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Psychiatric Patient Pours Ink Over Cathedral Icon

By The Moscow Times

September 16, 2012



Yury Piotrovsky

A 62-year-old psychiatric patient poured ink over an icon in Moscow's Christ the Savior Cathedral on Sunday, saying he was motivated by the harsh treatment of three female punk rockers jailed for a profanity-laced performance in the cathedral.

According to a source in the Moscow police, the man was detained shortly after the stunt, which took place midday in the capital's largest place of worship, Interfax reported.

When questioned by investigators, the offender said he was receiving treatment at a psychiatric clinic and called his actions a protest against the Russian Orthodox Church and its attitude toward anti-Kremlin band Pussy Riot.

Moscow's Khamovnichesky District Court on Aug. 17 sentenced three Pussy Riot musicians to two years in prison on charges of hooliganism motivated by religious hatred for performing

a song decrying President Vladimir Putin and Patriarch Kirill.

Pussy Riot supporters have claimed government and church officials pressed the Khamovnichesky court judge into handing down prison sentences.

On Sunday afternoon, the police source identified the ink spiller as Yury Piotrovsky, a native of St. Petersburg who currently lives in Germany.

On what appears to be Piotrovsky's account on Wikipedia's Russian-language site, he is listed as having a residency permit to live in Germany, where he lectures at the Russian Cultural Center in Munich and teaches ballroom dancing and yoga.

It was not immediately clear which icon Piotrovsky chose to smear and how badly it was damaged.

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