

Medal of People's Performance Artist of the USSR, 1985-1991.

In gilded tombak and lacquer. The pendant measures 24.7 mm in height (incl. eyelet), 22.8 mm in width; weighs 7.0 g not including the suspension and connecting link; total weight with suspension is 12.9 g. Raised late type circular logo of the Moscow Mint to the reverse of the medallion. Late version without the raised numeral sign № and underline for a serial number.

In excellent condition. The lacquer finish on the obverse is pristine, without any wear visible to the unaided eye and only a few microscopic contact marks along the edges that are unnoticeable without magnification. There are minuscule scuffs on the reverse, but the stippling remains perfect. The pin attachment is in perfect order; the connecting link is clearly original and its ends are still joined with solder in the trademark manner of the Soviet mint. The old, probably original ribbon is perfectly preserved and shows no fading or significant soiling.

The title of People's Performance Artist of the USSR (Narodnyi Artist in Russian) was the highest level of recognition for all kinds of performers including cinematographic actors, opera singers and ballet dancers. It was exceptionally difficult to earn: even some of the most popular and beloved Soviet movie stars never reached this coveted degree having to be content with lesser titles such as people's artist / honored artist of various Soviet republics. Most available sources agree that the title of People's Performance Artist of the USSR was bestowed upon 1006 people in total. Not all of them received the medal: it was introduced only in 1985 and henceforth issued only to the bearers of the title who were still alive.

/Avers 8, p. 227, fig. 1104/.

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