

Table medal in memory of Peter the Great and the first equestrian monument to him by Bartholomeo Karlo Rastrelli, Leningrad Mint, 1976.

In anodized aluminum, measures 65 mm wide, weighs 36 g. The artwork in high 3D relief is typical of table medals of the Soviet era. The obverse features a portrait of the emperor in high 3D relief, in ancient Roman style, with a laurel branch woven into his hair.

The reverse features the left profile of the monument and the inscription running along the edge, which reads "Equestrian Statue of Peter the First Artwork by Karlo Rastrelli".

The model of the table medal, struck at the Leningrad Mint in 1976, is the work of A.G. Shagin. The sculptor's name and date of issue, as well as the logo of the Leningrad Mint, are struck on the obverse. The circulation of this medal is unknown.

In excellent condition. The raised details are extremely crisp. The entire surface of the medal is completely free of significant blemish or wear. In two small spots on the outer rim the anodized layer is off, showing the aluminum core.

The fate of this monument is full of sudden changes, sad events and abandonment. Worth of a novel, as is the fate of its author, the world-renowned Italian artist, architect and sculptor Bartholomeo Karlo Rastrelli.

Lack of work orders drove the artist from Rome to Paris where he worked at the court of the Sun-King, Louis XIV. But his style (baroque) was not in vogue in France and when Louis XIV died, Rastrelli signed a contract with agents of Peter the Great's and moved to Russia together with his son, the future world-famous architect. Rastrelli dreamed of creating a monument to his hero reformer czar. But work on it out-lived Peter himself and the project was put on the back burner. Peter's successor on the throne, the Empress Elizabeth, showed interest in the monument and the work continued. Alas, Rastrelli Senior dies after finishing the wax model for casting, and the work is picked up by his son but the empress dies in 1761 and work on the monument grinds to a halt and stops for several years just when only the secondary details were left to be finished. The next Empress, Catherine the Great wanted her own version of the monument erected, which later became known as "The Bronze Horseman". She gifted the original statue to Prince Potyomkin who was not interested and just left it in a shed. For 18 years. And only in 1799, three Russian emperors later, the monument was placed by order of Emperor Paul I in front of the Mikhailovskiy Castle in St. Petersburg where it stayed and can be viewed today. And even then he almost replaced it with a monument to field-marshal Alexander Suvorov. If the field-marshal had not fallen out of favor with the czar, who knows what would have happened with the "homeless" Peter the Great and his steed!

/See Commemorative [Table] Medal of the Soviet Period, 1919 - 1991, fig. 1031/.

Please note, the coin in our photo is for size reference.

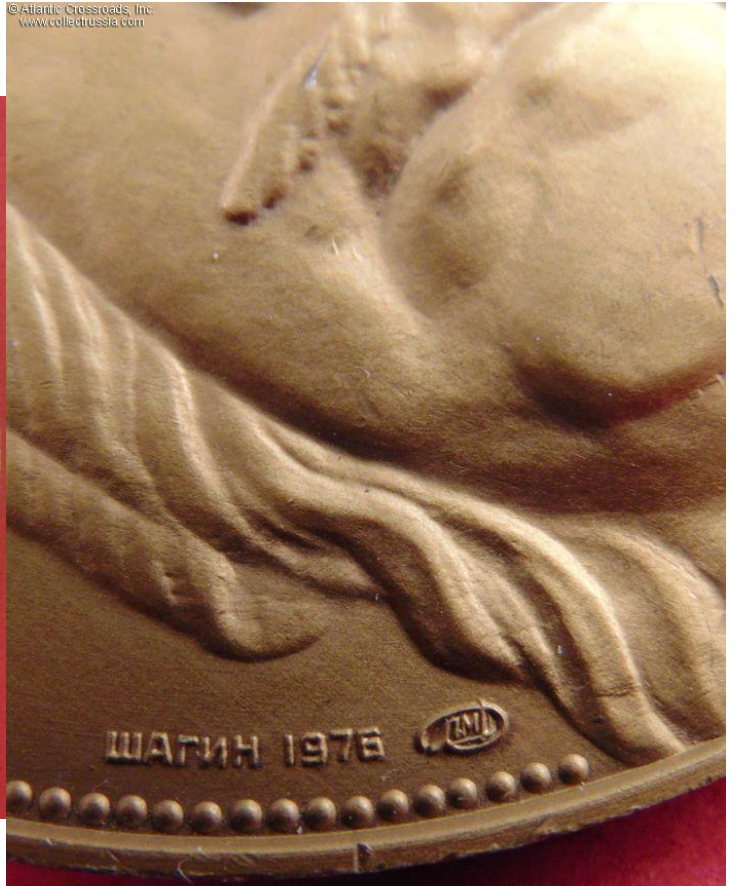
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