

Apollo-Soyuz Telephone, Unique Custom-Made Gift to Soviet Cosmonaut Alexey Leonov, dated 1978.

Stands a little over 32" tall to the top of the phone receiver in the cradle. In high-grade stainless nickel-plated steel. The base is approx. 9 1/2" across. Multi-part construction consisting of a circular base, a tall vertical rod supporting a decorative spiral "contrail" of a spaceship rising through the atmosphere.

The sphere representing the planet Earth and housing the telephone sits on top of the rod and features contours of the continents with the contour of the USSR in red and a large red star pinpointing Moscow. The centerpiece of the rotary dial features an elaborate gift dedication from the workers of the Odessa Promsvyaz Factory ("Promsvyaz" is Russian abbreviation for "Industrial Communications") to the cosmonaut Alexey Leonov, with the factory's logo and the year, 1978. The dedication is two-fold. One part of it reads "To Commander of the Soyuz of the Soviet-American Soyuz-Apollo flight". The other part reads "To the First Man Who Conducted a Spacewalk". The handset represents a model of the coupled Soyuz and Apollo, each featuring its respective national flag. Clearly, the workers of the Odessa Promsvyaz Factory went all out in their desire to create an out-of-this-world gift for a person of such, literally, out-of-this-world achievements!

We had no way of testing whether the phone is in working condition, in part due to the absence of a port for the RJ-11 line cable. However, the rotary dial rotates as it should, the lever of the cradle operates properly, and the handset appears to be intact. Please be aware that the halves of the globe are not rigidly fastened together and can separate in transit. However, with a little dexterity and 5-10 minutes of your time they can be reconnected.

Obviously, the value of this item is not in its function as a telephone. Aleksey Leonov (Алексей Архипович Леонов, 1934 - 2019) was arguably the most interesting star in the constellation of the first Soviet cosmonauts. He was the first person to conduct a spacewalk in 1965. He was also selected to be the first person to land on the Moon but the project was canceled. In July 1975 Leonov commanded the Soyuz capsule which docked in space with the American Apollo capsule for 2 days. A huge milestone in the evolution of space exploration and international cooperation, what the press called "Détente in the Heavens".

Another important but less known part of Leonov's life was art. He was a good writer and a talented artist. His paintings are in various museums including the Tretyakov Gallery in Moscow. One of his paintings, Over the Black Sea, is in our last photo. Leonov was also very active in Soviet and, later, Russian politics. In 1981 he became laureate of the USSR State Prize, and from 2002 until his death in 2019 he was a member of the Presidium of the United Russia party.

Please note that, due to the complex shape of the item, its large size and fragility, shipping and handling will cost considerably higher than our standard rates. We will take the utmost effort and care to ensure its safe delivery. If you would like to inquire about the shipping cost prior to placing the order, please contact us and let us know your shipping address. Thank you for your understanding!

Item# 37690

\$2,400.00





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