

MAIL

Purdey opens up sealed bid auction for bicentennial collection

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Purdey's Trio of Guns

By JOE MCCARTHY

British gun and rifle maker James Purdey & Sons is conducting an auction by mail for its bicentennial "Trio of Guns" collection that concludes Dec. 19.

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Luxury Daily

The brand infused much of its history into the trio of guns, likely generating substantial interest from gun enthusiasts. Although a by-mail auction seems ineffectual, it underscores the exclusive nature of the brand and the limited target audience.

"The Purdey Bicentenary Trio is completely unique and celebrates 200 years of sporting excellence, heritage, innovation and craftsmanship," said Elizabeth Walker, events and marketing executive at [James Purdey & Sons](#), London.

"This collection of two guns and one rifle is significant in marking key milestones in Purdey's history," she said. "For example, the classic side-by-side sporting shotgun which features Purdey's Beesley action and the traditional rose and scroll engraving representing our heritage, the Damascus design on the over-and-under which demonstrates innovation in design and the elaborate engraving on the .470 double rifle representing the craftsmanship of our gunmakers."

"The owner of this unique piece of artistry will have the rarefied opportunity to possess a piece of Purdey's history."

Trio for one

Purdey first unveiled its trio of guns, of which it has produced a single set, at the start of the year.



Purdey Trio Express Rifle

Purdey's Trio collection features guns that highlight the brand's skill and attention to detail throughout its 200-year history. Each gun will be stamped with Purdey's bicentenary mark and a special serial number ([see story](#)).



Purdey Trio Damascus Over and Under 20-bore

The set includes two shotguns and one double rifle, along with an oak and leather travel case and a custom-built glass display case.



Purdey Trio Side-By-Side 12-bore

The brand is now opening the guns up to interested buyers via a sealed-bid auction.

Purdey encourages interested consumers to write the brand for further information about the guns and how to proceed with the bidding process.

Accordingly, as the auction proceeds, bidders will likely increase their offers.

Sealed bid auctions necessarily trim down the potential bidding pool to only the most serious buyers, a fact all participating consumers will be aware of.

Purdey will close the bidding on Dec. 19 and will inform the winner in writing by Jan. 16, 2015. In addition to the guns and their accompanying accouterments, the winner will receive a book that captures the step-by-step creation of the trio.

Catching up

The form of the auction is splintering in a few directions, with major auction houses looking to improve in the digital space.

For instance, International auction house Sotheby's has joined forces with online auctioneer eBay to develop a digital platform that enables consumers to easily browse artwork, antiques and collectibles.

The partnership will likely raise eBay's stature in the auctioneer sector, as its work with Sotheby's will introduce the online shopping platform to the international art business. For Sotheby's, partnering with eBay will have a similar effect by making the auctioneer more accessible to global consumers ([see story](#)).

Also, auction house and art seller Christie's is capitalizing on the interest of fine horology with the launch of its online Watch Shop. Christie's Watch Shop has rare, vintage and luxury timepieces available for immediate purchase, year round via ecommerce ([see story](#)).

However, slower forms of the auction still hold a varnished appeal for some buyers looking for certain items.

"Purdey is a brand which by its very nature is discreet and principled and thus the sealed bid allows the bidder the time to be considered about his or her purchase," Ms. Walker said.

Final Take

Joe McCarthy, staff writer on Luxury Daily, New York

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