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Russian Artist Cuts Off Part of Ear in Act of Protest

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Artist Pyotr Pavlensky cuts off a part of his earlobe during his protest action titled "Segregation" in Moscow Oct. 19.

Russian artist Pyotr Pavlensky, known for his shocking protest stunts, cut off part of his earlobe in a protest titled "Segregation" at a Moscow psychiatric institution Sunday.

Pavlensky, who last year made headlines around the world for another protest in which he nailed his scrotum to the cobblestones of Red Square, was this time protesting against the use of forensic psychiatry for politically motivated purposes.

He cut off his earlobe while sitting naked on the wall of the Serbsky State Scientific Center for Social and Forensic Psychiatry, an institution that was infamous in Soviet times for declaring political dissidents mentally unstable. He was taken away by police following the stunt.

Pavlensky said he was demonstrating how authorities could "cut off" an unwanted individual from society by using psychiatric and medical diagnosis to forcefully send a person to a

penitentiary hospital.

Material from The Moscow Times is included in this report.

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