Antique Berliner Style No. 4 "metal Case" Gramophone. England, Circa 1902.



5 300 EUR

Period : 20th century

Condition : Bon état

Description

View in 360°:
https://ardhamin.sirv.com/2026/09/GR-E-607/GR-E-607.spin
Watch the video on YouTube:
https://youtu.be/biR1zZ-fLkoMagnificent and rare antique Berliner Style No. 4 "Metal Case" gramophone, an original period example dating to circa 1902. This is one of the less frequently encountered models from the first generation of Gramophone Company machines, particularly interesting for its distinctive cast-iron housing and limited commercial success. This example comes from a private collection and retains a historically significant configuration, with original nickel plating, a Concert reproducer, and its original motor with a three-weight speed governor.

Dealer

IberAntiques
Antiques and Collectibles
Tel : +34 976 45 39 31
Mobile : +34 617 46 85 03

Calle Juan Cabrero, 18 Local AA
Zaragoza 50007

The gramophone rests on its square varnished wooden base, with molded edges and an attractive patina developed over more than 120 years. Its distinctive cast-iron housing retains the original nickel plating, with minor marks, wear, and surface aging consistent with its age. The number 10404 is engraved on its surface. The wooden base still shows traces of the manufacturer's original identification decal, of which only a few remnants survive.

The elegant conical nickel-plated zinc horn retains its original period finish, with minor irregularities and surface signs of age. This type of horn is documented for the Style No. 4 beginning in October 1902, a feature consistent with the proposed dating of this example. The gramophone also retains its characteristic movable wooden arm, known as the "travelling arm", and its curved nickel-plated metal support, both essential elements of this model's historic configuration.

The gramophone is fitted with an original Gramophone & Typewriter Ltd. Concert reproducer, retaining the circular inscription "GRAMOPHONE & TYPEWRITER LTD. - LONDON - BERLIN". It shows signs of use and age consistent with the rest of the machine. The connection to the horn is made through a stitched leather elbow, possibly replaced during a later intervention. The turntable retains its original metal construction, although the green felt has been replaced.

The spring-wound motor is entirely original, including all its internal components and the three-weight speed governor. This configuration matches that documented on the example illustrated by Brian Oakley and Christopher Proudfoot in their book "His Master's Gramophone". The mechanism has been personally inspected and is in perfect working order, as demonstrated in the video accompanying our description. Because removing and correctly refitting the motor housing cover is particularly delicate, especially when positioning the speed governor, we have chosen not to dismantle it simply to photograph the interior. Nevertheless, we guarantee that all components of the motor are original to the period.

The gramophone is in excellent condition for a machine more than 120 years old. The cast-iron housing and horn retain their original nickel-plated finishes, while the Concert reproducer, movable wooden arm, and its supports preserve the historic configuration of this uncommon model. Particularly noteworthy is the preservation of the complete original motor, whose mechanism corresponds to the configuration documented for the Berliner Style No. 4. The machine shows natural signs of use and aging consistent with its period, as well as the previously noted replacement of the turntable felt and possible replacement of the leather elbow.

The gramophone comes with three original period Berliner discs, one of which can be heard in the video accompanying our description. These are particularly interesting additions, allowing the owner to enjoy historic recordings on a gramophone contemporary with those early commercial records. With its limited commercial distribution, excellent preservation, and original

principal components, this Berliner Style No. 4 is a particularly desirable piece for collectors of early gramophones. Its attractive nickel-plated finish, fully functional mechanism, and three included original discs make this gramophone a particularly appealing addition to a specialized collection.

Measurements: Wooden base: 25 x 25 cm (9.84 x 9.84 in). Approximate height of the motor housing: 12 cm (4.72 in). Horn: 42 cm long (16.54 in), with a bell diameter of 25 cm (9.84 in).

History of the Berliner Style No. 4 "Metal Case" Gramophone:

The Berliner Style No. 4 was introduced in November 1900 and remained on the market until approximately October 1903. It was one of the models developed during the early years of the Gramophone Company and was distinguished by its characteristic cast-iron housing mounted on a wooden base, an unusual construction among Berliner gramophones of that period. Because of this distinctive feature, collectors also know it as the "Metal Case", a name still used today.

The metal housing was offered in different finishes, primarily bronzed or nickel-plated, while nickel-plated zinc horns are documented beginning in October 1902. These later horns replaced or supplemented the black horns initially offered. The horizontally positioned movable oak arm is another characteristic feature of this model, along with the distinctive arrangement of

its mechanism inside the cast-iron housing.

Its spring motor was technically similar to the one used in the Berliner Style No. 5, although the No. 4 model was sold at a slightly lower price. According to historical documentation, versions equipped with two-weight speed governors existed, but three-weight configurations are also documented. In fact, the example illustrated in "His Master's Gramophone" by Brian Oakley and Christopher Proudfoot features this latter arrangement, matching that of our machine.

During the period in which the model was marketed, the types of reproducers fitted to it also evolved, from the early Clark-Johnson types to the later Concert reproducers. The combination of an original Concert reproducer and a nickel-plated zinc horn is consistent with a configuration dating to approximately 1902 or the immediately following years.

Despite its quality of construction and the mechanical features it shared with other contemporary Berliner models, the Style No. 4 had limited commercial distribution. Oakley and Proudfoot note that sales were low, which helps explain how infrequently this model appears today in collections and on the specialized market. Its distinctive design, combined with its limited commercial success, makes it one of the most interesting models for collectors of early Berliner gramophones.

The designation New Style No. 4 was subsequently also used for a model derived from

the Monarch Junior, which should not be confused with the earlier cast-iron-housed Style No. 4. Our example belongs to this first version, marketed between 1900 and 1903, and retains a fully documented historical configuration, with original nickel plating, a Concert reproducer, and a three-weight speed governor.

The recording featured in our video: "La alegría de la huerta" - Banda del Regimiento de Navarra, circa 1903-1904.

In our video, you can hear the polka "La alegría de la huerta", performed by the Banda del Regimiento de Navarra, on an original early 20th-century disc. The recording appears on a "Disque pour Gramophone" record with a black label and gold lettering, retaining the company's characteristic angel emblem. The label includes references to The Gramophone & Typewriter Ltd., the word "Barcelona", and catalog number 60021. This is one of the three original period discs included with the gramophone.

The piece is associated with "La alegría de la huerta", one of Federico Chueca's best-known zarzuelas, which premiered in Madrid in 1900. The record label credits "Chueca y Valverde" and identifies the selection as a polka. The performance is by a military band, one of the types of instrumental ensembles that played an important role in spreading Spanish popular and theatrical music during the earliest years of commercial recording.

The disc is listed in historical discographies under

catalog number 60021 and matrix number 7132 t. The recording can be dated approximately to 1903-1904, although the exact recording session date has not been confirmed. It was made using the acoustic recording process employed before the introduction of electrical recording and microphones, which accounts for the distinctive sound characteristics of these early commercial records.

Hearing this historic performance on an early 20th-century Berliner Style No. 4 provides an opportunity to appreciate how Spanish recordings of that period sounded when played on a machine contemporary with the records themselves. Its sound retains the distinctive characteristics and limitations of early acoustic recording technology, offering a direct connection to the earliest years of the recording industry. The original disc is one of the three period examples included with the gramophone.

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