

Porcelain Freestanding Desktop Plaque with Portrait of Nikolay Ostrovsky, Soviet writer, by Baranovka Factory, circa 1970s-80s.

Stands approx. nearly 4" tall, almost 3" wide. The portrait is monochromatic, applied over the glaze. The oval of the plaque is framed in a 3mm-wide band of gilt. Maker marked on the bottom, this version of the logo of the Baranovka Porcelain Factory was in use from 1973 to the end of the 1990s. Ostrovsky's 40th death anniversary was in 1976, so, presumably, the plaque was made in 1976 to commemorate the famous Soviet author of the *How Steel was Tempered* novel, one of only three literary pieces he ever wrote and his main claim to fame. All three of his works glorified the unimaginable difficulties of building the Soviet state and the human sacrifices it took. For that he was put on a high pedestal by the Soviet government.

The plaque is in excellent condition. The gilt of the frame is minimally worn off on the sides, probably from contact with human hands, but this is not very obvious because overall, the band retains almost all of its original luster. The portrait and the name under it are in pristine condition.

Nikolay Alekseevich Ostrovsky (Николай Алексеевич Островский, 1904 - 1936), joined the Young Communist League in 1919 at the age of 14, volunteered to join the Red Army, one of its Special Operations battalions (what we now know as Spetsnaz), later served in cavalry under Kotovsky and, later, Budyonny, was severely wounded. The wound got him discharged from the army. Modern Russian researchers have put question marks to a lot of bragging point in Ostrovsky's biography but that is not really a big surprise. He was just one of the myriads of heroes of the Soviet propaganda who, at closer inspection, began to look more like monsters than heroes.

Please note that the penny in our photo is for size reference only.

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