

# CHRISTIE'S

PRESS RELEASE | 26 OCTOBER 2023 | FOR IMMEDIATE DISTRIBUTION

## **Philippe and Elisabeth Dufour entrust Christie's HK with the sale of their "pièce unique Philippe Dufour", specially created to support their "Philippe & Elisabeth Dufour" Foundation**

**A gorgeous, unique 'Simplicity' watch by Philippe Dufour, made from the noblest of metals, platinum; in the perfect diameter of 38mm, and a dial in the most perfect simplicity, no subsidiary seconds, with a magnificent blue aventurine dial**



**Geneva** – 26 October 2023 - It's THE Philippe Dufour. A "Pièce Unique". A highly symbolic watch for the Dufour family. The one Philippe Dufour made to benefit the Foundation he created this Spring with his wife Elisabeth Dufour.

Mr. and Mrs. Dufour have entrusted their watch to Christie's, who will auction it in Hong Kong during the Live sale on November 26. The watch is a gorgeous, unique 'Simplicity' watch, made from the noblest of metals, platinum, in the perfect diameter of 38mm, and a dial in the most perfect simplicity, no subsidiary seconds, with a magnificent blue aventurine dial (est. HKD 12 million – 24 million / CHF 1.3 million – CHF 2.7 million / EUROS 1.4 million – 1.8 million / USD 1.5 million – 3 million). All proceeds from the sale will be donated to the "Philippe & Elisabeth Dufour" Foundation. Additionally, Christie's will make a charitable donation to the Foundation from the buyer's premium we receive of a sum equal to 5% of the aggregate hammer price achieved.

## THE PHILIPPE & ELISABETH DUFOUR FOUNDATION

The 3 June 2023 was the occasion of Philippe Dufour's 75<sup>th</sup> birthday celebrations at the Hôtel des Horlogers in the Vallée de Joux. This milestone event for one of the greatest living watchmakers became of global significance when the creation of the Philippe and Elisabeth Dufour Foundation was announced. The Dufour's not-for-profit Foundation has been established to help address some of the world's most pressing humanitarian needs, in Mr and Mrs Dufour's words:

*"Helping, giving, and supporting are important human actions that demonstrate solidarity towards people in distress. These actions can have a significant impact on our fellow humans and provide them with hope and comfort. It's important to remember that even small actions can have a positive impact on others' lives. Being human means having the capacity for empathy and compassion towards disadvantaged individuals and seeking ways to help and support them in their daily lives."*

*"We wanted a philanthropic foundation that is open to all the major challenges the world is facing, with a future that appears rather bleak. There are urgent situations, whether humanitarian, environmental, educational, or public health-related. We do not claim to be able to solve all the problems, but we ardently desire to do what we can to alleviate the suffering and despair of the most deprived individuals by contributing our part to the greater good. As the saying goes, 'Little streams make big rivers.'"*

Those situations include access to food, water, healthcare, housing, education, and support for the environment. The Foundation already has fundraising schemes in different projects.

The Dufour Foundation says that they hope the establishment of the foundation will be the start of a "passionate human and philanthropic journey that we hope will make a positive difference in the world." They are encouraged in the knowledge that they know they have "loyal customers and watchmaking friends... who could provide valuable aid in this endeavour" and they also "are convinced that, together, we can make a significant difference in the lives of those in need of our help."

## THE FOUNDERS – PHILIPPE & ELISABETH DUFOUR

The life journey of Philippe & Elisabeth Dufour has been marked by challenges and an unrelenting struggle to achieve their goals. Their incredible determination to overcome the obstacles that stood in their way has allowed them to fulfil their dreams and become role models for others.

Persevering despite the difficulties encountered is an essential quality for success in life. It is important to keep in mind one's goals and to demonstrate determination and resilience in the face of obstacles that arise.

Their life journey is a source of inspiration for all those seeking to achieve their goals and make a difference in the world. Their determination, perseverance, and commitment to philanthropy are qualities that can guide us on the path to personal and collective success and well-being.

With Philippe and Elisabeth Dufour as the founders on the board, Maricela Lancoud and Daniela Dufour will be members.

## THE GOALS OF THE PHILIPPE & ELISABETH DUFOUR FOUNDATION

- Helping people in emergency and disadvantaged situations.
- Participation in the construction and renovation of hospital structures, equipment, and materials.
- Participation in environmental projects to preserve ecosystems.
- Supporting the education and learning of people in precarious situations.
- To support artisans who pass on their art to younger generations.
- Participating in the preservation of the material and immaterial heritage of artisanal art.

### **About Philippe Dufour**

#### **The Wristwatches of Philippe Dufour**

Philippe Dufour has made only around 230 watches during the course of his long and illustrious career. Apart from certain individual special commissions, the wristwatches belong to one of three key models: Grande & Petite Sonnerie minute repeater; Duality and Simplicity. Each model was designed and made by the master himself with only minor workshop assistance. The importance and desirability of Philippe Dufour's wristwatches was underlined when a Grande & Petite Sonnerie minute repeater wristwatch had the distinction of being the most expensive independently made wristwatch ever to be sold publicly.

#### **Grande & Petite Sonnerie Minute Repeater**

The first wristwatch to be made under the Philippe Dufour name, the Grande and Petite Sonnerie minute repeater is, unsurprisingly, regarded by Mr. Dufour as one of his greatest achievements. Launched at BaselWorld in 1992 in four examples, one in each color of gold and one in platinum, all with white enamel dials. A world first for a wristwatch, it catapulted Philippe Dufour immediately to the forefront of independent watchmaking. Fittingly for such an incredibly complicated wristwatch, in 1999 Mr. Dufour designed two further watches in the series with a completely transparent sapphire crystal dial in order to display the intricacy of the striking mechanism to maximum advantage. Remarkable for its user-friendly setting, a silent or strike mode can be employed with the slide at 12 o'clock, the slide at six o'clock provides the choice of either Grande or Petite sonnerie mode. In Grande Sonnerie mode, the hours and quarters are struck at every hour and quarter. Petite Sonnerie mode strike the hours and quarters only on the hour with only the quarters at the quarter hour.

#### **Duality**

Another world first, 'Duality' was the first wristwatch to incorporate twin escapements linked by a differential system. The philosophy behind the Duality was to make a watch of stunning visual simplicity yet housing a highly sophisticated movement designed, not as an eye-catching novelty, but a serious high-precision movement that had a direct effect upon the watch's timekeeping performance. Only 9 examples of the Duality were ever made.

## **Simplicity**

Simplicity's pure and minimalist design followed closely that of Duality. A tour-de-force of haute horlogerie finishing, 'Simplicity' is a time-only wristwatch that was first conceived for the Japanese market. It is the only Philippe Dufour wristwatch still being made today, although the order book is now full.

## **Biography of Monsieur Philippe Dufour**

Regarded as a living legend, and without doubt one of the most revered ambassadors for the very best independent watchmaking, Philippe Dufour's philosophy of "no compromise, no limit" has been the guiding star of his 45-year career as an independent watchmaker. Indeed, it would perhaps be more accurate to describe Philippe Dufour's devotion to the design and creation of wristwatches as a vocation, a natural calling to which he has devoted his life and in so doing has made an incalculable contribution to the advancement of the art and craft of high-precision watchmaking.

For Philippe Dufour, perfection is paramount, in his workshop in the village of Solliat in the Vallée de Joux, each watch is made entirely by hand, often with traditional vintage hand tools, to the most exacting standards of craftsmanship imaginable. Every watch is directly commissioned by the client. A Philippe Dufour wristwatch represents a complex mechanical masterpiece that presents the very definition of true luxury, its design an aesthetic holy grail of simplicity.

Born in Switzerland in 1948, Philippe Dufour graduated from the Ecole d'Horlogerie de la Vallée de Joux in 1967 and in the same year was employed by Jaeger-LeCoultre. However, his personal horological journey followed in the footsteps of several of the great modern watchmaking geniuses including George Daniels and François-Paul Journe, by the repair and restoration of antique pocket watches. Such was his reputation for excellence that in 1982, Philippe Dufour was commissioned by Audemars Piguet to create five Grande Sonnerie pocket watch movements, the last of which was delivered in 1988.

A year later, using his mastery of the Grande Sonnerie complication, Philippe Dufour began the wristwatch that was to be a pivotal moment in the recognition of his supreme watchmaking talent and in the establishment of the Philippe Dufour brand. This seminal wristwatch was the first in the world to be successfully fitted with a Grande and Petite Sonnerie minute repeater movement, one of the most challenging of all watch complications for a watchmaker to construct and, within the confined space of a wristwatch case, quite unprecedented. Born of the desire to create something that had never been achieved before, after two and a half years in the making, the Grande Sonnerie was presented at Baselworld in 1992.

Following the success of that extraordinary world's first, Philippe Dufour developed and made yet another. His next wristwatch model, christened 'Duality' was launched in 1996 and was the first wristwatch to have a double escapement. The movement is constructed with two balance wheels compensated with a central differential gear, a system based on the principle that the differential averages out the errors between the two escapements and reduces potential errors by half. Only nine examples of 'Duality' were ever made.

At Baselworld in 2000, Philippe Dufour introduced the model that is perhaps best known to collectors, 'Simplicity'. A distillation of Mr. Dufour's endless quest for perfection, the model was originally created to satisfy the high demand for his watches in Japan, it is the only current production model. Around 200 have so far been made in either gold or platinum and it is in such demand that no more orders can be fulfilled.

Philippe Dufour was unanimously awarded the 2013 Special Jury Prize at the Grand Prix d'Horlogerie de Genève. Following this exceptional honor, he was invited to become one of the members of the Jury where his decades of experience at the very highest levels of watchmaking make his contribution invaluable.

**PRESS MATERIAL:** please download [here](#)

---

## INTERNATIONAL PRESS CONTACTS

### 289 CONSULTING PR TEAM:

Marine Lemonnier-Brennan  
[marine.lemonnier@289consulting.com](mailto:marine.lemonnier@289consulting.com)  
+41 79 389 67 62

Aude Campanelli  
[aude.campanelli@289consulting.com](mailto:aude.campanelli@289consulting.com)  
+41 78 637 16 91

### About Christie's

Founded in 1766, Christie's is a world-leading art and luxury business with a physical presence in 46 countries throughout the Americas, Europe, Middle East, and Asia Pacific, and flagship [international sales hubs](#) in New York, London, Hong Kong, Paris and Geneva. Renowned and trusted for our expert live and online-only auctions, as well as bespoke [Private Sales](#), Christie's unparalleled network of specialists offers our clients a full portfolio of [global services](#), including art appraisal, art financing, international real estate and education. Christie's [auctions](#) span more than [80 art and luxury categories](#), at price points ranging from \$500 to over \$100 million. Christie's has sold 8 of the 10 most important single-owner collections in history, achieved the world record price for an artwork at auction, launched the first [fully on-chain auction platform](#) dedicated to exceptional NFT art and manages [an investment fund](#) to support innovative startups in the art market. Christie's is also committed to advancing [responsible culture](#) throughout its business and communities worldwide. To [learn more](#), browse, bid, [discover](#), and join us for the best of art and luxury at [christies.com](#) or by downloading Christie's apps.

*\* Please note when quoting estimates above that other fees will apply in addition to the hammer price - see Section D of the Conditions of Sale at the back of the sale catalogue. \*Estimates do not include buyer's premium. Sales totals are hammer price plus buyer's premium.*

###

FOLLOW CHRISTIE'S ON

