

PHILLIPS DECADE ONE (2015-2025): BERTHOUD, PAST AND PRESENT

The Geneva 10th Anniversary Auction Will Feature the One-of-a-Kind, Handmade Naissance d'Une Montre III in Stainless Steel and Napoleon Bonaparte's Historic Louis Berthoud Marine Chronometer No. 52



Ferdinand Berthoud | Naissance d'Une Montre 3, 2025
Estimate: CHF 400,000 – 800,000

GENEVA – 22 SEPTEMBER 2025 – This November, Phillips in Association with Bacs & Russo will celebrate a decade of watch auctions with the Decade One (2015-2025) thematic auction at the Hôtel Président in Geneva. This landmark sale celebrates the successful first 10 years of the Phillips Watches department, reflecting on the remarkable watches, record-breaking results, and new scholarship that have shaped Phillips Watches since its inaugural auction in 2015.

Among the highlights are two remarkable timepieces from the Berthoud dynasty. The first is the Naissance d'Une Montre 3, a unique, brand-new stainless-steel wristwatch created entirely by hand by the team at Ferdinand Berthoud, with proceeds supporting the preservation of watchmaking craft. Complementing it is the Louis Berthoud Marine Chronometer No. 52, made circa 1801, a historically significant instrument once owned by Napoleon Bonaparte and French Navy Vice Admiral Denis Decrès, and the only known surviving historic Louis Berthoud timepiece with its original lever escapement.

Phillips in Association with Bacs & Russo is honored to present the unique stainless-steel Naissance d'Une Montre 3 by Ferdinand Berthoud at Decade One (2015-2025). The only example of its kind, this 44mm wristwatch features a hand-built chain-and-fusée mechanism, a bimetallic Guillaume-type thermo-compensated split balance, and a highly architectural open-worked COSC-certified movement inspired by the historic Ferdinand Berthoud 18th-century Astronomical Pocket Watch No. 3 (1806). More than six years and 11,000 hours of manual labor went into its creation, with each component – down to the 477 links of the chain – crafted entirely by hand using traditional tools.

The Naissance d'Une Montre initiative was launched by the Time Æon Foundation in 2009 to safeguard endangered artisanal techniques and prove that a contemporary watch could still be made without CNC or computer assistance. Following the first two projects with Greubel Forsey, Philippe Dufour, Michel Boulanger, Urwerk, and Oscillon, the third edition marks the first collaboration with Chronométrie Ferdinand Berthoud. Ten examples cased in ethically sourced gold will be produced starting in 2026, all of which are already reserved. The present steel watch, offered exclusively at Phillips, represents the first to be delivered and the last to be made available. A portion of the proceeds raised will be donated to a foundation that preserves and transmits watchmaking know-how for future generations. Several projects associated with horological culture will benefit from this donation.



Louis Berthoud | Marine Chronometer N° 52, Circa 1801
Estimate: CHF 60,000 – 120,000

Phillips is also proud to present the historically important Louis Berthoud Marine Chronometer No. 52, made circa 1801, at Decade One (2015-2025). Cased in silver and housed in its original mahogany box, the 63mm instrument represents a technical triumph of its era, fitted with a lever escapement and conical balance spring. Its significance extends far beyond watchmaking history: the chronometer was originally sold to the Premier Consul Napoleon Bonaparte (before he was crowned Emperor), who gifted it to Vice Admiral Denis Decrès in recognition of his valor commanding the *Guillaume Tell* ship during the aftermath of the Battle of the Nile. The inscription on its case preserves this history, marking it as a rare artifact of Napoleonic France and its naval legacy.

The chronometer's story continued after its presentation to Decrès, later Minister of the Navy, when it was passed on to Prince Jérôme Bonaparte and then returned. A subsequent inscription records another act of courage, commemorating Captain François Ponée's gallantry aboard the frigate *Néréide* during France's 1811 campaign off Mauritius. Remarkably, Louis Berthoud himself praised No. 52 in his workshop notes for the regularity of its lever escapement, a mechanism he often abandoned in favor of pivoted detents. Today, it stands as the only known surviving Louis Berthoud timepiece retaining its original lever escapement – a marine chronometer that embodies technical innovation and the sweep of Napoleonic history.

The Phillips Decade One (2015-2025) watch auction will take place on 8–9 November 2025 at the Hôtel Président in Geneva, offering collectors an unprecedented opportunity to discover and acquire timepieces that define Phillips' first decade as well as the broader history of watchmaking.

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. Phillips in Association with Bacs & Russo holds the world record for the most successful watch auction, with its Geneva Watch Auction: XIV having realized \$74.5 million in 2021. The annual total for watch auctions in 2024 exceeded \$212 million, marking the first time any auction house's Watches department has surpassed \$200 million in annual sales for four consecutive years.

Record-breaking prices include:

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.

ABOUT PHILLIPS

Phillips: where the world's curious and bold connect with the art, design, and luxury that inspires them. As a leading global platform for buying and selling 20th and 21st century works, Phillips offers dedicated expertise in the areas of Modern and Contemporary Art, Design, Photographs, Editions, Watches, and Jewels. Auctions and exhibitions are primarily held in New York, London, Geneva, and Hong Kong, with representative offices based throughout Europe, the United States, and Asia. Phillips offers a regular selection of live and online auctions, along with items available for immediate purchase. Phillips also offers a range of services and advice on all aspects of collecting, including private sales and assistance with appraisals, valuations, and financial planning.

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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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