



PATEK PHILIPPE
GENEVE

Press Release

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At its Geneva Salons, Patek Philippe presents the richest “Rare Handcrafts” collection ever to be on display there

At its historic headquarters on Rue du Rhône, from June 16 to 26, 2021, the manufacture is showcasing an extensive selection of over 75 pocket watches, wristwatches, dome clocks, and table clocks from its latest rare handcrafts collection. It is a rich range of one-of-a-kind and limited-edition pieces that pay tribute to challenging manifestations of craftsmanship such as manual engraving, grand feu cloisonné enamel, miniature painting on enamel, guilloché, gemsetting, and wood micromarquetry. On this occasion, Patek Philippe is also presenting six new watches from the current collection that are endowed with especially elaborate decorations.

Since the early days of mechanical watchmaking, artisans have always invested considerable care in decorating their clocks and watches. Timepieces were mainly beautiful, artistically finished treasures before they advanced to become reliable precision instruments. In Geneva, the individual decorative techniques found fertile ground in the famous “Fabrique” where all watchmaking-related occupations were assembled. Since 1839, as an heir of the grand Genevan tradition, Patek Philippe systematically commissioned the most talented artists to ennoble its creations. From 1970 to 1980, when the demand for such decoratively enhanced watches slumped and several ancestral techniques were on the brink of extinction, the manufacture mobilized its resources to preserve and breathe new life into all of its precious know-how and in particular miniature painting on enamel.

Grand passion

To this very day, Patek Philippe is dedicated to safeguarding and handing down all these competencies, but also to further evolving them in close collaboration with the artists who set their sights on new horizons. Moreover, the manufacture supports the development of totally new techniques for decorating watches, one of which is wood micromarquetry. The significance of artisanal professions for Patek Philippe also comes to the fore in the generous amount of space reserved for craftsmanship in the new, impressive production building that was officially inaugurated in Plan-les-Ouates (Geneva) in the spring of 2020.

A broad 2020-2021 collection

Every year, to highlight the full beauty and radiance of these refined techniques, Patek Philippe presents a collection of one-of-a-kind and limited-edition pieces enhanced with the most exquisite artisanal skills. The 2020 selection proved to be particularly rich, comprising more than 70 pocket watches (with their matching stands), wristwatches (Calatrava, Golden Ellipse, minute repeaters for ladies, Ladies’ Nautilus) and dome table clocks with motifs taken from eclectic sources of inspiration such as nature, fine arts, and cultural traditions from five continents. Because it was not possible to present the 2020 collection last year, Patek Philippe carefully safeguarded it in anticipation of its display to the general public and to watch connoisseurs. The exhibit at the Patek Philippe Salons in Geneva is enriched with several 2021

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creations that in particular salute the Genevan heritage. It offers a unique opportunity to admire this array of extraordinary works of art in its entirety before they are dispatched to private collections around the world. While exploring the exhibits, visitors can also observe the artisans at work as they demonstrate their virtuosity on site at the highest level of perfection.

An extensive palette of artistic skills

Manual engraving is the oldest decorative technique used to adorn timepieces. It ranks among the grand Genevan specialties (in the late 18th century, more than 200 engravers worked in Geneva). It also occupies a prominent position in Patek Philippe's "Rare Handcrafts 2020-2021" collection. It graces the case backs of pocket watches or serves as a frame for motifs executed with other techniques. Additionally, it plays a role in **damascening** where gold thread inlays in contrasting colors are worked into the surface to be decorated.

Cloisonné enamel has also been an element of horological artistry for a long time. On many one-of-a-kind and limited-edition pieces, it evokes fascination with the unmatched saturation and lasting intensity of its colors. A good example is the "Jazz" dome table clock. Its decor relies on flat gold wire with an impressive length of 18.3 meters. The wire is manually cut into tiny individual pieces and shaped to the contour of the motif. 48 transparent enamel paints are then applied. Grand feu cloisonné enamel is often enriched with gold powder or tiny spangles (paillons) in gold or silver leaf that shimmer through the enamel (**paillonné enamel**).

Miniature painting on enamel has been a key Genevan specialty since the 17th century as evidenced by numerous historic pieces on display at the Patek Philippe Museum in Geneva; it has a strong presence at the exhibition. It is found especially on the case backs of pocket watches and the dials of wristwatches. The artists use tiny brushes to apply the motifs stroke by stroke.

Receptive to all unique traditions in craftsmanship, Patek Philippe is also showcasing three magnificent techniques of French origin in its dome table clocks: **Limoges enamel painting** (consisting of several transparent enamel coats), **fauré enamel** (relief enamel) and **Longwy enamel on faïence** (with black edges).

In **guilloché**, venerable hand-operated machines are used to cut delicate geometric patterns into metal workpieces. The interaction with reliefs and light in the traditional technique of **flinqué enamel** shimmers through a transparent enamel coating. In mixed-technique work, guilloché also repeatedly occurs with certain motifs in cloisonné enamel.

Wood micromarquetry is a highly elaborate skill that for several years now has been used by Patek Philippe to decorate the dials of wristwatches or the case backs of pocket watches. It attains new pinnacles of virtuosity in small images assembled with hundreds of tiny pieces of wood and intarsias crafted from a wide range of wood species with varying colors and graining.

Diamond **gemsetting** causes the bezels of wristwatches to sparkle and creates breathtaking decors on haute joaillerie watches.

Patek Philippe also demonstrates its creativity and artisanal competence with numerous so-called **mixed-technique** pieces that combine different disciplines of craftsmanship. The "Panda" pocket watch is one of the most striking examples. It is a one-of-a-kind piece with a wood micromarquetry back, a dial



in grand feu flinqué enamel, and a manual engraving on the case and the bezel.

Rare handcrafts in the current collection

The techniques of rare craftsmanship are not reserved only for one-of-a-kind pieces in limited editions. Patek Philippe also uses them to decorated certain timepiece models in the current collection, such as individual grand complications or watch design icons. On the occasion of the “Rare Handcrafts 2020-2021” exhibition, the manufacture is presenting six new versions of familiar watch models that were turned into uniquely seductive pieces by gifted artists. The double-face Sky Moon Tourbillon wristwatch (12 complications) combines a manually engraved rose-gold case with a decor in brown grand feu champlévé enamel and a guilloché ornament (Ref. 6002R-001). The Ref. 5304 self-winding grand complication with a minute repeater and a retrograde perpetual calendar now comes in rose gold decorated with 80 baguette diamonds (Ref. 5304/301R-001). The Ref. 5374 grand complication with a minute repeater and a perpetual calendar is joined by a new white-gold version with a blue grand feu enamel dial (Ref. 5374G-001). The current Patek Philippe collection welcomes a new minute repeater for ladies with a dial in blue grand feu flinqué enamel and a bezel with a Flamme® diamond complement (Ref. 7040/250G-001), as well as a new Golden Ellipse Haut Artisanat in white gold with champlévé enamel and manual engraving (Ref. 5738/51). The manufacture also demonstrates its virtuosity in the master jeweler’s art with a new version of the Nautilus Haute Joaillerie in white gold with a random diamond pavé setting, also called snow setting (Ref. 7118/1450G-001).

