

Italy to Extradite Leader of 'Voina' Art Collective

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Extradition proceedings have been launched in Italy against Oleg Vorotnikov, the 35-year-old leader of controversial Russian art collective Voina, Fontanka.ru reported Wednesday.

He was detained in Venice on Monday with his wife and fellow activist Natalya Sokol after the pair found themselves in an altercation with Italian anarchists.

Though extradition proceedings are under way against Vorotnikov at the request of Russian prosecutors, the procedure could take months, according to the report.

Voina made a name for itself after painting a 64-meter-long penis across a St. Petersburg bridge facing the local FSB headquarters in June 2010. The following month, the group staged a protest that saw a member engage in activity of a sexual nature with a frozen chicken.

They have since engaged in an array of other colorful antics in the name of "performance art." Among other things, various members of the group were charged in 2012 with setting fire to a police truck in St. Petersburg.

According to his public Interpol file, Vorotnikov faces charges for "insulting a representative of the authority" and "using violence against the representative of the authority."

He had earlier faced up to seven years in prison on hate crime charges for overturning police cars in 2010 as part of one of the group's performances. Investigators later asked prosecutors to drop the case for a lack of proof that the move constituted a hate crime.

See also:

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