



19c Neo Rococo Dueling Pistols Pair Carved Wood Engraved Steel Liege Case



4 500 EUR

Signature : Liège arms manufactory

Period : 19th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Metal

Length : 53 cm

Width : 31,5 cm

Height : 8,2 cm

Description

This pair of magnificent percussion duelling pistols, crafted in the mid-19th century, in all likelihood in Liège, the recognised centre of European gunsmithing of that era, recalls a time when a weapon was an object of pride and a mark of its owner's taste. The octagonal barrels with engraving at the breech and muzzle, the percussion locks (which replaced the flintlock in the 1820s to 1840s) with expressive "gooseneck" hammers, the shaped pommel, the mounting screws: all these details are executed with exquisite ornament in the Neo-Rococo style with foliate scrolls, which demonstrates the virtuoso handwork of a Liège engraver. The grips and forestock, made from a solid piece of walnut, are distinguished by refined forms and are richly decorated with relief carving, executed by the

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confident hand of a carver. Such a level of finish indicates the manufacture not of utilitarian weapons, but of pistols of the high price segment of that time. This pair of pistols will undoubtedly adorn any collection or interior, bringing to it the aesthetics and spirit of nobility of the 19th century, when dignity and honour were placed on the same scale as life, and the duel was one of the instruments of justice.

DETAILS: Attribution / Maker: Presumably, the complete assembly of the pistols was carried out in a workshop in Liège (Belgium) or elsewhere in Europe (France, Germany), using barrels manufactured in Liège. The breech of the barrels bears a proof mark in an oval cartouche (partially concealed by the stock): ELG with a star, the mark of the Liège Proof House (Banc d'Épreuves de Liège), in use from 1846 to 1893. The mark indicates that the barrels were submitted to the compulsory proof test at Liège. Gold-inlaid numbers "1" and "2" on the barrels. Period: Mid-19th century (circa 1846 to the 1860s). Materials: Steel, wood, white metal (likely nickel silver). Pistols dimensions (approx., each): overall length 42 cm (16.5 inches), barrel length 26 cm (10.2 inches), thickness 4.1 cm (1.6 inches), height 17.5 cm (6.9 inches), calibre approx. 11 mm (0.43 inches). Condition: Overall in good condition, with age-appropriate wear. There are brass-brazed repairs to the hammer necks of both pistols; a decorative part of the metal trigger guard is missing on one pistol; there are minor cracks, chips, and dents on the wooden stocks. The hammers on both pistols can be cocked, indicating a working trigger mechanism; the bores have not been inspected for pitting. Case dimensions (approx.): height 8.2 cm (3.2 inches), length 53 cm (20.9 inches), width 31.5 cm (12.4 inches). Case: Later case, not original to the pistols; the lid lining features the gold-stamped Gothic-script inscription "M.Z.Z. Szulc". Accessories are absent. Provenance: Swedish private collection. Shipping: Approx. weight of each pistol 1.05 kg, total weight of the case with pistols 6.6 kg; packed approx. weight 8-9 kg.

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