

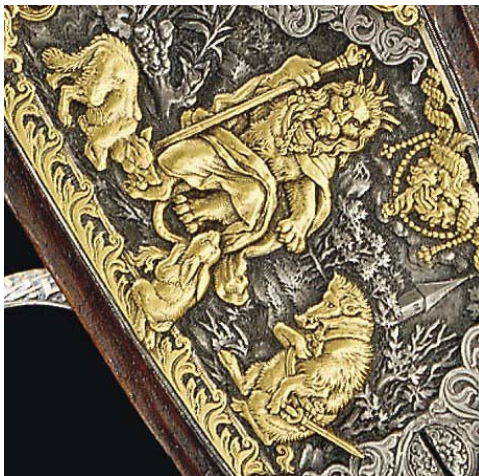
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VARIETY AND ORIGINALITY LEAD CHRISTIE'S SALE OF EXCEPTIONAL SPORTING GUNS



**A unique F Schmölzer engraved 16-bore / 7 x 65 (R) over-and-under combination rifle-shotgun by Josef Koschat (Ferlach) No. 280
Estimate: £70,000-100,000**

**Fine Sporting Guns, Rifles and Vintage Firearms
Wednesday, 18 May 2005**

London – Christie's is pleased to announce the forthcoming sale of *Fine Sporting Guns, Rifles and Vintage Firearms* on May 18th. This sale will continue to follow the department's approach of presenting streamlined sales that offer only the finest examples of the finest marques of sporting guns and firearms.

Leading the sale is an exceptional and unique over-and-under combination rifle-shotgun by Josef Koschat (Ferlach) (estimate: £70,000-100,000). This unusual firearm is made particularly distinctive by the layered engraving and gilding that adorns every part of the action and fittings. The engraving of the gun follows the story of Reineke Fuchs, one of the

most famous fables in German literature. The fable tells the story of a cunning fox and his relationships with other animals. At the beginning of the story, the fox is outwitted by far weaker animals. However, as the story unfolds, he earns respect by healing the sick lion, before killing him with poison at the end of the tale. Unusually, the story is thought to reflect the success of craft and falsehood while honesty goes unrewarded. The gun was engraved by F. Schmölzer, a renowned painter and jewellery designer, and portrays the story of Reineke Fuchs with exquisite depth and detail.

Also on offer is a fine pair of 12-Bore sidelock ejector guns by J. Purdey, made in 1950 (estimate: £25,000-35,000). This pair of guns was a gift from the last Shah of Iran to Princess Marie Gabrielle de Savoie, the daughter of the last King of Italy. The Princess is a keen lady shot, and had an extra set of 25-inch barrels made by Purdey for the purpose of shooting in Italy and Spain.

The sale will offer approximately 100 lots, and will include shotguns, double-rifles and an interesting collection of books related to firearms. Estimates will range from £1,000 to £100,000, and marques in the sale will include Purdey, Holland and Holland, Boss and some more exotic names.

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Images available on request
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