

Pro-Kremlin Activists Storm Moscow Art Exhibit

September 13, 2018



11.12 Gallery / Facebook

A fringe pro-Kremlin group has stormed a provocative artist's exhibit in central Moscow over what the activists said was its "anti-Russian" tone.

Members of the hyper-nationalist SERB activist collective said they "<u>violently disrupted</u>" artist Vasily Slonov's "Heavenly Jerusalem" exhibit a day after it opened its doors to the public at the Vinzavod gallery complex. SERB is known for recurring <u>attacks</u> on opposition-minded <u>exhibitions</u> and <u>figures</u>.

Related article: When Art Becomes the Victim of Politics (Op-ed)

"Naturally, SERB couldn't stay away and disrupted this exhibition," its member, Gosha Tarasevich, <u>wrote</u> on the Vkontakte social media website Wednesday.

Tarasevich attached photos showing himself and fellow activists brandishing some of the

seized and vandalized artwork, including stuffed toys wearing a *vatnik* quilted jacket with cotton insulation.

"Insulting the president is banned. That's not just our dumb whim, it's a criminal count," he wrote.

One of the art objects defaced by the activists at the exhibition is a side-by-side image of President Vladimir Putin and a skull.

Embed: https://www.facebook.com/alex.sharov.9/posts/10215081582867306

Moscow police are reportedly <u>investigating</u> the incident after Alex Sharov, the head of the 11.12 gallery where Slonov's exhibit opened Tuesday, <u>accused</u> them of "inaction."

Slonov is known for his often acid, satirical humor. In 2013, his "Welcome! Sochi 2014" posters caused a stir ahead of the Winter Olympics for featuring an Olympic mascot in a sex costume, barbed-wire Olympic rings and a vodka bottle on a pedestal. An exhibit in Perm featuring a fanged Stalin, a matryoshka-doll-shaped grenade and an ax chopping down birch trees with blood oozing out was closed after one local politician called them Russophobic.

Original url: https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2018/09/13/pro-kremlin-activists-storm-moscow-art-exhibit-a62868