

For Immediate Release
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Christie's Hong Kong Sale of Important Watches Offers Exceptional and Rare Timepieces Estimated to Fetch over HK\$ 80 Million



Important Watches

Monday, 30 May, 2011

11.30am & 2.30pm

Saleroom 2, Convention Hall, Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre

Hong Kong – Watch enthusiasts, beginners and seasoned collectors can look forward to an extremely wide array of magnificent timepieces at Christie's Hong Kong ***Important Watches*** Spring Sale on 30 May 2011 at the Hong Kong Convention & Exhibition Centre. **With 540 lots on offer and a total estimate exceeding HK\$80 million/US\$10 million**, the Spring Sale dazzles with rare enamel and pocket watches, opulent ladies' jewellery watches, exceptional vintage wristwatches and inspirational modern complication wristwatches. This impressive selection, covering a broad and rich range in terms of styles and prices, will offer watch lovers and collectors a unique opportunity to acquire timepieces of the highest qualities and values on the market.

Enamel and Pocket Watches

Undoubtedly the most prominent highlight of the sale is a magnificent pair of matching gold and enamel ***Singing Bird Pistols*** (Lot 2174, estimate: HK\$20,000,000–40,000,000/US\$2,500,000–5,000,000, *image right*). The matching mirror-image pistols set with diamonds, agate and pearls, attributed to world-renowned craftsman Frères Rochat, is the only publicly known pair of singing bird pistols in the world. This sale offers a singular collecting opportunity to acquire, not ONE but TWO of these museum pieces, at the same time. [Separate press release available [here](#)]



Equally noteworthy is a superb selection of over 150 lots of enamel and pocket watches, many of which were manufactured for the Chinese market dating back to almost two centuries. Since their first appearance, these extremely attractive watches have retained their appeal and are still today highly appreciated by collectors for their exquisite enameled, gem-set cases as well as for their innovative mechanisms. On offer are rare examples of pocket watches from rivaling English and Swiss manufacturers, lavishly decorated with flawless enamel paintings, delicate

diamond or pearl-set decorations, epitomizing the skill and creativity of watch makers in the late 18th and 19th century. These pocket watches were highly coveted by royal families, aristocracy in Europe as well as by the Imperial court and its courtiers in China.



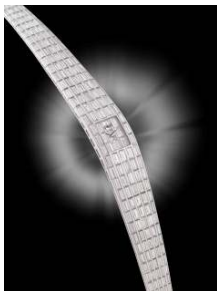
Of particular importance is a very rare **gold and enamel openface duplex pocket watch, circa 1815** (Lot 2173, estimate: HK\$480,000–750,000/US\$60,000–95,000, *image left*), by renowned London watchmaker **William Ilbery**, who was famous as the creator of Chinese market watches. Ilbery was a great artist and technician and his watches often combined exquisite enamel paintings by Swiss artists, with highly accurate and innovative movements. The enamel painting on the case is beautifully executed in the manner of Jean-Louis Richard and illustrates the English watchmaker's talent of combining high technology with the decorative arts.

Another emblematic example of a timepiece made for the Chinese market of the period is a very fine, rare and large, **gilt openface duplex pocket watch with mother of pearl and painted enamel, by Swiss watchmaker Bovet, circa 1860** (Lot 1964, estimate: HK\$150,000–250,000/US\$20,000–30,000, *image right*). 'Bo Wei' or 'Bo-vay' in Chinese, Bovet's pocket watches was a resounding success in China and the name soon became synonymous for the highest quality pocket watches, coveted by members of the ruling class in China. Gold cases with enamel miniatures painted by the most celebrated artists of the time, or cloisonné and champlevé decorations and pearl-set borders are unmistakable signatures of Bovet's creations. Many examples of such Bovet pocket watches with beautiful enamel paintings of vividly coloured bouquets on the cases are displayed in the Beijing Palace Museum collection.



Jewellery Watches

Checking the time has never been so beautiful. When world-renowned watch manufacturers such as Piaget and Audemars Piguet wish to dazzle their audience, they create jewellery timepieces of such astonishing design and elegance that they rival in opulence with creations from the world's greatest jewellery houses.



Undoubtedly the highlight of the season is the magnificent **Piaget Petite Galaxy, circa 1995**. The case, dial and bracelet of this wristwatch in white gold, are entirely set with 221 baguette-cut diamonds, weighing 21.66 carats. (Lot 1936, estimate: HK\$480,000–650,000/US\$60,000–80,000, *image left*). Since its establishment in 1874, the house of Piaget has given watchmaking history a new dimension through its technical skills and creative prowess. Piaget holds a key position for creating unparalleled "Haute-Joaillerie" luxury watches, adorned with the finest quality gemstones and fashioned entirely by hand. The slimness of the Galaxy movement, the flexibility of its bracelet and the unabashed use of diamonds are testimonies to Piaget's unrivaled prestige of a long-standing watchmaking and jewellery tradition.

Piaget shines again with this trio of lady's gold watches lavishly set with marquise diamonds and sapphires, rubies or emeralds. Made in 1998, each of these Haute-Joaillerie" watch is a unique piece and is sold individually. (Lots 1933, 1934, 1935, estimate: HK\$200,000–280,000/US\$25,000–35,000 per lot, *image of Lot 1935 see second image on page 1*). Fanciful, colourful and elegant, each watch is crafted with a painstaking attention to the slightest detail and in harmony with the creative spirit of Piaget.

The house of Audemars Piguet is equally known for their complicated man's wristwatches as for their spectacular lady's jewellery watches. Stunningly simple and elegant with its geometric check-board pattern of diamonds and baguette-cut emeralds, the splendour of this rare lady's **white gold bracelet watch, circa 2000**, is truly the product of a timeless design and the highest craftsmanship in gem-setting (Lot 1932, estimate: HK\$160,000 – 240,000/US\$20,000–30,000, *image right*).



Vintage Wristwatches

Christie's Hong Kong sets a new trend in watch auctions in Asia by introducing vintage wristwatches of the highest quality to Asia and remains committed to this role of showcasing rare timepieces which not only symbolize milestones in watch-making history, but also display groundbreaking functions and traditional craftsmanship. For lovers and collectors of vintage watches, Patek Philippe continues to be the most coveted name, and Christie's Hong Kong is proud to present a range of important timepieces from the world's most esteemed watchmaker.

Among Patek Philippe's many creations, the Reference 2499, a perpetual calendar chronograph wristwatch with moonphases, widely acknowledged as one of the world's greatest watch models ever created, has undoubtedly greatly influenced the designs of many of the most renowned watchmakers. Introduced to the market in 1950, it

replaced the legendary reference 1518 (see lot 2405 in this auction), the world's first perpetual calendar wristwatch with chronograph made in series. Over a period of 35 years, reference 2499 was made in four series in a total production of only 349 pieces, the majority cased in yellow gold. The rarity of this model becomes evident when considering that an annual average of only 9 watches left Patek Philippe's workshops.



Certainly one of the most significant lots in this Spring sale, Christie's Hong Kong will offer a **Reference 2499, third series in pink gold**, made in 1971 (Lot 2403, estimate: HK\$5,500,000–9,500,000/US\$700,000–1,200,000, *image left*). Remaining in extremely fine condition, this tremendously rare watch stands as only the sixth example of the ref. 2499 third series in pink gold to ever come to the public market.

By offering the iconic Reference 1518 in the same sale, Christie's provides watch enthusiasts in Asia the chance to compare the evolution of design and mechanical innovations of the two most historically important references from Patek Philippe. Reference 1518 was launched in 1941 and according to literature, only 281 examples were made until 1954, the majority cased in yellow gold, few in pink gold. It was furthermore the first perpetual calendar chronograph wristwatch produced in series by any watch company. The model was later replaced by reference 2499 (see lot 2403 in this auction), also a perpetual calendar chronograph, but with a wider diameter and fluted lugs.

The present sample of **Patek Philippe Reference 1518** (Lot 2405, estimate: HK\$1,600,000–2,500,000/US\$200,000–300,000, *image right*), an 18k gold perpetual calendar chronograph wristwatch with moon phases, manufactured in 1949 is a perfect specimen with its fine condition and special provenance. This watch is the key lot of a private collection offered in the Spring sale *«A Gentleman's Journey: 12 Complicated Watches Manufactured by Patek Philippe dating from 1942 to 2006»*, which includes 12 complicated vintage and modern Patek Philippe wristwatches, representing the owner's profound interest, taste and knowledge in Patek Philippe's production of the last six decades. Each watch in the collection is accompanied by its presentation box, original certificate or Extract from the Archives.



Modern Complicated Watches

In horology, complication refers to any feature in a timepiece beyond the simple display of hours, minutes, and seconds. The more complications in a watch, the more challenging and labour intensive it is to design, create and assemble. A typical date-display chronograph may contain in excess of 250 parts, while a particularly complex watch may have a thousand or more parts. Complicated watches are therefore produced in strictly limited numbers and only by the world's most famous watchmakers. Once again Christie's will present an array of greatest innovative models from Patek Philippe, Breguet and Vacheron Constantin together with a number of independent watchmakers such as Greubel Forsey and F.P. Journe.

As early as in the 16th century, ambitious watchmakers attempted to include astronomical indications in their pocket watches. Patek Philippe takes this ambition to the extreme with their creation of their most complicated wristwatch ever made by the manufacture – the **Patek Philippe Sky Moon Tourbillon Reference 5002P**. In unused



condition, this exceptionally rare and highly important platinum, manual winding double dialed wristwatch, circa 2008 (Lot 2121, estimate: HK\$7,000,000–9,500,000/US\$900,000–1,200,000, *image left*) features 12 complications including minute repeater, tourbillon, perpetual calendar, retrograde date, sky chart, moon phases, orbit display and sidereal time.

Among all the minute repeaters, Patek Philippe's minute repeating watches are renowned for their rich and pure tones and the appearance of a Patek Philippe minute repeating watch at auction never fails to excite. The example on offer in this sale is a fine **Patek Philippe Reference 5078P minute repeater which was launched in 2005 and only available in platinum** (Lot 2120, estimate: HK\$2,400,000–4,000,000/US\$300,000–500,000, *image right*). Not only is this minute repeater fitted with a remarkable number of 342 parts, Patek Philippe performed the masterly feat of combining a micro-rotor and a minute repeating mechanism in a proportionally small '12 ½' movement. Furthermore, it incorporates a 'Cathedral' repeating mechanism which consists of a high-tone and a low-tone gong, produced by two hammers and consequently achieves a much richer and fuller timbre.



When the world's most renowned jeweller **Harry Winston** collaborates with one of the most gifted independent watch makers **Greubel Forsey**, the result is the **Opus 6**, an art piece in white gold which epitomizes stunning design with cutting-edge technical excellence (Lot 2193, HK\$2,400,000–4,000,000/US\$300,000–500,000, *image left*). The extraordinary feature in Opus 6 lies in its unusual construction of the Double Tourbillon 30°, a signature of French-English watchmaking duo Greubel and Forsey, which combines a one-minute tourbillon inclined at 30° inside a four-minute tourbillon to offset any positional errors and to ensure superb chronometry. The movement provides 72 hours of power reserve, hours and minutes by co-axial discs at 3 o'clock, and small seconds disc at 11 o'clock. Limited to 6 pieces, this example is numbered 5/6, and is manufactured in 2006.

IMAGES can be downloaded here:

<http://csbk.myftp.org/Spring%202011%20Christie's%20Hong%20Kong%20Auctions/Watches/Images/>

In advance of the 30 May sale in Hong Kong, highlights from the sale of *Important Watches* will be on view in the following cities around the world:

Date	Location	Venue
23-24 April	Shanghai	The Waldorf Astoria
26-27 April	Beijing	St. Regis Hotel
30 April – 1 May	Singapore	Artspace@Helu-trans
12-13 May	Bangkok	Christie's Bangkok
21-22 May	Taipei	Fubon Life Assurance Building
26-29 May	Hong Kong	Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre

About Christie's

Christie's, the world's leading art business had global auction and private sales in 2010 that totaled £3.3 billion/\$5.0 billion. Christie's is a name and place that speaks of extraordinary art, unparalleled service and expertise, as well as international glamour. Founded in 1766 by James Christie, Christie's conducted the greatest auctions of the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries, and today remains a popular showcase for the unique and the beautiful. Christie's offers over 450 sales annually in over 80 categories, including all areas of fine and decorative arts, jewellery, photographs, collectibles, wine, and more. Prices range from \$200 to over \$100 million. Christie's has 53 offices in 32 countries and 10 salerooms around the world including in London, New York, Paris, Geneva, Milan, Amsterdam, Dubai and Hong Kong. More recently, Christie's has led the market with expanded initiatives in emerging and new markets such as Russia, China, India and the United Arab Emirates, with successful sales and exhibitions in Beijing, Mumbai and Dubai. Visit Christie's Website at www.christies.com

**Estimates do not include buyer's premium*