

PRESS RELEASE

PHILLIPS TO OFFER NINE MUSEUM-QUALITY CARTIER CLOCKS HAILING FROM A PRESTIGIOUS PRIVATE COLLECTION ACROSS SPRING AUCTIONS IN GENEVA AND HONG KONG

The Geneva Watch Auction: XXI on 10-11 May to Feature a Historically Important and Unique 1924 Cartier Portico Mystery Clock No.3

The Hong Kong Watch Auction: XX on 23-25 May to Feature a Unique Mystery Clock with a Beautiful Coral Sculpture Depicting a Chinese Mythological Creature and Dragon



Cartier

A historically important, unique, and large Portico Mystery Clock made of rose quartz, enamel, onyx, rock crystal, and diamonds, 1924
Estimate: In excess of CHF 2,000,000 / US\$2,280,000



Cartier

A unique, extremely rare, impressive, and museum-quality rock crystal, diamond, onyx, coral, mother-of-pearl, yellow gold and enamel mystery clock, circa 1930
Estimate: HK\$2,000,000 - 4,000,000 / US\$256,000-513,000

GENEVA / HONG KONG – 23 APRIL – Phillips in Association with Bacs & Russo is proud to present an exceptional selection of nine Art Deco Cartier clocks from a prestigious private collection, to be offered this May across auctions in [Geneva](#) and [Hong Kong](#). These rare and important pieces, spanning the 1900s to 1940s, showcase Cartier's mastery of design, craftsmanship, and innovation during the golden age of decorative arts. Highlights include a museum-quality Portico Mystery Clock, an extremely rare Mystery Clock with coral sculpture, a stunning red amber and black enamel desk clock featuring jade dial, a unique illuminated nephrite lantern clock, and a rare minute-repeating desk clock with Laque Burgauté panels. Together, they represent a once-in-a-generation collecting opportunity.

Aurel Bacs, Senior Consultant of Phillips in Association with Bacs & Russo, said, “For Phillips and its international team of specialists, it is an incredible privilege and pleasure to bring such a historic, museum-quality selection of unique Cartier clocks from the early 20th century to the market. As King Edward VII called Cartier ‘the jeweller of kings and the king of jewellers,’ issuing it with a royal warrant just two years after opening its first London store in 1902, these unique, entirely hand-crafted clocks are the pinnacle of craftsmanship, quality, creativity, and mechanical ingenuity. Highlighted by the Portico Clock Number 3, which I consider one of the world’s most important horological items, all types of timekeepers combined and made in the 20th century, I can barely remember having seen such an important assembly of Cartier clocks at auction in the last decades. I have known many of the extraordinary clocks for most of my horological life through old auction catalogues, museum exhibition catalogues, and literature. I had even seen a few of them in person some 20 years ago – and now they have all become real, tangible, and available for the elite of collectors and institutions. It is an overwhelming feeling.”

To Be Offered in The Geneva Watch Auction: XXI on 10-11 May

A historically important, unique, and museum-quality rose quartz, enamel, onyx, rock crystal, and diamond-set Portico Mystery Clock with rock crystal dial and diamond-set mother-of-pearl inlay bezel, 1924
Estimate: In excess of CHF 2,000,000 / US\$2,280,000

Cartier’s legendary Portico Mystery Clock No. 3, created in 1924, will feature in the Geneva Watch Auction: XXI. Standing 38.1 cm tall, this museum-quality masterpiece features rose quartz columns, a twelve-sided carved rock crystal dial, and a diamond-set dragon motif. Cartier suspended the dial within a Chinese temple-inspired frame, an illusion of floating time that helped define the Art Deco era. Only six Portico clocks exist, and No. 3 is one of the most lavish, incorporating mother-of-pearl, onyx, and enamel. Exhibited at the 1925 Exposition des Arts Décoratifs in Paris and later at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, this clock has been referenced in major publications, including *Gazette du Bon Ton* and Hans Nadelhoffer’s *Cartier: Jewelers Extraordinary*. The clock resurfaces now after more than three decades in private hands, offering a rare opportunity to own one of Cartier’s most important and celebrated works.



A highly rare, charming, and very unusual miniature prism clock with original presentation box, circa 1940
Estimate: CHF 10,000 - 20,000 / US\$12,400-24,800



Cartier’s miniature prism clock, dating to the 1930s, offers a rare and playful twist on traditional timekeeping. Measuring just 17.5mm by 17.5mm by 28.5mm, this horological marvel uses a patented prism system based on the periscope principle to create an optical illusion: the clock face appears clearly from the front but vanishes from the back. Designed by Gaston Cusin, a collaborator of Maurice Couet, the prism clock remains one of Cartier’s most charming technical achievements. Complete with its original presentation box, this example presents an exceptional collecting opportunity.



An elegant silver, enamel, and rock crystal desk compendium with clock, circa 1925
Estimate: CHF 15,000 – 30,000 / US\$18,600-37,200

Cartier’s silver, enamel, and rock crystal desk compendium, dating to circa 1925, blends refined craftsmanship with elegant design. Measuring 29.5cm in length and

9cm in width, with a 12cm tall clock, the piece captures Cartier's signature balance of geometry and luxury. The clock's dial and movement are signed Cartier, and the compendium features rock crystal inkwell handles and graphic gold hands. This rare desk piece highlights Louis Cartier's commitment to artistry and innovation.

To Be Offered in The Hong Kong Watch Auction: XX's Evening Session on 23 May

Phillips will hold a dedicated Evening session on 23 May, featuring clocks that showcase Cartier's genius and the influence of the Far East on their Art Deco creations, alongside an impressive selection of exquisite [19th century mechanical curiosities](#) made for the Chinese market.

A unique, extremely rare, impressive, and museum quality rock crystal, diamond, onyx, coral, mother-of-pearl, yellow gold and enamel mystery clock, circa 1930

Estimate: HK\$2,000,000 - 4,000,000 / US\$256,000-513,000

Measuring 215mm tall, the present museum-quality Mystery Clock features a beautiful coral sculpture depicting a dragon and Bixie, a mythical creature in Chinese folklore often portrayed as a hybrid between a lion and dragon. Both figures are associated with strength and protection, symbolizing power and good fortune in Chinese culture. The octagonal dial, framed by a mother-of-pearl bezel and stylized black enamel clouds, features diamond-set hands designed to mimic dragon wings. Cartier's Mystery Clocks, based on 19th-century illusionist techniques, hide their movements to create the illusion of floating hands. Each clock was made individually with lavish materials, often inspired by Eastern art. Signed with French hallmarks and an original European Watch and Clock Co. movement, this clock offers a rare glimpse into Cartier's creative golden age. Last seen publicly three decades ago, it now offers a once-in-a-generation opportunity to acquire a significant Art Deco piece.



A unique and stunning red amber and black enamel desk clock with carved jade dial, rose-cut diamond hands, and presentation box, circa 1925

Estimate: HK\$1,200,000 - 2,400,000 / US\$154,000-308,000

This unique Cartier desk clock, made circa 1925, blends Eastern symbolism with Cartier's Art Deco vision. Crafted from rare Burmese red amber, black enamel, and carved jade, it features a jade dial depicting a monkey and a red amber bangle carved with a chimera — both powerful symbols of longevity, fortune, and protection in Chinese culture. The piece is further distinguished by the clock's rose-cut diamond hands, gold Roman numerals, and original Cartier presentation box.

An exceptional, unique, and museum-quality nephrite, onyx, lacquer, diamond, and coral-set illuminated desk clock styled as a lantern with double mother-of-pearl dials and presentation box, circa 1925

Estimate: HK\$ 960,000 - 1,920,000 / US\$123,000-246,000

Created circa 1925, this unique Cartier illuminated desk clock captures the spirit of the Art Deco era. Styled as a Chinese lantern, it features nephrite panels, coral latticework, black lacquer, and dual mother-of-pearl dials with Chinese numerals. When lit, the nephrite glows as if a fire burns within. Dragon-shaped hands and a



crown topped by a crescent and star suggest a royal connection, potentially King Farouk of Egypt. Signed by Cartier and accompanied by a vintage Bulgari presentation box, this museum-quality clock represents a rare fusion of Eastern inspiration and Cartier's legendary craftsmanship.



A unique and important yellow gold, nephrite, jade, onyx, and lacquer minute-repeating desk clock with “Laque Burgauté” panels and mother-of-pearl numerals and key, circa 1929

Estimate: HK\$560,000 - 1,120,000 / US\$71,800-144,000

Created circa 1929, this unique Cartier minute-repeating desk clock combines masterful craftsmanship with Eastern inspiration. Made from yellow gold, nephrite, jade, onyx, and lacquer, it features “Laque Burgauté” panels depicting poetic nature scenes in tinted mother-of-pearl. A nephrite Fu Dog crowns the clock, doubling as the minute repeater trigger. Signed by Cartier, with matching case and key numbers, the clock embodies Cartier's creative peak in the Art Deco era. Exhibited at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art and cited in major literature, this museum-quality piece offers a rare chance to own a true masterpiece.

To Be Offered in The Hong Kong Watch Auction: XX on 24-25 May



A unique, extremely rare, and historically important rock crystal, mother-of-pearl, yellow gold, onyx, and diamond-set Art Deco mystery clock, circa 1925

Estimate: HK\$ 2,000,000 - 4,000,000 / US\$256,000-513,000

Cartier's circa 1925 Modèle A Mystery Clock stands as a landmark in horological innovation and Art Deco design. Crafted from rock crystal, mother-of-pearl, yellow gold, onyx, and diamonds, this unique piece creates the illusion of floating hands through an ingenious hidden mechanism. Signed by Cartier and European Watch & Clock Co., the clock sits on an onyx base with gold hour markers and beadwork. In outstanding condition, it exemplifies the craftsmanship that made Cartier's Mystery Clocks legendary. With only around 60 Modèle A examples known, this sale offers a rare opportunity to acquire an iconic masterpiece.

An imposing, unique, and impressive pink marble, agate, and enamel table clock with barometer, thermometer, key, and presentation box, circa 1905

Estimate: HK\$1,200,000 - 2,400,000 / US\$154,000-308,000

Created circa 1905, this unique Cartier table clock combines pink marble, agate, and vibrant green enamel in a design deeply inspired by Russian artistry. Featuring a clock, barometer, and thermometer, the piece reflects the Belle Époque era and the opulence of early 20th-century France. A carved agate elephant stands atop the pink marble base, symbolizing Cartier's playful yet luxurious style. Signed Cartier and housed in its rare original green presentation box, this clock captures a pivotal moment in Cartier's history.



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 US\$200 million in annual sales for four consecutive years.

Record-breaking prices include:

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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. Visit phillips.com for further information.

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

PRESS CONTACTS:

GENEVA – Marine Lemonnier-Brennan

Aude Campanelli

marine.lemonnier@289consulting.com

aude.campanelli@289consulting.com

LONDON – Alexandra Bradley, Head of Press, UK & Europe

Anna Passmore, Senior Press Officer

abradley@phillips.com

apassmore@phillips.com

HONG KONG – Ingrid Hsu, Head of PR and Corporate Communications, Asia

ingridhsu@phillips.com

NEW YORK – Jaime Israni, Head of PR and Corporate Communications, Americas

Paul Lerner, Consultant plerner@optimistconsulting.com

jisrani@phillips.com

PHILLIPS NEW YORK – 432 Park Avenue, New York, NY 10022

PHILLIPS LONDON – 30 Berkeley Square, London, W1J 6EX

PHILLIPS HONG KONG – G/F, WKCD Tower, West Kowloon Cultural District, No. 8 Austin Road, West Kowloon

PHILLIPS GENEVA – Rue de la Confédération, 7 Geneva 1204

