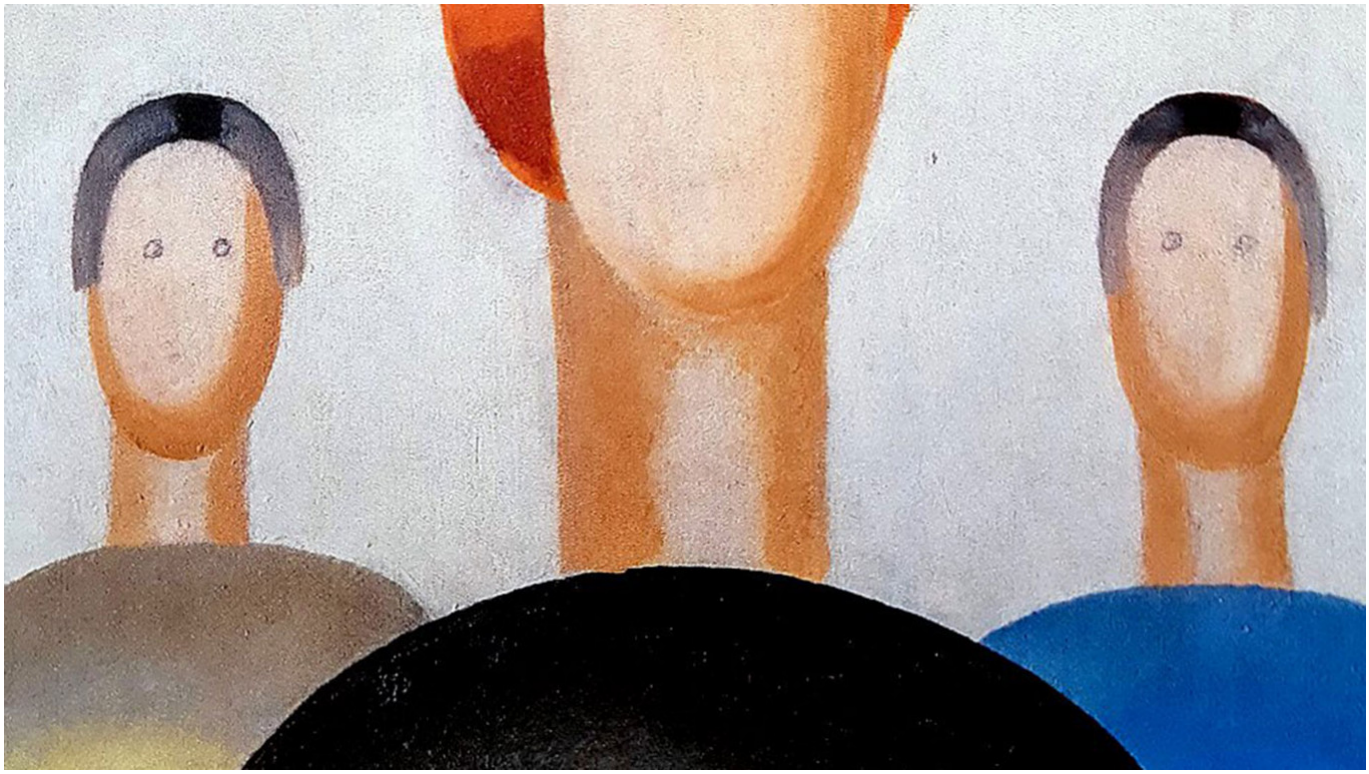
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Vandal Damages Soviet Avant-Garde Painting With Eye Drawings

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The vandal drew two pairs of eyes onto Anna Leporskaya's "Three Figures" with a ballpoint pen. **The Art Newspaper Russia**

Update on Feb. 8: Leporskaya's painting was vandalized by a Yeltsin Center security guard, the center's executive director Alexander Drozdov announced Monday. The unnamed guard, who is roughly 60 years old, committed the crime on his first day of work, exhibition organizer Anna Reshetkina wrote in an Instagram post.

A Soviet avant-garde painting has been damaged by an unknown vandal who drew eyes on its faceless figures while it was on display in central Russia, The Art Newspaper Russia reported Thursday.

Visitors discovered two pairs of eyes drawn onto Anna Leporskaya's "Three Figures" (1932-34) with a ballpoint pen during an abstract art exhibition at the Yeltsin Center in the city of Yekaterinburg, where it was on loan from the State Tretyakov Gallery in Moscow.

According to The Art Newspaper, two visitors spotted the extra details on Dec. 7 and the

Yeltsin Center turned to law enforcement two weeks later, on Dec. 20.

Police refused to investigate the act of vandalism, prompting the Culture Ministry to file a complaint with the Prosecutor General's Office, the outlet reported.

The Yeltsin Center, former Russian President Boris Yeltsin's social and cultural center that houses an art gallery, told the Znak.com news website that police deemed the damage caused to the artwork "insignificant."

The insurance firm AlfaStrakhovanie reportedly placed a 74.9 million ruble (nearly $1 million) value on Leporskaya's "Three Figures" and agreed to pay 250,000 rubles ($3,200) for its restoration.

The Art Newspaper reported that although the pen's ink penetrated the paint layer, the damage was not irreversible due to the vandal's soft stroke.

The Yeltsin Center, which returned the painting to the Tretyakov Gallery soon after the damage was discovered, said it installed protective screens over the remaining works in the exhibition after the incident.

Leporskaya was the protege of Kyiv-born avant-garde artist Kazimir Malevich.

During the Siege of Leningrad in World War II, Leporskaya was involved in readying artwork from the State Hermitage Museum for evacuation from the city.

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