

Collector

HOLIDAY 2015 WATCH EDITION



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Diamonds sparkle on the most wantable pieces of the season

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Six timepiece aficionados share the inspiration behind their diverse, luxurious collections

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This holiday season, the timepiece can make a huge impact and demonstrate your timeless affection. At The Collector, our goal is to share with you the best and the brightest in fine watches.

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THE WORLD'S MOST
COMPLICATED WATCH



The front and back
of the Ralph Lauren
RL Automotive
Sketeton, \$50,000,
ralphlauren.com.

The Entertainers

Celebrity ambassadors and product placement make modern watches key players on the big screen and beyond

BY KEITH W. STRANDBERG

WATCHES ARE AN EVER-INCREASING PART OF THE entertainment world, whether they are featured in films, on the red carpet, as prizes at film festivals, as the official timekeepers in sports or adorning high profile celebrity ambassadors.

Product Placement

In the best product placement, watches are key components to the delineation of character in movies. After all, characters are defined by the choices they make: words, jobs, clothes, actions, cars and, yes, watches.

Today's highest profile watch placement has to be Omega in the James Bond movies. Omega has been the official watch of the Bond franchise since 1995, when Omega first appeared on Bond's wrist in *GoldenEye*. To celebrate the new Bond film, *Spectre*, Omega introduced two new limited models, the Seamaster Aqua Terra 150m James Bond Limited Edition (\$7,350) and the Seamaster 300 Spectre Limited Edition (\$7,500). The Seamaster Aqua Terra 150m features the Bond Family Crest repeated on the dark blue PVD dial of this anti-magnetic watch (limited to 15,007 pieces), while the Seamaster 300 Spectre is the watch that Daniel Craig wears in the film. In fact, Mr. Craig recently visited Omega's facility in Villeret, Switzerland, to see the production of this watch, which is limited to 7,007 pieces.

Omega is also on George Clooney's wrist in *Tomorrowland*. He wears a Vintage 1958 Constellation Automatic Chronometer. His timely quote? "With every second that ticks by, the future is running out."

Hamilton watches were featured prominently in the Matt Damon movie *The Martian*. Mr. Damon wears the Hamilton All Black BelowZero watch throughout the movie, and other actors are wearing other current and vintage Hamiltons.

Actor Clive Owen always chooses the watch for each character he plays. "The propmaster will come with a tray of watches and I have to pick the ones I want to wear," he says. "It has to be right. The choice of watch says a lot about someone. When you're wearing a great watch, it's like wearing a work of art on your wrist."

Partnerships and Brand Ambassadors

Recently, several high profile watch brand ambassadors were announced, as well as some interesting partnerships. Katheryn Winnick, star of the History Channel's *Vikings*, is representing Raymond Weil and Pierce Brosnan

'IT HAS TO BE RIGHT. THE CHOICE OF WATCH SAYS A LOT ABOUT SOMEONE. WHEN YOU'RE WEARING A GREAT WATCH, IT'S LIKE WEARING A WORK OF ART ON YOUR WRIST.'—CLIVE OWEN



Clockwise from top left: Pierce Brosnan, Clive Owens, Tom Brady, Daniel Craig and Katheryn Winnick.

began working with Peter Speake-Marin after the watchmaker consulted on Brosnan's film *Survivor*.

TAG Heuer made a big splash by signing NFL quarterback Tom Brady, joining other high profile athlete ambassadors including LeBron James (Audemars Piguet), Usain Bolt (Hublot), Novak Djokovic (Seiko) and Roger Federer (Rolex).

Staying in sports, Hublot just introduced the fourth watch in its partnership with the NFL's Dallas Cowboys, the Big Bang Dallas Cowboys, and Tissot just announced its appointment as the Official Timekeeper of the NBA (and has partnership deals with five NBA teams—the Bulls, the Lakers, the Heat, the Knicks and the Spurs).

Film Festivals

This year is the third year IWC is the Official

"Festival-Time" Partner of the Tribeca Film Festival. To support the Tribeca Film Institute, IWC auctioned a unique timepiece, the Portofino Monopusher Edition "Tribeca Film Festival 2015," raising \$50,000.

To honor its 10-year partnership with the Venice Film Festival, Jaeger-LeCoultre presented a special photographic exhibition, entitled "Behind the Scenes," at this year's event. Al Pacino, Sylvester Stallone, Spike Lee and others (all recipients of the Jaeger-LeCoultre Glory to the Filmmaker Award) offered glimpses into their creative process through a series of photos. Jaeger-LeCoultre also sponsors the New York; Toronto; Abu Dhabi, UAE; San Sebastián, Spain; Shanghai and Los Angeles film festivals, as well as the Film Society of Lincoln Center's Filmmaker in Residence.

Let It Snow

Jeweled watches take the season by storm

BY KEITH W. STRANDBERG

NOW THAT IT'S COLDER OUTSIDE, WITH SNOW just around the corner, it's the perfect time for a little "ice" on your wrist.

Many watch companies simply set diamonds onto watches to add a bit of sparkle, but the watches featured here do things differently—whether it's an incredible setting, a stunning design, a miniature painting, a unique complication or a secret sliding door.



AUDEMARS PIGUET DIAMOND PUNK ONYX:

The winner of the Best Jewelry Watch at the Grand Prix de l'Horlogerie, the watchmaking Oscars, the Diamond Punk is a beautiful diamond and black onyx bracelet hiding a secret watch. Snow-setting the 7,848 diamonds, along with the assembly of the watch, takes the artisans and watchmakers at Audemars Piguet more than 1,440 hours to accomplish. \$752,800, audemarspiguet.com



BOVET AMADEO FLEURIER 39 POPPIES:

Highlighting the artistry of Russian jeweler Ilgiz Fazulzyanov, who is a master of Grand Feu (high fire) enamel, the Poppies is a one-of-a-kind piece. Featuring an enamel miniature painting on an 18-karat gold base plate, this 39mm white gold timepiece has diamonds hand-set on the bow, bezel, lug, strap-bolt and crown. \$142,600, bovet.com



PIAGET COUTURE PRÉCIEUSE:

Piaget has a long tradition in high jewelry and the Couture Précieuse is another great example. This supremely elegant watch comes in 18-karat white gold set with 59 brilliant-cut diamonds (approx. 6 carats) and 58 baguette-cut diamonds (approx. 10 carats) and with a silver dial. Price upon request, piaget.com



GRAFF BUTTERFLY:

With each diamond selected and hand set by Graff's master jewelers, the Graff Butterfly is truly a work of art. Each butterfly comprises four pear-shaped diamonds for the wings, with offset round diamonds.

All Graff watches are inspired by the diamond and this Butterfly is completely covered with jewels. \$125,000 and up (featured Butterfly price upon request), graffdiamonds.com



JACOB & CO. ASTRONOMIA GRAVITATIONAL TOURBILLON BAGUETTE DIAMONDS:

This incredible watch features a tourbillon, time display, hand-painted globe and round diamond on four satellites, all spinning individually and together against a baguette diamond backdrop. \$1,000,000, jacobandco.com



FRANCK MULLER COLOR DREAMS:

With a different hue of gemstone for every hour, the Color Dreams takes color to the next level. This automatic timepiece has sparkling diamonds adorning its 42mm pink gold case. \$50,800, franckmuller.com



FABERGÉ LADY COMPLIQUÉE WINTER:

With no hands, this 38mm platinum cased watch uses a retrograde fan and moving hour markers to display the time. The white mother-of-pearl marquetry dial is slowly covered by the blades of the fan, 15 minutes for each, then the blades jump back to the next hour. \$67,500, faberge.com

PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY THE WATCHMAKERS

True Luxury Is Limited

Exclusivity means more than ever before

BY KEITH W. STRANDBERG

THE BIGGEST WATCH BRANDS MAKE AND SELL millions of watches. Sure, they are high quality, look great and perform without a problem, but they are ubiquitous—seems like everyone is wearing one.

In today's world, true luxury is finding and buying something few others have. Luckily, the watch industry is more than happy to oblige, and limited-edition timepieces are extremely popular.

Define Limited

A limited edition should have unique details or features not available in a brand's regular line. When a watch is issued in a series of 7,000 pieces, for example, that's not truly limited. What are considered limited are watches that have incredible complications, special designs, unique materials, rare decorative crafts or spectacular themes—and the fewer made, the better.

Truly Special

Here are some limited-edition watches worth considering, ranging from the affordable to the wallet busting.



MAÎTRES DU TEMPS CHAPTER THREE

Maîtres du Temps combines a different set of famous watchmakers for each "chapter" in its story. Chapter Three is the brainchild of Kari Voutilainen and Andreas Strehler, highly regarded independent watchmakers. The traditional dial conceals two secret windows that will display a second time zone and a day/night indicator when a pusher in the crown is activated. Limited to 50 pieces per execution. \$96,100, maitresdutemps.com



TIFFANY CT-60 ANNUAL CALENDAR LIMITED EDITION

Designed to put Tiffany back on the watchmaking map, the CT-60 honors the "New York Minute" and Tiffany's Big Apple heritage. This 40mm timepiece, released for the holiday season, features a gray soleil finished dial in a white gold case and is limited to 60 pieces for the world. \$20,000, tiffany.com



GIULIANO MAZZUOLI MANOMETRO 10TH ANNIVERSARY

Inspired by the speedometers of vintage Alfa Romeos, this Manometro celebrates the 10 years designer Giuliano Mazzuoli has been making watches. Limited to 120 pieces, one for each month of the last 10 years, the limited-edition number is "handwritten" on the dial, and Mazzuoli's signature is engraved on the side of the polished 45.2mm stainless steel case. \$3,900, giulianomazzuoli.it



ANTOINE PREZIUISO TOURBILLON OF TOURBILLONS

Limited to five pieces this year, this incredible, award-winning timepiece (it won the Innovation Prize, as well as the Public Prize at the GPHG, watchmaking's Oscars) features three tourbillons, all rotating around the dial every 10 minutes. 480,000 Swiss francs (about \$478,000), antoine-preziuso.com



BELL & ROSS VINTAGE WW1 EDICIÓN LIMITADA

Powered by a hand-wound mechanical movement with a power reserve of five days, this special Vintage WW1 celebrates Cuban cigars. The 42mm, 18-karat 5N red gold case, brown curved dial with powdered gold numbers, elegant red-gold-curved hands and an opening to admire the movement's turning balance all evoke bygone luxury. The presentation box even doubles as a humidor and holds up to 50 cigars. 99 pieces, \$24,000, bellross.com



CLERC HYDROSCAPH H-140 CARBON LIMITED EDITION CHRONOGRAPH

The Hydroscaph H-140 is a luxury diving timepiece, water resistant to 500 meters. The complicated (103-piece) case of this chronograph is made of DLC-coated stainless steel and NPTT carbon, which adds strength and a striking appearance. Limited to 140 pieces celebrating the brand's 140-year anniversary. \$13,300, clercwatches.com

PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY THE WATCHMAKERS



What Do You Wear?

BY NEESHA ARTER

We asked tastemakers across the fields of fashion, business and ecology: "Do you wear a watch, and if so, what make?"

1. Alina Baikova (Model and Ambassador of The Heart Fund)

"When I'm in the mood to wear a watch, I rotate between my three Rolexes. Depends on the occasion and outfit I'm planning on wearing. Whether it's my white gold with diamonds, or yellow gold vintage from 1974, or men's watch in gold with steel, I feel like there is one for every outfit and occasion."

2. Jessica Hart (Supermodel)

"My yellow gold, circa year 2000 Nautilus Patek Philippe. I think it looks really chic. It's a men's watch, but it's not too big and for a gold watch is not that flashy or overstated. To anyone that doesn't know watches it could look like a Casio and I love that!"

3. Ben Mills (Director of Upper Studio NY and London)

"My stainless steel Burberry watch because it's subdued, understated and without stating the obvious—keeps me on time. The simple, classic shape means I can pair it with almost anything in my wardrobe."

4. Darin Rubell (Owner of Drexler's)

"A few years ago, I was given an antique Hamilton pocket watch. It was given to me by my grandfather, which was given to him by his father. It's from the early 1900s. For me, it's about the connection to the watch as an heirloom. Phones do the best time-telling these days, but don't provide the familial bond that a timepiece can create."

5. Mike Indursky (Bliss World President)

"I wear a super-cool, all-black Boccia titanium watch. It has a big but sleek face that fits me perfectly. I previously wore the same watch for 10 years, but one day, walking down Broome Street in Soho, I saw a billboard for this watch. I turned around, went in the store and bought it. Yeah, it was that easy."

6. Nicole Miller (Fashion Designer)

"My favorite watch ever is a Hublot—I have one with a rubber strap, as well as a gold one. Lately, I've been wearing my Apple watch, but I don't like it for formal events."

7. Max Renny (Executive Chef at Church Street Tavern)

"I wear a 35-year-old Cartier tank watch that was restored by my father, Gerard Renny, and given to me on my 21st birthday."

8. Diane Gilman (Fashion Designer)

"I wear watches as a form of practical bracelets, as jewelry. My favorite is my Chanel pave diamond chronograph rhodium watch. I particularly love denim and diamonds...wearing all that sparkle really offsets the casual chicness of jeans (mine, of course)!"

9. Caroline Gogolak (Carbon38 President and Co-Founder)

"I own a Cartier Santos Demoiselle watch. It was a college graduation present and I like it because not a lot of people own it and it doesn't get in the way when I'm typing on my computer."

10. Rosena Sammi (Jewelry Designer)

"I wear a Bulgari Serpenti watch, it was a 10-year wedding anniversary present from my husband. We were enjoying lunch at our favorite brasserie on Rue Saint-Honoré and I spied it on a very chic Parisian woman. I guess my husband has a good memory! And besides, serpents are talismans of the gods—didn't Diana Vreeland say you can't wear enough of them?"

The Watch Men



MELDY MELAMED FOR NEW YORK OBSERVER

Six private collections that reflect the synergy of important timepieces with the passing of time

BY ZACHARY WEISS

EVERYONE REMEMBERS THE VERY FIRST WATCH they were given. Whether you picked out a comic book motif from the local toy store as a kid, or thrilled to the funky new vibe of Swatch when it hit the U.S. way back when, the memory is there. The first important watch that comes along from a manufacturer of distinction—a brand with a unique heritage—also occupies a special space. Here, we talk watches with six driven, but very different New York-based collectors.

Michael Lorber

Michael Lorber, a real estate agent at The SLS Team, has amassed a collection of 50 high-end watches, he estimates. His first, a Breitling Chronograph, was given to him by his parents in 1992 when he was 13 years old. Since then, he has acquired a couple of timepieces every year to celebrate milestones such as passing the bar exam, or closing a big deal, but he is hesitant to play favorites. “It’s like picking your favorite child. I have sentimental watches that I love, including a gold watch that belonged to my grandfather” he said. His laundry list of favorites includes four or five Pateks, a monogrammed Jaeger LeCoultre, and a Vacheron Constantin driving watch from 1921 with an angled face that allows motorists to see the time without turning their hand. “I’m not much of a vintage watch person, though. I’m just scared to take care of them,” he conceded. “But if you want to have a good time, you have to have a good watch.”



MICHAEL MABLE FOR NEW YORK OBSERVER

Michael Moskowitz

Michael Moskowitz, the creative director of web auction platform eBay, has a very particular outlook on his watch collection. “It’s a modest collection, not expansive. It’s more of a selection of eclectic items to pair with different outfits,” he said during a visit to his office. He is one of a small cache of watch collectors who hold strong views about certain manufacturers. “Everyone has a gold Rolex and gold doesn’t appeal to me in a visceral way,” he said. “I don’t want to come off as a poorly spoken Russian oligarch with a manhole-cover-sized bezel on his wrist, either, so I only wear a Rolex in the summer months, but it’s the kind of watch an antihero in a Bond movie handling the scuba equipment might have worn, not a ‘Bond’ watch.” Of course, the majority of his vintage timepieces—including army-issue watches like Waltham, Hamilton, and Bulova timepieces from the ‘40s, ‘50s, and ‘60s—are found on his own website. “Almost my whole collection I’ve found on eBay, because I hate paying through the nose when I don’t need to,” he quipped with caution. “But never buy a watch from a place whose name begins with the letter M. The big four are Montevideo, Mumbai, Mexico City and Moscow. This is from personal experience.”

Marco Cilia

Marco Cilia, the general manager for HotelAmericano, is an unassuming watch collector, whose collection spans time periods and brands. “With time, I think watch collecting slowly grew on me. I’m not a fan of jewelry on a man other than the essentials,” he said. “So, in my view, a watch becomes a statement piece, and a way to express your individuality.” Despite his passion for collecting timepieces, Mr. Cilia has not formed any firm allegiances with one particular maker. “I like to differentiate,” he said. “I will go for a particular brand one time, and then sometimes for a design moment or time in history. The goal is to have a watch for any occasion and any mood you are in.” These include his essentials: a Rolex Yacht-master, an Audemars Piguet Royal Oak, a Hublot Big Bang, a Panerai Power Reserve and GMT, and an IWC Portuguese. “I generally find most of my watches in-store, but I know a few dealers, so I always go to them first,” he said. “But I always remember, only buy it if you really want it.”



SASHA ANSLÖV FOR NEW YORK OBSERVER

Tommy Fazio

Tommy Fazio, the former men's fashion director of Nordstrom and now president and creative director of the PROJECT trade show, is a Rolex loyalist. "I received my first Rolex on my 40th birthday from a very special person," he said slyly. "That's all I'll say." Though he started collecting watches modestly enough with a Timex Expedition, his obsession quickly snowballed. Now he's a seasoned pro with some sage advice for potential collectors. "Do your homework first before going into a store. Know how much you want to spend, and what type of watch you want to purchase," he said, sounding like a veteran car collector. "There are a few brands whose stores I love to go into and look at the new models. I recently discovered Bamford watches at Dover Street Market in Murray Hill, which are customized Rolex watches covered in a permanent black coating. Definitely unique."

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'Do your homework first before going into a store. Know how much you want to spend and what type of watch you want to purchase...'



ARMAN DZIEDZIC/NEW YORK OBSERVER



CELESTE SLOMAN/NEW YORK OBSERVER

Matt Breen

Matt Breen is a co-founder of nouveau menswear destination Carson Street Clothiers on Crosby Street in Soho. The lawyer-turned-menswear obsessive has amassed a bevy of timepieces, beginning his obsession as a boy. "My first watch was in first grade, The Shark Watch. I was obsessed, I remember trying to hold all four of the buttons at once so the shark would swim across the screen, never did get it to work," he joked of the classic Day-Glo-colored accessory. "On a more serious note, my first true 'timepiece' was a Stainless Steel 1998 Rolex Datejust, which was a graduation gift from my parents and shockingly survived all four years of college. Needless to say, once it adorned my wrist I never turned back from the world of horology. To this day, it is one of my favorite pieces to wear." This is one of the pieces he considers to be the "backbone" of his collection, in addition to a brown band and black band watch. "Once you have these three pieces covered, you have a timepiece for any occasion. There is no need to spend a ton of money on your first few pieces, especially if this is something you want to do the rest of your life. You will never be able to work up the ladder if you start at the top. Once you have several pieces, you can start to seek out the unique, that really speak to you as an individual, that's where it becomes very fun."

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'My first watch was in first grade, the Shark Watch. I was obsessed, I remember trying to hold all four of the buttons at once so the shark would swim across the screen, never did get it to work.'

Victor Kubicek

Director and screenwriter Victor Kubicek has a certain lens of romanticism when it comes to his collection, and considers each piece to be a peep into his past. "I've come to know my Grandpa through my watches. From him, I have some of the most interesting ones, like a pocket watch, which I never wear, with a peacock on the back detailed in blue, green and black. So they carry memories for me that are charged with emotion, and that's critical," he recalled over lunch. "I'm writing a period story right now, and I always wonder what kind of watch each character would have worn. You have to know what kind of watch he's wearing to know who he might be." A favorite of his, an Omega yellow gold timepiece with a hand-hammered face and black band, seemed to be at odds with itself after taking several plunges in the water, one particular instance due to a paparazzi chase. "As a kid I had a crush on a young Chloë Sevigny," he said of the starlet who he was on vacation with at the time. "We went to the beach where lots of people were taking pictures so we just ran into the water."

"We were having fun, but two minutes later I realized I was wearing the watch," he recalled. "My best friends helped me patch it together as a high school graduation present, so it's a bit like a beloved dog with a chewed-off ear." His Tao of collecting was taught to him by his father, famed ski champion J.R. Kubicek IV. "My dad didn't like shiny objects, and he wasn't easily impressed," he said while puffing his e-cigarette. "He taught me that a watch isn't meant to display wealth, but to recognize that another man's time is important."

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'My dad...taught me that a watch isn't meant to display wealth, but to recognize that another man's time is important.'



CELESTE SLOMAN/NEW YORK OBSERVER

Dynasty

Heirloom potential is becoming increasingly important in the market

BY KEITH W. STRANDBERG



AUDEMARS PIGUET ROYAL OAK PERPETUAL CALENDAR

The new extra-thin Royal Oak Perpetual Calendar in 18-karat white gold is easy to use and read, and features a great looking moon phase display. Audemars Piguet's new movement calculates the varying lengths of months and leap years, has 374 parts and 38 jewels and, if you keep it wound, only needs correction every 125 years and 317 days. \$95,700, audemarspiguet.com



BREGUET TRADITION CHRONOGRAPHE INDÉPENDANT 7077

Breguet is one of the most famous names in watchmaking, and this visually stunning chronograph would have looked as at home on this grandmaster's wrist in 1790 as it does today. Available in a 44mm case in 18-karat white or rose gold, the 3-D, open-worked design will never go out of style. \$78,900 in rose gold, \$79,700 in white gold, breguet.com



CHOPARD L.U.C. 1963 TOURBILLON

This elegant tourbillon in a 40mm 18-karat rose gold case features a white, high fire enamel dial. The tourbillon is COSC-certified and has a power reserve of nine days. Limited to 100 pieces. Price upon request, chopard.com



ROLEX OYSTER PERPETUAL GMT EXPLORER II

The truth is that everyone knows the Rolex brand, and that's because it is so popular and so well made. You can't go wrong with the iconic GMT Explorer II, featuring a second time zone indicator and classic Rolex styling. \$8,950 in stainless steel with blue and black Cerachrom bezel (shown, left), \$38,250 in white gold, with the famous blue and red "Pepsi" bezel, rolex.com



JAEGER-LECOULTRE GEOPHYSIC TRUE SECOND

Based on a design first launched in 1958, Jaeger-LeCoultre reintroduced the Geophysic collection last year and this year the showpiece is the True Second, with a complication that allows the second hand to jump from second to second. Simple and elegant, packed with high watchmaking content. \$17,500 in 18-karat pink gold, jaeger-lecoultre.com



PATEK PHILIPPE REF. 5227G MEN'S CALATRAVA

Watches don't get more elegant and traditional than the Patek Philippe Calatrava. The white gold with black lacquered dial pictured here has a sapphire crystal caseback that showcases the automatic movement. A hinged dust cover also allows this watch to be personalized with an engraving. \$34,700, patekphilippe.com

THE THOUGHT OF GIVING A GIFT YOUR LOVED ones can carry through life is a comforting one. And with a fine watch, you can envision your grandchildren's grandchildren still cherishing the timepiece you give this holiday season.

The big question is, how do you ensure you are buying the right watch, one that will not only last long enough, but look good doing it?

Buy Classic

Steer clear of trendy, in-your-face watches for this purchase. They might look great right now, but maybe not in 10, 20 or 50 years. The same goes for colors—the "in" color of today will change next year. The best colors? Sober ones like black, white, silver/gray and hues of gold.

Stick to classic and traditional timepieces. One litmus test—if the watch you are considering looks like it would have fit in a century ago, then it's a good bet it will look good a century from now.

Buy Big or Go Home

Not size, brand. For an heirloom watch, stay true to the famous names in watches. A smaller, independent brand might turn out to be a cherished timepiece a century from now, but it's a riskier proposition than a known quantity that has already been around for at least a hundred years.

Patek Philippe, Chopard, Breguet and Rolex are examples of companies that have been around for decades or centuries and will still be around for decades to come.

Wear and Preserve

No one has ever said "I love this watch, my dad kept it in his safe all his life." Buy a watch that your loved ones will wear, and that way they appreciate it and the timepiece will mean more to future generations.

Regular service is a must to make sure the watch always runs correctly. Mechanical watches should be serviced about every five to seven years and if they are regularly serviced, making sure the movement is lubricated and cleaned, they can last virtually forever.

"Servicing a watch is very important, especially if you're planning on handing it down to the next generation," says Armen Darakjian, owner, Darakjian Jewelers in Birmingham, Mich. "The joy of an heirloom gift gets muddled when the recipient has to immediately send it in for a service that comes with a charge. It's like giving a vintage car that doesn't run and has a dent in the quarter panel."

PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY THE WATCHMAKERS

The World's Most Complicated Timepiece

The Nuances of the Vacheron Constantin Ref. 57260

BY KEITH W. STRANDBERG

IN NORMAL LIFE, A COMPLICATION IS A BAD thing, but in the watch world, complications are sought after. And this year, Vacheron Constantin, to celebrate its 260th anniversary, has created the most complicated timepiece ever made, known as Ref. 57260.

This pocketwatch (a wristwatch wouldn't have the volume needed for all the complications) has a record 57 complications, some never seen before, like the eight Hebrew calendar functions. Made at the request of a collector, this watch was eight years in development.

"We had to deliver a minimum of 36 complications and the watch had to be smaller than the most complicated watch at the time on the market, which had 33 complications," explains Dominique Bernaz, the head of Atelier Cabinotiers, the bespoke arm of Vacheron Constantin. "From day one, the watchmakers had something else in mind. They originally wanted to include 45 or 46 complication, and then the collector requested the Hebrew calendar."

This is a unique piece, not available for sale, but don't despair—for that last minute holiday gift for 2023, you too can commission a bespoke piece.

Ref. 57260 Key Numbers

Why Ref. 57260? 57 for the number of complications; 260 for the years of Vacheron Constantin's existence

- 6 time measurement functions
- 7 perpetual calendar functions
- 9 astronomical calendar functions
- 1 lunar calendar function
- 1 religious calendar function
- 8 Hebrew calendar functions
- 4 three-column wheel chronograph functions
- 7 alarm functions
- 8 Westminster carillon-striking functions
- 2,800 components
- 98 mm in diameter
- 50.55 mm thick
- 242 jewels

Estimates of the cost of Ref. 57260 are between \$5 and \$10 million. Vacheron Constantin did not release a price.



COURTESY VACHERON CONSTANTIN