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Russia Places Ex-Kremlin Adviser, Gallerist Marat Gelman on Wanted List

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Marat Gelman at the exhibition "Marat's Gift: Contemporary Art from the Gelman Collection" at the Tretyakov Gallery in 2020. **Kirill Zykov / Moskva News Agency**

Russia has placed prominent art gallerist and former Kremlin adviser-turned-critic Marat Gelman on its wanted list.

An Interior Ministry card listing Gelman — who moved to Montenegro in 2014 amid a growing crackdown on artistic freedoms — as a wanted person mentions his Israeli citizenship, the RBC news website reported.

It does not specify the crime that Gelman is suspected of, according to RBC.

Gelman, 61, was declared a "foreign agent" late last year.

In January 2022, unknown perpetrators scrawled the phrase "foreign agent" in blood-red paint on the door of his Moscow apartment after he arrived in the Russian capital for a short visit.

Gelman linked the Interior Ministry's notice to President Vladimir Putin's speech Tuesday in which he ordered his special services to root out domestic and foreign enemies.

"[Russian law enforcement workers] get paid and want to keep getting paid. For this, they need to show that there are enemies. If and when they run out of enemies, they will be sent to the front to die," he told The Moscow Times by social media messenger.

In the early 2000s Gelman had been a political consultant who was involved in Putin's fledgling presidency and later ran a state-owned television broadcaster.

Prior to his time in politics, he began his arts career as a collector, establishing one of Russia's first private contemporary art galleries in 1990.

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