

Sotheby's

EST.1744

The George Daniels Horological Collection



A Selection of Press Coverage to Date

The Financial Times

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The Daily Telegraph

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Montres de Luxe

Sale of a master's collection

LONDON

Pieces that were owned by 'horological rock star' will be put up at auction

BY RACHEL RAMSAY

George Daniels was a "rock star of the horological world," according to Daryn Schnipper, head of Sotheby's International Watch Division.

Mr. Daniels, who died in October aged 85, was one of the great watchmakers of the 20th century. He was also a fervent watch and clock collector. His private collection comprises about 130 pieces, including 9 of his own creations, is to be auctioned at Sotheby's in London in November.

English clockmaking history will be represented by pieces including a 1677 Joseph Knibb silver and ebony table clock, estimated at £600,000 to £900,000, or \$953,000 to \$1.4 million, and a large gold pocket watch by John Arnold, dated 1789, estimate still to be decided.

As personal as it is historically significant, the sale also includes a French Or-

flaw of the traditional lever escapement — the part of a watch that regulates its timekeeping — which had been puzzling watchmakers for centuries. It is widely accepted as the most significant horological development in 250 years.

The November sale will include two Daniels pocket watches featuring the coaxial escapement for which the maker once said he had a special affection: the Space Travellers' Watch, made around 1982, carries an estimate of £400,000 to £600,000, and the Grande Complication watch, dating from around 1987, is estimated at £500,000 to £800,000.

Ms. Schnipper, of Sotheby's, said in a phone interview that Mr. Daniels was responsible for an "explosion of horological ideas and concepts" that breathed new life into watchmaking.

The sale includes an Omega chronograph wristwatch that he customized, fitting it with his coaxial escapement as early as 1975. Also featured is the first piece that he made specifically to show the suitability of the coaxial design to wristwatches: a handsome yellow gold four-minute tourbillon, created in 1991, it is estimated at £150,000 to £250,000.

The coaxial escapement was finally bought and incorporated into industrial production by Omega in 1999.

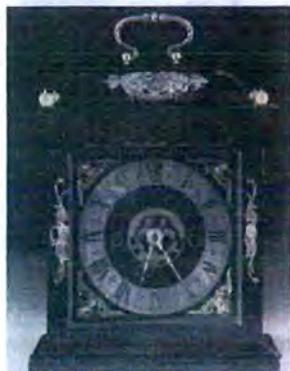
Jonathan Hills, the deputy director of Sotheby's clock department and a long-term friend of Mr. Daniels, said the watchmaker, committed to encouraging others to develop their own methods and skills, had an extraordinary influence throughout the watchmaking community. For evidence, the sale includes An F.P. Journe Chronomètre Souverain platinum wristwatch, engraved with the message "FP to George Daniels, my Mentor 2010."

Another protégé of Mr. Daniels was the celebrated watchmaker Roger Smith, who became his apprentice in 1998 and still works at Mr. Daniels' iconic workshop on the Isle of Man. An example of their collaborative Millennium series, a white gold wristwatch with a slim coaxial escapement is estimated at £60,000 to £80,000.

Proceeds of the Nov. 6 sale will fund the George Daniels Educational Trust, set up to provide financial support for students seeking higher education in the fields of horology, engineering, medicine, building or construction. Eligible students will be nominated by the British Horological Institute, the Worshipful Company of Clockmakers and the City of London University, with all of which Mr. Daniels retained close ties throughout his life.

The "George Daniel's Personal Collection of Clocks and Watches" will be shown in public exhibitions travelling worldwide through the summer.

"A rock star? Yes," said Mr. Newman, trustee and executor of the educational trust: "And the brightest star."



George Daniels was both a master watchmaker and a collector of historical timepieces. Above left, a silver-mounted ebony table clock by Joseph Knibb of London, dated 1677. Right, the Space Travellers' Watch by Mr. Daniels, made around 1982.



SOTHEBY'S

molu mantel clock dating from around 1840, the first clock Mr. Daniels ever purchased, estimated at £800 to £1,200.

A 19th-century Black Forest cuckoo clock until this year hung on the kitchen wall of his home on the Isle of Man: "A noisy thing, ticking 'til the end," said David Newman, a close friend of Mr. Daniels, in a phone interview. It is tagged with an estimate of £250 to £350.

An impressive example of the timepieces created in the Daniels London workshop in the late 1960s, under the Breguet name, a Three Wheel Skeleton clock, is estimated at £60,000 to £80,000.

The watches that Mr. Daniels built himself, from concept to finished product, were made not to be sold but purely to satisfy his passion for experiment with horological design and innovation.

The coaxial escapement, invented by Mr. Daniels in 1974, fixed a basic design

Collection

G. Daniels aux enchères

Les garde-temps exceptionnels personnels de cet horloger de génie seront vendus à Londres

Michel Bonel

Maître horloger entré déjà dans la légende, grand spécialiste d'Abraham Louis Breguet, George Daniels (1926-2011) était un des rares à savoir fabriquer entièrement une montre à complications. On lui doit notamment l'invention de l'échappement coaxial. Il a été adopté par la marque Omega pour être produit en série, révolutionnant ainsi l'industrie de la montre mécanique.

Son premier modèle, une montre de poche à tourbillon avec échappement à détente pivotante, date de 1969. Par la suite, il a créé 36 autres montres souvent pour des raisons expérimentales.

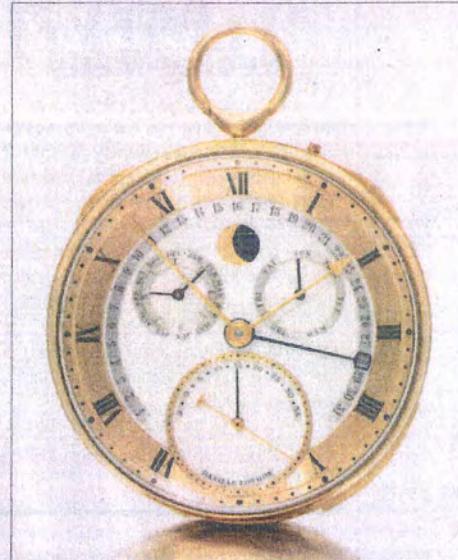
Issu d'un milieu modeste, fasciné par l'horlogerie dès son plus jeune âge, George Daniels ouvrit dans les années 1950 son premier atelier de réparation dans le sud de Londres. La qualité de ses services et son travail sur les montres à grande complication lui valurent rapidement une réputation d'excellence auprès des collection-



Georges Daniels (1926-2011), maître horloger, grand spécialiste d'Abraham Louis Breguet et inventeur de l'échappement coaxial. DR

neurs du monde entier. C'est toute sa collection personnelle de garde-temps que Sotheby's s'apprête à vendre le 6 novembre à Londres. Comportant 130 lots estimés à quelque 5 millions de livres, elle offre en plus des montres fabriquées par ses soins, des garde-temps attribués aux grands horlogers des XVIIe, XVIIIe et XIXe siècles. Beaucoup de ces pièces n'ont pas été vues du public

depuis des années. Le lot phare est une grande complication à tourbillon, en or, dotée d'un échappement coaxial, d'une répétition minutes, d'un calendrier perpétuel instantané, d'une équation du temps, d'un thermomètre, affichant aussi la réserve de marche et les phases de lune (estimation: de 500 000 à 800 000 livres). Pour Geoffroy Ader, directeur du département de haute



Grande complication avec tourbillon, dotée d'un échappement co-axial. Estimation: de 500 000 à 800 000 livres. DR

horlogerie de Sotheby's en Europe, «Si l'on devait faire une seule comparaison pour définir le génie de cet inventeur, ce serait Abraham Louis Breguet. La fameuse citation du prince de Talleyrand, selon laquelle ce diable de Breguet veut toujours faire autrement que mieux, décrit parfaitement la recherche de la perfection qui anima toute la vie de Georges Daniels.»

Der Meister der Hemmung

Briten lieben es, ihre Namen mit *middle initials* zu versetzen, aber auch die ersten Buchstaben eines zweiten oder gar dritten Vornamens. Vor allem in der aufstrebenden Mittelklasse des Infereichs gilt das als chic, weil es nach *upperclass* klingt. „Wer nicht mindestens zwei Vornamen hat, ist von seinen Eltern nicht geliebt worden“, sagt einer, der sich auskennt. Kein Wunder also, dass sich im namensrechtlich liberalen England ganze Websites damit befassen, wie man mit wenig Aufwand legal zu einem weiteren und vor allem präsentablen Vornamen kommt, also etwa aus Kelly Jones eine Sarah K. Jones oder aus Tracy Smith eine Geoffrey T. Smith machen.

George Daniels hatte nur einen Vornamen. Angeblich hätte er nicht einmal eine Geburtsurkunde, weil seine Eltern sich selber schämten, als er 1906 zur Welt kam. Sie waren nicht verheiratet. Da war so ein Kind ein peinlicher Ausrufer. Und tatsächlich verbrachte Daniels nach eigenem Bekunden eine wenig glückliche Jugend – in ärmlichen und rauen Verhältnissen, mit dürriger Schulbildung und von seinem vierzehnten Lebensjahr zunächst als Hilfsarbeiter in einer Maschinenfabrik, später in einer Reloefabrik. Erst 1935, als er nach drei Jahren Dienst aus der Armee entlassen wurde, fand er im Norden von London einen Ausbildungsort für den Beruf, von dem er geträumt hatte, seit er als Fünfjähriger auf der Straße eine Armbanduhr gefunden und unter ihrem Deckel sein persönliches Universum entdeckt hatte: den Planeten und Sterne.

Daniels lernte schnell. Schon 1937 gelang ihm eine Art Gesellenstück. Es war die Fertigstellung eines Schiffchronometers, das er als Rohwerk erwerben und mit von ihm selbst gefertigten Teilen vollendet hatte. Als Hersteller weist das Zifferblatt einen gewissen „D. W. Daniels, London“ aus. Offenbar auf ein porträtmäßig gedrehten Hintergrund abgebildet, hatte der eingetragene junge Handwerker sich selbst „schein zweiten- und „Ferkunst“ sogenannten Vornamen zulegen zu müssen. Aber so wie Daniels nie wieder ein Schiffchronometer herstellte, nutzte er auch das „W.“ als *middle initial* nicht erneut.

Tatsächlich geriet seine Karriere so glorreich, dass das Initial nicht überlebte. Ein Teil der Zeit regelrecht überströmt wurde durch allerlei denn Nachnamen von Daniels folgende Buchstaben, die in den Landen Ihrer Majestät wahrhaft Prestige verlautbaren:

Die Sammlung des genialen Uhrmachers George Daniels wird in London versteigert. Darunter sind meisterhafte Preziosen.

Von Peter Rawert



Armbanduhr von Omega: Automatik-Chronograph, angepasst von George Daniels 1973 (Tasse zu 2000 Pfund)



Meister der Präzision: George Daniels bei der Arbeit



Gesellenstück: Daniels' Marine Chronometer, gebaut 1937 auf 250 bis 350 Pfund

AMBE, CBE, HonDSC, FBHI, FSA – oder in Worten: Member und Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire, Honorary Doctor of Science, Fellow of the British Horological Society, Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of London und viele andere mehr.

Man darf Daniels den wohl bestensdienenden Uhrmacher des Jahrhunderts nennen. 37 Uhrläufe hat er in seinem Leben gefertigt; einige davon mit einem Arbeitssumfang von mehr als 290 Stunden. Sämtliche Modelle seiner Arbeiten hat er stets selbst hergestellt. Zulieferung war tabu. Allerdings die Gravur der Zahlen auf dem Zifferblatt überließ Daniels einer anderen Hand.

Grundsätzlich arbeitete Daniels „vom Kopf“ und nicht etwa auf Bestellung. Wenn überhaupt, sollten seine Uhren ihr Käufer finden und nicht etwa irgendwelche Käufer seine Uhren. Konstruktionszeichnungen machte Daniels erst, nachdem er eine Uhr fertiggestellt hatte. Wenn er mit einer neuen Uhr begann, habe er ihren gesamten Mechanismus im Kopf, sagte er einmal in einem Interview. Zeichnungen seien da unnötig, weil ihre Linien doch ohnehin meist um ein Vielfaches breiter seien als die kleinsten Teile.

Daniels' Uhren sind sämtlich Meisterwerke. Jede einzelne zeichnet sich durch höchste Finesse aus. Als seine größte technische Leistung gilt die Erfindung der „Co-Axial-Hemmung“. Das ist eine Form der freien Hemmung, bei der sich zwischen dem Hemmungsrad und dem Gangregler – also dem Pendel oder der Uhrschwinger – ein Anker um eine eigene Achse hin und her bewegt. Daniels' Bauart verfügt über zwei auf einer Welle übereinander angeordnete Räder.

Das hat eine Verringerung der Kontaktflächen von Anker und Hemmung zur Folge. Die entsprechend reduzierte Reibung im Uhrwerk macht unabhängig von anfalligen Störungen eine Fein-

ga die Co-Axial-Hemmung in die industrielle Fertigung.

George Daniels starb am 21. Oktober 2016. Seinen Nachlass verkaufte sein Sohn, Sir Stephen, dem „George Daniels Education Trust“. Der ist der Förderer junger Menschen bei der Ausbildung in vor allem technischen Berufen gewidmet. Zugunsten des Trusts wird Daniels' Uhrensammlung

am 6. November in einem „Single Owner Sale“ bei Sotheby's versteigert. Unter den 137 Losen mit einer Gesamtschätzung von etwa fünf Millionen Pfund befindet sich zwei Zeitmesser, die Daniels selber als seine Lieblingsstücke bezeichnet hat: zum einen die „Space Travelers' Watch“ aus dem Jahr 1987. Auch sie ist eine Taschenuhr mit einer freien Hemmung und

doppeltem Rad, zeigt die mittlere Sonnen- und Sternzeit, das Mondalter, die Mondphasen sowie die Zeitgleichung, ihre Tase belief auf 1000 bis 1500 Pfund. Eine Zun. anderen die „Grand Complication Watch“ aus dem Jahr 1987. Auch sie ist eine Taschenuhr und verfügt über ein goldenes Minutenourteil, eine filigrane Co-Axial-Hemmung, Minutenre-

petition, einen augenblicklich um Mitternacht umschaltenden ewigen Kalender sowie Anzeigen der Zeitgleichung, der Mondphasen, der Temperatur und der Gangreserve. Für sie wird ein Erlös zwischen 650 000 und 1.000 Millionen Euro geschätzt. Achtlich hohe Preise erzielte Daniels' Sammlung auch für drei Sammlerstücke aus der Werkstatt von Joseph Knibb (1640 bis 1710), darunter eine prachtlive Taschuh mit Silberbeschlägen aus dem Jahr 1677 (Tase 765 000/1,15 Millionen Euro).

Immerhin für einen Liebhaber mit schmalarem Geldbeutel kommt Daniels' Schiffschronometer in Betracht. Trotz seines einzigartigen „W“-Aufklebers kostet er 440 Euro eingepreist. Ein bisschen sieht das nach einem Lodevogel-angebot aus. Einige Stücke von Omega und Rolex, die von Daniels für Experimente mit der Co-Axial-Hemmung genutzt wurden, liegen im oberen Bereich des Euro-Bereichs. Bei Breguet aus dem 19. Jahrhundert werden hingegen 10 000 bis 50 000 Euro für das Stück erwartet.

Fast skurril neben all diesen Preziosen wirkt das Angebot einer kleinen Souveniruhr. Daniels hätte sie auf einer Reise nach Genf erworben. Er wolle an ihr beobachten, wie die Uhren der verschiedenen Werk überhaupt richtig laufen können, soll er nach dem Kauf gesagt haben. Das unscheinbare Objekt ist mit drei Schweizer Armbanduhren zu einem Los gebunden. Das Los ist auf 100 bis 150

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Wer die Funkweise der Co-Axial-Hemmung von Daniels bewundern will, kann dies auf einem kleinen Video tun: www.alldials.com.

Für die Tasche? Chronometer mit Tourbillon von George Daniels, 1976, geschätzt auf 150 000 bis 250 000 Pfund

Klaus Schelsky



George Daniels' personal collection to be auctioned

Sotheby's London has announced a sale of the late George Daniels' horological collection, to be held on November 6. It will comprise approximately 130 lots and is expected to fetch around £5m.

Daniels, who died last year at the age of 85, was considered by many to be the greatest watchmaker of his time. Inventor of the revolutionary co-axial escapement, he was also an avid collector of timepieces.

The collection comprises clocks and watches Daniels made for his own private use, as well as examples – many of which have not been seen in public for several years – from some of the most famous makers of the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries.

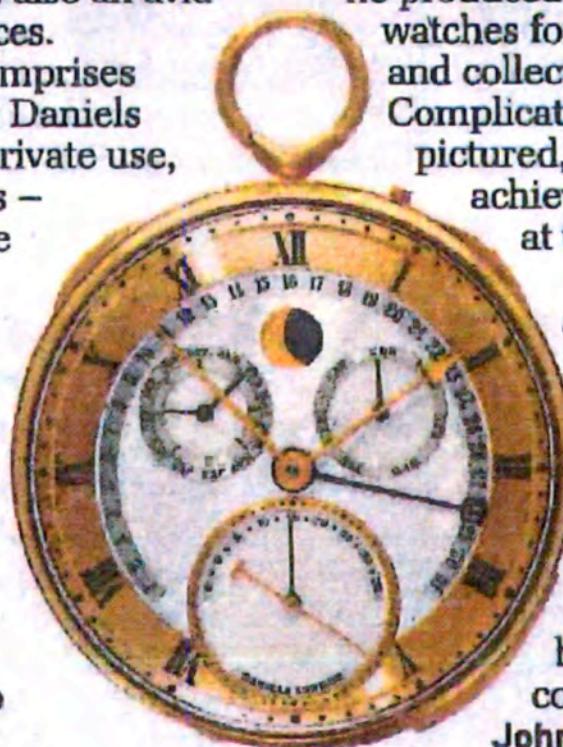
"The auction represents a one-time opportunity to acquire the clocks

George Daniels collected to satisfy his lifelong fascination with horology," says Jonathan Hills, deputy director of Sotheby's clock department.

Daniels started his career after the Second World War as a trade watch repairer in south London. In the Fifties, he made his first and only marine chronometer, while over the ensuing 40 years he produced hand-made watches for connoisseurs and collectors. His Grand Complication watch, pictured, is expected to achieve up to £800,000 at the auction.

Proceeds from the sale will go to the George Daniels Educational Trust, which supports students of horology, medicine, engineering, building or construction.

John Phillips



VAN FAIR

AUTUMN 2012

"When the legends die,
the dreams end;
there is no more greatness."

-TECUMSEH

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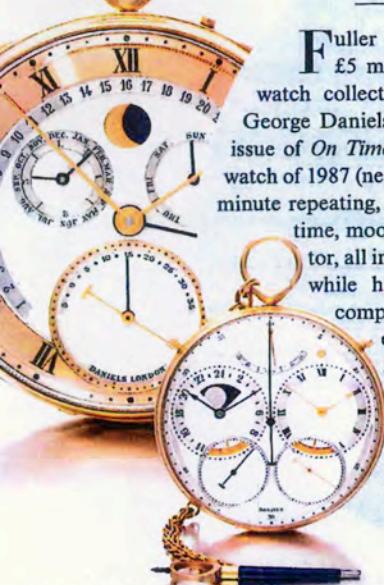
Stopwatch



Clockwise from above: the Billiken; a Taft campaign button; an artist's impression of Taft dancing on the front page of *Le Petit Parisien*, 1910; Taft in the White House.

Military Precision

It might have looked like a scientific instrument, but lot 324 in Sotheby's June sale contained a Marine Master clock (below) by Patek Philippe. The metal-clad device featured a state-of-the-art quartz movement and was accurate to between 1/10th and 1/1,000th of a second, the result of an unlikely 1960s alliance with Auricoste, a French military-watch supplier (soldier pictured left).



Fuller details have been revealed about the £5 million November sale from the personal watch collection of the late watchmaking genius Dr George Daniels, CBE (above), announced in the previous issue of *On Time*. Highlights include his grand complication watch of 1987 (near left), which features a one-minute tourbillon, minute repeating, instantaneous perpetual calendar, equation of time, moonphase, thermometer and power-reserve indicator, all in a hefty gold case. It could fetch up to £800,000, while his 1982 Space Traveller watch (below left), complete with Daniels' independent double-wheel escapement, should achieve more than £600,000. Four examples of the Millennium wristwatches made by Daniels and his protégé, Roger Smith, will also be offered, as will pieces by Rolex, Omega and Patek, which Daniels used as "mules" for his horological experiments.

Silly Billy

We've spoken before in these pages of our admiration for Cartier's fabulous rock-crystal desk clocks of the Art Deco era, but we struggled to fall in love with an example called the Billiken, recently offered by Sotheby's. The clock itself was perfectly nice (though not one of Cartier's best designs); it was the "Billiken" atop it that seemed somewhat dubious. The Billiken was a symbol of luck created in 1908 by a Missouri art teacher called Florence Pretz and named after President "Billy" Taft. Although not as successful as the teddy bear (named after Roosevelt), the Billiken enjoyed a few years of cult status, during which time the figure was embraced by the Japanese, who elevated it to The God of Things as They Ought to Be. The Billiken is still widely admired in Alaska—a place where I, for one, am entirely happy for it to remain.



Le Petit Parisien
Supplément Littéraire Illustré



AUCTION REPORT
by SIMON DE BURTON

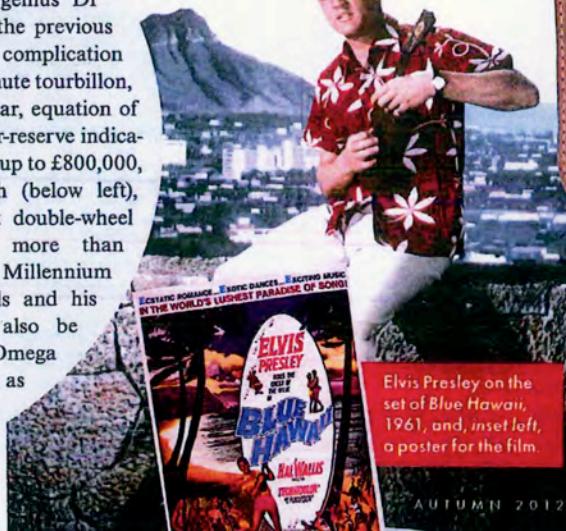


FULL FIGURES



ONE FOR THE MONEY

A gold-plated Omega Constellation (below left and near right) originally owned by Elvis Presley made \$52,000—five times the estimate—at Antiquorum's New York sale in June. The understated chronometer was worn by the King when he was a G.I. between 1958 and 1960. Elvis eventually gave the watch to Charlie Hodge, a member of his entourage whom he had become close with while in the army together, and later employed as a backing singer and guitarist.



Elvis Presley on the set of *Blue Hawaii*, 1961, and, inset left, a poster for the film.

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EXTRAORDINARY CLOCKS AND WATCHES

The George Daniels Horological Collection, On View

London, July 12-August 11, 2012

George Daniels (August 19, 1926–October 21, 2011) was a world-known horologist and the most important of the twentieth century. He was the only watchmaker ever to have received a CBE and an MBE for his services to horology, and was the inventor of the Daniels revolutionary 'Co-Axial' escapement developed during the 1970s, designed to run unaffected by the deterioration of its lubricant. This personal collection of clocks and watches comprises those pieces he made as well as fine and rare historical examples by some of the most famous makers from the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries.

The auction consists of approximately 130 lots, estimated to fetch in the region of



George Daniels, *The Grand Complication Watch*

£5 million, with all proceeds from the sale going to help the George Daniels Educational Trust. The sale will feature watches and clocks of key periods of horology history.

From very humble beginnings, George Daniels was fascinated by the movement of a broken pocket watch and resolved to learn how to repair it. He established himself in South London as a trade watch

repairer developing a system of repair that enabled him to mend and return watches faster than others.

By 1960, he had become renowned for the quality of his repair work and ability to work on watches of great complexity. He made his first and only marine chronometer which was to be followed, over the next forty years by approximately 30 hand-made watches.

Distinguished and rare clocks and

watches from the George Daniels Horologic Collection are on early view before selling at Sotheby's on 6 November. Daniels' own momentous designs and pieces from notable seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth century makers tell a rich horological history, and pay fitting tribute to an eminent horological life.

SPARKLING TREASURES

Important Jewels

New York, September 20, 2012

The first jewellery sale of the fall auction season will include an array of fine diamonds and gemstones as well as period and contemporary designs from the best European and American jewellers. Estate jewels from the collections of Eunice Joyce Gardiner, Kitty Carlisle Hart, and Walter and Doris Goldstein, New York will also feature prominently in the Important Jewels sale this September.

FREUD'S INNER LIFE

An Artist's Life: Photographs by Cecil Beaton and David Dawson

London, July 10-August 11, 2012

This is a never-before-staged dedicated show of portraits by Lucian Freud's most significant interpreters—renowned photographer Cecil Beaton (1904–80), and David Dawson, his assistant. Most of Dawson's photographs are as yet unpublished, and a number of them have never before been exhibited. Spanning different periods of the artist's life, these intimate photographs give an insight into Freud's inner life.

Oliver Barker, Deputy Chairman Sotheby's Europe and Senior International Specialist, Contemporary Art, commented: 'Freud's contribution to world art has been immeasurable and we are therefore thrilled to be able to stage this exhibition of portraits which celebrates the life and artistic achievements of this iconic painter.'

A selection of these images are available to purchase.

Lucian Freud by Cecil Beaton, Coombe Priory, Dorset, April 1956



Sotheby's versteigert Kunstobjekte aus dem Besitz der berühmten New Yorker Philanthropin und Kunstmäzenin Brook Astor. Die Auktion, die am **24. September 2012** in New York stattfinden wird, umfasst Juwelen sowie bedeutendes und dekoratives Kunsthandwerk, welches aus Brook Astors' Apart-

ment in der Park Avenue und „Holy Hill“, ihrem Anwesen in Westchester, stammen.

Das Angebot in der Auktion wird auf mehr als 5 Millionen Dollar geschätzt. Auf Grund ihres hohen sozialen Engagements, u.a. in einigen New Yorker Institutionen, hat Frau Astor be-

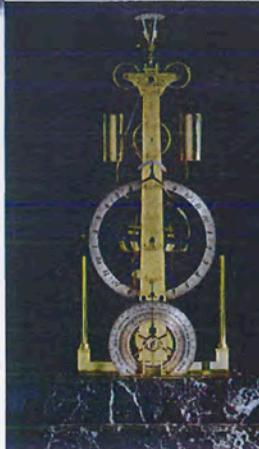
reits eine Vielzahl an wohltätigen Organisationen ausgesucht, die sie unterstützt, darunter die New Yorker Public Library, das Metropolitan Museum of Art, die Pierpont Morgan Library, das Animal Medical Center in New York, die New York City Schools sowie verschiedene Stiftungen in Maine.

Sotheby's wird am **6. November 2012** in London die Uhrensammlung von George Daniels in einer Single Owner-Versteigerung zur Auktion bringen.



George Daniels (19. August 1926 - 21. Oktober 2011) war ein weltweit bekannter, anerkannter Uhrmacher und der bedeutendste seines Fachs im 20. Jahrhundert. Er war der einzige Uhr-

macher, der jemals den CBE und den MBE auf Grund seiner Leistungen erhielt, und der Erfinder des revolutionären „Co-Axial“ Hemmung, die er in den 1970er Jahren entwickelt hat und die so konstruiert war, dass sie unabhängig von der Abnutzung des Schmiermittels funktionierte. Diese persönliche Uhrensammlung umfasst Exemplare, die er zu seiner eigenen Freude angefertigt und behalten hat, sowie schöne und seltene Zeitmesser von einigen der berühmtesten Uhrmacher des 17., 18. und 19. Jahrhunderts. Die zur Auktion kommende Sammlung – eine Hommage an ein der Uhrmacherkunst gewidmetes Leben – besteht aus etwa 130 Losen und wird in der Region von 5 Millionen Pfund geschätzt. Viele dieser wunderbaren Stücke waren seit etlichen Jahren nicht mehr öffentlich zu sehen. Die Sammlung wird zugunsten des George Daniels Educational Trust versteigert.



UN PATRIMONIO DI LANCETTE ALL'INCANTO

L'inglese George Daniels è stato il più grande maestro orologiaio del XX secolo, autore di alcune geniali innovazioni meccaniche. Sotheby's ora lo celebra con un'asta che raccoglie oltre 130 lotti della sua inimitabile collezione privata

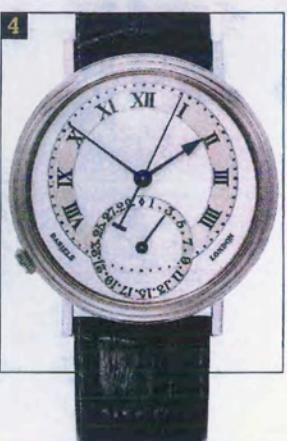
di Paco Guarnaccia

George Daniels è considerato uno dei più grandi mastri orologiai della storia delle lancette, sicuramente il più importante del XX secolo. Scomparso il 21 ottobre 2011, l'orologiaio inglese è diventato famoso soprattutto per aver creato durante gli anni 70 un meccanismo, lo scappamento Co-Axial (adattato dalla maison Omega, in esclusiva, per la produzione in serie), che ha risolto l'annoso problema della lubrificazione del movimento meccanico.

Tanti sono stati i riconoscimenti di cui è stato insignito Daniels nella sua carriera: dalla Medaglia d'oro della Clockmaker's Company, fino alla nomina da parte della regina Elisabetta II come membro dell'Ordine dell'Impero britannico per i suoi meriti orologai. La famosa casa d'aste Sotheby's si prepara a celebrarlo il 6 novembre mettendo all'incanto la collezione personale di orologi di Daniels. Oltre 130 lotti, tra modelli creati direttamente da lui o firmati dai più grandi orologiai del XVII, XVIII e XIX secolo, per un valore stimato totale che si aggira sui 6 milioni di euro.

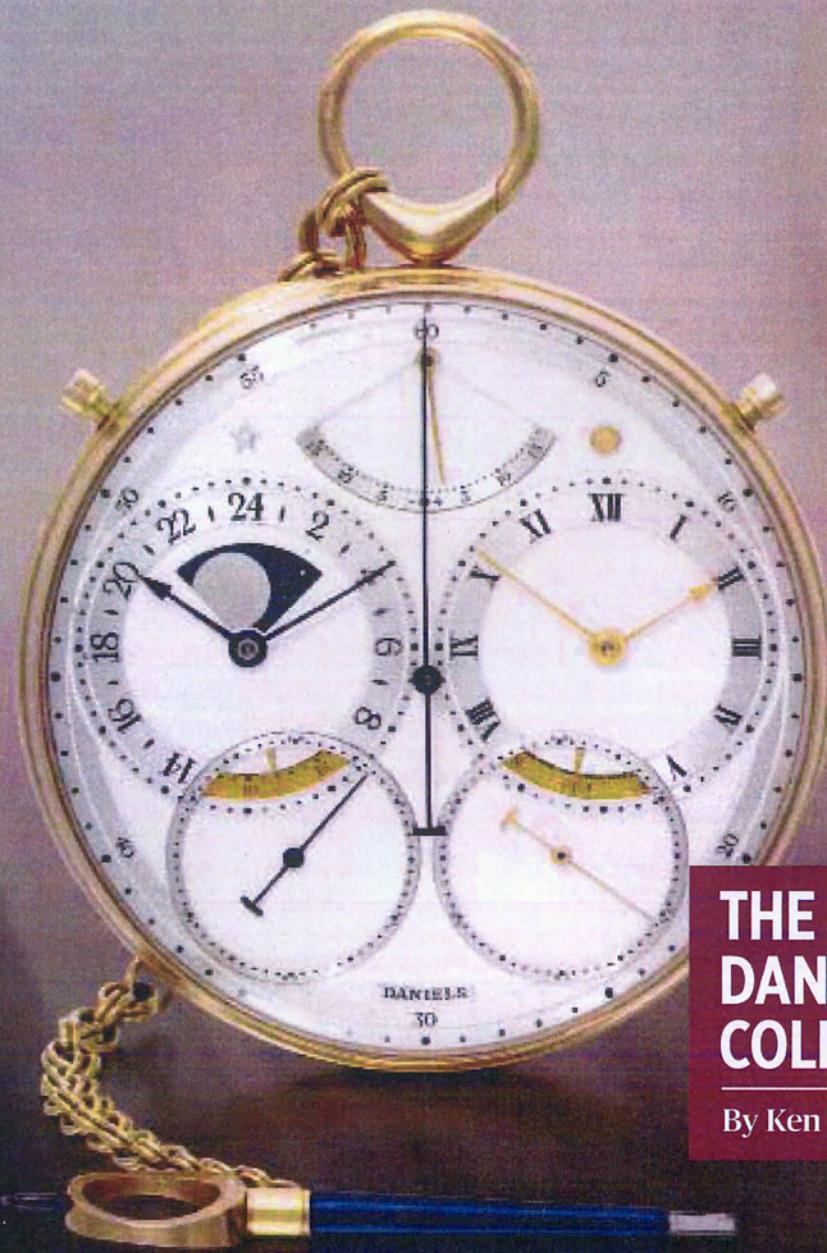


L'ASTA
«GEORGE
DANIELS'
HORLOGICAL
COLLECTION» DI
SOTHEBY'S
SI TERRÀ
IL 6 NOVEMBRE
A LONDRA



1. L'orologiaio George Daniels (1926-2011) all'opera su un segnatempo. 2. La replica esatta fatta da Daniels del No. 3225, di Breguet et Fils (75mila-100mila euro). 3. L'ultracompliporto modello da taschino **Space Traveller's Watch** creato da Daniels nel 1982 (500mila-750mila euro). 4. L'orologio da polso **2000 Millennium**, sempre di Daniels, in oro bianco, automatico con scappamento Co-Axial (75mila-100mila euro).

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES



THE DANIELS COLLECTION

By Ken Kessler

THE PERSONAL COLLECTION OF THE LATE MASTER WATCHMAKER GEORGE DANIELS GOES TO AUCTION IN NOVEMBER.



FOllowing the remarkable results of the sale of George Daniels' vintage cars, excitement is building for next month's auction of his personal watch and clock collection. Owning a time-piece made by - or even once possessed by - the greatest watchmaker of the last century is a thought that will inspire furious bidding from the enthusiasts able to consider six-figure estimates.

To put into context the potential for auction lots connected to Daniels, consider how his automobiles (see International Watch June, page 110) fared on the 29th of June, at the sale held by Bonham's at the Goodwood Festival of Speed. The original estimate for the entire collection of seven automobiles and two motorcycles was \$12.7 million. Two cars fetched enough to exceed that: the Ex-Sir Henry "Tim" Birkin 1929-31 4½-Litre Supercharged "Blower" Bentley Single-Seater sold for £5,041,500 (\$7,927,758), while the 1912 Rolls-Royce 40/50hp Double Pullman Limousine achieved £4,705,500 (\$7,399,398).

Sotheby's sale of George Daniels' Personal Collection of Clocks and Watches will take place in London on November 6. As far as provenance is concerned, there can be no higher in watch collecting circles. Daniels, who passed away on October



◀ George Daniels 1999 Millennium, an 18K yellow gold automatic center seconds wristwatch with date and Daniels slim co-axial escapement, estimated at \$78,625 to \$110,075.



DANIELS, WHO PASSED AWAY ON OCTOBER 21, 2011, WAS UNIVERSALLY REGARDED AS THE MOST IMPORTANT WATCHMAKER OF THE 20TH CENTURY.



◀ Daniels' first wristwatch, an 18-karat yellow gold four-minute tourbillon wristwatch with Daniels slim co-axial escapement and compact chronograph mechanism, circa 1991, estimated at \$235,875 to \$393,125.



21, 2011, was universally regarded as the most important watchmaker of the 20th Century. He was the only watchmaker ever to have received from the Queen the Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (CBE) and the Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (MBE) for his services to horology.

INVENTOR

HISTORY WILL, OF COURSE, REMEMBER DANIELS for his invention of the revolutionary "Co-Axial" escapement, which he developed during the 1970s. Designed to run unaffected by the deterioration of its lubricant, the Co-Axial escapement was adopted by Omega and is now featured in many of its new models. Among his other achievements were a number of peerless books, including a history of Breguet, and mentoring Roger Smith, who has been entrusted with Daniels' legacy.

As far as watch auctions go, this one will - in all probability - rank among the most spectacular. Daniels' personal collection of clocks and watches includes watches he made - he is believed to be the first watchmaker to have made every part of a watch - as well as historical pieces from famous watchmakers of the 17th, 18th and 19th Centuries.

AMONG THE MOST HUMBLE OF THE LOTS, BUT ONE WHICH HAS AS CLOSE A CONNECTION TO GEORGE DANIELS AS ANY PIECE HE PRODUCED, IS THE STAINLESS STEEL ROLEX DATEJUST ON A JUBILEE BRACELET, WHICH HE WORE AS HIS "EVERYDAY" WATCH. IT IS DESCRIBED BY SOTHEBY'S AS: "ROLEX STAINLESS STEEL AUTOMATIC CENTER SECONDS WRISTWATCH WITH DATE AND BRACELET CUSTOMIZED BY GEORGE DANIELS TO USE A SLIM CO-AXIAL ESCAPEMENT, CIRCA 1989 DATEJUST REF 16220, WITH AN ESTIMATE OF £5,000-7,000/\$7,862 TO \$11,007."

“

CONSISTING OF APPROXIMATELY 130 LOTS, THE TOTAL ESTIMATE FOR THE SALE IS “IN THE REGION OF £5 MILLION” OR ABOUT \$7.8 MILLION.

THE SALE

CONSISTING OF APPROXIMATELY 130 LOTS, the total estimate for the sale is “in the region of £5 million” or about \$7,863,500. For those who recognized in Daniels a singular brilliance, and an unwavering championing of the mechanical watch, the sale will be, in Sotheby’s words, “a tribute to a life devoted to horology.” Aside from those few lucky visitors to Daniels’ workplace in the Isle of Man, many of these watches and clocks have not been unseen in public for some years. All proceeds from the sale of the collection will go to help the George Daniels Educational Trust, which was established to make funds available to students wishing to further their education in the disciplines of horology, medicine, engineering, building, or construction.

Geoffroy Ader, Sotheby’s European Head of Watches said, “It is a huge honor to present George Daniels’ personal collection featuring watches and clocks of key periods of horology history. George Daniels was a master watchmaker and this single owner sale is a unique opportunity to celebrate his extraordinary contribution to watchmaking.”

Jonathan Hills, Deputy Director, Sotheby’s Clock Department, added, “This auction represents a one-time opportunity for collectors to acquire the clocks George Daniels collected to satisfy his life-long fascination with horology and which no doubt brought him great enjoyment.”



▲ The George Daniels Grand Complication, watch an 18k yellow gold one-minute tourbillon with Daniels slim co-axial escapement, minute repeating, instantaneous perpetual calendar, equation of time, moon-phases, thermometer, and power reserve indication, circa 1987, estimated at \$786,250 to \$1,258,000.



SEIKO CLOCKS, JAEGER-LECOULTRE HOT AT ANTIQUORUM IN HONG KONG

Antiquorum's Hong Kong Aug. 25 auction, "Important Modern and Vintage Timepieces," grossed more than \$1,759,978 and offered 211 timepieces to bidders.

Several lots sold for four or five times their pre-sale estimate and overall, 80.6% was sold, representing 131% by value.

The auction included a collection of rare tourbillons, selections from unusual modern brands and interesting Seiko clocks among others, driving competitive bidding.

"Watch enthusiasts view tourbillons and perpetual calendar as essential complications to have in a collection, and we were delighted to see such competitive bidding for these and other exceptional lots at auction," General Manager, Antiquorum Hong Kong, Jill Cheapn said.

The Jaeger LeCoultre Ref.233.64.20, "Reverso Gyrotourbillon 2" in Platinum (lot 211) was the highlight of the sale. The piece was sold to a European collector for \$242,392.

"With our first auction held in August in Hong Kong, we are excited to see that collectors' interest in exceptional timepieces continues to be strong even during the summer holidays," President and CEO of Antiquorum, Evan Zimmermann said. "The auction featured an amazing selection of timepieces that drove outstanding results."

Patek Philippe timepieces also sold well. The Patek Philippe Ref. 5100 IO days in 18K white gold (lot 203) sold for \$62,854. In addition, a Patek Philippe 18K Yellow Gold Five Minute Repeater (lot 187), attracted an intense bidding session of resulting in its sale at \$37,067- over four times its pre-sale estimate.

TOP LOTS

IMPORTANT MODERN AND VINTAGE TIMEPIECES

SATURDAY,
AUGUST 25, 2012

LOT 211

JAEGER-LECOULTRE

A rare Jaeger-LeCoultre Reverso Gyrotourbillon 2 in platinum. Rare, with only 75 pieces circa 2009.

\$199,844

LOT 203

PATEK PHILIPPE

An 18k white gold chronometer. Limited to 450 pieces, Patek Philippe created the 10 Days White Gold to celebrate the millennium.

\$50,283

LOT 202

PATEK PHILIPPE

A rare Patek Philippe Ref. 130 Chronograph Rose Gold. Made in 1944 and sold on Oct. 12 1945, the wristwatch was accompanied with a certificate of origin and the Extract of the Archives.

\$48,994

LOT 75

GERALD GENTA

An 18k yellow gold and diamond encrusted Gerald Genta. The Skeleton Perpetual Calendar was made in the 1990s and integrates perpetual calendar and moon phases.

\$47,704

LOT 210

BREGUET

A Breguet Classique Rattrapante. Limited to seven pieces and featuring a split-second chronograph with an enamel dial.

\$36,100

LOT 100

DEWITT

Oversized and water resistant, the a limited edition 18k pink gold Dewitt Academia One Minute Tourbillon Mystérieux.

\$36,100

LOT 209

BREGUET

This 1990s Breguet features 18k white gold with a visible one-minute tourbillon regulator.

\$33,522

LOT 187

PATEK PHILIPPE

Patek Philippe Five Minute Repeater pocket watch in yellow gold made for Tiffany & Co. in 1917.

\$29,654

LOT 99

RICHARD MILLE

A limited edition Richard Mille Felipe Massa Limited Edition. Featuring a tonneau-shape and self winding movement.

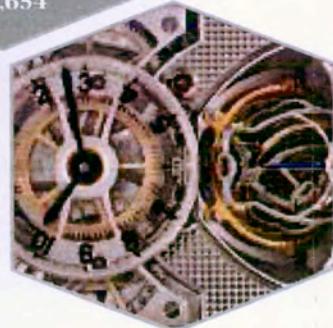
\$28,365

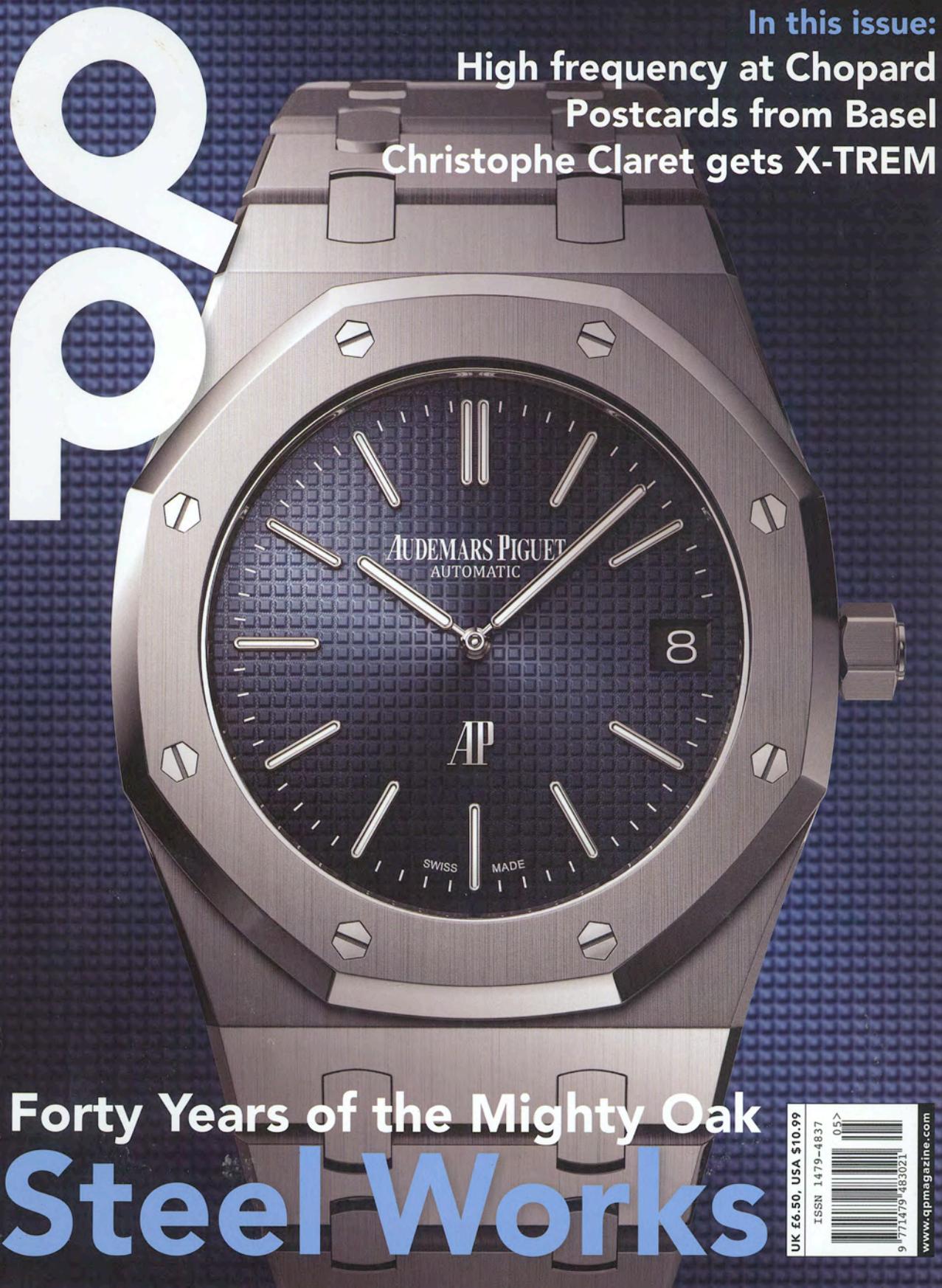
LOT 201

PATEK PHILIPPE

A 1963 large Patek Philippe white gold timepiece. Accompanied with original box and certificate of origin.

\$27,075





In this issue:

High frequency at Chopard
Postcards from Basel
Christophe Claret gets X-TREM

Forty Years of the Mighty Oak
Steel Works

UK £6.50, USA \$10.99
ISSN 1479-4837



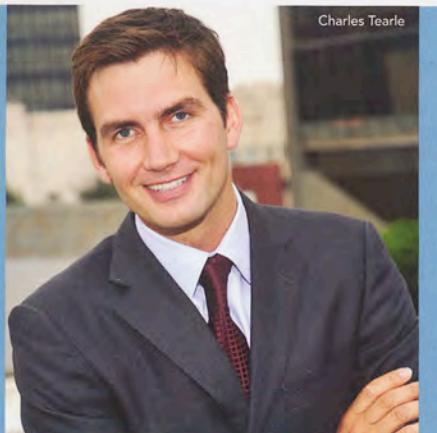
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auctions

Asian collectors look back to China, AP's Royal Oak anniversary creates a stir and *QP* gives you a sneak peak of what will be on offer at the upcoming George Daniels auction. **Simon de Burton**

Time for charity

The preservation of the marine world seems to be the favoured charitable crusade among watch brands of late, which is why Jaeger-LeCoultre offered the Prototype No. One of its recently-launched Deep Sea Vintage Chronograph in an online auction that ran on the firm's web site in March. The three-day sale ended with a winning bid of £9,300 for the watch (the production version of which costs £7,450), all of which will be donated to the Puerto-Princesa subterranean river national park that has been a UNESCO World Heritage site since 1999. In the next issue of *QP*, meanwhile, we'll be able to tell you the price realised for a unique, green-dialled Girard-Perregaux Sea Hawk which was made especially for Christie's third annual 'Green Auction' held on 11 April. All the money from the sale of the watch will go to an environmental charity that deals mainly with water conservation projects.



Tearle on the move...

After three years with Antiquorum in the US and prior to recently being made head of the firm's Asian division, Charles Tearle has suddenly announced his departure from the house in order to pursue a new venture. As this issue of *QP* went to press, the highly experienced auction specialist had just announced that his new position will be at Sotheby's Hong Kong – little surprise as Tearle, 38, has been immersed in the world of watches since the age of 16 when he became an assistant at Somlo in London. After 12 years he left to travel the world before joining Bonhams, for which he set up the US watch department prior to jumping ship to Antiquorum in 2008.



1. The unique Prototype No. One Deep Sea Vintage Chronograph, recently auctioned online in aid of charity for a winning bid of £9,300. 2. The dial colour on the Girard-Perregaux Sea Hawk is a reference to Christie's 'Green Auction' held on 11 April, with proceeds going to environmental charities.



3. A yellow-gold chronograph Space Travellers' watch with Daniels independent double-wheel escapement, circa 1982. Estimate £400,000-600,000. 4. The yellow-gold Grand Complication watch featuring a one-minute tourbillon with Daniels slim co-axial escapement, circa 1987. Estimate £500,000-800,000. 5. A fine Breguet et Fils no.3225 replica weight-driven three wheel skeleton timepiece by George Daniels. Estimate £60,000-80,000.

Daniels details emerge

Further to our initial 'scoop' on the sale of the personal clock and watch collection of the master horologist the late Dr George Daniels (see *QP*52), we can now tell you that the auction, due to take place at Sotheby's in November, is likely to yield a staggering £5 million. *QP* will, of course, carry a comprehensive preview in the issue published immediately before the sale, but it will whet your appetite to learn that among the star lots will be one of the two Space Traveller's watches (estimate £600,000) and the Grand Complication watch of 1987, which could realise up to £800,000. There will also be four examples of the Millennium wristwatch (including a prototype), as well as the replica of a 19th-century Breguet weight-driven skeleton clock which Dr Daniels made to such a level of accuracy that Maison Breguet awarded it an official certificate of authenticity. The estimate for that is a modest £60,000-90,000.

21 March 2012 Last updated at 17:27

Sotheby's sell watchmaker Dr George Daniels' collection

By Mark Edwards
BBC News

An Isle of Man watchmaker's private collection of watches and clocks is to be auctioned by Sotheby's in November.

The items were assembled over a 50-year period by the Edgware-born watchmaker Dr George Daniels, who died in 2011.

In an illustrious career spanning more than 60 years he has been credited with some of the most important advancements in his field.

His private collection included 130 lots and is expected to raise more than £5 million for his Educational Trust.

The trust helps students seeking higher education in the fields of horology, engineering, medicine, building or construction.

Director of Sotheby's clock department, Jonathan Hills, said it was an "extraordinarily exciting collection".

'Like a god'

He said: "In horological circles he is a revered all over the world. He is like a god to some people."

"We are expecting interest from the four corners of the world."

The most successful of his inventions, the co-axial escapement, won him international acclaim and is regarded as one of the most significant horological developments in 250 years.

The head of Sotheby's International Watch Division, Daryn Schnipper, said: "George Daniels heralded a new chapter of mechanical watchmaking.

"He fuelled the energies of a new generation such as his disciples Roger Smith and Stephen Forsey of Greubel Forsey."

'Wonderful legacy'

Roger Smith moved to the Isle of Man from Greater Manchester in 1998 to work with Mr Daniels, who he describes as the "greatest horologist of all time".

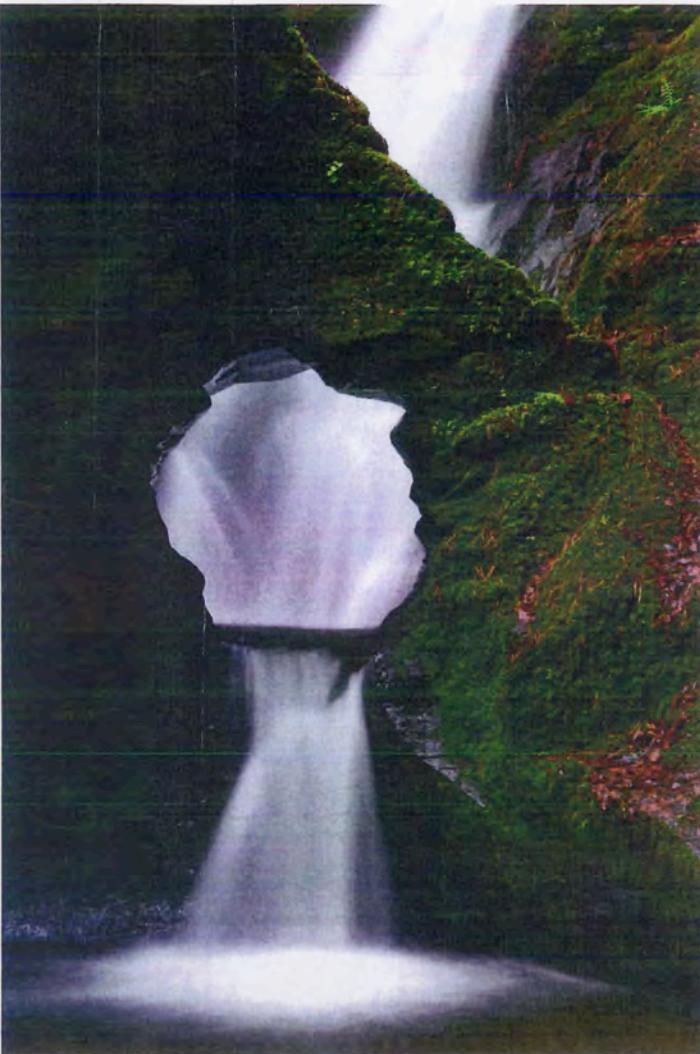
He said: "George devoted his life to the improvement of the mechanical timekeeper. Each piece was added to the collection because of its unique horological interest and includes pieces which come with great historical importance."

Mr Smith continued: "George would have been delighted knowing that they will be going to new owners who will continue to enjoy them just as he did."

The collection will range from a cuckoo clock with an estimated value of a few hundred pounds to a clock made by Joseph Knibb in 1677, which carries an estimated price of close to £1m.

It will also include the Daniels Space Watch, designed to commemorate the first moon landing.

Dr Daniels created 37 watches over a 60-year career. Each watch was created from scratch by hand and from raw materials, a task which includes mastering more than 30 separate skills. The collection will be auctioned in London on 6 November.



Merlin's Wall, the unusual waterfall in St Nectan's Glen, Cornwall, by Adam Burton, one of the glorious pictures from the Landscape Photographer of the Year competition, the results of which were announced this week (www.take-a-view.co.uk). Other winners included the tower at Reculver, Kent, at dusk (Mirek Galagus) and a Derbyshire barn in the snow (Ian Lewry). The winning and commended photographs are in a book released today by AA Publishing (£25) and will be displayed at the National Theatre, London SE1, from November 12 to January 12, 2013.

Meres and Mosses to be restored



ONE of the UK's most precious, if relatively unknown, landscapes is to be restored through a £2 million Heritage Lottery Fund-backed project.

Formed during the Ice Age, the Meres and Mosses of the Marches, an area between Crewe in Cheshire and Ellesmere in Shropshire, comprise the largest and most ecologically diverse cluster of wetlands in lowland England. The area, one of Defra's 12 designated Nature Improvement Areas, holds large peat deposits plus Europe's greatest concentration of farm ponds, glacial lakes and floating bogs, which are also home to the raft spider, Britain's largest.

However, extensive drainage over the centuries has shrunk the extent of the wetlands to 10% of that which existed in the 1500s, leaving a fragmented landscape. Mature trees have shaded out marginal vegetation and plants such as the beautiful globeflower, plus wading birds such as snipe and lapwing, face extinction in the area.

The Shropshire Wildlife Trust is leading the five-year scheme to restore about 250 square miles of wetland. Ancient peat bogs will be restored and work will begin on the River Perry, which has suffered from industrialisation, to encourage the return of its natural meanders. *Jack Watkins*



Top Whitemere. Above A raft spider, walking on water



Gold verge watch, £20,000–£30,000

Watch out for a horologist's delight

THE collection of the greatest British horologist of the 20th century comes under the hammer at Sotheby's next week. George Daniels, who died last year aged 85, only sold watches to people he liked, so most of the 137 lots in the sale have never been offered on the open market. Daniels created 27 examples himself, and was one of few people able to handcraft an entire watch, which takes about 3,000 hours. His was a rags-to-riches tale: his life was transformed when, aged five, he found a broken watch and opened up the back. He established himself as one of the quickest repairers in London, rejuvenated the market for the mechanical wristwatch and invented the co-axial escapement, the first new watch mechanism since 1754.

The collection, which will be auctioned on November 6 (www.sothbys.com), includes antiques as well as Mr Daniels's own creations, such as the space travellers' watch (estimated at £400,000–£600,000). All proceeds will go to his educational trust.



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antiques

Time please

CHRISTOPHER PROUDLOVE WITH WATCHES THAT ARE WORKS OF LOVE

I'm not sure what George Daniels would have made of the iPhone. Apart from making voice calls and texts, for as little outlay as free, or 99p at worst, it's possible to have the thing tell you the time or the weather anywhere in the world, the air temperature in Wirral and even when high tide will be tomorrow in Rhyl, constantly recalibrating itself to take into account leap years and phases of the moon.

He'd probably have bought one just to take apart to see how it was made.

Dr Daniels, who died at his home on the Isle of Man in October last year, had that kind of inquisitive mind.

When he was five, he opened up the back of a broken watch to reveal its complex mechanism of wheels and cogs, shedding a light on a new universe, which he said transformed his life.

On November 6, Sotheby's will sell the personal collection of watches and clocks George built over a lifetime devoted to horology: unique timepieces George made himself, together with fine and important antique clocks and watches by makers who inspired him. They are expected to raise £3.8-5.8m

Proceeds from this landmark sale will be added to the £1m raised for his collection of vintage cars, sold last June. The funds will go to the George Daniels Educational Trust, set up by him to further the higher education of pupils studying horology, engineering, medicine or building construction. There could be no more fitting memorial.

Dr George Daniels was a world-renowned horologist and the most important watchmaker of the 20th century. He was the only watchmaker ever to have received a CBE and an MBE for his services to horology and the inventor of the revolutionary Daniels "co-axial escapement", the first new watch mechanism created since the invention of the

lever escapement by Thomas Mudge in 1754. Unlike the lever, escapement, this allows the movement to run unaffected by the deterioration of its lubricant.

In Sotheby's catalogue for the sale, a foreword by Andrew Crisford, a friend of Dr Daniels and a Past Master of the Worshipful Company of Clockmakers, notes that in the past, it would take 34 people to make a watch, all highly skilled, having served lengthy apprenticeships. In addition to case making, dial making and engraving, no fewer than five different craftsmen were required to produce the wheels alone.

In an industry now largely reliant on quartz movements and batteries, Dr Daniels had no access to skilled craftsmen. Instead, with the exception of engraving the numerals on the dials, he mastered almost every single technique himself conceiving, designing, making a complete watch from blank sheet of paper to a finished, ticking, supreme timepiece, "down to the last blued steel screw", as Tina Millar, a former head of Sotheby's clocks and watches department put it.

He also decided he would make only watches that interested him, rather than what the market might require. In a 40-year period, he made only 27, each one taking as much as 3,000 hours to create. He would sell only to people he liked. Sotheby's sale includes nine prized examples that have never before been on sale. The most valuable is estimated at £500,000-800,000.

This gold-cased pocket watch is a masterpiece of engineering, designed to show the skills of the watchmaker as an artist craftsman. As a result, it is highly complex. Called the Grand Complication watch, it was made in about 1987 and has a one-minute tourbillon - it revolves once a

minute to counter the effects of gravity on accuracy; the Daniels slim co-axial escapement; minute



repeating mechanism on two gongs; instantaneous perpetual calendar; equation of time; moon-phases; thermometer and power reserve indicator. Enough to make an iPhone blush.

Close behind at £400,000-600,000 is the "Space Travellers" watch, which has a charming story attached to it. On a trip to Zurich, Dr Daniels had dinner with a collector who was keen to buy the watch he had with him. The watch was not for sale, but the collector persisted, impressing Dr Daniels with the compliment of not even asking the price. So the watch changed hands. Immediately regretting parting with it, Dr Daniels decided to make another, even more complicated and accurate than the first.

In the 18th century, the accuracy of a watch was checked against a precision clock set by a star. By means of having solar timed (based on the passage of the sun) and sidereal time (based on the rotation of the Earth), this watch could make the calculation for you, the difference being 3.555 minutes per day, to an accuracy of 0.8 seconds a year. With the help of a mathematician from Cambridge University, Dr Daniels was able to produce a watch which reduced to error to 0.28 seconds.

He used to say to people: "When you are on your package tour to Mars you need a watch like this, and when using the telephone for long distance calls you could switch the chronograph into sidereal time to cut your bills by 3.555 minutes per day!". It was named to commemorate the first moon landing in 1969.

The most valuable wristwatch is the first made by Dr. Daniels to demonstrate the suitability of the co-axial escapement for wristwatches. It also incorporates another of his inventions: a compact chronograph mechanism which was experimental at the

time. It is estimated at £150,000-250,000.

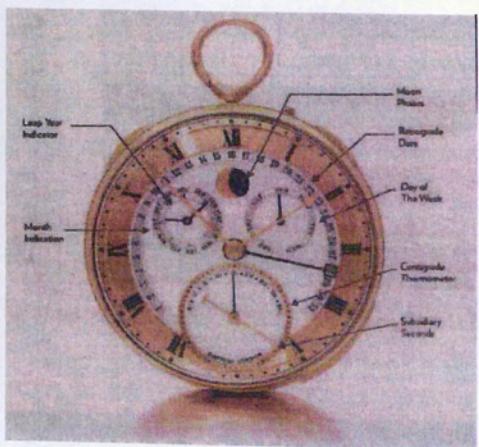
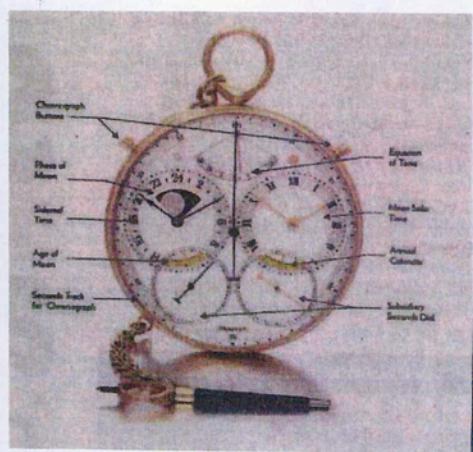
Dr Daniels' formidable success – he retired to the Isle of Man for tax purposes – enabled him to acquire exemplary timepieces by some of the greatest makers in history. The sale includes more than 100 antique clocks and watches covering some 400 years of craftsmanship.

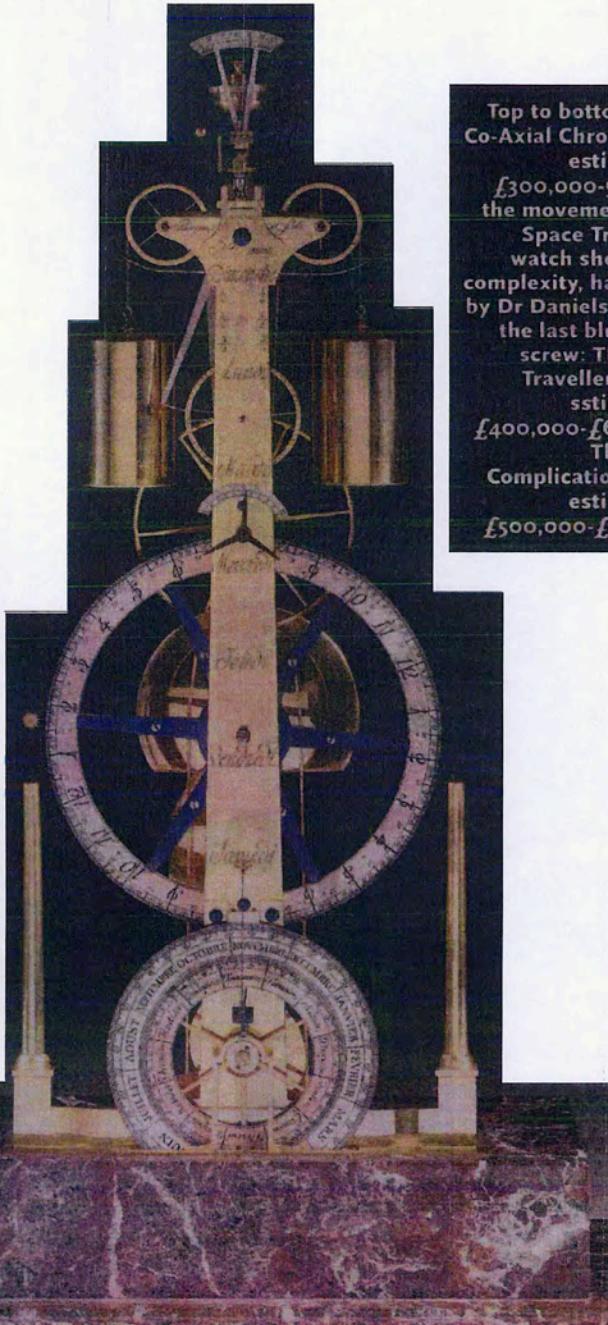
They range from Dr Daniels' favourite, a German carved wood cuckoo clock, circa 1880, which was kept running in the kitchen at Riversdale, his £2.5 million pound home in Ramsey (estimate £250-350) to a superb, small, and extremely rare silver-mounted ebony table clock, made by Joseph Knibb and dated 1677, which is estimated at £600,000-900,000. The clock was given as a gift to his great grandfather, the surgeon Thomas Beckett by George III.

It will be interesting to see if a Daniels watch beats it. I suspect it might.



Watchmaker George Daniels





Dr Daniels was inspired by the work of the French horologist Abraham-Louis Breguet (1747-1823). On a visit to their workshop in Paris, he admired this skeleton clock and asked permission to copy it. The clock took pride of place on Dr Daniels' mantelpiece. It is estimated at £60,000-80,000.

Top to bottom – The Co-Axial Chronometer, estimated at £300,000-500,000; the movement of the Space Travellers' watch showing its complexity, handmade by Dr Daniels down to the last blued steel screw: The Space Travellers' watch estimated at £400,000-£600,000; The Grand Complication watch, estimated at £500,000-£800,000



The table clock by Joseph Knibb dated 1677, given by George III to the surgeon Thomas Beckett

[Galerie photo](#)

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GENEVE

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Alpina
GENEVE

Sotheby's : vente de la collection horlogère de George Daniels, « le plus important horloger du 20ème siècle »

Le 6 novembre 2012, la célèbre maison londonienne Sotheby's va consacrer une vente exceptionnelle à la collection personnelle de garde-temps de George Daniels. Cet artisan et inventeur de génie est reconnu comme le plus important horloger du 20ème siècle. George Daniels est le célèbre inventeur de l'échappement « co-axial », un mécanisme révolutionnaire qu'il développa dans les années 1970.

La vie de George Daniels est l'histoire d'une ascension. Issu d'un milieu fort modeste, son talent fut salué par les plus prestigieuses dynasties horlogères européennes et contribua à ériger sa réputation de plus grand horloger britannique du 20ème siècle.

La mise en vente de sa collection personnelle constitue un événement majeur dans le monde des enchères. Estimés entre £200.000 et £900.000 (entre 246.000 et 1,1 million d'euros), les 137 lots comprennent plusieurs des créations de George Daniels ainsi que de somptueux exemples de montres et d'horloges anciennes. A noter que la plupart de ces garde-temps ne sont jamais apparus sur le marché !

Georges Daniels avait pour coutume de ne créer des montres que pour les personnes qu'il appréciait. En quarante ans, il ne produira ainsi que 27 pièces, toutes entièrement faites à la main. Neuf d'entre elles seront mises en vente le 3 novembre à Londres. Rivalisant avec les plus grands maîtres de la discipline, ce homme comptait parmi les rares horlogers capables de réaliser tous les composants d'une montre à la main, vis comprises, une entreprise de près de... 3 000 heures !



La fascination de George Daniels pour les montres remonte à son enfance, lorsqu'à l'âge de cinq ans, il trouva une montre de poche qu'il ambitionna de réparer. Toute sa vie, il se remémorera cet épisode comme une expérience qui l'ouvrit à un nouvel univers et transforma son existence. Le succès aidant, George Daniels entreprit ensuite d'acquérir des garde-temps fabriqués par ses illustres prédecesseurs. La vente de novembre comprendra plus de 100 horloges anciennes et montres couvrant plus de 400 ans d'histoire de l'horlogerie.

Connu pour avoir relancé le marché de la montre-bracelet mécanique, Georges Daniels est également l'inventeur de l'échappement « co-axial » - le premier mécanisme de montre imaginé depuis 1754. La qualité de ses réparations et son travail sur des montres à grande complication lui valurent rapidement une réputation d'excellence auprès des plus grands collectionneurs. Son grand art lui fit gagner le respect et l'amitié du monde horloger. Son œuvre demeure une grande source d'inspiration pour toute une génération.

Selon Geoffroy Ader, directeur du Département de Haute Horlogerie de Sotheby's en Europe, « c'est un immense honneur de présenter la collection personnelle de George Daniels, une collection qui comprend des garde-temps de périodes clés de l'histoire de l'horlogerie. George Daniels était un Maître dans son domaine et cette vente est une opportunité unique de saluer son extraordinaire contribution à l'horlogerie. Nous nous réjouissons d'aller à la rencontre des collectionneurs du monde entier et de partager avec eux notre enthousiasme pour cette collection ».

Et Jonathan Hills, directeur adjoint du Département des pendules et horloges de Sotheby's d'ajouter: « cette vente est une occasion unique pour les collectionneurs d'acquérir des garde-temps soulignant la passion que George Daniel nourrit toute sa vie pour l'horlogerie. Nous sommes honorés d'avoir été choisis pour mettre en vente une collection d'une telle importance ».

« Les montres réalisées par Georges Daniels n'apparaissent que rarement sur le marché et le fait d'avoir neuf d'entre elles dans une seule vente est une première. Les amateurs de montres trouveront là une occasion exceptionnelle d'acquérir des pièces uniques qui ne reviendront probablement pas de sitôt sur le marché » - conclut enfin Jo Lewis, à la tête du Département de Haute Horlogerie de Sotheby's Londres.

Le George Daniels Educational Trust

Les recettes de la vente seront reversées au « George Daniels Educational Trust », créé selon le souhait de George Daniels afin de perpétuer sa passion pour l'éducation. La mission de cette organisation caritative est d'encourager l'excellence intellectuelle et d'assister financièrement les étudiants désireux de poursuivre leurs études. Elle finance notamment les études d'étudiants dans les disciplines de l'horlogerie, l'ingénierie, la médecine et de la construction. L'organisation apporte d'autre part son soutien aux étudiants sélectionnés par la City University de Londres ainsi qu'aux lauréats choisis par la Worshipful Company of Clockmakers et le British Horological Institute.

L'organisation a déjà contribué à l'établissement d'une Chaire Professorale George Daniels à la School of Engineering de la City University de Londres. Des étudiants en horlogerie ont aussi reçu des bourses à la British School of Watchmaking de la Birmingham City University et au West Dean College. L'organisation a également apporté son soutien à la modernisation du BHI Distance Learning Course.

George Daniels

George Daniels (19 août 1926 – 21 octobre 2011) est reconnu internationalement comme le plus important horloger du XXème siècle. Seul membre de la profession à avoir été décoré Membre (MBE) et Commandeur de l'ordre de l'Empire britannique (CBE) pour ses services rendus au monde horloger, George Daniels est le célèbre inventeur de l'échappement « co-axial », un mécanisme révolutionnaire qu'il développa dans les années 1970. La fascination pour les montres de George Daniels remonte à son enfance et au jour où il trouva une montre de poche qu'il ambitionna de réparer. Issu d'un milieu modeste, il ouvrit son premier atelier de réparation de montres dans le sud de Londres dans les années 1950. La qualité de ses réparations et son travail sur des montres à grande complication lui valurent rapidement une réputation d'excellence auprès des plus grands collectionneurs. Au cours des quarante années qui suivirent, Georges Daniel créa quelques trente montres entièrement faites à la main.

Minute repeaters to wow at Sotheby's November sale

Kathryn Bishop, October 10th, 2012

Sotheby's is set to follow up its George Daniels Horological Collection sale on November 6 with its Important Watches sale in Geneva, featuring more than 300 lots including Patek Philippe, Rolex and IWC timepieces.

The sale will take place on November 13 at the Hotel Beau-Rivage.

The sale has been organised by Sotheby's Europe specialists Geoffroy Ader and Thomas Perazzi and is expected to bring in between CHF 6 and 8 million (£3.9m to £5.3m), with a number of rare timepieces among the lots.



Ader, head of watches for Sotheby's Europe, said: "This sale is a celebration of elegance and style. It includes a selection of rare vintage and modern timepieces which demonstrate that watchmaking falls into the realm of art."

"Among highlights are two minute-repeating wristwatches by Patek Philippe and Vacheron Constantin which capture the essence of vintage wristwatches. These watches are most probably unique models which were made by the most important watchmakers in Geneva in the 1940s and 1950s, one of the richest period of modern Swiss horological history."

The sale will be led by Patek Philippe's Reference 2524/1, a watch sold at Tiffany & Co. and bearing the Tiffany & Co logo on the dial. The timepiece is a specially ordered 18ct yellow gold wristwatch features a movement made in 1954 and cased in 1961. It has a lower estimate of CHF250,000 (£166,000).

The second lead model in the sale is a vintage, minute-repeating Reference 4261 timepiece by Vacheron Constantin, manufactured in 1943. This very rare 18ct pink gold minute-repeating wristwatch comes to the market with a lower estimate of CHF130,000 (£86,320).

Thomas Perazzi, deputy director of the European Watch Department, added: "This autumn's sale has been put together to meet the strong demand for timepieces of high quality and rarity and most notably rare Rolex vintage chronographs.

"I am especially delighted to present a very rare model of Rolex ref. 6238 with pulsometer scale. The reference 6238 was produced in few examples over a very short period, between 1964 and 1967. The watch in the sale is in exceptional condition and according to our research, it is only the fourth example of this reference with a pulsometer dial ever to appear on the market."

The Rolex in question is one of several timepieces from the brand to feature in the sale. In the section focused on very rare chronographs will be the Reference 6238, often referred to as the "pre-Daytona" reference. Dating from circa 1965, this stainless steel chronograph wristwatch with registers and pulsometer scale carries an estimate of CHF60,000 to 90,000 (£39,844 to £59,765).

The sales will also include a group of fine vintage wristwatches such as a Panerai Reference 3646 with case and movement signed by Rolex, made circa 1940, and a vintage Vacheron Constantin triple-calendar version of its Cioccolatone, a model said to appear only rarely at auction.

An 18ct gold rectangular Cartier wristwatch dating from circa 1930 that once belonged to the famous German model from the Sixties, Editha Dussler, is also due to appear in the sale, as well as vintage IWCs.