

PRESS RELEASE

PHILLIPS TO PRESENT F.P.JOURNE'S HISTORIC BREGUET SYMPATHIQUE N°1 AT THE GENEVA WATCH AUCTION: XXI



Breguet Sympathique

A monumental, historically important, technically impressive unique brass base with yellow gold panels clock with moonphase, equation of time, thermometer, month, day and date indications accompanied by a yellow gold tourbillon wristwatch with moonphase display and power reserve, 1991
Estimate: In excess of CHF 1,000,000

GENEVA – 7 APRIL 2025 – This May, Phillips in Association with Bacs & Russo will present one of the most historically and technically important horological creations of the 20th century: the **Breguet Sympathique N°1**, designed and built by **François-Paul Journe** in 1991. This groundbreaking timekeeping ensemble — featuring an Empire-style master clock with yellow gold panels and a matching 18k yellow gold wristwatch tourbillon — stands as a modern tribute to one of Abraham-Louis Breguet's most ingenious inventions. With an estimate in excess of CHF 1,000,000, this extraordinary set will be offered at the **Geneva Watch Auction: XXI**, taking place on **10–11 May 2025** at **Hotel President, Geneva**.

Alexandre Ghotbi, Head of Watches, Europe & Middle East, and **Tiffany To, Head of Sale**, jointly said, "Sir David Salomons, the world's greatest Breguet collector, once wrote, 'To carry a fine Breguet watch is to feel that you have the brains of a genius in your pocket.' To paraphrase him, the Breguet Sympathique N°1 offers the extraordinary sensation of having Breguet's genius reimaged for modern times through the vision of F.P.Journe and THA—placing the brilliance of these watchmaking masters on your mantelpiece, in your pocket, or on your wrist. It is an absolute honour to bring this historic masterpiece back to the market after over 30 years—a symbol of craftsmanship and human ingenuity that transcends generations and continues to inspire collectors and connoisseurs alike."

First conceived in 1795, Abraham-Louis Breguet's original Pendule Sympathique was a system that allowed a paired pocket watch to be automatically wound, set, and adjusted by its accompanying clock. Only eleven were ever produced, each a mechanical marvel. Nearly 200 years later, François-Paul Journe — then at the helm of

Technique Horlogère Appliquée (THA), alongside Denis Flageollet and Dominique Mouret — was commissioned by Breguet to revisit this forgotten complication for the landmark 1991 “Art of Breguet” exhibition and auction.

The result was the Sympathique N°1. Standing at 255mm tall, with yellow gold panels and a classical architectural form designed by horological illustrator David Penney, the Sympathique N°1 clock is equipped with a moon-phase, equation of time, thermometer, and full calendar (day, date, month). It is also the first and only example of Journe’s proposed twenty clocks to be crafted in gold.

The matching wristwatch —crafted in 18k yellow gold and measuring 36mm in diameter — features a tourbillon, moon-phase, and power reserve in a regulator-style layout. When the wristwatch is docked within the clock, the Sympathique mechanism winds the watch, sets the time, and regulates its balance to match its own.

The Sympathique N°1 made its public debut during the “Art of Breguet” exhibition in 1991 and subsequent auction in Geneva on 14 April 1991, where it sold for CHF 1,546,250. It has remained within the same collection ever since.

As Breguet celebrates its 250th anniversary this year, the return of the Sympathique N°1 is a testament to Journe’s early genius and long fascination with the tourbillon and complex timekeeping systems — an obsession that would later define his eponymous brand.

Auction: 10 & 11 May 2025

Auction viewing: 7 - 11 May 2025

Location: Hotel President, 407 Quai Wilson, Geneva, Switzerland, 1201

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

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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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