

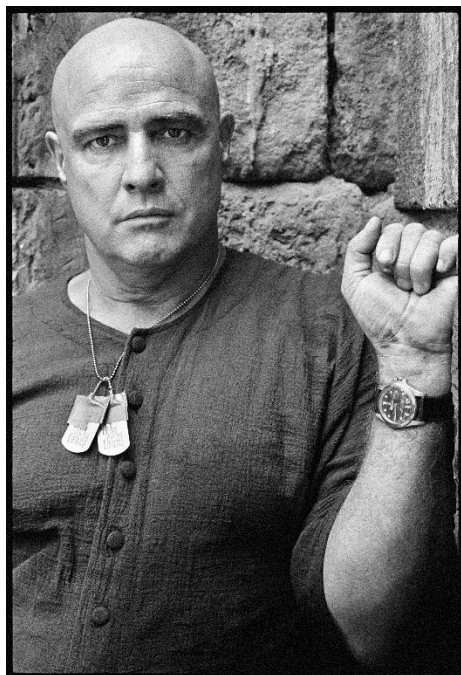
PHILLIPS

IN ASSOCIATION WITH

BACS & RUSSO

PRESS RELEASE

**Phillips in Association with Bacs & Russo
is Proud to Announce the Sale of
Marlon Brando's Rolex GMT-Master
– The Legendary Watch Featured in *Apocalypse Now*,
and Hand-Engraved by the Actor Himself –
To be Offered in its Flagship New York Auction,
GAME CHANGERS,
Taking Place on 10 December 2019**



Marlon Brando on the Set of *Apocalypse Now*
Photo Credit: Mary Ellen Mark



The Marlon Brando *Apocalypse Now*
Rolex GMT-Master, ref. 1675

NEW YORK – 12 JULY 2019 – Phillips in Association with Bacs & Russo, the leading auction house for collectors’ timepieces of the highest quality, is pleased to announce the theme of its next New York Auction. Taking place on 10 December, *GAME CHANGERS* will be a tightly curated thematic auction dedicated to watches owned by extraordinary people who are considered “game changers” in their fields. The evening sale will also include iconic collectors’ models from leading brands that have changed the course of watchmaking and watch collecting, alongside other important timepieces that are outliers in terms of provenance, aesthetics, condition, and rarity.



Phillips’ flagship New York watch auction, *GAME CHANGERS* will offer what is undoubtedly the most important wristwatch formerly owned by Academy Award® winner Marlon Brando. An iconic Rolex GMT-Master ref. 1675, this watch was worn by Brando in Francis Ford Coppola’s *Apocalypse Now*, released in August 1979. With its absolutely superb provenance, it is the watch seen by millions on the wrist of Colonel Walter E. Kurtz – the character played by Brando – and long thought to have been missing. In addition to its role on the silver screen, the GMT-Master being offered at Phillips is made even more extraordinary by the never-before-seen engraving on the caseback, “M. Brando,” hand-engraved by Marlon Brando himself.

This watch remained in Brando’s possession until 1995, when he gifted it to his daughter, Petra Brando Fischer. The auction this December marks the watch’s first time ever being shown publicly and offered for sale since having been acquired by the legendary actor in the early 1970s.

Coppola’s *Apocalypse Now* is among the greatest accomplishments in cinematic history and Brando’s performance is amongst his most iconic. Brando played the role of Colonel Walter E. Kurtz, a former Green Beret who, during the Vietnam War, went rogue running his own military unit in Cambodia. On Marlon Brando’s wrist, as seen in the film, was this exact Rolex GMT-Master, a reference 1675 manufactured in 1972, fitted on a black strap with its bezel missing. Brando told Petra that he wore the watch to the set of *Apocalypse Now* in the Philippines, and he was told that he had to remove it during filming, as it would stand out. Brando said that he argued, “If they’re looking at my watch, then I’m not doing my job as an actor.” He said that the filmmakers let him wear the watch, but he removed the bezel, resulting in the unique-looking timepiece that is so closely associated with Colonel Kurtz.

Paul Boutros, Phillips’ Head of Watches, Americas, said, “Widely considered the greatest actor of all time, Marlon Brando’s storied career has come to define the 20th century – his seminal films serving as cornerstones of American culture over the course of six decades. This Rolex GMT-Master is the holy grail of watches owned by Marlon Brando and one of the greatest



Marlon Brando, Petra Brando Fischer, and Russel Fischer, May 1998

‘long lost’ watches to finally surface after years of speculation. As this year marks the 40th anniversary of *Apocalypse Now*, the film that brought this watch into the spotlight, we are thrilled to work with Marlon Brando’s daughter, Petra Brando Fischer, and her husband, Russel Fischer, in offering collectors an incredible opportunity to acquire this historic watch.”

In 1995, 20 years after the filming of *Apocalypse Now*, Brando gifted the watch to Petra following her graduation from Brown University in 1994, before she went to Law School at the University of Southern California. Brando handed Petra a hand-written letter in which he wrote that he was proud of her accomplishments, then gave her this GMT-Master and said, “This watch is like a tank. You can do anything you want to it and it will keep on going. I want you to have it as a reminder of how proud I am of you.” In

2003, Petra gifted the watch to her husband, Russel, on their wedding night. He appreciated its significance and has cherished it ever since, having chosen to never wear it.

The Rolex GMT-Master ref. 1675 is being offered as it was received by Petra, without a bezel and fitted on a rubber strap. The watch is exceptionally well preserved, retaining all bevels, curves, and sharp edges as delivered from the Rolex factory nearly five decades ago. The luminous hour markers and hands have aged beautifully to a gorgeous shade of beige, and the dial, hands, case, crystal, and crown are all original to the watch.

Through the sale of the watch at Phillips, Petra and Russel would like the public to remember Marlon Brando's great contribution to film and celebrate his legacy. "Russel and I believe this watch is a piece of movie history that belongs in the hands of a collector who will give it the prominence it deserves," said Petra. A portion of the sale proceeds will assist a charitable foundation established by Petra and Russel, which will provide financial support to children who are living through serious hardship due to abuse, neglect, poverty, or disability - causes which Petra believes would have been very important to her father.

Phillips is thrilled to offer The Marlon Brando *Apocalypse Now* Rolex GMT-Master alongside The Jack Nicklaus Rolex Day-Date, announced earlier this year, in this important thematic sale that will conclude our auction season.

Auction: 10 December 2019 | Location: 450 Park Avenue, New York

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[Please click here for images of The Marlon Brando Apocalypse Now Rolex GMT-Master.](#)

Credit information:

Marlon Brando on the Set of Apocalypse Now - Credit to Mary Ellen Mark. DO NOT CROP.

Photos of the Brando Family - Courtesy of Petra Brando Fischer

Photos of the Watch - Courtesy of Phillips

ABOUT PHILLIPS IN ASSOCIATION WITH BACS & RUSSO

The team of specialists at Phillips Watches is dedicated to an uncompromised approach to quality, transparency, and client service, achieving a sale total of \$ 108 million in 2018 - its third consecutive year as the worldwide market leader in watch auctions.

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 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 Patek Philippe wristwatch at auction.

ABOUT PHILLIPS

Phillips is a leading global platform for buying and selling 20th and 21st century art and design. With dedicated expertise in the areas of 20th Century and Contemporary Art, Design, Photographs, Editions, Watches, and Jewelry, Phillips offers professional services and advice on all aspects of collecting. Auctions and exhibitions are held at salerooms in New York, London, Geneva, and Hong Kong, while clients are further served through representative offices based throughout Europe, the United States and Asia. Phillips also offers an online auction platform accessible anywhere in the world. In addition to providing selling and buying opportunities through auction, Phillips brokers private sales and offers assistance with appraisals, valuations, and other financial services. Visit www.phillips.com for further information.

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

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