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**THE NAKED
WATCHMAKER**

MASTERCLASS

DECONS

PEOPLE

MAKING

GLOSSARY

BLOG*

LINKS

ODD-SHOP

Oliver R. Muller

Industry Consultant

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1. Describe briefly your childhood.

I had quite a carefree childhood, surrounded by a loving family, between Geneva and Zug. My father was travelling a lot and my siblings, and I kept my mother busy with all our pranks. My parents gave me a very free and open-minded upbringing. They liked unusual personalities of all fields and ages, so we were always surrounded by a quite colorful and unusual crowd, swimming against the current, which was very inspiring. On week-ends, we did sail or ski depending on the season – my Dad's favorites.

2. As a child did you have any driving ambition?

I have – put mildly - a very headstrong personality, for the good and the bad. Whether it was at home or school, I was always challenging the rules and did not fit in the system. With my middle-class upbringing, it came as a surprise to my family when I told them I wanted to become a farmer. They tried to put me off, but it was useless: I was really determined about this, and I did it!

3. What is your first significant memory as a child?

When we moved to Zug, I had a really hard time to adjust to the

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I left home at 15 for my farmer apprenticeship and it turned out to be a real school of life. I worked in a little farm above Zurich. It was very hard and physical: we had to wake up at 5:30 every morning and worked very long hours. This experience taught me resilience and endurance, I loved working with my hands and seeing the immediate result of my work. I still have the greatest respect for people who work hard and reconnecting with Mother Nature is my way to recharge batteries. and I discovered also a passion for wine growing !

5. What made you decide to go in the direction you are currently in?

I have always loved luxury cars, mechanics and genuine craftsmanship in general. When I landed at Omega 22 years ago, I had a revelation. I fell in love with watchmaking and never left the industry since. After some years and many encounters with inspiring people – there would too many to name – I ended in the world of independent artisan watchmakers. It's both an inspiring and very grounded tribe of people perpetuating a tradition linked to our culture.

6. What's the worst job you've had to do?

With my personality, authority was always an issue, so corporate life and wasting time in internal politics have always been a challenge for me. At the beginning of my career I composed with it as I had to build experience but it became soon pretty clear I would write my own story at

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years later, I had to let go the dedicated team that made my dream come true. It was a huge deception to overcome and clipped my wings for a while. But being very resilient and a relentless optimistic, I hanged on my connections to rebound on my next mission. Family and friends have always been a strong source of motivation to move forward.

8. Who has had the strongest influence on you?

I am inspired by entrepreneurs and self-made men and women, whether in the industry or sports. People who are strong-willed, fighters who never give up, who play against the odds. Ernst Thomke, Steve Jobs, Elon Musk, Anthony Joshua amongst others.

9. What are you most proud of?

My children are my biggest pride. They challenge me every day, giving me the will to move on. Seeing them flourishing and thriving, becoming confident persons is the greatest feeling.

10. What advice would you give to a 20 something someone thinking of taking a similar path as you?

Think and dream big. Follow your passion and guts. Keep questioning, never stop being curious. Never listen to intrapreneurs if you want to become a

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- Coach a young boxer to become a world champion
- Understand the Relativity Theory by A. Einstein
- Own a château and create the best red wine in the world

12. Where do you think the industry is going to be in 10 years' time.

In the low end : disrupted by the smartwatches but being resilient it will be reinvented itself. In the high end : even more creative than today. Strong brands will have become even stronger with a few niche players growing to a global size. A complete disruption of the business model with most of the multi-brand retailers disappearing and the strong verticalizing their retail online and direct to consumer. The keyword is direct to consumer with intermediaries disappearing Companies are reinventing themselves as what they used to be: influencers for lesser known brands and pushing rather than having the pull from captive consumers of blockbuster brands. Finally, I see a very bright future for true and genuine watchmakers such as Rexhep Rexhepi or Cyril Brivet-Naudot who are the new Dufour's and Voutilainen. And hopefully one day a talented woman watchmaker.

To learn more about [Oliver R. Muller](#)

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