



VACHERON CONSTANTIN
GENÈVE

“Classic with a Twist”

An exhibition celebrating
Vacheron Constantin’s creativity and
boldness at the dawn of the 20th century.

New York from July to November 2021

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- This year, Vacheron Constantin is celebrating the 100th anniversary of the American 1921 watch, a timepiece that has become a much-loved icon among collectors.
- The “Classic with a twist” exhibition pays tribute to a spirit in which technique and style converse in subtle harmony between the conventional and the atypical.
- From July to November 2021, Vacheron Constantin North American Flagship 28 East 57 Street New York, NY.

July 2021, New York - On the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the American 1921 watch, the “Classic with a twist” exhibition celebrates the creative freedom of Vacheron Constantin at the dawn of the 20th century. From the 1910s to the 1930s, Vacheron Constantin was particularly renowned for its extraordinary artistic effervescence. The wide range of different-shaped ‘form’ cases and special displays on show in this exhibition reflects an exciting chapter in the history of Vacheron Constantin.

“Classic with a twist” is first and foremost a story of freedom, the tale of a singular style that emerged in the context of the Roaring Twenties and the Art Deco movement through a daring variety of shapes, designs and geometrical figures: atypical shapes, strict squares and surprising lozenges, elegant cushions, as well as a few examples of special displays and off-centre indications. The “Classic with a twist” exhibition bears witness to the creative energy expended by Vacheron Constantin between 1910 and the end of the 1930s: an exhilarating period conducive to making daring moves, flouting convention and opening up to all kinds of stylistic fancies.

Considered an exclusively feminine accessory at the end of the 19th century, it was at the turn of the 20th century that the wristwatch began to conquer the hearts of men, won over by the functionality and comfort of keeping track of time on their wrists. True to its pioneering spirit, Vacheron Constantin showed an early awareness of the evolution in the art of wearing a watch by creating – in 1889 already – a ladies’ model on a bangle-type bracelet, probably the oldest wristwatch in the company’s heritage known to date. Thanks to the considerable progress made in the miniaturisation of its movements, Vacheron Constantin freely expanded its field of creative expression through an incredible variety of avant-garde designs. Tonneau (barrel), lozenge, rectangle, cushion, oval, curved or cambered silhouettes: through the choice of pieces on display, “Classic with a twist” reminds us that all the iconic case shapes we know today were created between the 1910s and 1920s.



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Cushion-shaped watch in 18K yellow gold, crown at 11 o'clock, Ref. 11677 - 1921

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Quintessence of an era

The stylistic abundance of the “Classic with a twist” exhibition illustrates Vacheron Constantin’s ability to capture the spirit of the times and the customs of its era. Above and beyond watchmaking, the exhibition reflects a way of life, the societal changes taking place at the dawn of the 20th century, as well as the evolving tastes and trends in clothing. It tells the story of the Roaring Twenties, the new-found sense of freedom and lightness, the artistic effervescence, the good life and the ebullient cultural world. It also traces the rise of the Art Deco movement and the appeal of a geometrical aesthetic that emerged in architecture as well as in art and watchmaking. Finally, it evokes the new spirit taking hold of Europe and the United States, a market in which Vacheron Constantin had developed strong ties from the outset, having been present there since 1832.

It was within this euphoric context that the Manufacture was one of the first to adopt the cushion shape. Between 1919 and 1921, it produced a few models intended exclusively for the American market. With its avant-garde design consisting of a cushion-shaped case, an atypical diagonal display and an offset crown, this rare timepiece particularly sought-after among collectors is celebrating its 100th anniversary this year. Unveiled on the occasion of the “Classic with a twist” exhibition, this original model is one of the most striking examples of the creative energy that the Manufacture has demonstrated throughout its existence.



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An American legend

Adopted by dandy drivers probably drawn to the possibility of reading the time diagonally without having to let go of the typically large steering wheel of 1920s cars, this legendary watch was also much appreciated by progressive personalities of the time. Among them was Reverend Samuel Parkes-Cadman. A clergyman and newspaper writer renowned for his fight for racial equality and against anti-Semitism, he was also one of the first to use radio to broadcast his sermons to millions of listeners. While on holiday in Montreux, he acquired two of the watches produced at the time, one with luminescent numerals and the other with black enamelled Arabic numerals. This original model is displayed in the “Classic with a twist” exhibition and is one of the most striking examples of the creative energy that the Maison has demonstrated throughout its existence, particularly at the dawn of the 20th century.

- **Elongated barrel-shaped watch in 18K yellow gold, Ref. 10144 – 1915**

At the turn of the century, the wristwatch gradually became an everyday accessory, potentially a piece of jewellery. The *tonneau* (barrel) shape naturally made its appearance thanks to its seamlessly integrated strap lugs and case. In 1915, Vacheron Constantin interpreted it in an elongated shape made of 18K yellow gold. The matt silver-toned dial of this reference is swept over by blued steel “*oeil de perdrix*” hands and punctuated by 12 elegant black enamelled Arabic numerals and an inner minute track.

- **Barrel-shaped watch in 18K yellow gold, Ref. 10594 – 1915**

In the 1910^s, Vacheron Constantin expended considerable effort on miniaturising its calibres and endowing its creations with the finesse and elegance required for wearing time on the wrist. Accuracy, functionality, discretion and ergonomics are at the heart of this barrel-shaped watch produced in 1915. An elegant 18K yellow gold case frames a silver-toned dial rimmed by a minute track and graced with black enamelled Arabic numerals and “*oeil de perdrix*” hands.

- **Wide special-shaped wristwatch in 18K yellow gold, Ref. 10970 – 1917**

Neither rectangular nor oval, this 1917 timepiece bears witness to Vacheron Constantin’s creative boldness at the dawn of the Roaring Twenties through its generously curved 18K yellow gold case. This inventiveness is also reflected in the design of the matt silver-toned dial highlighted by black enamelled Arabic numerals of various sizes, while an outer minute track and “*oeil de perdrix*” hands strike a more traditional note.



- Elongated barrel-shaped watch in 18K yellow gold, Ref. 10144 – 1915
- Barrel-shaped watch in yellow gold, Ref. 10954 – 1915
- Wide special wristwatch in 18K yellow gold, Ref. 10970 – 1917

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- **Cushion-shaped watch in 18K yellow gold, crown at 11 o’clock, Ref. 11677 – 1921**
Between 1919 and 1921, Vacheron Constantin produced two series of six cushion-shaped watches with offset dials and offset crowns. Two of these were sold in 1928 to the famous American clergyman and newspaper writer, Reverend Samuel Parkes-Cadman, including this 1919 model in 18K yellow gold with a crown at 11 o’clock and a white enamel dial bearing enamelled Arabic numerals and a small seconds hand between 4 and 5 o’clock
- **Cushion-shaped single-pusher chronograph wristwatch in 18K yellow gold, Ref. 11059 – 1928**
Horological complications were also progressively miniaturised to fit smaller cases, thus enhancing elegance and comfort on the wrist. This ever-greater technical sophistication is exemplified in this 18K yellow gold cushion-shaped single-pusher chronograph produced in 1928. As far as indications are concerned, there is a clear focus on legibility with a dial punctuated by 10 painted Arabic numerals, a graduated pulsometer scale for 30 beats and gold “leaf-type” hands.
- **Cushion-shaped minute repeater wristwatch in white and pink gold, Ref. 11243 – 1930**
From the 1920^s onwards, the minute repeater mechanism became the third type of complication sufficiently miniaturised to be incorporated into a wristwatch case. In 1930, Vacheron Constantin chose to house this sophisticated mechanism in a cushion-shaped case in white and pink gold. Its refined style extends onto the vertical brushed silver-toned dial, swept over by pink gold “*oeil de perdrix*” hands.



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- Cushion-shaped watch in 18K yellow gold, crown at 11 o’clock, Ref. 11677 – 1921
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- Cushion-shaped single-pusher chronograph wristwatch in 18K yellow gold, Ref. 11059 – 1928



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Marking the 100th anniversary of the Historiques American 1921 watch, the “Classic with a twist” exhibition celebrates the creativity and boldness of Vacheron Constantin at the dawn of the 20th century. Through a selection of avant-garde historical pieces, from special-shaped ‘form’ watches to original displays, this exhibition mirrors an era marked by the carefree spirit of the Roaring Twenties and the aesthetic influence of the Art Deco movement. From the 1910^s to the 1930^s, from Geneva to the United States, it recounts the tastes of the time and the evolution in the art of wearing a watch. A pivotal period that Vacheron Constantin was able to accompany by developing an unexpected aesthetic vocabulary in which technique and style converse in subtle harmony between the conventional and the atypical.



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Founded in 1755, Vacheron Constantin is the world's oldest watch Manufacture in continuous production for over 265 years, faithfully perpetuating a proud heritage of watchmaking excellence and stylistic sophistication through generations of master craftsmen.

At the pinnacle of Haute Horlogerie and understated elegance, the Maison creates timepieces with unique technical and aesthetic signatures, and an extremely high level of finishing touches.

Vacheron Constantin brings to life unparalleled heritage and a spirit of innovation through its collections: Patrimony, Traditionnelle, Métiers d'Art, Overseas, Fiftysix, Historiques and Égérie. It also offers its discerning clientele of connoisseurs the rare opportunity to acquire unique and bespoke timepieces by means of its "Les Cabinotiers" department.

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