

CHRISTIE'S 佳士得

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CHRISTIE'S SALE OF IMPORTANT WATCHES OFFERS RARE & COLLECTIBLE TIMEPIECES FROM THE MOST RENOWNED MAKERS

Hong Kong – Christie's Autumn sale of *Important Watches* in Hong Kong will take place on December 2 at the Hong Kong Convention & Exhibition Centre. Offering more than 450 rare and collectible timepieces valued in excess of HK\$60million (US\$7.5million) from renowned manufacturers such as **Audemars Piguet, Breguet, Cartier, Patek Philippe, Rolex, Ulysse Nardin, and Vacheron Constantin**, this sale offers something for watch collectors across a spectrum of taste and price.

Rare Timepieces For Today's Discerning Collectors *From Celebrated Works by the Masters of Horology to Collector's Pieces from Watchmaking's Newest Stars*

Among the leading sale highlights is the **Tourbograph "Pour le Merite"** from **A. Lange & Sohne** (estimate: HK\$2,200,000-4,000,000/US\$285,000-300,000), the very first wristwatch in the history of horology that unites three marvels from the realm of ultra complications: a **fusée-and-chain transmission, tourbillon, and rattrapante chronograph mechanism**. This very special timepiece is the second Lange creation with the attribute "*Pour le Mérite*", an accolade for the superb horological skills of the Lange's master watchmakers. The name alludes to the most prestigious order of merit inspired by Alexander von Humboldt, sponsored by King Frederick William IV in 1842, for outstanding, predominantly scientific accomplishments. As the name suggests, the Tourbograph integrates a timekeeping mechanism that allows lap times to be measured. **The present model remains to this day the most complex and exclusive wristwatch to ever leave the Saxon manufactory.** The hand-crafted manually wound L903.0 calibre is composed of no less than 1,000 individual components. The tourbillon alone consists of 84 parts yet weighs a scant 0.5 grams. Just the finishing process of the bridge requires two days to complete. **The Tourbograph is limited to 101 examples, 51 were made in platinum and are no longer available.**



Greubel Forsey is a name that has quickly become one of the most desirable independent makers on the market today. This season, Christie's is please to present the **Invention Piece 1**, a gracefully-finished horological masterpiece that represents a solid validation of the underlying fundamental inventions of

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Greubel Forsey, with an objective to reinforce the link between mechanism and indication, as well as the relentless pursuit to improve timekeeping precision (estimate: HK\$2,200,000-3,000,000/US\$285,000-385,000). The highly original hour and minute display comprises of two triangular indicators, red for the hours and blue for the minutes, that enable the observer to follow the passing of time on two concentric semi-circles around the exquisitely finished tourbillon cages; the eccentric seconds and power reserve indicator appear to be in "orbit", reminiscent of a miniature solar system. The unique nature of the IP1 is reinforced by the engraving in miniature bas-relief on the plate of the case back of the story of Robert Greubel and Stephen Forsey's partnership, a personal touch that will forever accompany the owner of this exceptional timepiece. **The IP1 was produced in a single edition comprising three unique editions of 11 watches each in white gold, pink gold and platinum**, a number (1+1) chosen for its symbolic value representing the Robert Greubel and Stephen Forsey partnership.

Also of note is a **rare and important platinum Breguet Double Tourbillon wristwatch** (estimate: HK\$1,600,000-2,400,000/US\$200,000-300,000). Founded in 1775 by Abraham-Louis Breguet, largely considered one of the greatest horologists of all time, Breguet counted among its clients the most influential and royal patrons of the era – from Queen Marie-Antoinette to the Prince of Wales. Among Abraham-Louis Breguet's most important innovations was his 1795 invention of the tourbillon, a mechanism to counteract the effects of gravitational pull on the escapements of clocks and watches in their constant change of position and one of today's most common of horological features. The **Breguet Double Tourbillon**



exemplifies Breguet's most important invention with excellence. The wearer is immediately captivated by the watches massive 45mm case. Inspired directly by the principles with which Breguet revolutionized watch making, the mechanism consists of the double tourbillon, each working independently from one another. The two tourbillons are coupled by means of differential gears and mounted on a rotating centre plate carrying out a complete revolution in twelve hours. The back of the movement bears a hand-engraved drawing representing the solar system, inspired by the 60-second rotation of the tourbillons on themselves and their rotation in tandem around a center axis over a 12-hour period.

Among the many highlights from Rolex comes the Deep Sea Special, a timepiece specially designed to resist the most extreme pressure when diving (estimate: HK\$800,000-1,200,000/US\$100,000-150,000).



This extraordinary timepiece is able to withstand a staggering depth of 35,789 feet (10,845 meters) due to its deep domed crystal, special screw down winding crown and heavy gauge screw back. In 1948, the renowned Swiss physicist Professor Auguste Piccard began testing an invention called "bathyscaphe", a deep-diving vessel which derived its name from the Greek words "bathos" - deep and "scaphos" - ship. Rolex contacted Professor Piccard to test its watches during his diving experiments. Piccard accepted and Rolex developed a watch fitted with a special case and domed crystal in order to hold up to the tremendous pressure. Less than 10 examples of the Deep Sea Special are known to exist, making this timepiece extremely rare and highly valuable.

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A unique offering this season is a group of five highly impressive, white gold limited edition wristwatches from Glashütte (estimate: HK\$600,000-900,000/US\$77,000-116,000). Displayed in a black lacquer multifunctional display cabinet, complete with automatic winders, wine bar, and cigar humidor, this lot is designed with today's most discerning connoisseurs in mind.

Diamond and gem-set timepieces continue to be a draw for collectors. From Cartier comes the limited edition lady's white gold and diamond-set Baignoire wristwatch, entirely set with 274 princess-cut diamonds weighing approximately 34 carats (estimate: HK\$720,000-950,000/US\$90,000-120,000). And from F.P. Journe is the strictly-limited platinum and diamond-set Vagabondage Mystery wristwatch (estimate: HK\$620,000-800,000/US\$80,000-100,000).

Important Creations from Patek Philippe



Timepieces from Patek Philippe form an important cornerstone of Christie's sales in Hong Kong each season and this season's auction of *Important Watches* is no exception. Among the leading lots from this famed maker is the extremely rare **Reference 5079J** (estimate: HK\$2,000,000-4,000,000/US\$250,000-300,000), manufactured in 2004 as a **very special series of 5 limited edition wristwatches** to celebrate the 50th anniversary of their relationship with George Pragnell Ltd., one of the largest retailers of luxury watches in the United Kingdom based outside of London in Stratford upon Avon. The present lot, one of these five extremely rare examples, is fitted with the sought-after black dial, Breguet numerals and "Cathedral" repeating mechanism, consisting of a high-tone and a low-tone gong translating into a much richer and fuller sound, resembling the chime of the bells of a cathedral.

Also of note is the **Reference 5075G**, produced in 2000 in a very limited series of only 10 and featuring an enamel dial that is painted by hand employing the ancient metalworking cloisonné techniques, thus each dial is unique (estimate: HK\$1,200,000-1,500,000/US\$155,000-195,000).

Sure to be among the most sought-after Patek's this season is the **Reference 3974 in yellow gold**, a timepiece that has become a modern classic epitomizing the strengths and wonderful acoustics of Patek Philippe minute repeaters (estimate: HK\$1,800,000-2,400,000/US\$230,000-300,000). Produced together with the Star Calibre in 1989 to celebrate Patek Philippe's 150th anniversary, the Ref. 3974 was manufactured in very small numbers, with only approximately 90 made in yellow gold. **This sought-after Reference ceased production in 2002 and is one of the most desirable minute-repeaters of modern production.**

The **Reference 5101P**, Patek's debut showpiece for Basel 2003, will also be among the sale's top highlights (estimate: HK\$1,300,000-1,800,000/US\$160,000-230,000). Understated elegance has always been a hallmark of Patek Philippe, and characteristic for this famed maker, hardly any signs on the outside of the piece reveals the complexity of its inner workings. In fact the 5101 is the first timepiece that combines two complications which are very difficult to accommodate in the confined space of a rectangular movement: two tandem mainspring barrels with 240 hours of energy storage capacity and a tourbillon precision regulator composed

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of 72 individual parts. The reference 5101P in platinum features the distinctive feature of carrying both the official C.O.S.C. (*Contrôle Officiel Suisse de Chronomètre*) certification and the Geneva Seal.

A perennial favorite with collectors due to its great proportion and superb case definition is the Reference 5004G (estimate: HK\$1,200,000-1,600,000/US\$150,000-200,000), a reference that contains all the ingredients necessary making it undoubtedly one of the most sought-after Pateks on the market. First introduced by Patek in 1995 to meet the demand for a split seconds perpetual calendar, a complication that was missing from its family of grand complications, the Ref. 5004 is available in all metal options with various dial configurations, and is still being manufactured today. Exemplifying the classic style of Patek Philippe and the *haute horlogerie* perfected at the company founded 170 years ago, this present timepiece is one not to miss.



Among the more unusual offerings from Patek is a **Reference 652/17 enamel pocket watch** (estimate: HK\$400,000-600,000/US\$52,000-77,000) signed by G. Menni who produced approximately 50 miniature enamels for Patek Philippe from the early 1980s to the late 1990s. Together with Susanne Rohr who celebrated 35 years of collaboration with Patek Philippe in 2002, these are two of the last artists who are able to perpetuate the supremely exacting art of miniature painting on enamel. The enamel miniature scene depicted on the present pocket watch is after the famed Swiss artist Albert Samuel Anker's 1896 painting, *The Village School* that is presently in the collection of the Kunstmuseum, Basel.

****Images Available Upon Request****

For more information in English and Chinese about Christie's Hong Kong Fall 2009 Season Highlights go to www.christies.com/chinese

Auction:

Important Watches

Wednesday, 2 December

11am & 2.30pm

Viewing:

Grand Hall, Hong Kong Convention & Exhibition Centre

Friday, 27 November -

Tuesday, 1 December

About Christie's

Christie's, the world's leading art business, had global auction and private sales in 2008 that totalled £2.8 billion/\$5.1 billion. For the first half of 2009, art sales totalled £1.2 billion/\$1.8 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 \$80 million. Christie's has 53 offices in 30 countries and 10 salerooms around the world including 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 Middle East, with successful sales and exhibitions in Beijing, Mumbai and Dubai.