

1975 dated bust of Maxim Gorky, the famous author considered the father of Soviet literature and the originator of Socialist Realism.

Large 9.5" tall x 7" wide size. Artistic rendering showing him in his trademark fedora, in a thoughtful pose. Of the wide array of official Soviet portrait sculptures, this one stands out as unusual for being a civilian and in a relaxed pose and dress. Likewise, it is a complicated casting, with an open space under the forearm, which requires a special mold that will release it. Uncommon.

Statue is in cast metal with heft. Artist signature "Torch" and 1975 date on the reverse. Condition is excellent showing little age.

Maxim Gorky (meaning Maxim the Bitter one) pen name of Aleksey Maximovich Pyeshkov, 1868-1936. Gorky is considered the father of Soviet literature and the founder of the doctrine of socialist realism.

Instilled by his grandmother with a love of romantic tales, Gorky began a nomadic life at 12, wandering the Volga area. He educated himself, an experience he describes in *My Universities* (1923).

He held dozens of menial jobs, publishing his first story in 1892. His articles exposed local corruption and he soon lost his job.

In 1898 Gorky's collection *Sketches and Stories* was published by a radical press and the author was an immediate sensation. These romantic tales concern the vigor and nobility of the Russian peasants and workers. About 1900 he turned to writing novels of social realism. Of these, *Mother* (1906) had the greatest impact on Soviet literature. Describing the awakening of revolutionary feeling in an ill-treated peasant woman, it became the prototype of the revolutionary novel.

At this time Gorky became close friends with Leo Tolstoy and Chekhov, about both of whom he later wrote superb *Reminiscences*. Gorky donated most of his income to the revolutionary movement. He was arrested frequently but treated carefully because of his popularity. The Czar rescinded his election to the Academy of Sciences in 1902, whereupon Chekhov and Korolenko resigned in protest.

Gorky wrote 15 plays, two of which, heavily censored, were very successful at the Moscow Art Theatre. One of them, *The Lower Depths* (1902), a study of the wretched lives of derelicts, remains a classic. His plays, at first modeled on Chekhov's, emphasized characterization over plot.

After the failure of the 1905 revolution, in which he took part, Gorky sought to raise funds for the movement abroad. Following an initial positive reception in the United States (1906) he was insulted in the press, which portrayed him as a man of questionable morals. Gorky held a grudge against the United States, which he expressed in later writings. Settling in Capri (1906-13), he set up a Bolshevik propaganda school before he returned to Russia in 1914.

Exhausted from his work as head of the State Publishing House, by bouts with tuberculosis, and a lung damaged in a suicide attempt, he sought rest abroad (1921) and returned in 1928. When Gorky returned to Russia he was greeted as a great Soviet hero while earning the reputation of selling out to Joseph Stalin's brutal regime.

His final, unfinished work, often considered his masterpiece, is *The Life of Klim Samgin* (1927-36), a four-volume novel of Russian social conditions from 1880 to 1917. Gorky's death at 68 remains mysterious; he may have been assassinated by the NKVD on Stalin's orders.

Gorky's work exerted a profound influence on Soviet intellectual thought.

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\$220.00

A bronze sculpture of a man with a mustache, wearing a hat, resting his chin on his hand in a contemplative pose. The sculpture is set against a red background.

A close-up photograph of a bronze bust of a man, likely a historical figure, wearing a hat and having a beard. The sculpture is set against a solid red background. The man's face is shown in profile, looking slightly downwards and to the right. The bronze has a textured, weathered appearance with some darker patina. The hat is a wide-brimmed style, possibly a fedora or similar. The beard is thick and curly. The lighting highlights the contours of the face and the texture of the bronze.

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A bronze sculpture of a man, likely a soldier or revolutionary, wearing a wide-brimmed hat. The figure is depicted from the chest up, with a heavily textured, weathered surface that suggests a rugged or battle-worn character. The sculpture is set against a solid red background.

A close-up photograph of a metal fragment, likely a bullet or shell casing, showing a stamped mark. The mark is a stylized, raised impression of a letter 'A' followed by the word 'TOP' and a small, illegible mark. The metal has a mottled, aged appearance.

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