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## American Union Case Seiler Gutta-percha Ambrotype Photo Frame "bird's Nest" With Doves, 1860



425 EUR

Signature : Seiler

Period : 19th century

Condition : Très bon état

Material : Other

Width : 8,5

Height : 9,6

Depth : 1,8

### Description

A superb and rare American Union Case dating from approximately 1860-1865. This photographic case is made of a dark brown thermoplastic material, often described in the literature as gutta-percha or Union Case composition. It is marked "SEILER," the engraver who created this remarkable design. An almost identical example is held in the collections of the Science Museum in London. The central medallion depicts a young boy reaching out toward a nest containing two doves. This scene is surrounded by two concentric rows of heart-shaped motifs. The first row consists of classical hearts, while the second features richly stylized hearts of Gothic inspiration. The whole is framed by an elegant floral design, making this model one of the most refined and symbolic

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Union Cases of its era. In Victorian symbolic language, hearts represent love and fidelity, the nest evokes home and family, while the two doves symbolize peace, union, and a lasting marriage. This carefully crafted composition gives this model a special significance that goes far beyond the more common floral or geometric designs. The interior is entirely original and retains its gilded brass frame (preserved), velvet lining, hinges, and original clasp. The box still contains its original photographic portrait depicting two children. Based on its construction and visible characteristics, it is most likely an ambrotype (collodion positive on glass) produced during the same period. The slight brownish discoloration visible around the image is due to the natural aging of this early photographic process. The entire piece is preserved in a very fine original condition, with no visible breaks or restorations. The hinges and clasp function perfectly. A remarkable collector's item for enthusiasts of early photography, Victorian decorative arts, and American Union Cases. A particularly attractive and well-documented example, whose decoration and the engraver of the die have now been identified. A virtually identical Union Case, marked SEILER, is held in the collections of the Science Museum in London. Dimensions Height: 9.6 cm Width: 8.5 cm Depth: 1.8 cm Origin: United States Period: circa 1860-1865 Materials: pressed thermoplastic composition (gutta-percha / Union Case composition), gilded brass, velvet, and original photograph (probably an ambrotype). Thank you for visiting. Best regards, Ben