

Watches auction craze: way over one million?

The Derek Pratt N°1 Oval Pocket Watch from Urban Jürgensen und Sønner

Setting a record! This unique, historic platinum pocket tourbillon handcrafted by Derek Pratt is thrilling the most ardent collectors. Particularly since it comes from the secret and fascinating collection of world expert Helmut Crott.

Hotel Président Wilson, Geneva, November 8, 2024

Lot number 40 of *Phillips Reloaded*, the first autumn sale of the renowned watch auction house led by Aurel Bacs, this Urban Jürgensen und Sønner masterpiece embodies the ultimate horological Grail..

This extremely rare timepiece, known as the Oval Pocket Watch Derek Pratt N°1, exemplifies the theme of this autumn sale, named by Phillips 'The Rebirth of Mechanical Watchmaking, 1980-1999'.

A horological cornerstone of history

Oval in shape (76 mm high and 62 mm wide), this platinum pocket watch was entirely handcrafted between 1982 and 2005 by master watchmaker Derek Pratt. Its final decorating was entrusted to the famous master watchmaker Kari Voutilainen. It features a detent escapement, tourbillon and winding key. With its signed case, dial and caliber, with its power reserve, thermometer and moon phase displays, it enhances according to Phillips Senior Logan R. Baker, "a monumental achievement in the field of watchmaking."



Editorial Manager

Estimation:

In excess of CHF 1,000,000 - \$ 1,180,000 - €1,070,000
Phillips November 08, 2024 Auction, Lot 40

Bidding > <https://bit.ly/2BidOvalWatch>

High resolution visuals & pictures > [download here](#)

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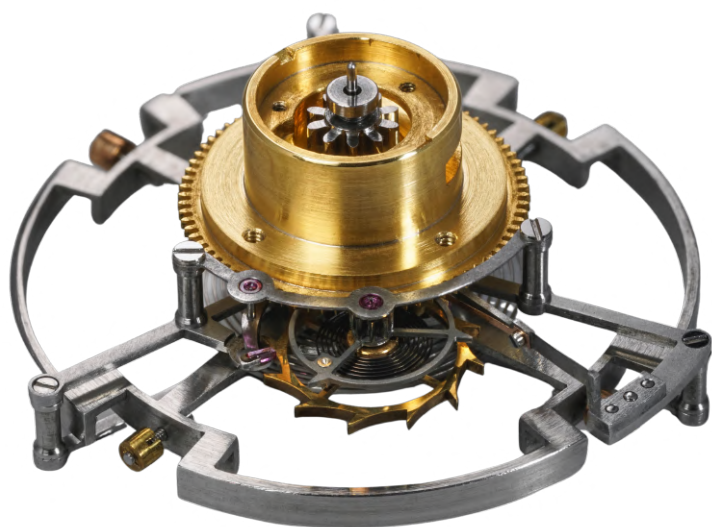
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Derek Pratt (1938–2009)

Laureate of the 1999 Gaïa Prize, aka *Watchmaking Nobel*, this discreet watchmaker was one of those rare horological geniuses of the 20th century.

A friend of the master watchmaker Georges Daniels, an Englishman like himself, he won awards from the highest chronometric authorities in his country, such as the *British Horological Institute*. He moved to Switzerland to work for Peter Bamberger of Urban Jürgensen und Sønner, a Swiss brand of Danish origin, now taken over by master watchmaker Kari Voutilainen. Through his work and this piece, Derek Pratt pays homage to such great watchmakers as Abraham-Louis Breguet, Urban Jürgensen, Thomas Earnshaw and Professor Alfred Helwig.

With his background in antique restoration, Derek Pratt combined creativity, ingenuity, skill and genius, all against a humble and generous ethos. His achievements, in particular the 34 ultra-complicated pocket watches he created for collector Peter Bamberger under the Urban Jürgensen und Sønner name, fascinate his peers as much as a few initiated collectors.



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Logan R. Baker directeur éditorial chez Phillips

"As it makes its first-ever appearance at auction at Phillips RELOADED, on November 8, 2024, this extraordinary timepiece, which has long resided in the private collection of the esteemed Dr. Helmut Crott, a friend of Pratt's and Baumberger's, offers not just an opportunity to own a masterpiece, but a once-in-a-lifetime chance to acquire a cornerstone of modern horological history."

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World-renowned expert Dr. Helmut Crott

Talking about some photos found in Derek Pratt's workshop, with whom he had befriended, Helmut Crott, a major collector, says: *"I showed these photos to my 82-year-old dial maker who has spent 65 years in the dial business. He was very astonished about the tools Derek used. They seemed to him archaic, but he said someone who can use these kinds of tools must be very talented"*



Derek Pratt was clearly determined to make watches in a traditional way and wouldn't be swayed by modernity

