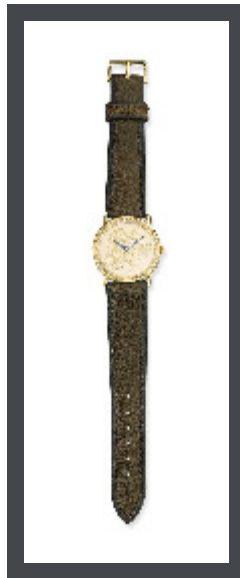


Sale 9698, Lot 175

AN 18K GOLD AND DIAMOND WRISTWATCH, BY HANS ERNI



Price Realized \$3,525 (Price includes buyer's premium)

Estimate \$3,000 - \$4,000

Sale Information

Sale 9698

IMPORTANT JEWELRY AND FINE WRISTWATCHES

6 March 2001, Los Angeles

Lot Description

AN 18K GOLD AND DIAMOND WRISTWATCH, BY HANS ERNI

With nickel-finished jewelled lever movement, the gold dial depicting a bird within a circular-cut diamond surround, the reverse bearing a molded gold double head, to the brown leather band, 9 *ins.*

Signed and designed by Hans Erni; signed and manufactured by Piaget

HANS ERNI

Versatile, whimsical, biomorphic, and massive figures are found in the work of the Swiss artist Hans Erni whose creations evoke feelings of a simple life. Initially trained as a draftsman-architect at the Ecole des Arts et Metiers in Lucerne from 1927-28, Erni went on to study at the Academie Julian in Paris between 1928-29, and later the

Vereinigten Staatsschulen für freie und angewandte Kunst in Berlin. Enri's kaleidoscope of talent included sculpture, stage design and jewelry design. Erni developed an admiration of ancient Greek art during his years at the Vereinigte Staatsschulen, paying homage to it in a variety of works. These works were line drawings which focused attention on the mass of the human form and were often signed by the pseudonym "Francois Greque" or the "French Greek". Such works are reminiscent of the lithographs of Greek myths Picasso created during one stage of his career. By 1935, after he established himself with the Abstraction-Creation group, he participated in a competition organized by the Kunstmuseum in Lucern and won. The prize was the honor of executing his fresco, which would be titled *The Three Graces of Lucerne*, in the town's rail station. It was from this moment on that he was recognized for and subsequently commissioned for his frescoes. His initial interest in jewelry design is difficult to determine, but it can probably be traced to his set and costume design work for various opera productions in the mid-1940s. Furthermore, his sudden spark of interest in ceramics in the early 1950s may have triggered his study of structure, construction, and subsequently the fabrications of models for jewelry.