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BACS & RUSSO

PRESS RELEASE

Phillips in Association with Bacs & Russo Announces a Full Set of Four Philippe Dufour Watches to be Offered in The Geneva Watch Auction: XIV in November 2021

A Unique Opportunity to Access Four Extraordinary Watches Created by One of the Most Eminent Watchmakers of Our Time

Including the Grande & Petite Sonnerie Pocket Watch, Grande & Petite Sonnerie Wristwatch, Duality, and Simplicity (37mm)

Marking the First Time a Unique #1 Grande et Petite Sonnerie Pocket Watch will Appear on the Market



Philippe Dufour
Grande et Petite Sonnerie wristwatch #1 in yellow gold
Estimate: CHF 1 to 2 million

GENEVA – 26 AUGUST 2021 – Phillips in Association with Bacs & Russo is delighted and humbled to announce four major Philippe Dufour creations to be offered in its upcoming sale this Fall: The Geneva Watch Auction: XIV. All fresh to the auction market, the watches are coming from a private collector who over the years has assembled these masterpieces. The group includes the Grande & Petite Sonnerie pocket watch Number 1 in yellow gold, the Grande & Petite Sonnerie wristwatch number 1 in yellow gold, the Duality in pink gold and the Simplicity (37mm) in

platinum. This marks the very first time in auction history that these four masterpieces will be offered by one auction house during a single season.

Aurel Bacs, Senior Consultant Bacs & Russo and Alexandre Ghotbi, Head of Watches, Continental Europe and Middle East, jointly said, *“To us and a huge community around the world, Philippe Dufour is the horological equivalent of Michelangelo, the importance of his work cannot be overstated. This “set” of four Philippe Dufour timepieces has been an epiphanous moment for us. Offering his four creations - the Grande & Petite Sonnerie pocket watch, Grande & Petite Sonnerie wristwatch, Duality and Simplicity - is truly humbling and mind boggling. Dufour is a living icon and his creations are as coveted as oeuvres by the greatest artists of our time. How awe-striking that we are offering the very first Grande & Petite Sonnerie wristwatch ever made! We are honored to have been entrusted with this collection from an owner who had the vision and passion to patiently assemble a collection like no other. Dufour’s lifetime output is smaller than paintings by masters such as Modigliani and Manet and for any Dufour connoisseur, this collection represents the Grand Slam of Dufour collecting.”*

Rarely has a watchmaker singlehandedly so well represented a horological genre that has gone from being reserved for the cognoscenti to a category that is boxing in the heavyweight league as Philippe Dufour. Dufour exemplifies what we have collectively come to imagine as the typical Swiss watchmaker: a pipe-smoking figure working in a small workshop in the Swiss mountains making watches by hand of incomparable beauty and quality, infused with passion and love. Dufour is all the above and much more. An extremely talented and passionate watchmaker, he is an ardent defender of traditional watchmaking that he considers a dying art that needs to be transmitted. A true living legend, his watches are considered masterpieces that collectors treasure, making them extremely difficult to obtain.

An independent watchmaker since the late 1970s, Dufour restored antique and vintage timepieces, which led him ten years later to develop a very small series of pocket and wrist grande sonnerie watches. These were followed by the Duality, the world’s first wristwatch incorporating a double escapement, and finally the Simplicity, featuring a movement architecture designed to demonstrate hand finish and decoration that modern horology had not yet witnessed. In the span of over 30 years since he created his eponymous brand, Dufour created only these four models under his name.

Grande & Petite Sonnerie Pocket Watch number 1 (Unique Piece)

Estimate CHF 400,000-800,000/ US\$436,000-872,152 / HK\$3,384,000- 6,768,000

A Grande Sonnerie is a timepiece that automatically chimes the hours on every hour and hours and quarters on every quarter, and when on petite sonnerie mode the watch will only chime the passing of the quarters. Phillippe Dufour began his work on the grande sonnerie with a series of five pocket watches made for a large brand in the early 1980s. The fact that the brand never acknowledged his work led him to create his own Grand & Petite Sonnerie pocket watch in the late 1980s. The present example is number 1 and the only Dufour Grande & Petite pocket watch made that bears his name on the dial.

Grande & Petite Sonnerie Wristwatch number 1 in yellow gold

Estimate CHF1million-2 million / US\$1,090,000 -2,180,000 / HK\$ 8,461,000-16,922,664

From 1989 to 1992, Dufour set out on the difficult task of miniaturizing his sonnerie movement to wristwatch size and the result was the present Grande & Petite Sonnerie wristwatch number 1, a world premiere that makes the present example offered at auction the world’s very first Grande & Petite Sonnerie wristwatch. This version was produced in only five examples with white enamel dials, respectively 2 cased in white gold, one in yellow and one pink gold, as well as one in platinum.

Duality pink gold number 8

Estimate CHF 800,000-1.6 million US\$872,152-1,744,520 / HK\$6,768,000 – 13,540,596

Dufour’s inspiration for the Duality came from a few school watches from the Vallée de Joux watchmaking school of the 1930s – the same school that Dufour graduated from. These pocket watches had a single gear train delivering

power to two balance wheels through a differential. Once again, like with his sonnerie wristwatch, Dufour set out on the task of shrinking this mechanism to wristwatch size.

In 1996, Dufour introduced his iconic Duality, the world's first wristwatch incorporating a double escapement. Featuring two independent balance wheels compensated with a central differential gear, the mechanism improves accuracy while also countering the effects of gravity. He initially planned to produce 25 examples, however, only nine were made including an example with movement number '00' (sold at Phillips New York in 2017 for close to \$1 million), making the present example bearing number 8 the last one made. It is one of three pink gold examples ever produced.

Simplicity (37mm) platinum number 57

Estimate CHF 250,000-500,000 / US\$272,581 – 545,176 / HK\$2,115,743 – 4,231,326

After having proven his undeniable talent and expertise in creating ultra-complicated mechanisms, Dufour set out in 2000 on the challenging task to create a simple three hand watch with a movement architecture designed to demonstrate hand finish and decoration that modern horology had not yet witnessed. The gentle flow of the bridges' curves, the bold and alluring inward and outward angles, the hand applied Geneva waves and red rubies all provide a seductive visual harmony. The facts that the decoration and assembly are done by hand explains the fact that less than a dozen Simplificities left Dufour's workshops in the Vallée de Joux per year. The present watch bearing movement number 57 is one of the earlier models that the master produced.

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The team of specialists at Phillips Watches is dedicated to an uncompromised approach to quality, transparency, and client service, achieving a sale total of \$133 million in 2020.

A selection of our recent record-breaking prices:

1. Paul Newman's Rolex "Paul Newman" Daytona reference 6239 (CHF 17,709,894 / US\$17,752,500) – New York Auction: Winning Icons – 26 October 2017 – Highest result ever achieved for any vintage wristwatch at auction.
2. Patek Philippe reference 1518 in stainless steel (CHF 11,020,000 / US\$11,112,020) – Geneva Watch Auction: FOUR – 12 November 2016 – Highest result ever achieved for a vintage Patek Philippe wristwatch at auction.

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**Estimates do not include buyer's premium; prices achieved include the hammer price plus buyer's premium.*

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