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Russian Dissident Artist Shot Dead in Eastern Poland

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Semyon Skrepetsky. **Social media**

A Russian dissident artist and blogger known for his political caricatures of President Vladimir Putin was shot and killed in eastern Poland, local law enforcement authorities said Tuesday.

Semyon Skrepetsky, whose real name was Robert Kuzovkov, was killed Monday morning in a parking lot in the city of Biala Podlaska, located roughly 30 kilometers (18.5 miles) from the Belarusian border. Polish prosecutors said he was shot several times at close range.

A spokesman for the prosecutor's office said two Belarusian citizens were detained "in the course of extensive police operations" near the Belarusian consulate in Biala Podlaska. Police have not pressed charges against them and are still investigating the shooting.

Skrepetsky, a native of Russia's Altai region, immigrated to Poland in 2021 to avoid political persecution. He specialized in neo-primitivist artwork and political satire, and his work routinely targeted high-profile figures, including Putin, Soviet dictator Joseph Stalin,

Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov, Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko and even the late opposition activist Alexei Navalny.

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According to the exiled investigative outlet IStories, Skrepetsky was a polarizing figure who frequently attended and criticized Russian opposition rallies in Europe.

Just three days before his death, on the June 12 Russia Day holiday, Skrepetsky staged a high-profile picket outside the Russian Embassy in Berlin, holding up a satirical painting depicting Stalin holding a baby Putin.

Hours before the shooting on Monday, Skrepetsky wrote on his personal Telegram channel that he had received threats from users demanding retribution for the performance.

Skrepetsky's personal information had previously been added to Myrotvorets, an unofficial Ukrainian database that publishes details on individuals it deems "enemies of Ukraine." Following his death, Skrepetsky's profile photo on the database was updated with the word "liquidated" stamped across it in red.

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