

IN-STORE

Breguet touts historical significance in Frick Collection exhibit

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By TRICIA CARR

Swiss watchmaker Breguet is appealing to watch enthusiasts through its participation in the "Precision and Splendor: Clocks and Watches at The Frick Collection," New York.

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The three historic Breguet timepieces by Abraham-Louis Breguet and his son Antoine-Louis Breguet from the late eighteenth century are the most recent creations on display. Breguet also provided major funding for the exhibit, which could strengthen its reputation in the watch industry.

"We chose the Breguet watches and one clock before we ever thought about partnering with Breguet because they happen to be the finest clocks of that time," said Ian Wardropper, director at [The Frick Collection](#), New York.

"The three watches together just made a wonderful display and showed the innovation and clock making of this era," he said.

Watches through time

The Precision and Splendor: Clocks and Watches exhibit chronicles some of the most significant European watches in the United States. It was organized by Charlotte Vignon, The Frick Collection's associate curator of decorative arts.

The pieces featured in the exhibit represent discoveries and innovations in watchmaking starting from the early sixteenth through the nineteenth century.

The display is shown in The Frick Collection's Portico Gallery, the only room in the museum where direct sunlight hits the artifacts, through Feb. 2, 2014.



Portico Gallery

The exhibit comprises 11 clocks and 14 watches from the inheritance of Winthrop Kellogg Edey as well as five clocks lent by collector Horace Wood Brock that have never before been on display in New York.

Breguet is sponsoring the exhibit with additional support from The Selz Foundation, Peter and Gail Goltra and the David Berg Foundation.

Pieces by the Breguet family are displayed together in one glass case and are accompanied by a descriptive plaque.



Breguet display

The timepiece at the top of the display case is the gold-and-silver double-dial desk watch.



Desk watch

The watch is significant for being one of the few historical timepieces with both decimal and traditional time on one face.

The decimal system was established during the French Revolution and divided the day into ten hours and the year into ten months, but it was only in use for approximately 18 months.

The Frick Collection estimates that the watch was made in April 1795 when Abraham-Louis Breguet returned to Paris from Switzerland.

The other Breguet timepieces on display are the gold pocket watch with tourbillon circa 1820 and the gilt-brass table clock circa 1530.



Table clock

The Frick Collection will incorporate the public exhibit into educational programs and seminars during its run. It also created a five-minute educational video on the table clock.

Embedded Video: <http://www.youtube.com/embed/6nhAfMmg0Rg>

Table clock video

History buff

Breguet often flaunts its historical significance to attract brand enthusiasts and collectors. In January, Breguet began to celebrate its founder's tourbillon innovation through a month-long exhibit in Geneva that will tour other cities worldwide.

The exhibit titled "Breguet, the innovator. Inventor of the Tourbillon" honors Abraham-Louis Breguet's invention of the watch regulating tourbillon in 1801.

Consumers can also learn about the exhibit and the tourbillon on Breguet's Web site through images and a video ([see story](#)).

Many luxury consumers are also patrons of the arts. Therefore, Breguet is exposing the brand to consumers who have the ability to make a purchase.

Exhibits also establish brand authority among watch enthusiasts.

"We're really proud of this new Portico Gallery that has been open for a year and a half," Mr. Wardropper said. "There is something magical about seeing the clocks in full strength of daylight."

Final Take

Tricia Carr, associate reporter on Luxury Daily, New York