

Man Nails Testicles to Red Square Cobblestones in Bizarre Protest

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Tourists and locals alike witnessed an unusual scene Sunday as St. Petersburg performance artist Pyotr Pavlensky hammered a nail through his testicles and into the cobblestones of Red Square, close to Lenin's Mausoleum.

"A naked artist, looking at his balls nailed to the Kremlin pavement, is a metaphor for the apathy, political indifference, and fatalism of contemporary Russian society," Pavlensky wrote in a statement explaining the performance.

The performance coincided with the holiday, "Day of the Ministry of Internal Affairs." Policemen on Red Square quickly responded by first covering the naked artist with a blanket. The young artist was taken into custody and hospitalized after being removed from the pavement.

Pavlensky has a history of extreme performance pieces, beginning with a protest in July 2012

in which he sewed his mouth shut and carried a sign to protest against the imprisonment of the band Pussy Riot in front of Kazan Cathedral in St. Petersburg.

In May, Pavlensky staged a second performance in which he was left, naked and wrapped in barbed wire, in front of the St. Petersburg Legislative Assembly Building, following which he spent several days in police custody and underwent psychiatric examinations that concluded that he was legally sane.

According to Interfax, Pavlensky will be given medical assistance and be interrogated by police before a decision is made about his legal competence.

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