

GIFT OF THE YEAR 2007 GIFT AND FASHION JEWELLERY AWARD WON BY FRANCE DESIGNS / AKTEO WATCHES

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The winners of this year's Gift of the Year Awards were announced last night at a glittering Awards ceremony at the Grosvenor House Hotel, London.

The Gift & Fashion Jewellery award was won by AKTEO Watches; an exclusive collection of intricately designed thematic watches made in France with Swiss movements. The AKTEO collection was a finalist in two other categories; Art Gallery and Collect It. The full range of watches can be viewed at www.exprimez-vous.co.uk

Sabrina Rochemont at AKTEO's UK distributor, France Designs Limited, believes that it is the combination of innovative design and the high quality of the watches which has ensured its place as a winner on the list of the nation's most exciting gifts for 2007:

"AKTEO watches are fun and exciting and answer the demand for quality personal gifts and self-expression. The Gift of The Year Awards is an excellent indicator of what's going to be hot this Christmas and therefore, we are thrilled to have been announced as winners."

The watch chosen as winner in the Gift and Fashion Jewellery category was The Author Cubic (illustrated). Quill and fountain pens show the time on this cubic watch face with occidental letters carved on the dial with striking precision and style.

The Oscars of the Giftware world – the Gift of the Year Awards are always an excellent indicator of what's going to be hot this Christmas. Now in its 28th year, the 2007 Awards have heralded a record number of entries of those hoping to be crowned as this year's 'must-have' Christmas gift.

Isabel Martinson, chief executive, The Giftware Association, says, "Only the most original and innovatively designed products have made it this far. It's a 10 billion pound industry and only the best get through! Each company has had to demonstrate that its product captures current trends, has consumer appeal and is commercially viable. All of the finalists involved this year were exceptional and judging the winners of each category was a very difficult task!"

The awards recognise outstanding innovation in new products across eighteen categories from classical through to contemporary and including cookware, eco-friendly products through to children's gifts, wellbeing products and those made in the UK – as well as an 'under ten pounds' category – perfect for those festive stocking fillers!

Celebrating its Diamond Anniversary, the Giftware Association has been supporting and promoting the UK's gift and home industry for 60 years. As the industry's national trade body, it represents over 1,500 companies which between them employ over 20,000 people in areas as far-ranging as manufacturing, importing / exporting, wholesale, distribution, design, retail, publishing as well as craftsmen and

sector specialists.

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