

Contact: Victoria Cheung 852.2978.9919 vccheung@christies.com
Dick Lee 852.2978.9966 dlee@christies.com

For Immediate Release

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**CHRISTIE'S HONG KONG IMPORTANT WATCHES AUCTION TO SHOWCASE
UNIQUE AND EXTREMELY RARE TIMEPIECES**



Important Watches

31 May 2006

Hong Kong – In conjunction with its 20th anniversary, Christie's Hong Kong will present in its forthcoming auction of *Important Watches* some of the rarest and most sought-after timepieces by world-renowned watchmakers. From vintage models to modern and contemporary designs, many of these horological masterworks are first seen in the auction market and are destined to arouse enormous interest from collectors and connoisseurs worldwide.

Featuring over 500 timepieces, including a fabulous private collection, the sale is one of the largest watch auctions in Asia. Taking the centre-stage is a very rare and important **Patek Philippe** platinum rectangular wristwatch featuring a state-of-the-art tourbillon with ten day power reserve, Ref. 5101P, produced in 2005 (Lot 2193, estimate: HK\$2,000,000-2,400,000/ US\$250,000-300,000). It is the first contemporary platinum tourbillon

Christie's Hong Kong Limited
22nd Floor, Alexandra House
16-20 Chater Road
Central, Hong Kong
tel 852 2521 5396 fax 852 2845 2646
www.christies.com

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watch with ten day power reserve ever to be offered at auction. The design, inspired by the Art Deco period, is a masterpiece of modern-day horology. Its substantial size and form, with a total length of 51 mm, is highly unusual and impressive among contemporary timepieces. The fascinating and very complicated tourbillon mechanism combined with the long duration of sustained power in the movement is also a first in terms of engineering brilliance. This exceptional piece is expected to generate furious biddings among watch connoisseurs when it makes its ground-breaking appearance at Christie's auction.

Equally splendid is an extremely rare and unique **Patek Philippe** gold, enamel and diamond-set minute repeating perpetual-calendar moon-phase pocket watch (Lot 2006, estimate: HK\$1,200,000-2,000,000/ US\$150,000-250,000). The only known example in the world, this watch was completed in 1981. The main body of the case is 18k gold with a magnificent royal blue enamel band to the front and back cover, interspersed with foliate motifs throughout. The rim and back are also highly engraved with decorative scrolls. Offsetting this sumptuous case is the wonderfully deep sky blue translucent dial, subtly set with diamond numerals and contrasting with the four subsidiary dials showing the perpetual calendar and phases of the moon. To enable the owner to appreciate such beauty without it being hidden away in a box, there is also a majestic purpose-made gold and royal blue enamel stand, itself a modern work of art.

A further highlight by **Patek Philippe** is a very rare 18k gold perpetual calendar chronograph wristwatch with snap on glazed back and additional spare snap on solid back, Ref. 3970, *circa* 1986 (Lot 2004, estimate: HK\$800,000-1,200,000/ US\$100,000-150,000). This model is from the first series ever produced of this reference number, and is one of less than 100 examples ever made with the snap on case backs. All subsequent series of this reference came with screw on case backs, making this watch highly sought after by collectors. Its silvered dial is set with applied baton and square numerals, while three subsidiary dials indicating constant seconds are combined with 24 hour indication and 30 minutes register.

An extraordinary selection of jewelled watches will be offered in the sale combining excellent technology with scintillating diamonds. A superb **Piaget** lady's 18k white gold and diamond set oval "Kanthara" wristwatch, *circa* 1999, is one of the most exquisite and desirable jewelled watches ever created for the lady (Lot 2093, estimate: HK\$1,700,000-2,300,000/ US\$220,000-295,000). It is the first time this model has ever been offered for auction in Asia, and is expected to captivate every lady connoisseur. Its opulence is exemplified in its diamond-set dial and an 18k white gold bracelet adorned with 140 emerald-cut diamonds totaling over 60 carats.

Also included in the sale is a very rare **Ulysse Nardin** platinum minute repeating and automated "Jungle" wristwatch with cloisonné enamel dial (Lot 2172, estimate: HK\$1,000,000-1,200,000/ US\$130,000-150,000). Not only does it have the very complicated mechanism of the minute repeating function, but it also has three automated parts moving when the repeating mechanism is activated, all visible on a highly colourful enamel dial

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depicting a jungle scene. Only 18 of these watches in platinum were produced and this is the first time this model has ever been offered at auction.

Another prized offering is a fine and rare titanium tourbillon wristwatch with power reserve and torque indication, Ref. RM002, *circa* 2002 by **Richard Mille** (Lot 2155, estimate: HK\$720,000-1,000,000/ US\$90,000-130,000). Richard Mille is one of the leading independent watch makers, manufacturing very high end technical and innovative timepieces, greatly influenced by the automobile and aviation fields. Due to the complexity of the unusual movement, production of the rare titanium tourbillon wristwatch Ref. RM002, is limited to a very small quantity per year making it highly coveted in today's market.

A. Lange & Söhne is a watchmaker with a long tradition in complex timepieces. A fine and rare limited edition platinum fly-back double split second chronograph wristwatch with power reserve seen in this sale is one of only five examples produced with black dial, made to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Sincere, Southeast Asia's pre-eminent watch retailer, headquartered in Singapore (Lot 2037, estimate: HK\$720,000-950,000/ US\$90,000-120,000). A true rarity, this watch features skeletonised three-tiered lever movement, two-engine-turned subsidiary dials indicating constant seconds and 30 minutes register, and split second mechanism operated through three buttons in the band.

Fresh to the auction market in Asia is a platinum limited edition tonneau shaped mystery watch by **F.P. Journe**, Model Vagabondage (Lot 2197, estimate: HK\$280,000-350,000/ US\$35,000-45,000). Featuring a dial with visible mono-metallic compensation balance at the centre, Arabic numerals for the wandering hours in tonneau-shaped case, this highly coveted timepiece is one of the only 69 examples made in 2004.

Christie's sale will also feature 145 watches from a remarkable private collection, offering a wide range of timepieces from the most famed watchmakers. Among the notable pieces is a rare **Gerald Genta** 18k white gold and sapphire set automatic perpetual calendar, minute repeating, tourbillon, world time wristwatch with phases of the moon, No. 1, *circa* 1995 (Lot 1751, estimate: HK\$480,000-640,000/ US\$60,000-80,000). This is a very complicated watch combining three of the most difficult and technical functions a watch maker can manufacture, and only very few pieces of this model were ever produced. It features a finely engraved skeletonised jewelled lever movement, and an outer revolving bezel calibrated with the names of 34 world cities, and "Gerald Genta and No. 1" engraved on the band.

Pre-sale Exhibitions:

New York	Christie's	9-10 April
Singapore	Grand Hyatt Singapore	14-15 April
Tokyo	Park Hyatt Tokyo	24-25 April
Jakarta	Christie's	28-29 April

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Shanghai	The Westin Shanghai	10-11 May
Beijing	St. Regis Beijing	13-14 May
Bangkok	Plaza Athenee Bangkok	16-17 May
Taipei	Fubon Life Assurance Building	20-21 May
Hong Kong	Hong Kong Convention & Exhibition Centre	26-30 May

Auctions:

Important Watches, 31 May 2006 at 11:00am & 2:00pm

Convention Hall, Hong Kong Convention & Exhibition Centre

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