

Lenin Prize Medal, Type 1, #498, circa 1960 issue.

The medallion is in solid 23 K gold; the suspension device is in gold-plated silver. The medallion measures 27.1 mm wide and weighs 20.0 grams (not including the suspension and connecting link); total weight with suspension is 27.9 g. The obverse features beautifully detailed, sculptured bas-relief of Lenin. Note the low serial number "498" stamped on the reverse. The suspension device in silver gilt is of the early type, with a cylindrical catch for the pin held by the push-button; it measures 23.9 mm in width. Based on our observations, no more than several hundred Lenin Prize Medals were issued with the Type 1 suspension, roughly in 1 - 800 serial number range.

In very fine to excellent condition. The Lenin's bas-relief and stippling on the background of the medallion on the obverse are nearly pristine having a few minuscule contact marks almost unnoticeable to the naked eye. There are a few tiny dings to the raised edge near the top, also practically unnoticeable, no bumps or edge knocks. The reverse has a single scrape to the edge at 8:30 to 9 o'clock segment, probably from testing for gold content. The background field shows a couple of tiny dings to the field at about 7 o'clock position, otherwise untouched, with perfectly preserved stippling. The raised lettering is perfect and beautifully crisp.

The Type 1 suspension device is original and perfect, with nicely preserved gilt clearly visible under the attractive light silver patina. The pin and cylindrical catch are completely intact and fully functional. The old, probably original ribbon is very clean. The connecting link is original and has not been cut.

Lenin prize was established as a monetary reward in 1925, and first awarded in 1926 to several leading scientists for groundbreaking research. Later it was also issued for works of art, literature, cinematography, technological achievements etc. The title of Lenin Prize Winner or "Laureate" would bring immense recognition and career benefits for life.

Lenin Prize was not awarded during the Stalin's years but was reintroduced in 1956, during the "de-Stalinization" campaign. The gold medal was established the same year. The first person to receive it was Igor Kurchatov, the father of Soviet atomic bomb. In the first years after its introduction, up to 76 prizes could be awarded annually, often shared between members of a single team that had worked on the same project. In 1967, State Prize took the role of the lesser award and the status of Lenin Prize, an already extremely prestigious award, got thereby further elevated. Henceforth, the Lenin Prize was awarded once every two years (although there were some exceptions for secret projects) and in far smaller numbers, only 30 at a time. Unlike the earlier Stalin Prize or the lower State Prize, Lenin Prize could be awarded to any person only once in a lifetime. It must be added that although no serial number records for Lenin Prizes have been found as of now, they may exist in the Russian archives - which represents an immense research potential for any Lenin Prize medal.

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\$5,700.00





