



## HistoLab

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### Electrophorus

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branch of study: electricity / electrostatics

inventor: Johann Carl Wilcke, around 1761

The Electrophorus is an electrostatic generator, developed by Wilcke around 1761 and popularised by Volta towards the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

The electrophorus consists of a resin body that is placed onto a grounded metallic plate. The resin is charged by friction, e.g. by rubbing it with an animal's fur. Then a metal plate with an insulated handle is placed on top of the electrophorus. The plate is grounded by touching it or by connecting it to the grounded bottom plate. After lifting the plate with the handle from the Electrophorus, a spark can be drawn. Since the grounding results in a charging of the metal plate through electrostatic induction, the production of sparks can be reproduced for a long time. Therefore, Volta called the apparatus "elettroforo perpetuo" (perpetual electrophorus).



Besides to the Electrophorus as described by Volta our HistoLab also holds a [Double Electrophorus](#) on the model of Lichtenberg.

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