A Memorial to Stalin-Era Repressions Is Unveiled After 27 Years

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Donat Sorokin / TASS

A memorial to Stalin-era repressions has been unveiled in the central Russian city of Yekaterinburg, 27 years after the local government first commissioned it.

The monument, Ernst Neizvestny's follow-up to his "Mask of Sorrow" erected in 1996, is titled "Masks of Sorrow." Its two weeping faces — one facing Europe, the other Asia — symbolize repentance and respect for the victims of the Stalin era, the state-run TASS news agency reports.

"This is a landmark event in the life of the region and Russia," the governor of the Sverdlovsk region Yevgeny Kuyvashev said during the opening ceremony on Monday. "Hundreds of thousands of people from the Urals suffered during the years of mass repression."

"We would like to see the memorial visited by residents and visitors of the city regularly to preserve the memory and prevent the recurrence of similar events," the deputy head of the

administration of Yekaterinburg Sergei Tushin was [cited](#) as saying by the state-run RIA Novosti news agency.

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The second statue, erected in Neizvestny's native city, almost never materialized: The model gathered dust in a basement for 15 years, Rossiskaya Gazeta [reports](#).

Neizvestny sued the city, but a court ruled that the model be transported to the Southern Urals, where it was stored for another 10 years.

The sculptor died in New York last summer before his project was realized.

During the ceremony, the former human rights ombudsman Vladimir Lukin called the monument as much a memorial to the victims of the Stalin era as to the statue's sculptor himself.

"In fact, it is a monument to Ernst Neizvestny," Lukin [said](#).

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