number of case parts	40
Dial finish	multi-layer gradient varnishing
Number of dial parts	8
Strap	black alligator leather with a lining made of calfskin, contrasting yellow stitching
Buckle	produced by the Konstantin Chaykin manufacture, classic, stainless steel