

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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CHRISTIE'S PRESENTS EXQUISITE & RARE TIMEPIECES IN OCTOBER

Important Pocket Watches & Wristwatches

October 17, 2007

Christie's New York

New York - Christie's fall sale of *Important Pocket Watches & Wristwatches* on October 17 will present 376 lots of exceptional timepieces, many not only exceedingly rare and historically important, but fresh to the market. From complicated vintage watches by makers such as Patek Philippe and Vacheron Constantin, to a superb selection of sought-after modern wristwatches, this annual fall sale is sure to please new and established collectors alike.

Leading the sale is arguably the most historically important Vacheron Constantin wristwatch to ever come to auction: an extremely rare reference 4293 in 18k pink gold. Combining the complications of minute repeating, triple calendar and phases of the moon, this magnificent and probably *unique* wristwatch is going to be among the most highly coveted pieces in the fall sale. A recent discovery, this tremendous piece is being offered by the family of the original owner and is estimated at \$250,000-500,000.

From Patek Philippe comes a lovely example of the rare pink gold version of the reference 1526 (estimate: \$150,000-300,000). Patek Philippe commenced production of the reference 1526 in 1941, producing its first perpetual calendar wristwatch in series. At the time, this reference remained the only perpetual calendar available on the market. According to literature, only 210 examples were made, the majority in yellow gold cases, until 1952. Only a very few examples in pink gold and one in stainless steel are known to date.

Also from Patek Philippe is a rare ref. 3939H in platinum (estimate: \$250,000-350,000). This complicated timepiece exemplifies the mastership of Patek Philippe in that it not only consists of a total of 336 parts, but it also houses both minute repeating and tourbillon functions within a small case. Approximately 100 pieces are known to have been produced, with about 30 to 40 examples in platinum. The present watch represents one of approximately 9 pieces known to the market and has never before appeared at auction.

Also included in the sale is a rare and historically interesting oversized diver's wristwatch by Panerai from the 1940s (estimate: \$70,000-100,000). During the 1930s, following disappointing tests carried out on watches available at that time, the Royal Italian Navy

approached Panerai with the request of designing a watch resistant to extreme conditions while at the same time keeping exact time. Consequently as of 1938 a small series of "Radiomir" watches of the reference 3646, such as the present watch, were produced for the Italian Navy. During World War I and II, watches and other instruments made by Panerai became standard-issue tools for Italian Navy frogmen, SLC torpedo riders and commandos and also for naval forces of other countries.

A strong selection of modern timepieces will also be offered, including an extremely rare limited edition Breguet reference 1801 (estimate: \$110,000-150,000) - the first example of this reference in platinum to appear at auction. The reference 1801 is part of a special edition created for the 200th anniversary of Breguet's invention of the tourbillon in 1801. A total of 66 examples were produced in the limited edition series – 28 examples in white gold, 28 examples in pink gold, and 10 examples in platinum, of which this is number 9.

Another interesting modern timepiece in the sale is the impressive pink gold and diamond tourbillon wristwatch by Richard Mille (estimate: \$140,000-180,000). Richard Mille began his career as a marketing expert, however his long association with the French firm Matra and later with the jewelry firm Mauboussin gave him a clear perception of the style of wristwatch he envisioned for the 21st Century. Seeking to emulate the skilled craftsmanship of high performance Formula One racers or fighter jets, Mille uses futuristic materials like nano-fibers and ultra-light aluminum movement plates. By incorporating futuristic materials and specially developed escapements he has created fine timepieces that have their own unique character.

Auction:	<i>Important Pocket Watches & Wristwatches,</i>	October 17
Viewing:	Christie's Galleries at 20 Rockefeller Plaza	October 11-16

About Christie's

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