

CHRISTIE'S

PRESS RELEASE | WORLDWIDE
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**FROM ONE OF THE MOST PRESTIGIOUS WATCH COLLECTIONS:
HENRY GRAVES JR.'s FIRST EVER MINUTE REPEATING WRISTWATCH
BY PATEK PHILIPPE**

&

**THE MOST VALUABLE ESTIMATED WATCH AT CHRISTIE'S: THE ONLY KNOWN
GOBBI RETAILED PATEK PHILIPPE REF. 2523
WITH TRANSLUCENT BLUE ENAMEL DIAL**



On the left: Patek Philippe, ref. 2523, made in 1953; on the right Patek Philippe made for Henry Graves in 1927

Worldwide - Christie's fall watch auctions in Geneva on 11 November and Hong Kong on 27 November will each offer a phenomenal landmark of watchmaking by Patek Philippe. These two timepieces, respectively extraordinary in their very different ways, will stir the international watch market as well as the hearts of the world's greatest collectors and connoisseurs.

Christie's will present Henry Graves Jr.'s (1868-1953) unique yellow gold tonneau minute repeating wristwatch of 1927, the first and earliest wristwatch in his outstanding collection of approximately 30 watches by the prestigious Swiss manufacturer Patek Philippe, it is also Patek Philippe's earliest known minute repeating wristwatch. Specially commissioned and delivered in 1928, it is unanimously considered to be the prime piece among the very earliest recorded Patek Philippe minute repeater wristwatches. Its importance in the history of watchmaking alongside its unmatched provenance place it firmly as one of the most significant wristwatches in the world.

Only discovered as recently as 2012 in the estate of Graves's grandson, Reginald H. Fullerton Jr., the watch has only ever had one other owner since it left the family. Manufactured at a time when minute repeater wristwatches were almost unheard of, it was specially made for Graves and engraved with the Graves coat of arms. Adding

a further layer of fascination is the knowledge that this watch is the first minute repeating watch that Henry Graves Jr. ever bought and that he personally collected it in June 1928 from Patek Philippe in Geneva.

Historically, very few watch collectors have become famous outside the sphere of the horological world. The American multi-millionaire and sportsman Henry Graves Jr. is one of this elite group. Perhaps Patek Philippe's best client of the period and now famous as the man who commissioned the then most complicated watch in the world, a pocket watch better known today as the "Graves Super-Complication", which became the most expensive watch ever sold at auction and which brought the name Henry Graves Jr. to a worldwide audience.

This eminently wearable minute repeating wristwatch embodies the taste and imagination of one of the greatest watch patrons of the 20th century. It is now ready for the next chapter in its extraordinary journey at an estimate of CHF 3,000,000-5,000,000.

Made in 1953 and sold in April 1957 to Patek Philippe's distinguished retailer Gobbi in Milan, this **reference 2523** is part of an exceedingly small series of dual crown world time wristwatches (estimate: US\$7,000,000-14,000,000). It is thought that only seven reference 2523 dual-crown world time wristwatches in pink gold were ever made.

Unique amongst this already rarefied model, it is the only known example of reference 2523 to be double signed with both Patek Philippe's signature and that of the prestigious Milan retailer Gobbi. It is only the fifth pink gold reference 2523 ever to be offered at auction and one of only two known pieces to have the stunning translucent blue enamel centre to the dial, fully confirmed by Patek Philippe's Extract from the Archives.

This reference 2523, preserved in wonderfully original condition is fitted with one of the scarcest dial types of all the known versions - the extremely beautiful translucent blue enamel disc of which only one other example is known. The beauty of the case and dial design is matched only by the complexity of the inner workings of the watch, the revolutionary world time system - or "Heures Universelles" designed and patented in the early 1930s by legendary watchmaker Louis Cottier.

An exemplar of Patek Philippe's 1950s "golden age", when design, craftsmanship and technological advancement coincided to perfection, it is unlikely that another reference 2523 of such immense rarity will be available for perhaps decades to come.

PRESS CONTACTS

Europe: Alexandra Kindermann | +41 79 1014196 | akindermann@chrisites.com

Asia: Gigi Ho | +852 2978 6719 | gigiho@chrisites.com

US: Jennifer Cuminale | ++1 212 636 2178 | jcuminale@chrisites.com

About Christie's

Christie's, the world's leading art business, had auction sales in the first half of 2019 that totalled £2.2 billion / \$2.8 billion. Christie's is a name and place that speaks of extraordinary art, unparalleled service and international expertise. Christie's offers around 350 auctions 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 also has a long and successful history conducting private sales for its clients in all categories, with emphasis on Post-War & Contemporary, Impressionist & Modern, Old Masters and Jewellery.

Alongside regular sales online, Christie's has a global presence in 46 countries, with 10 salerooms around the world including in London, New York, Paris, Geneva, Milan, Amsterdam, Dubai, Zürich, Hong Kong, and Shanghai.

**Please note when quoting estimates above that other fees will apply in addition to the hammer price - see Section D of the Conditions of Sale at the back of the sale catalogue.*

**Estimates do not include buyer's premium. Sales totals are hammer price plus buyer's premium and are reported net of applicable fees.*