

Association International Association Les Hénokiens - Château du Clos Lucé

THE 2023 « PRIX LEONARDO DA VINCI PRIZE» AWARD

The award ceremony for the **12th Leonardo da Vinci Prize** took place on September 28, 2023. Geneva.

The Prize was awarded to Carole Hubscher, CEO of Caran d’Ache, member of the 4th generation of the Hubscher family, by Mr. Jean-Claude Biver, entrepreneur, CEO in the luxury watchmaking sector and former president of LVMH’s watchmaking division, Mr. Alberto Marengi, president of the Henokiens Association, François Saint Bris, president of the Château du Clos Lucé – Parc Leonardo da Vinci and Mr. Patrick Chappatte, international press cartoonist.



Alberto Marengi- Jean-Claude Biver- Carole Hubscher- Patrick Chappatte- François Saint Bris

Caran d’Ache is a Swiss, family-run company founded in 1915 and recognised internationally for its fine art drawing and Haute Écriture instruments. A true icon of the “Swiss Made” label, the Maison is 100% Swiss and is currently run by Carole Hubscher, member of the family involved in the company’s management at the highest level since the 1930s. Caran d’Ache, whose headquarters and manufacturing site are located in Thônex, in the Canton of Geneva, embodies the passion of Fine Arts, serving creativity with elegance and excellence. Caran d’Ache employs approximately 300 people and manages a network of a dozen shops in Switzerland along with 120 shop-in-shops around the world and exports its products to 90 countries.

Caran d’Ache was founded in 1915 as the “Fabrique Genevoise de Crayons”, and renamed the “Fabrique de Crayons Ecridor S.A.” in 1920, the company will ultimately be renamed la Maison “Caran d’Ache” in 1924 by Arnold Schweitzer, an ambitious Swiss financier. Although sales of the Caran d’Ache pencils are progressing steadily in Switzerland, this is not the case abroad, which leads businessman Jacques Hubscher, Sr. and his son Henri to invest in the company in 1930 before taking ownership of it a few years later. Jacques Hubscher left his mark on the company starting in 1960 when he expanded the company internationally and broadened its scope to include the Haute Écriture sector. Carole Hubscher, representing the 4th generation of the family, has been at the helm of the Maison since 2012, alongside her sister Patricia Hubscher, member of the Board of Directors in charge of corporate governance and orientation for the coming generation, and their cousin, Dominique Christin.



The Leonardo da Vinci award ceremony was opened by Alberto Marengi, President of the Henokiens, for whom « Caran d'Ache represents a family capitalism that gives meaning to work, anchors it in regions and roots it in our cultures ». The President Marengi explained why « Caran d'Ache and the Leonardo da Vinci prize reflect the idea that it is possible to engage in or continue an entrepreneurial adventure, while at the same time bringing something extra to the world around us ». In this credo, the

Henokiens and Le Clos Lucé find all the reasons why the Caran d'Ache company, honored today, is deserving of this trophy. For President Marengi « the Hubscher family has made their family business an international success, while contributing with their products, their philosophy, their way of acting and their respect for others, to helping the planet ». He concludes by saying that « he is convinced that the twelfth winner will add his qualities, values and entrepreneurial vision to a list of winning companies now representing 8 different countries in Europe and Japan ».

For the president of le Clos Lucé François Saint Bris « Leonardo da Vinci had a highly visual mind. As seen by his extraordinary ability to assimilate and visualise information. There is a great resonance between Leonardo's drawing and writing instruments, his studies and research into pigments and colours in these "bottegas" and his drawings, sketches and diagrams and the Caran d'Ache's design of sustainable drawing and writing instruments ». For François Saint Bris « proud of its legacy, Caran d'Ache has always voluntarily pursued the regional and circular economy both in terms of using raw materials and hiring local talent». And to underline that for him « solidarity, engagement and responsibility are the fundamental values that form the bedrock of Caran d'Ache's culture, a culture in which drawing and writing savoir-faire are handed down through the generations ». François Saint Bris concludes his speech with the following words « harnessing its experience and unique DNA, to all its projects Caran d'Ache brings stringent quality control and the perfect balance of time-honoured tradition and constant attention to its environmental impact with sustained innovation at the cutting edge of technology. Social and environmental responsibility is a subject that is shared by its management and all its employees. Faithful to its values, in 2018 Caran d'Ache signed up to the *UN Global Compact*, a United Nations initiative in Geneva that aims to encourage businesses to implement socially responsible principles and commit to adopting and promoting humanist principles on international labour, the environment and anti-corruption and take actions that advance societal goals. This Leonardo da Vinci Prize, awarded to Caran d'Ache rewards the exemplary role of all family businesses and its tremendous human personal adventure as entrepreneurs for more than a century».



Patrick Chappatte Patrick Chappatte is a world-renowned cartoonist and reporter, in constant search of meaning. The organizers of the Leonardo da Vinci prize gave him carte blanche to distill his vision of the world with humor. In his country, Switzerland, he is a star. As famous as Roger Federer. Based in Geneva, it is there that the press cartoonist "throws arrows at the world", as he likes to define his profession, of which he is one of the great current figures.



Jean-Claude Biver is a visionary of watchmaking, a world where both past and present time combine. In his eyes, there is a great similarity between the world of watchmaking and that of family businesses for which transmission constitutes a permanent issue and challenge. For Jean-Claude Biver “the transmission of the company, its know-how, its values, surprisingly resembles the transmission of life, the prerogative of women without whom nothing would be possible on earth”. Transmission, creativity, humanism are qualities that we recognize in Carole Hubscher. According to him, “the Caran d’Ache model constitutes an example of a successful transfer, the company, the Hubscher family and its president Carole Hubscher having never ceased not to limit themselves to a pure and simple manufacture of products, but to be a factory of dreams, making possible the expression of emotions and creativity through drawing and writing, like Leonardo da Vinci, to whom the prize refers.

In receiving the Leonardo da Vinci Prize, Carole Hubscher declares herself « honoured to be the first family business in Switzerland to receive the prestigious award from an equally prestigious association and a castle which are just as much » She continues by giving an overview of the story and her vision of Caran d’Ache « since its foundation in 1915, Caran d’Ache designs and produces writing and drawing instruments to help successive generations express their creativity freely and authentically. At a time when the world is increasingly digitalised and under the influence of predictive intelligence, we are committed to creativity and passion. Our passion is complemented by another value: the humanist and responsible approach we perpetuate. Steeped in Geneva’s Protestant history, we have always attached great importance to our social and societal commitment ».



For Carole Hubscher « it's not just a culture, it's second nature to a company that thrives in its ecosystem ». A responsible company also means that Caran d’Ache integrates environmental performance beyond legal requirements into its manufacturing and distribution processes, particularly in terms of energy, purchasing and supply, as well as waste recovery. Another great characteristic of the company is its determination to be innovative. It is a constant mental gymnastics aimed at never being satisfied with good when you can do

better, by bringing added value at each level of your organization, with the conviction of one day transmitting a strong heritage in a perspective of sustainability. She continues by emphasizing that as a family business, her sister Patricia, managing director, and herself are keen to get involved in perpetuating a name and preserving a historical and cultural heritage. A story that is written with a pen held tomorrow by the next generation. Carole Hubscher concludes her speech with the following words « *ladies and gentlemen, you are the testimony of family businesses that have demonstrated excellent management and exceptional longevity, and which serve as examples for us other family SMEs. Overcoming crises has made you even stronger, demonstrating your resilience. Thank you for inspiring and encouraging us. As we look back over our history, we think of our predecessors who never stopped looking ahead and building ambitious projects. In a world of multiple crises, social and environmental, let us draw on the glorious past of our ancestors to build confidence in a better world and a world of opportunity. It is with this ode to optimism that I wish to conclude. On behalf of my family and our entire Caran d’Ache family, I would like to thank you once again for this award, which fills me with great pride* ».



The trophy of the Leonardo da Vinci Prize

The trophy, designed by the jeweller Mellerio , is inspired by the flying helix invented by Leonardo da Vinci. It embodies the laudable values of superiority, advancement and vision that the “Leonardo da Vinci Prize” was created for to recognize, promote and reward