

SA968467

A Cased William Crookes Spintharoscope

Price

Sold**Item Reference: SA968467****Date of manufacture: 1900**

Dimensions

Height = 6 cm (2.4")

Width = 3 cm (1.2")

Depth = 3 cm (1.2")

Description

For sale an Edwardian period cased William Crookes Spintharoscope. Comprised of a 1" diameter brass tube, one and a half inches in length, with convex eyepiece to one end for observation and ebonite base with knurled edge and adjusting wheel to one side. The side of the tube is engraved "Spintharoscope - W. Crookes 1903". This fascinating instrument retains all of its original lacquer and is complete with its original two part card and leather case. The below is an extract from "Half Lives: The Unlikely History of Radium" by Lucy Jane Santos which provides a very good insight into both Crookes unlikely discovery and the social impact at the time. "Radium became closely associated with high society, fashion and entertainment when Sir William Crookes (creator of the aforementioned tube) debuted his new invention, the spintharoscope (from the Greek word spintharis, meaning a scintillation or flash of light), at a meeting of the prestigious Royal Society on 15 May 1903 in London. Crookes later explained how he had been experimenting with a mixture of radium salts when he accidentally knocked over some crystals, scattering them over a zinc sulphide screen (Crookes, like man...

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