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‘Uncultured’ Muscovites' Parkour Statue Stunts Spark Outrage in St. Petersburg

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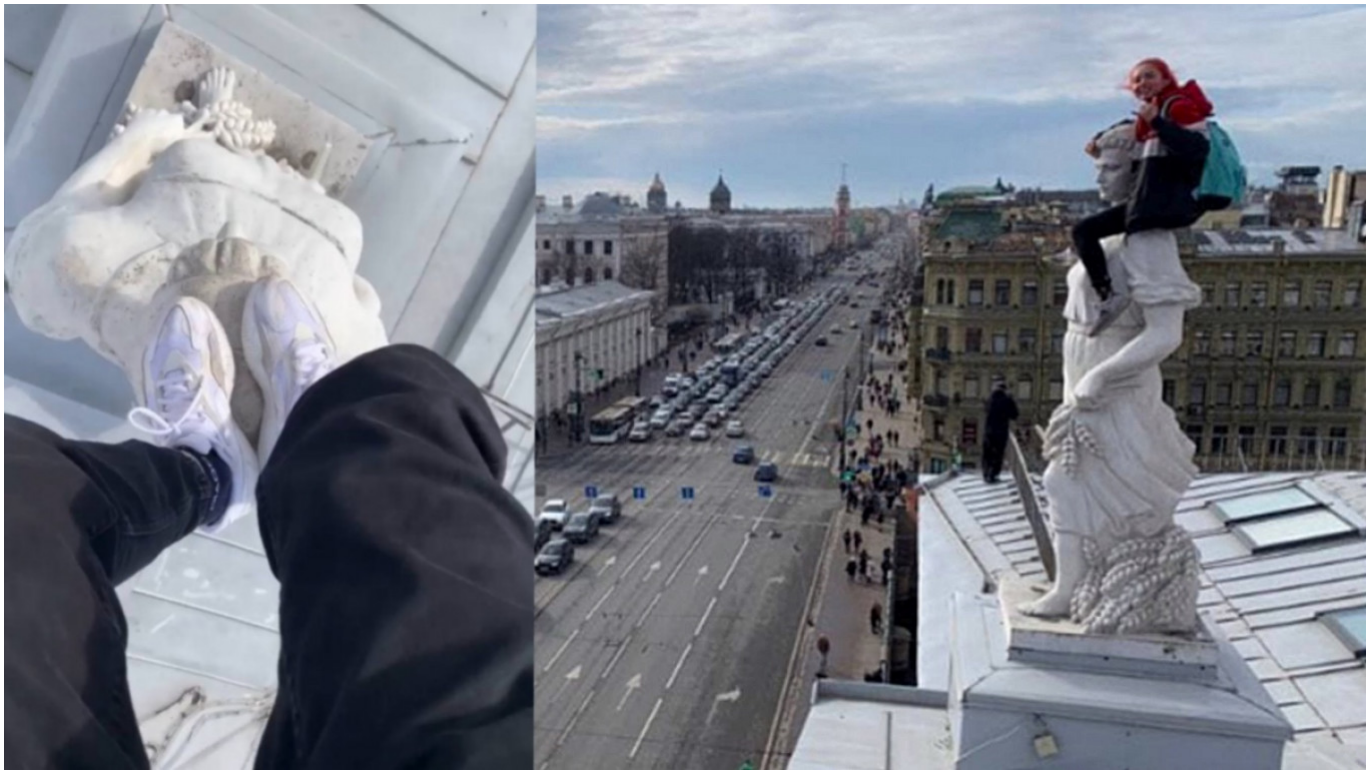

St. Petersburg residents are calling on local authorities to ensure rooftops of the city’s landmarks are well-protected from unauthorized visitors after the photos spread online. **Instagram**

The centuries-old rivalry between Russia’s two largest cities took a new turn when St. Petersburg residents found photos of Muscovites climbing on top of their city’s many statues.

St. Petersburg tour guide Violetta Vitovskaya on Tuesday shared a photo that shows Moscow parkour athlete Akmal Shakurov standing atop a 100-year-old statue on the historic Rosenstein apartment building in central St. Petersburg.

“Guys, is there anywhere I could report this s*** based on the content below?” Vitovskaya captioned the picture shared in a city residents’ group on Facebook.

The post soon received hundreds of comments and caught the attention of local news outlets. While some observers worried about the traceurs’ safety, others were far more concerned for the artifacts.

“Disgusting. Although not surprising [to see] after barbecues near the Bronze Horseman statue,” Alyona Laskoronskaya wrote.

“Send this to the prosecutor’s office together with a written complaint,” user Artyom Davbeta suggested. “They will find [the traceurs] and politely explain that you can’t behave like this in St. Petersburg.”

“My heart bleeds even when I see a chopped-off piece of historic stucco work and now there’s this?! How could you, what’s wrong with you?” user lera_iliashenko wrote on Instagram.

Users shared other pictures of Shakurov and his friends, including those showing the group climbing the tower of the Chubakovs revenue house, an architectural landmark built in 1913.

“I knew there would be outrage and hatred over [the pictures with] the sculpture. People are worried about the sculpture, not about me,” Shakurov said in a conversation with a local resident published by the Fontanka.ru news website.

Shakurov said he has been doing parkour for over a decade and wouldn’t have touched the statue if it wasn’t steady enough for his trick.

“I have a head on my shoulders. Ordinary people from the street just can’t understand it,” explained Shakurov, who has restricted access to his social media profiles amid the outrage.

Meanwhile, St. Petersburg residents are calling on local authorities to ensure rooftops of the city’s landmarks are well-protected from unauthorized visitors, worrying some buildings may not be ready for an influx of “uncultured” guests during this summer’s tourist season.

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