Jerry Garcia’s Legendary Guitar, “Wolf,”
to be auctioned in support of the Southern Poverty Law Center

For millions of passionate Grateful Dead fans, there is only one “Wolf,” Jerry Garcia’s legendary guitar. Customized by luthier Doug Irwin, and labeled “D. Irwin 001,” Wolf was delivered to Jerry and first appeared in a 1973 New York City performance the Grateful Dead gave for the Hell’s Angels. Over the following two decades, Wolf became almost as well known as the performer himself as it was played in countless concerts and on treasured recordings throughout Jerry's fabled career. Indeed, the 1977 film “The Grateful Dead Movie” directed by Jerry features extensive footage of the beloved musician onstage playing Wolf.

Years after the musician’s passing, Wolf returned to Doug and was sold in a 2002 Guernsey’s auction conducted at NYC’s electric Studio 54, where it fetched close to $1 million, more than doubling the then existing world record for any guitar ever sold. Now, Wolf’s buyer, wishing to support the important efforts of the Southern Poverty Law Center and its continuing fight against racism and hate groups, has returned Wolf to Guernsey’s for an unprecedented one lot auction of this most treasured instrument. The proceeds of the winning high bid on this extraordinary guitar will go to SPLC. The Guernsey’s event, additionally supported by the Relix Group, will be held on May 31st following an evening of music played by a lineup of extraordinary musicians live at NYC’s fabulous Brooklyn Bowl. Absentee bidders will also be accommodated.

From San Francisco’s Winterland Ballroom to NYC’s Palladium to Egypt’s Great Pyramids, Jerry and Wolf travelled, appearing in front of massive, passionate audiences. It is no wonder that the devoted Deadhead who purchased the Wolf in 2002 has said, “I’ve been a fan of The Dead since I was a kid, and playing this iconic guitar over the past 15 years has been a privilege. But the time is right for Wolf to do some good. My wife and I have long supported the efforts of the Southern Poverty Law Center, and if ever we needed the SPLC, we sure do need them now.”

Rarely, if ever, has an item as memorable and noteworthy as Wolf been sold to benefit such a worthy cause. Guernsey’s is thrilled that the return of Wolf will go a long way to combat poverty, racism and injustice across the country. The auction of Wolf comes only days after Amazon's upcoming release of the Martin Scorsese-produced documentary about Jerry Garcia and the Grateful Dead, “Long Strange Trip.”

Plans are now afoot to make May 31st at the Brooklyn Bowl a spectacular evening of music followed by the thrilling sale of Wolf. Those interested in bidding should visit www.guernseys.com or contact the auction house in New York at 212-794-2280.

Photos: (B/W image of Jerry Garcia playing Wolf) Roberto Rabanne
(Color photo of Wolf with poster + all other photos of Wolf) Guernsey’s
ABOUT GUERNSEY'S
In its forty first year, Guernsey’s has built a reputation as the auction house known for representing the most extraordinary properties. From the largest auction in history (the ocean liner SS United States) to vintage racing cars on to artwork from the Soviet Union, pre-Castro Cuban cigars and the $3 million baseball, the firm has few rivals when it comes to the presentation of wildly diverse collections. The John F. Kennedy, Franklin Roosevelt, Princess Diana, Elvis Presley, Jerry Garcia, John Coltrane, Dick Clark, Mickey Mantle, Duke Ellington and the Beatles events were all conducted by Guernsey’s.

The Holocaust-related Dr. Hans Sachs Poster Collection, antique gold jewelry and rare emeralds from the wreck of the legendary Spanish galleon Nuestra Senora de Atocha, and the complete archive of Rosa Parks are among the auction house’s most recent projects.

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