

Ticking Across Borders

Nomos Glashütte goes beyond the call of duty with its altruistic collection of timepieces made in collaboration with Doctors Without Borders.

By Logan R. Baker

Médecins Sans Frontières, known in the English-speaking world as Doctors Without Borders, is one of the most successful charitable organizations to ever receive donations. According to the foundation's 2015 annual international activity report, more than 30,000 medical professionals and engineers volunteered to provide medicinal, preventative, and infrastructural aid to more than 70 countries.

Since 2012, the German watch manufacture Nomos Glashütte has collaborated with Ärzte ohne

Grenzen, the German Doctors Without Borders affiliate, to create limited-edition timepieces that raise money for humanitarian aid. Before the watchmaker, which is known for its award-winning timepiece designs and in-house Glashütte-made movements, was allowed to partner with the organization, the brand was subject to an intense series of check-ups that ensured its production methods and sourcing of materials met the strict ethical standards required by Doctors Without Borders.

The line of timepieces is characterized by subtle stylistic nods, such as a red 12 o'clock numeral at the top of the dial, a small Doctors Without Borders signature underneath six o'clock, and an engraving on the caseback. This is all done tastefully and in line with Nomos's reputation.

OPPOSITE TOP TO BOTTOM:
City of Glashütte. Watch
assembly in the Nomos
factory.





The initial batch of 2,000 German exclusive Tangente and Tangente 33 models rapidly sold out. Following this success, the manufacture opened up distribution to its retailers in the United States and United Kingdom in 2013.

That same year, the brand introduced limited-edition models of the Tangente 38 and Tetra 27 in another round of German-only releases.

“Our name, Nomos, actually comes from Greek and means, among other things, ‘just (fair or equitable) distribution,’” says Nomos Glashütte CEO Uwe Ahrendt. “Social impact is important to us in dealing with retailers, our employees, customers, and suppliers.”

Priced similarly to the rest of Nomos’s standard collections, the Doctors Without Borders series eventually had a total of eight different timepieces available. How-

ever, with three out of the four Ärzte ohne Grenzen (Doctors Without Borders Germany) exclusives completely sold out, the brand has opened up the remaining five designs to any of the three countries the watches are available in.

With each watch sold, the brand donates 100 dollars, pounds, or euros of its profit to Doctors Without Borders. So far, Nomos is on track to donate over \$1 million to the organization.

“This collaboration is the least we can do,” says Ahrendt. “It is the right thing to do and because it is within our capabilities, it is something we must do.”

This is not Nomos’s first step into the humanitarian and political sphere. With the European refugee crisis continuing to grow with no end in sight, members of the Nomos management team recently

met with the Minister-President of Saxony, Stanislaw Tillich, to discuss possible strategies of ensuring a nondiscriminatory and open-minded state.

In the fall of 2015, the brand also placed multiple banners across Saxony encouraging acceptance of the influx of refugees and immigrants.

The banners translate to say “We tick internationally. No to right-wing philosophy. Yes to tolerance and open-mindedness—and people who need our help now.” It’s a powerful message.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Nomos Glashütte CEO Uwe Ahrendt. Tangente 38 Doctors Without Borders model, Tangente 33 Doctors Without Borders model, Tetra 27 Doctors Without Borders model. Nomos headquarters in an old train station.