

A Catalog of Holocaust Medals

A History Etched in Metal



Severin Szperling
with his daughter Julie Szperling



A Catalog of Holocaust Medals: A History Etched in Metal

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*Medals on front cover are Concentration Camps SZ-59 and SZ-77; and Holocaust SZ-6, SZ-8, and SZ-59.
Medals on back cover are Concentration Camps SZ-3, SZ-53, and SZ-73; and Holocaust Individuals, Janusz
Korczak SZ-21.
Medals on title page are Concentration Camps SZ-15 and Holocaust SZ-60.*

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*To the memory of my parents:
everyone has a name.*

This phrase is inscribed on the medal (Holocaust SZ-55, O2) issued by special order for Severin Szperling to honor and remember his parents, Nechuma (Prybulska) and Michal Szperling, from the city of Czestochowa, Poland. The phrase is essential to preserving the memory of each Jew of the six million who perished in the Holocaust.

I have prepared this catalog in dedication to the memory of my parents.

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Author's Note

Many institutions in the world have issued Holocaust-related medals, but no one has yet tracked such medals' sources and dates of issue. Doing just this is my purpose in preparing this catalog, dedicated to the memory of my parents. In doing so, I have spent uncounted thousands of hours over the last ten years traveling throughout Europe from one concentration camp to another—thirteen in total—visiting museums and mint companies, meeting with designers and private individuals, and visiting all types of Jewish institutions. From my home in Tucson, Arizona, I have made hundreds of telephone calls, mailed hundreds of letters and photocopies, and sent hundreds of faxes and emails around the world, seeking help in gathering information and translating the foreign inscriptions on the medals.

In this catalog, I provide the reader with as many details as possible about each medal. Medals are grouped according to subject and ordered by year of issue. Each page of the catalog begins with an identification number (SZ number) as well as photographs and descriptions of both sides of the medal. Medals marked by an asterisk can be found in my private collection. In addition, known details about each medal (such as its designer, material, and circulation, as well as when and where it was struck or cast) are provided. I continue to search for information currently missing about some medals, and I am always looking for new Holocaust-related medals to complete my collection. I am interested in purchasing any of the unmarked medals in the catalog, as well as any medals unknown to me. Newly discovered medals and newly unearthed information will be included in the next edition of this catalog. All information may be sent to the authors by email:

Severin Szperling, holocaustmedals@aol.com

Julie Szperling, numismaticmemories@hotmail.com

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I am grateful to my family—my wife, Alfreda, and my daughters, Julie and Michelle—for their editorial assistance and their patience and encouragement during the many, many long hours spent preparing this catalog.

I would also like to thank all the individuals and organizations that helped me in compiling this catalog.

Severin Szperling

Preface

There are many different ways by which people keep alive the memory of the Holocaust. Some erect monuments, create statues, and build museums. Others write books, shoot films, compose music, and paint artwork. Still others lecture in schools and work to keep memories alive in their communities. Each type of expression preserves an essential part of our memory—an anniversary, a country’s history, a people’s culture.

Severin Szperling collects commemorative medals and coins that have been struck and cast to honor the people affected by, and commemorate the events of, the Holocaust that occurred during the Nazi German occupation of Europe in World War II. Severin has created this numismatic catalog to keep alive the memory of his parents, and the memories of all the victims of the Holocaust.

What follows is a short history describing the path that led to the compilation of this catalog.

Severin Szperling was born during the Nazi occupation of Poland in the Czestochowa Jewish Quarter in March 1940—after April 9, 1941, the Jewish ghetto. His parents were Nechuma Prybulska and Michal Szperling. Wishing to protect their only son, after a year and a half in the ghetto, Szperling’s parents smuggled their two-and-a-half-year-old son out of the ghetto to the Aryan side, where a Christian couple, Anna and Stanislaw Pociepny, promised to hide Severin until the end of the war, when his parents would come for him.

Severin survived the Holocaust hiding in and around the Pociepnys’ house, in a barrel in their backyard and underneath a rabbit hutch in a hole dug under their home. This was his childhood until the liberation of the city on January 18, 1945. In 1943, during his hiding, his parents, as part of a group of 125 Jews, were executed in the local Jewish cemetery. Most of Czestochowa’s Jewish population was deported, and perished in the Treblinka Extermination Camp. Severin spent the next 23 years with the Pociepnys, who gave him their family name and raised him as a Catholic. During his adolescence, Severin learned that his biological parents had been murdered by the Nazis, and that he had family still living in Israel.

In 1964, Severin visited Israel, where he learned about his remaining family, rediscovered Judaism, and found the only existing photograph of his father; none of his mother has yet surfaced. Upon his return to Poland in 1965, Severin worked as a mechanical draftsman in a textile plant, but during the growing anti-Semitic campaign in Poland in the late 1960s decided to pursue emigration. With the help of the Hebrew Immigration Aid Society in 1970, Severin was stripped of his Polish citizenship and left Poland permanently. He traveled to Vienna and Rome and eventually came to Cleveland, Ohio. Two months later, he moved to Chicago, Illinois, where he lived for the next twenty-five years. During this time, he had his fiancée, Alfreda, brought from Czestochowa. They married and had two daughters. After graduating from construction school, Severin opened his own construction company in Chicago. In 1996, he and his family moved to Tucson, Arizona, to run a hotel. In 2002, Severin and his wife retired.

Severin still visits his hometown in Poland regularly. His first stop is always the Jewish cemetery, where his parents lie buried in an unmarked mass grave. Next, he goes to the Catholic cemetery to visit the graves of the Pociępnys.

Since 1972, Severin Szperling has been collecting medals that commemorate the victims of the Holocaust. He has pursued this passion full-time during his retirement. Szperling has become a world-renowned numismatist as he has built his collection over the last thirty-eight years, traveling Europe to search out medals and coins that depict concentration and work camps, ghetto uprisings, and historical figures from the Holocaust era. His collection consists of more than 430 medals and coins in different metals, shapes, weights, sizes, and colors, originating since 1945 from mints, governments, and private entities in fourteen countries—the United States, Israel, Poland, the Czech Republic, France, the Netherlands, Belgium, Italy, Greece, the United Kingdom, Germany, Hungary, Denmark, and Russia. Szperling has written several articles for the American Israel Numismatic Association and has displayed his collection for a local numismatic club, for local Jewish organizations in Arizona, and for the Janusz Korczak Association of Canada. He is a member of the American Numismatic Association, the American Israel Numismatic Association, and the Polish American Numismatic Association.

Janusz Korczak

**100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRTH OF
JANUSZ KORCZAK (HERSZ GOLDSZMIT) (SZ-1)**



O.



R.

O. Portrait of Janusz Korczak. Inscription in Polish: JANUSZ KORCZAK THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRTH, 1878–1978.

R. A heart and the faces of children.

Designers and sculptors	O: Katarzyna Pikarska, Poland R: Adam Myjak, Poland
Designer's name	75mm, O: K. Pikarska
Diameter	70 mm
Mintage	
* Bronze	750 pieces
Diameter	75 mm (see note)
Mintage	
* Cast in bronze	quantity unknown
Both medals struck and cast by	The Polish State Mint, Warsaw, Poland, 1978
Issued by	Committee Organization Celebration of the 100th Anniversary of the Birth of Janusz Korczak, Poland, 1978

Note: The 75-mm medal was issued only as an award medal.

JANUSZ KORCZAK MEMORIAL (SZ-2)



O.



R.

- O. Portrait of Janusz Korczak. Above, the years 1878–1978, commemorating the hundredth anniversary of Janusz Korczak's birth. Below, inscription written in Hebrew and English: JANUSZ KORCZAK PERISHED IN TREBLINKA 1942.
- R. A group of children with a teacher figure. Around the rim, inscription in English: GHETTO FIGHTERS' HOUSE, and inscription in Hebrew: YITZHAK KATZENELSON GHETTO FIGHTERS' HOUSE.

Diameter 59 mm

Mintage

- * Bronze quantity unknown
- * Gold-plated bronze quantity unknown
- * Silver-plated bronze quantity unknown
- Silver quantity unknown

All medals are edge-marked SHEKEL in Hebrew and English, trademark of mint, and serial number.

Diameter 35 mm

Mintage

- * Silver, edge-marked quantity unknown
SILVER in English and
serial number

Struck by Shekel Mint Company, Israel, 1978

Issued by Beit Lohamei Haghettaot—Ghetto Fighters' House, Israel, 1978

No other information is known.

JANUSZ KORCZAK COINS (SZ-3)



- O.** The obverse of all versions of the coins is identical. In the center, an eagle (the emblem of the People's Republic of Poland), with trademark of mint under the eagle's leg. Under the eagle's wings, a divided year: 19 78. Around the rim, inscription in Polish: PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF POLAND. On the lower rim, the denomination: ZL 100 ZL.
- R.** Portrait of Janusz Korczak with his name inscribed around the rim and the years 1878–1942.
- R1.** Portrait of Janusz Korczak, with the Polish word PROBA (sample) on his left side, his name inscribed around the rim, and the years 1878–1942.
- R2.** Side profile of Janusz Korczak, with the Polish word PROBA (sample) on his left side, his name inscribed around the rim, and the years 1878–1942.

Diameter 32 mm

Mintage

* Silver Ag 625 30,000 pieces

R1:

Silver Ag 625, sample 100 pieces

* Nickel, sample 500 pieces

R2:

* Silver Ag 625, sample 3,000 pieces

* Nickel, sample 500 pieces

Struck by The Polish State Mint, Warsaw, Poland, 1978

Issued by The Government of People's Republic of Poland, 1978

No other information is known.

THE NATION-WIDE POLISH SCOUTS MEETING NAMED JANUSZ KORCZAK (SZ-4)



O.



R.

- O. The portrait of Janusz Korczak. Around the rim, inscription in Polish: DON'T DEMAND THE FAVOR FROM ANYBODY AND IF YOU HAVE DONE THE FAVOR, DON'T ASK TO BE GRATEFUL FOR IT, J. KORCZAK.
- R. Inscription in Polish: THE NATION-WIDE MEETING OF THE POLISH SCOUTS IN THE NAME OF JANUSZ KORCZAK—ZIELONA GORA, JUNE 1978.

Designer and sculptor G. & J. Nowicki, Poland

Dimensions 100 mm × 100 mm

Mintage

* Cast in bronze with patina finish 50 pieces

Issued by Polish Janusz Korczak Association, Poland, 1978

No other information is known.

JANUSZ KORCZAK—100TH ANNIVERSARY OF HIS BIRTHDAY (SZ-5)



O.



R.

- O. Figure of Janusz Korczak holding two children, with his name inscribed around the rim and the years 1878–1978.
- R. In the center, the medal badge of the Polish scouts and inscription in Polish: TO BE ON ALERT. Around the rim, inscription in Polish: STUDY OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION IN PRUDNIK.

Diameter 70 mm

Mintage

* Copper with patina finish quantity unknown

Issued by Polish Janusz Korczak Association, Poland, 1978

No other information is known.

**JANUSZ KORCZAK—UPON 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF
BIRTHDAY (SZ-6)**



O.



R.

- O.** Side profile of the Janusz Korczak monument, and his name inscribed to the middle right. Below the monument, children in pairs walking through gate surrounded by the barbed wire. Trademark of mint at bottom.
- R.** Decorated with roses, inscription in Polish: UPON 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF BIRTHDAY 1878–1978.

Designer and sculptor Piotr Gawron, Poland
Diameter 70 mm
Mintage
* Bronze 750 pieces
* Gold-plated bronze quantity unknown
Struck by The Polish State Mint, Warsaw, Poland, 1979
No other information is known.

THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF JANUSZ KORCZAK (SZ-7)



O.



R.

- O. Portrait of Janusz Korczak, his name inscribed around the rim, and the years 1879–1942. Left side of his portrait, inscription in Polish: CZESTOCHOWA—79.
- R. Against the background of flowers, inscription in Polish: THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF JANUSZ KORCZAK.

Designer and sculptor	Leszek Wielunski, Poland, 1979
Diameter	88 mm
Mintage	
* Cast in bronze	1 piece
Issued privately by	Leszek Wielunski, Poland, 1979
No other information is known.	

**INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF JANUSZ KORCZAK
REWARD MEDAL (SZ-8)**



O.



R.

- O.** Portrait of Janusz Korczak. Around the rim, inscription in Polish: INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF JANUSZ KORCZAK 1878–1942.
- R.** Inscription in Polish: FOR THE POPULARIZATION OF CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES IN THE CITY OF GDYNIA.

Diameter 53 mm
Mintage
* Copper quantity unknown
Issued by City of Gdynia, Poland, 1979
No other information is known.

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF JANUSZ KORCZAK (SZ-9)



O.



R.

- O. The monument of Janusz Korczak surrounded by children. Around the rim, inscription in Polish: JANUSZ KORCZAK—ZIELONA GORA 1979.
- R. Inscription in Polish: HE LOVED THE CHILDREN, DIED WITH HONOR, REMAINED THE LEGEND AND THE CHALLENGE.

Diameter 95 mm
Mintage
* Cast in bronze with patina finish quantity unknown
Issued by Polish Janusz Korczak Association, Poland, 1979
No other information is known.

**25TH GATHERING OF JANUSZ KORCZAK BOY
SCOUT TEAMS (SZ-10)**



O.



R.

O. Portrait of Janusz Korczak. Around the rim, inscription: XXV GATHERING OF JANUSZ KORCZAK BOY SCOUT TEAMS. KIELCE 27.IV.1979.

R. Symbol of scout.

Dimensions 75 mm × 83 mm, irregular shaped

Mintage

* Struck in aluminum in quantity unknown
two versions: looped and
not looped

Issued in Poland, 1979

No other information is known.

**FIRST EDUCATIONAL CENTRE NAMED
JANUSZ KORCZAK (SZ-11)**



Polish word for “HEART” inscribed twice within a heart. Below, inscription in Polish: FIRST EDUCATIONAL CENTRE NAMED JANUSZ KORCZAK IN ZGORZELEC—1980.

Dimensions 90 mm × 117 mm, one-sided

Mintage

* Cast in brass quantity unknown

Issued by City of Zgorzelec, Poland, 1980

No other information is known.

KORCZAK INTERNATIONAL MEETING IN A CIRCLE (SZ-12)



O.

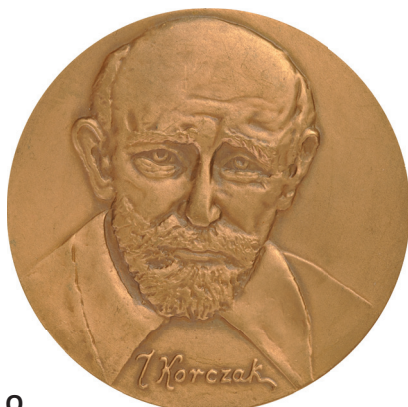


R.

- O. Symbol of the Korczak International Meeting in a Circle, lying on the camp grounds among plants. Around the upper rim, inscription in Polish: KORCZAK INTERNATIONAL MEETING IN A CIRCLE.
- R. Janusz Korczak embracing a child. Against the background of plants, in the lower left corner, inscription in Polish: DO NOT DEMAND A FAVOR FROM ANYBODY, BUT IF YOU DID A FAVOR, DO NOT EXPECT GRATITUDE, signed J. KORCZAK. In the lower right corner, inscription in Polish: CAMP OF KORCZAKOWO, ZIELONA GORA, 1980.

Designer and sculptor	G. and J. Nowicki, Poland
Dimensions	155 mm × 145 mm
Mintage	
* Cast in bronze	50 pieces
Issued by	Polish Janusz Korczak Association, Poland, 1980
No other information is known.	

JANUSZ KORCZAK THE NATIONAL YOUTH PHILATELIST EXHIBITION (SZ-13)



O.



R.

- O. The portrait of Janusz Korczak and his name inscribed below.
- R. Two children holding stamps. Around the upper rim, inscription in Polish: THE NATIONAL YOUTH PHILATELIST EXHIBITION. Around the lower rim, inscription in Polish: >>BYDGOSZCZ '83. Trademark of mint company at the bottom left.

Designer's initials	R: SW
Designer and sculptor	Stanisława Watrobka, Poland
Diameter	70 mm
Mintage	
* Bronze	500 pieces
* Silver-plated bronze	180 pieces
* Gold-plated bronze	120 pieces
Struck by	The Polish State Mint, Warsaw, Poland, 1983
Issued by	The Committee of the National Youth Philatelist Exhibition, Bydgoszcz, Poland, 1983

THE RIGHTEOUS AMONG GENTILES, YAD VASHEM
AWARD MEDAL TO MARYNA FALSKA
(SZ-14)



O.



R.

- O. Two hands holding on to a rescue cord woven from barbed wire strands and wound around the globe. Around the globe, inscription in Hebrew: HE WHO SAVES ONE LIFE IS LIKE HE WHO SAVED THE ENTIRE WORLD.
- R. The memorial complex on Remembrance Hill in Jerusalem. Below the memorial complex, inscription in Hebrew and French: A TOKEN OF GRATITUDE FROM THE JEWISH PEOPLE. Between the two inscriptions, engraved in French: TO MARYNA FALSKA. Around the lower rim, inscription in French: HE WHO SAVES ONE LIFE IS LIKE HE WHO SAVED THE ENTIRE WORLD.

Designer Nathan Karp, Israel

Diameter 59 mm

Mintage

* Copper–nickel 1 piece

The edge of the medal is marked with the state emblem and STATE OF ISRAEL in Hebrew and English.

Struck by Hecht Mint, Israel, 1980

Issued by The Righteous Among Gentiles, Yad Vashem, Jerusalem, Israel

Note: This medal was awarded to Maryna Falska in October 1985 for her aid to Janusz Korczak during his imprisonment in the Warsaw Ghetto.

REMEMBER JANUSZ KORCZAK (SZ-15)



Portrait of Janusz Korczak with his name inscribed around the rim and years 1879, 1942.

Designer's initials	R: JFS '90 and the number of the medal
Designer and sculptor	Jerzy F. Sztuka, Poland
Diameter	125 mm, one-sided
Mintage	
* Cast in bronze with patina finish	10 pieces
Issued privately by	Jerzy F. Sztuka, Poland, 1990

DR JANUSZ KORCZAK (SZ-16)



O.



R.

- O. Portrait of Janusz Korczak. Inscription in Polish: DR JANUSZ KORCZAK.
- R. Inscription in Polish: THE GREATEST HAPPINESS IS TO LIVE, WORK AND FIGHT FOR A BETTER LIFE IN THE WORLD.

Designer's initials	O: AN
Designer and sculptor	Andrew Nowakowski, Poland
Diameter	60 mm
Mintage	
* Bronze	200 pieces
Struck by	The Polish State Mint, Warsaw, Poland, 1990
Issued by	Association of Fighters for Liberty and Democracy, Poland, 1990

**INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF POETS
“ARCADIA”—LUBLIN, POLAND 1996 (SZ-17)**



O.



R.

O. Portrait of Janusz Korczak. Around the rim, inscription in Polish: JANUSZ KORCZAK REWARD.

R. Inscription in Polish: INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF POETS “ARCADIA”.

Designer and sculptor Zbigniew Kotylo, Poland

Diameter 105 mm

Mintage

* Cast in bronze with light patina finish 6 pieces

Issued by International Congress of Poets “Arcadia,” Lublin, Poland, 1996

Note: The medal was awarded to the winner of a Janusz Korczak poetry contest among elementary and high school students.

HONORARY CLUB NAMED JANUSZ KORCZAK (SZ-18)



- O.** Portrait of Janusz Korczak in a 15-mm circle surrounded by a blue rim. Around the rim, inscription in Polish: HONORARY CLUB OF BLOOD DONORS OF P.C.K. (Polish Red Cross) NAMED JANUSZ KORCZAK AT MSR (the shipyard) IN SWINOUJSKIE.
- R.** Blank back on which to inscribe a recipient's name.

Diameter 32 mm, looped

Mintage

- * Bronze 100 pieces
- * Silver-plated bronze 100 pieces
- * Gold-plated bronze 100 pieces

Issued by Honorary Club of Blood Donors named Janusz Korczak at the shipyard in Swinoujscie, Poland, 1998

No other information is known.

IN MEMORY OF JANUSZ KORCZAK (SZ-19)



O.



R.

O. Portrait of Janusz Korczak and his name inscribed vertically.

R. A child's hand within another hand.

Designer	Dominik Glab, Poland
Diameter	32 mm
Mintage	
* Bronze	1,000 pieces
* Silver-plated bronze	1,000 pieces
* Gold-plated bronze	quantity unknown
* Silver, gilded	quantity unknown
Struck and issued by	The State Mint S.A., Poland, 2002

25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SPECIAL SCHOOL GROUP NAMED JANUSZ KORCZAK (SZ-20)



O.



R.

O. Portrait of Janusz Korczak. Around the rim, inscription in Polish: THE SPECIAL SCHOOL GROUP NAMED JANUSZ KORCZAK. KCYNIA.

R. School building. Around the rim, inscription in Polish: 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF ZSS (Special School Group) 1978–2003.

Diameter 60 mm

Mintage

* Cast in bronze quantity unknown

Issued in Poland, 2003

No other information is known.

IN MEMORY OF JANUSZ KORCZAK (SZ-21)



O.



R.

- O. Portrait of Janusz Korczak. On the left side, inscription in English: WARSAW 1878–1942 TREBLINKA.
- R. In the center, an olive branch and below, inscription in English: THERE ARE NO CHILDREN THERE ARE PEOPLE and his signature. Around the rim, inscription in English and Hebrew: SOCIETY THE JANUSZ KORCZAK HOUSE IN JERUSALEM.

Designer and sculptor	Mark Salman, Israel
Diameter	100 mm, designed with a stand for vertical display
Mintage	
* Cast in bronze and antique gold-plated	20 pieces
* Cast in bronze and silver-plated	20 pieces
Issued by	Society the Janusz Korczak House in Jerusalem, Israel, 2005

**THE ANNA MARY PEDIATRIC HOSPITAL RENAMED
AS JANUSZ KORCZAK PEDIATRIC HOSPITAL
(SZ-22)**



O.



R.

- O.** In the center, a part of the statue of Anna Mary. On the left side, shield of the city of Lodz. On the right side, inscription in Polish: NOW NAMED J. KORCZAK. Around the rim, inscription in Polish: 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ANNA MARY HOSPITAL. Trademark of mint company on the right side.
- R.** Picture of the pediatric hospital building. Below, the years 1905–2005, ŁÓDŹ, and the medical symbol.

Designer's initials	R: ET
Designer	Ewa Tyc Karpinska, Poland
Diameter	70 mm
Mintage	150 pieces
* Silver-plated bronze	
Struck by	Mint of Poland S.A., Poland, 2005
Issued by	Society of Friendship of the Janusz Korczak Pediatric Hospital, Poland, 2005

JANUSZ KORCZAK MEDAL (SZ-23)



Portrait of Janusz Korczak and his name inscribed at the bottom. Behind him, wagons and a group of Jewish children lined up for loading into a cattle wagon for transport to a concentration camp. Far behind, fenced camp.

Designer and sculptor	Mieczyslaw Stobierski, Poland
Dimensions	125 mm × 132 mm, one-sided
Mintage	
* Cast in bronze	100 pieces
Issued by	State Museum Auschwitz-Birkenau, Oswiecim, Poland, 1994
Medal inventory number at the Museum of Auschwitz-Birkenau PMO-1-5-674.	

JANUSZ KORCZAK MEDAL (SZ-24)



Portrait of Janusz Korczak and his name inscribed at the bottom. Around him, figures of children.

Designer's initials S.M.
Designer and sculptor Mieczyslaw Stobierski, Poland
Dimensions 105 mm × 135 mm, one-sided

Mintage
* Cast in bronze quantity unknown

Issued in Poland, 1994

No other information is known.

**KORCZAK INTERNATIONAL MEETING IN A CIRCLE
(SZ-25)**



Medal shaped like two oak leaves with a circular symbol and inscription in Polish: KORCZAK INTERNATIONAL MEETING IN A CIRCLE.

Dimensions 170 mm × 135 mm, one-sided, irregular shape

Mintage

* Cast in bronze

quantity unknown

Issued by

Polish Janusz Korczak Association, Poland

No other information is known.

**JANUSZ KORCZAK—ST. PETERSBURG MEDAL
(SZ-26)**



O.



R.

- O.** Portrait of Janusz Korczak against the background of barbed wire fence and his name inscribed around the lower rim.
- R.** Inscription in Russian: ST. PETERSBURG JANUSZ KORCZAK ASSOCIATION. Above inscription, sailboat. Below inscription, stylistic symbol of the children with Janusz Korczak.

Designer and sculptor Lew Rozumovsky, Russia
Diameter 35 mm
Mintage
* Copper quantity unknown
Issued by St. Petersburg Janusz Korczak Association, Russia
No other information is known.