

Fearing Arrest, Voina 'Guru' Flees to Estonia

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Alexei Plutser-Sarno, the spiritual guru behind the controversial art group Voina, or War, has fled to Estonia for fear of arrest, he wrote Saturday [on his blog](#).

Plutser-Sarno, who is also known for writing a dictionary of Russian obscenities, said he crossed the border illegally with help from high-level Estonian friends following a tip that he could be arrested. He said he did not plan to return to Russia.

"I got absolutely credible information from my lawyer that I have become a suspect in the Voina case as the organizer and leader of the criminal group Voina," Plutser-Sarno said on Russkaya Sluzhba Novostei radio Friday from Tallinn.

Earlier this month, a St. Petersburg court sanctioned the arrest of two Voina members for a September "performance." The Palace Revolution, as they called the event, involved activists flipping over several police cars, some with officers inside, at night in downtown St. Petersburg to protest police corruption.

Plutser-Sarno did not participate in the event, but he wrote about it on his blog.

The artists face up to five years in prison for hooliganism. Investigators have not publicly described Voina as a "criminal group," which could imply more serious criminal charges.

Investigators could not be reached for comment about Plutser-Sarno's allegations over the weekend. Soon after the September stunt, Plutser-Sarno said in an interview with The Moscow Times that Voina was not afraid of prosecution.

Voina has a long record of borderline-legal performances, including staging an orgy at the Biological Museum in Moscow in 2008 and painting a 65-meter penis on a St. Petersburg drawbridge facing the local FSB headquarters on the eve of an international economic forum in June.

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