

OMEGAMANIA

OMEGA WATCHES AT A GLANCE

The Masters

The water-resistant **Seamaster**, launched in 1948 was Omega's first wristwatch "line", and with it Omega started organizing its products into families. The Seamaster won the title of "Professional" in 1970 with the 600 "Ploprof" (*plongeur professionnel*) professional-diver model that went down to 1370 meters under water before it stopped functioning to win a 1972 contest for the world's most water-resistant watch. Omegamania includes many examples of the variety of automatic, quartz and chronograph Seamasters produced over almost 60 years. James Bond watches are represented by the much-abused Seamaster Planet Ocean, still sweaty from Daniel Craig's on-set stunts in the filming of *Casino Royale*. Also offered is a Seamaster actually worn by Pierce Brosnan in *Tomorrow Never Dies*.

The anti-magnetic **Railmaster**, introduced in 1957, ahead of its rival, the Rolex Milgauss, and rated to survive in 1,000 Gauss of magnetism, was designed to cope with the huge magnetic fields generated by big electric engines such as those in locomotives and in power stations. Most watches are magnetized by less than 100 Gauss, while the 8,000-Gauss magnet of a high-speed electric train delivers a watch-killing magnetic field of 500 Gauss at six feet (2 meters).

Omegamania marks the half-century of the **Speedmaster**. Launched in 1957, the year of the Sputnik, the Speedmaster walked in space with Wally Schirra in 1962, accompanied the first and last moon expeditions, helped the astronauts survive Apollo XIII, and remains in space today. The sale includes space-certified models from the batch of 35 on the MIR space station in 1993-1994. The immense variety of the Speedmaster in 50 years of production, as well as the many limited editions (mainly commemorating space achievements), make the Speedmaster a collector's favorite. But you would have to own more than 200 Speedmaster references to have a representative collection of this iconic model.

The **Flightmaster** chronograph was designed as the aviator's watch of the immediate pre-quartz age. Its second time-zone made it popular with the Boeing 707 jet set of the sixties and seventies. Among the rarest of the Omega Masters, it went through five distinct product generations into the mid 1980's.

Precision watches

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Omega was unbeatable at observatory precision competitions, winning the highest number of points ever awarded at the Kew-Teddington and Geneva observatories. Chronometers included in this sale range from one of the factory tourbillons entered for the 1948 Geneva observatory trials, to the 1978 Constellation Megaquartz complete with its marine-chronometer rating certificate from the Besançon Observatory. Varying less than one second a month the Megaquartz is 10 times more precise than an ordinary quartz watch.

Pre-1948

Ever since it first appeared on watch dials in 1894, Omega has been synonymous with variety, making a watch to celebrate anything that captures the human imagination – from the coronation of Ras Tafari, descendant of Solomon, as Haile Selassie, Emperor of Ethiopia in 1930, to the latest incarnation of James Bond in 2006. This sale includes, among Omega's early production, military watches, the first water-resistant Marine watches, jazzy Art Deco pocket-watches, watches to mark Swiss marksmanship contests and pocket chronographs with high-speed tachometers.

Special series

Special series and limited editions have been a feature of Omega watchmaking since the late sixties. Omegamania gives collectors an opportunity to acquire complete sets of the company's contemporary products, including the Museum watches, the central tourbillon with coaxial escapement as well as two pieces from the inescapable James Bond collection. Among the more unusual lots in the catalogue is the set of three "Olympic" Timers, all No. 8. Women will find the early work of the celebrated jeweller, Gilbert Albert, in a suite comprising a watch, ring and brooch designed in 1969.