

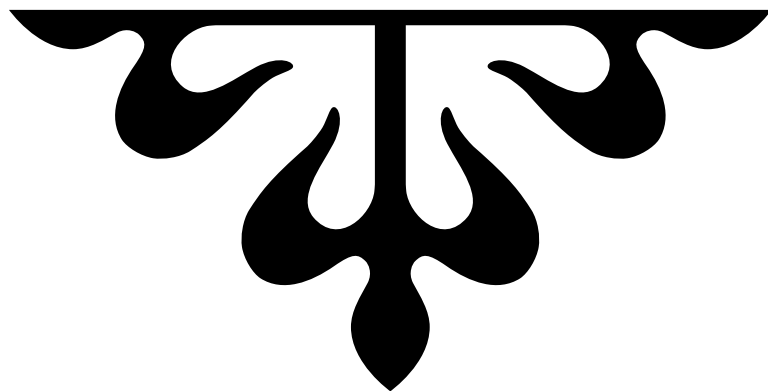
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# BIRTHDAY SONG

PATEK PHILIPPE'S 175<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY GRANDMASTER CHIME HITS THE HIGH NOTES. **BY LAURIE KAHLE**

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Committed to keeping Patek Philippe independent and under family stewardship for decades to come, Philippe and Thierry Stern mark the milestone with the most complicated wristwatch the brand has ever produced.

“ THE GRANDMASTER CHIME FEATURES TWENTY COMPLICATIONS, INCLUDING MULTIPLE STRIKING FUNCTIONS.”

the movement at 9 o'clock. In addition, the quarter hours sound on three gongs instead of two with a different melody for each quarter, a flourish that demands even more energy.

### ON DEMAND

**THE BEEFED-UP POWER** source also drives the minute repeater, which chimes hours, quarters, and minutes on demand. The patented alarm, which sounds the alarm time like a minute repeater, is almost unprecedented in a mechanical wristwatch. This pairing reflects Stern's belief in producing traditional "artful" complications as well as "useful" everyday complications for the modern aficionado. Another innovation is the patented date repeater that sounds the date with a high-low strike to denote ten-day intervals, plus high notes for each additional day.

The Grandmaster Chime achieved six patents, including one for the advanced isolation mechanisms that ensure simple and safe operation so the wearer doesn't inadvertently make an adjustment that could cause a malfunction. Another patent was awarded for the mechanism that allows the user to easily flip and lock the case to show the alternate dial featuring an instantaneous perpetual calendar with a patent-pending four-digit year display.

Consisting of 214 components, the elaborately engraved 47mm 18-karat rose gold case is designed to wear equally comfortably no matter which dial is facing up while also enhancing the sound quality of the watch's harmonious songs.

As an expression of Patek Philippe's rich heritage in decorative métiers d'art, a master engraver devotes hundreds of hours embellishing the case with relief engravings including a laurel leaf motif, which is a symbol of triumph.

The Grandmaster Chime is a remarkable horological achievement that only a half dozen of Patek Philippe's most faithful collectors will get to enjoy. However, the brand is reserving the seven piece for its Geneva museum where anyone can visit and admire it. (See accompanying story about the Patek Philippe museum.)

"When I started at Patek, I was trained and formed by many interesting people, highly professional people," concluded Stern at the piece's October's 2014 unveiling. "All of them taught me a lot of things—not about how to make money, it was about how to make beauty. If you make beauty, you will last. For me, that was really the target." ●

*Laurie Kahle writes about travel and time for ateliermagazine.com.*



Caliber 300 GS AL36 750, with perpetual calendar (as pictured at left)



The caliber's flip side, with chimes, moon phase and more.

**B**efore introducing the much-anticipated Grandmaster Chime Ref. 5175 at Patek Philippe's 175<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration in Geneva last October, Thierry Stern, the brand's president and the fourth-generation Stern to run the business, paid tribute to his father Philippe.

"HE SPENT MANY years teaching me not only about watches but about education, about respect, about values, and how to explain the beauty and art of watchmaking," said Stern before a video presentation that swept the audience into the watch's multilevel movement with 1,366 components, including three tiny hammers striking three wire gongs, producing the melodic notes for which the watch is named. The \$2.6 million timepiece embodies those ideals, the evolution of the brand, and the passing of the torch from one generation to the next.

Stern was only eighteen years old when Patek marked its 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary with the famous Caliber 89 pocket watch, which the brand hails as the most complicated timepiece ever made. While the Caliber 89 was the star of that event, Stern later realized the significance of the minute repeater wristwatches also produced for the occasion. He observed that those musical timepieces marked the beginning of the rise and return of complications that had typically been reserved for pocket watches. This marked a turning point for not only Patek Philippe but for mechanical watchmaking, which experienced a renaissance

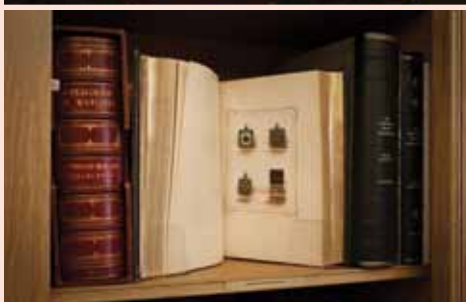
in the decades that followed.

Given Stern's love of minute repeaters, it's not surprising that he would choose to develop a striking wristwatch—the most complicated wristwatch Patek Philippe has ever built—to mark last year's 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Seven years and more than 100,000 hours were invested in the creation of the double-dialed Ref. 5175 featuring twenty complications, including multiple striking functions.

Among them is the brand's first grande sonnerie, which automatically chimes the hours and quarters at each quarter hour or, when set in petite sonnerie mode, chimes only hours at the top of each hour and only quarters every fifteen minutes. A single switch on the left side of the case allows you to easily change the mode from silent to grande sonnerie to petite sonnerie.

Patek had previously declined to produce the energy-hungry complication until it could achieve a strike-work power reserve of at least one day. Recent technological advancements allowed Patek to exceed this goal with double barrels dedicated to the striking mechanism delivering a thirty-hour power reserve, which is displayed on the dial at 3 o'clock opposite the power reserve indicator for





## Patek Philippe on Display

By Nola Martin

THE PATEK PHILIPPE MUSEUM IS SITUATED IN THE HEART OF GENEVA AND A VISIT OFFERS THE OPPORTUNITY TO VIEW A RARE COLLECTION OF ANTIQUE TIMEPIECES THROUGH FOUR FLOORS OF EXTREMELY WELL CURATED TIMEPIECES DEPICTING THE EVOLUTION AND RICH HISTORY OF WATCHMAKING.

The building itself has a long history of craftsmanship. It was originally designed in 1919 by the gifted architect William Henssler and it housed skilled gemcutters to jewelry production. In 1975 it was home to Les Atelier Runis where the watchcases and bracelets were manufactured for Patek Philippe. It was in 1999 that Patek Philippe completely remodeled the facility.

Each floor of this museum will ignite and fascinate the watch fanatic inside of every guest with its impressive collection of over eight hundred timepieces impeccably displayed under one roof. The museum weaves you through a collection dating far back as the 1500s. Of course, one entire floor is dedicated to the extraordinary collection of Patek Philippe

timepieces from 1839 to 2000. On display are prominent pieces belonging to Queen Victoria, the Sultan of Egypt, Hussein Kamel and many other members of global royalty. A head-spinning number of watchmaking masterpieces are on display, including the Calibre 89, a pocket watch commemorating the 150th anniversary of Patek Philippe. Many pieces from the famous Henry Graves, Jr. collection are also on view.

This journey of discovery will take you through the respected traditions of horology and the artistic techniques closely linked, like enameling or miniature paintings. There are galleries dedicated to showcase musical timepieces and the unique collection of automatons.

The historic archives are rounded out with a library full of nearly 4,000 literary works on watchmaking. Even original tools and antique workbenches from watchmakers used to create these time-telling masterpieces are displayed. One can also glance into the mind of Polish immigrant, Antoine-Norbert de Patek founder of Patek Philippe, whose copious notes can be seen here. Meticulous

ledgers containing information of each Patek Philippe watch created and the details to follow from customers name, repair log and pricing.

The museum is a must see on your next visit to Geneva. Join for either public or private guided tours in English or visit during opening hours to explore at your own pace by following the English signage. Please visit [patekmuseum.com](http://patekmuseum.com) for further details. 📍

### THE PATEK PHILIPPE MUSEUM

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