



A B B E V I L L E P U B L I S H I N G G R O U P

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Publication date: April 2008

Contact: Briana Green  
(212) 366-5585 x25  
[bgreen@abbeville.com](mailto:bgreen@abbeville.com)

A Fascinating Tour of the British Museum's Priceless Watch Collection

## The History of Watches

By David Thompson  
Photography by Saul Peckham

The collection of watches held by the British Museum is unsurpassed anywhere in the world. Spanning an incredible five hundred years, it contains watches of every variety, from sixteenth-century early stackfreed watches (the first that attempted to even out the force produced by the mainspring as it wound down), to precision-made chronometers of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, to mass-produced watches of the modern era.

**THE HISTORY OF WATCHES** (\$45.00, cloth, April 2008) presents the story of the watch through major examples from the Museum's collection, representing all the principal makers of Europe and America. Here you will find samples of the craftsmanship of Thomas Tompion, a London watchmaker whose reputation stretched far and wide even in his own time, and the Swiss-born Abraham Louis Breguet, who worked in Paris supplying the best watches that money could buy to the crowned heads and aristocratic families of the western world. In contrast to the high precision of these horological giants, the collection includes some of the very first wristwatches ever

devised, less accurate than later models but beautiful and ingeniously designed in their own right. Also featured are pin-pallet lever watches made for the mass market during the last two centuries by companies such as Waterbury and Ingersoll, along with early examples of electro-mechanical watches and products of the quartz revolution.

Eighty watches are discussed in all, accompanied by over 250 finely detailed photographs capturing everything from the ornamentation of faces to the intricacy of gears. The most comprehensive volume of its kind, **THE HISTORY OF WATCHES** allows the reader a rare glimpse into the inner workings, as well as the outer beauty, of these magnificent timepieces.

#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR AND PHOTOGRAPHER

**David Thompson** is Curator of the Horological Collections in the Department of Prehistory & Europe at the British Museum. **Saul Peckham** has been a photographer for the British Museum for twenty years. He was previously the photographer for David Thompson's volume *Clocks*.

#### **THE HISTORY OF WATCHES**

By David Thompson

Publication Date: April 2008

176 pages; 250 illustrations in full color; cloth, \$45.00

ISBN 978-0-7892-0918-4

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