

BERTHOLLET'S PRESS REVIEW

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The 2024 Russian Election

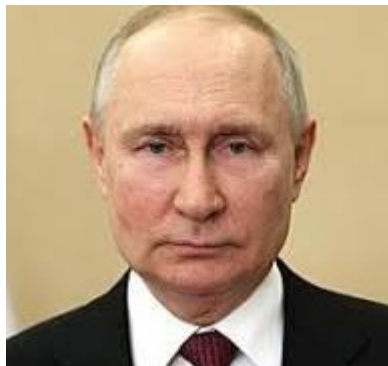
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elections_in_Russia

<https://apnews.com/article/russia-presidential-election-2024-what-to-know-04a363dd56d4b3f15d3048ed8585fe55> APNews

The Russian presidential election took place last week, on 15-17 March. Voters needed to be aged over 18 and have a clear criminal record. More than 110 million voters were expected these days, and they were able to use online voting for the first time. The election is a two-round election, and one if a candidate gets a majority of vote at the first round. The president is elected for a maximum of two consecutive 6-year terms. Before 2012, it was 4 year-terms. Russia has been governed by only 3 presidents since 1990. Then, Putin came to power and election have not been free nor fair, opponents are jailed and repressed, censorship is everywhere.

Vladimir Putin, who has been president for 16 years, faced 3 major candidates on the 2024 election : Nikolai Kharitonov of the Communist Party, Leonid Slutsky of the nationalist Liberal Democratic Party, and Vladislav Davankov of the New People Party. Other candidates were eliminated of the run like Alexei Navalny who died on February after 19 years in a Russian penitentiary.

For some people, the election highlights one dichotomic issue : are you for or against Putin ? Furthermore, the vote will impact the issue on the Russian-Ukrainian war, a vote for Putin may count as a vote for the war.



In the midst of the Kremlin regime, can art make people lucid? Here the point of view Vladimir Ovchinnikov.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-68543919>

BBC News, March 14th

Vladimir Ovchinnikov is an 86-year-old Russian artist who depicts Russia through his art.

“Pinnacle of Ambition” is a painting by Vladimir that depicts a man in a martial arts uniform walking a tightrope over a mountain of human skulls. Vladimir says that “This is what the ambition of a person high in power can lead to.”

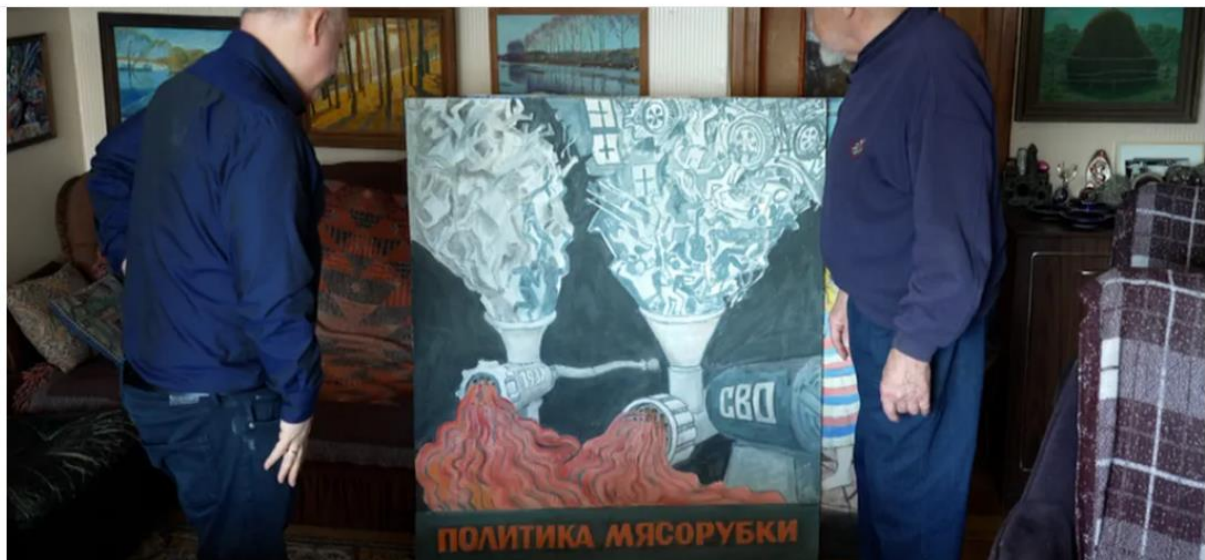
Another creation of the artist is a painting of two meat grinders chopping people. They each represent a tragedy in Russian history: one the Great Terror of Stalin; Russia's other war in Ukraine. “We haven’t learned any lessons,” Vladimir concludes. “My paintings make people think: are we right or are we wrong in this conflict? I think this is a crime against the territorial integrity of a neighboring state. I would tolerate it if I kept the silence.”

Russia on television is very different from that in Vladimir's paintings. This is why the artist asserts that his beliefs and opinions must be portrayed and shown to people, so that they see something other than a manipulated reality.

For example, he pays tribute to Alexei Navalny, the leader of the opposition, who died in prison, by painting his portrait. “The same day, someone cleaned it,” he said. The artist is constantly censored.

Most of his street graffiti, such as those criticizing the war in Ukraine, or some similar to meat grinders, are either censored or fined for “discrediting” the Russian army.

“Many people keep silent because they are afraid of repression, of losing their job and of being contacted by others,” says Vladimir.



Vladimir says his paintings get people thinking about the conflict in Ukraine

Putin's Opposition : Dead, Jailed or Exiled

<https://www.kyivpost.com/post/29640>

March 17, 2024, 9:27 am

Kyiv Post (a Ukrainian newspaper)

On March 17, 2024, the Presidential elections were held in Russia. Putin has organized assassinations and arrests in order to win these presidential elections. Indeed, all his major opponents are now dead, exiled or in jailed.

Here are some examples. One of his major opponents Alexei Navalny, a Russian lawyer died in an Arctic prison colony. He organized the "Noon against Putin". All of Putin's opponents were invited to go to the polling stations at noon to vote against him.

Advocates and pacifists are also touched by Putin's violences. Indeed, the pro-peace artist Alexander Skochilenko was sentenced to seven years because she replaced supermarket price tags with anti-war slogans. Moreover, many people leave Russia to another country, like Ukraine, so they can express themselves without being threatened.

So underground partisans and exiles are the only ones who can try to end Putin's dictatorship.

