

WATCH

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THE WATCH MAGAZINE REDEFINED

heritage Founded in 1860, the former supplier to the Royal Italian Navy is now a modern maker with eight of its own movements.

style Offering more than just dual time, the Panerai Luminor 1950 3 Days GMT Automatic features date, stop seconds and power reserve indication.



technology The new caliber P.9001 is a proprietary automatic movement with 227 components, 4Hz frequency, bidirectional rotor and three-day power reserve.



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Watch Journal

presents

PATEK PHILIPPE

A QUALITY SEAL



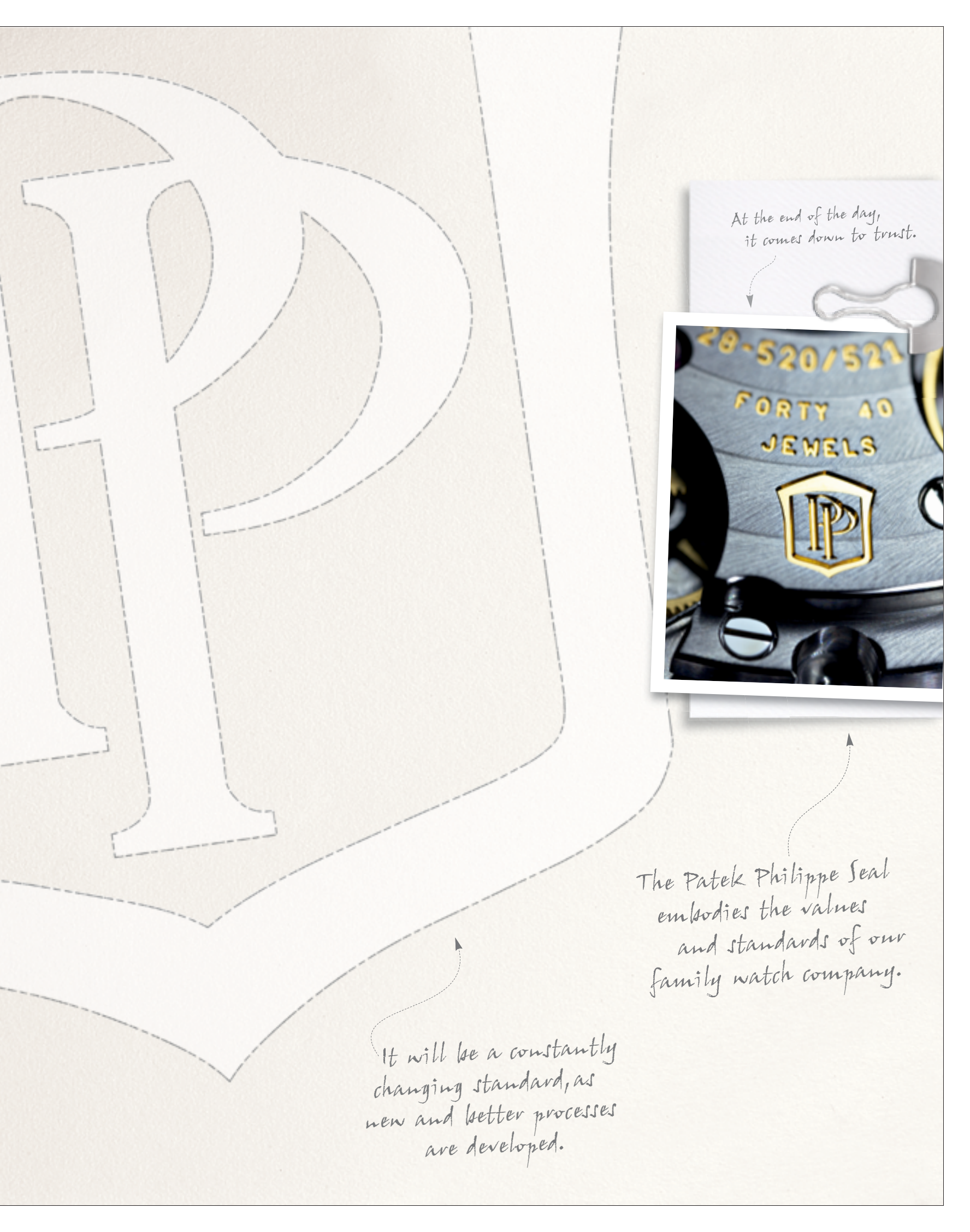
*the evolution of
a philosophy of quality
and independence*

A QUALITY SEAL

A LOOK AT THE PATEK PHILIPPE SEAL

Patek Philippe made big news during Baselworld 2008 when president Philippe Stern announced that the company would be developing its own quality standard, which it would adopt in place of the Geneva Seal quality standard. Following the trade show, there was nothing further from the brand on this subject—until this year's Baselworld. Patek Philippe officially unveiled the Patek Philippe Seal, which is an attempt by the company to record and standardize its own internal processes. It seems the company believed that the existing quality standards, and there are several, fell short of those Patek Philippe already maintained.

Patek Philippe touts spring 2009 as the beginning of a new era: "All of the manufacture's mechanical movements will henceforth be embossed with the exclusive Patek Philippe Seal. This is the evolution of a philosophy of quality and independence that the workshops in Geneva have been systematically pursuing since the company was founded in 1839. The new label clearly expresses



At the end of the day,
it comes down to trust.



The Patek Philippe Seal
embodies the values
and standards of our
family watch company.

It will be a constantly
changing standard, as
new and better processes
are developed.



President, Philippe Stern, and vice president, Thierry Stern



The Annual Calendar Chronograph in rose gold, bearing the Patek Philippe Seal

the very essence and distinctiveness of Patek Philippe: a level of perfection that far transcends what external statutes and official standards prescribe. After all, true passion can only come from within."

If the company making this statement were Hyundai, it might be met with great skepticism, but because Patek Philippe is generally regarded as the gold standard when it comes to quality in watchmaking, the Patek Philippe Seal has been met with a high level of acceptance. "The scope of the Geneva Seal was limited, and there are more seals out there, and Patek needed to do something to show the distinctiveness of our timepieces," says Larry Pettinelli, president, Patek Philippe NA.

"At the end of the day, it comes down to trust," he continues. "If you trusted Patek before to do the right thing, there is now even more reason to trust Patek. The product won't be made any differently; we are just defining

it now, for ourselves and for our customers." Unlike the Geneva Seal, which is primarily a finishing standard, and the COSC certification, which focuses on precision, the Patek Philippe Seal is designed to cover the entire watch. The new seal "defines all competencies and features of relevance to the manufacture, precision and lifelong maintenance of a Patek Philippe timepiece," according to Patek's materials.

Although Patek Philippe developed the seal, the company has set up an organization that will hold the manufacture accountable for any deviation from the standard. In fact, there are a legislative body and an executive body that operate independently from one another, supervising the Patek Philippe Seal.

The Comité du Poinçon Patek Philippe is the legislative entity, which defines the qualifications for the Patek Philippe Seal and continuously adjusts the regulations to accommodate relevant developments. The Comité du Poinçon Patek Philippe consists of two subcommittees: the Comité Technique (for technical issues) and the Comité Esthétique (for aesthetic issues). These two subcommittees monitor all work processes continuously, to ensure compliance. The president, Philippe Stern, and vice president, Thierry Stern, of the manufacture are the Garants du Poinçon Patek Philippe—guardians of the Patek Philippe Seal.

"I clearly understand why they didn't want external people involved, being an independent—if we give someone access to all the information on how we make our product (ten thick volumes outlining every process in the production of every model), they would know everything. It would be too dangerous," notes Pettinelli.

"I don't know how interested our consumers will be in the Patek Philippe Seal," he adds. "We are sending booklets and bullet points to our retailers and incorporating the information into the training for the sales staff, so they are ready to answer any questions. We are running national and international ads. We are putting some money behind this campaign to explain what we are doing and who we are, which is also brand building."

The Patek Philippe Seal will be a constantly changing standard, as new and better processes are developed. "[The elder] Mr. Stern wanted a standard that would certify the entire watch, and he wanted to make sure it could evolve (the last change to the Geneva Seal was in 1957). If there is a better way, he wants to be able to write it in," Pettinelli says. "He isn't establishing the new seal to gain more credibility. It's just a way to formalize what we have been doing all along. We wanted to put in writing how we do it—precision, finishing, everything, including service."

It would be easy for an industry leader such as Patek Philippe to get complacent about what it does and even to stagnate, but to this company's credit, it is continually looking to improve. The Patek Philippe Seal codifies this incessant desire.

By Keith W. Strandberg, international editor. For more information, visit patek.com or telephone 212.218.1240.