LIBRARY THE MOST BEAUTIFUL WATCH FACES

There are innumerable books devoted to watchmaking, but as astonishing as it may seem, until now there was no work, no comprehensive survey focused exclusively on dials. And yet! The dial is the face of the watch, the first thing you see, the thing that sets it apart from all the others. Moreover, it is truly an art form in itself. This gap has now been brilliantly filled by the reference work "Le Cadran, visage de la montre bracelet au 20e siècle" (*The Dial, the face of the wristwatch in the 20th century*), by Dr. Helmut Crott. A globally renowned auctioneer, watch expert and collector, the author

of this survey "codifies, explains, recounts and highlights everything the dial of a twentieth-century wristwatch embodies in terms of know-how and heritage value," as he sums up in his preface.

To do so, he recounts in minute detail the saga of the Stern Cadrans company founded in 1898 by the Stern family, which bought Patek Philippe in 1932 but whose story continued until 2016, by which time the company had been taken over by Richemont (in 2000).

Over the course of this monumental work of nearly 400 superbly illustrated pages, Helmut Crott not only tells an exciting human story; over and beyond that, he unveils with precision and detail all the technical and artistic complexities that go into producing a dial, the decorative processes, the contributing professions, not to mention an extremely well-researched and documented analysis of nearly 35 "classic and legendary dials".

These include dials that have become veritable icons, created not only for Patek Philippe, but also for Rolex, Audemars Piguet, Vacheron Constantin, Breguet, Longines and Cartier.

An essential work, but hard to get from the moment it was published (currently available in French only – but let's hope that will change). Try your luck at watchprint.com.

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