

For Immediate Release

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A WATCH WITH A HISTORY TELLS MORE THAN THE TIME

Important Pocketwatches and Wristwatches

14 November 2005

Christie's Geneva

Geneva – Christie's International Watch Department, the recognised international auction market leader, will present a superb selection of over 400 examples in the sale of **Important Pocketwatches and Wristwatches** on 14 November 2005 in Geneva. The auction will be led by one of the most important watches by Patek Philippe to be offered at auction which was created for Henry Graves Jr. in 1926. With prices starting at SFr1,000 through to Sfr1,000,000, this will be a high quality, colourful, stylish and rich sale spanning four centuries.



A spectacular Patek Philippe 'Grande Complication' pocket-watch made for Henry Graves Jr. and delivered to him on 1 June 1926 leads the sale. Considered to be one of the most important watches made in the 20th century, this unique and historically important watch took nearly eight years to complete and is estimated at SFr800,000-1,400,000 / \$640,000-1,100,000. Henry Graves Jr. was a true connoisseur and the greatest of Patek Philippe's patrons. Born into a prominent banking family, Graves competed with James Ward Packard, the automobile manufacturer, in challenging the master watchmakers of Patek Philippe to produce the most complicated and sophisticated watches ever made.

This highly significant gold openface minute-repeating grande and petite sonnerie clock-watch with split seconds chronograph, 30-minute register, perpetual calendar and ages and phases of the moon, showcases Patek Philippe's finest work, the result of their mission to satisfy the world's most demanding clientele. With its 12 complications, it is among the most complicated of watches ever made to be offered at auction. No public records are available to show how many watches Graves Jr. ordered from Patek Philippe, but research suggested 30 pieces, all engraved with the family's coat of arms and motto ESSE QUAM VIDERE (To Be Rather than to Seem). Today at least 12 of these pieces are publicly exhibited at the Patek Philippe Museum in Geneva.

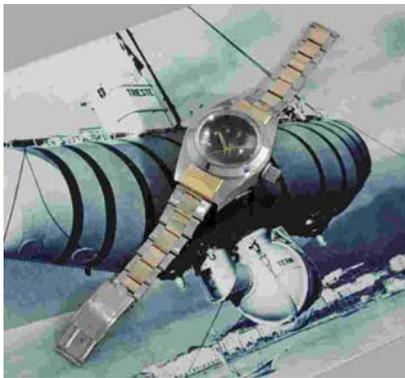
Further highlights by Patek Philippe include an extremely rare and possibly unique white gold cushion-shaped single button chronograph wristwatch with vertically positioned register and Breguet numerals (estimate: SFr 1,200,000-1,800,000 / \$960,000-1,400,000). Probably made by special request for one of Patek Philippe's most important patrons in 1928 during the Depression, it is the only known example of a single-button chronograph cased in white gold. Combining the state-of-the-art chronograph movement with the latest design of that period, it is one of the most important wristwatches to be offered at auction.



The sale also features a rare gold split seconds chronograph wristwatch with Breguet numerals and oversized subsidiary dials which was manufactured by Patek Philippe in 1939 and is probably the earliest model of its kind (estimate: SFr 250,000-350,000 / \$200,000-280,000). One of the most unusual and interesting split seconds wristwatches ever to appear on the market, its very atypical dial layout comprises a completely different look compared to the regular versions.

For the collector who desires minimalism, simplicity and style, two fabulous and aesthetically beautiful examples by Patek Philippe will also be offered including a rare stainless steel wristwatch with two-tone silvered dial, Ref. 565, manufactured in 1946 (estimate: SFr 30,000-50,000 / \$24,000-40,000) and a rare platinum self-winding wristwatch with bracelet, retailed by Cartier and manufactured in 1956 (estimate: SFr 100,000-150,000 / \$80,000-120,000).

ROLEX



Celebrating a centenary of the famous makers is a selection of superb Rolex watches dating from the 1930s through to the current day including the Rolex Oyster Deep Sea Special No. 1 (estimate: SFr 80,000-120,000 / \$64,000-95,000). The extraordinarily rare stainless steel, gold and gilt tonneau-shaped self-winding waterproof diver's wristwatch with sweep centre seconds was developed in the 1950s for deep sea diving. This prototype was the first of its type ever made and is number one in a series of 12. The watch is thought to have participated in one of Professor Auguste Piccard's diving trials in the Mediterranean Sea.

Discerning watch collectors will also have the opportunity to acquire further examples by the famous inventor of the waterproof watch including a gold waterproof chronograph wristwatch with black dial and bracelet, Ref. 6238, *circa* 1965 (estimate: SFr 90,000-120,000 / \$72,000-95,000) and a rare stainless steel wristwatch with champagne dial with bracelet, Ref. 3525, manufactured in 1939 (estimate: SFr 45,000-65,000 / \$36,000-52,000).

PANERAI

Recently rediscovered and only known through black and white images is an extremely rare and large stainless steel prototype of a waterproof chronograph wristwatch, manufactured in 1943 by Panerai (estimate: SFr 60,000-90,000 / \$48,000-71,000). An Italian company who specialised in developing and making scientific material for underwater use, Panerai was requested by Mussolini in 1936 to develop watches for underwater. In 1943 the Italian government asked Panerai to develop a chronograph wristwatch for high ranking officers in the Italian Navy, a project which was never completed due to the turmoil of the war. The present watch is believed to be the only prototype in existence.



THE OLD AND THE NEW

From a classic English pocket watch to a modern example by Patek Philippe, the sale will also offer collectors the opportunity to acquire good value examples which are highly sought-after and exquisitely made. One of the earlier examples in the sale is a classic, English pocket watch with Tourbillon made by S. Smith & Son in 1913 (estimate: SFr 50,000–70,000 / \$40,000-56,000). From the 1930s is a beautiful and rare gold chronograph wristwatch with three-tone dial, manufactured in 1938 by Audemars Piguet (estimate: SFR 40,000-60,000 / \$32,000-48,000) and for the collector just starting out is a rare and unusual stainless steel single button fly back chronograph wristwatch with black military dial, *circa* 1940 by Longines (estimate: SFr 8,000-12,000 / \$ 6,400-9,500).

Completing the sale is a special order and possibly unique white gold perpetual calendar chronograph wristwatch with phases of the moon, bracelet and custom-made grey diamond-set dial, Ref. 3970 E (estimate: SFr 150,000-250,000 / \$120,000-200,000). Manufactured in 2002 by Patek Philippe, this very exclusive and highly desirable watch has an unusual grey dial which was previously unrecorded and would make the perfect addition to any collection.

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Images on request
www.christies.com

Notes to Editors:

Important Pocketwatches and Wristwatches tour dates:

New York: 15 -19 October 2005

Hong Kong: 22 – 23 October 2005

Taipei: 25-26 October 2005

Forthcoming sale dates:

New York: 20 October 2005

Geneva: 14 November 2005

Hong Kong: 30 November 2005

London: 11 & 12 December 2005

Christie's International Watch Department is the recognised international auction market leader. Christie's holds an impressive number of world auction records. The highest price ever achieved at a Christie's watch auction is \$1,779,080 for the platinum Patek Philippe Tourbillon watch made for Henry Graves Jr. which was sold in Geneva in May 2004. Christie's sales focus on pocket and wristwatches and collectibles from the early days of watchmaking through the modern day. Major watch sales are held in Geneva, Hong Kong, London and New York, with combined jewellery and watch auctions in Amsterdam, Milan, and Rome.