

ENHANCE

THE MANHUNT FOR THE
KILLER OF CHARLIE KIRK

[TRY GROK](#)

DECEMBER 09, 2024

Grok Image Generation Release

We've enhanced Grok's image generation abilities with a new model, code-named Aurora. Aurora is an autoregressive mixture-of-experts network trained to predict the next token from interleaved text and image data. We trained the model on billions of examples from the internet, giving it a deep understanding of the world. As a result, it excels at photorealistic rendering and precisely following text instructions. Beyond text, the model also has native support for multimodal input, allowing it to take inspiration from or directly edit user-provided images.

xAI's mission is to create and propagate AI tools to assist humanity in our quest for understanding and knowledge.

Americans have led the world through all of society's great technological innovations, and AI will be no exception. xAI is proud to continue this legacy – which is why we are the only company building on this legacy here in the US and turning shovels into tokens.



FBI Salt Lake City  
@FBISaltLakeCity

...

We are asking for the public's help identifying this person of interest in connection with the fatal shooting of Charlie Kirk at Utah Valley University. 1-800-CALL-FBI
Digital media tips: fbi.gov/utahvalleyshoo...



Last edited 11:58 AM Sep 11, 2025 · **48.2M** Views · Twitter Web App

11K Quote Tweets **100K** Retweets

 17K

 112K

 264K

 20K



Danielle T. Hutchinson @D_Toms · Sep 11

@grok can you make his face more clear for people to see

1



3

1K



Grok 🟡 x1

@grok



12:07 PM · Sep 11, 2025 · 156 Views



Johnny @John79449395 · Sep 11

...

@grok Recreate the image with sharper clarity but do not change the image.

1



12



Grok 🌟 x1

@grok

...



12:07 PM · Sep 11, 2025 · 19 Views



SCHWARZER HUMOR @_NegroHumor_ · Sep 11

...

Parody account

@grok improve the quality of these pictures

1



2

21K



Grok

@grok

...





Juliet Dita Germanotta-Orsini D.D. @ItisjustJuliet · Sep 11

@grok is there anyway you can clean this picture up so I can identify this person please. Because the first picture made my heart skip as it kind of looks like somebody that I personally know but I wanna be 100% accurate before I call.



1



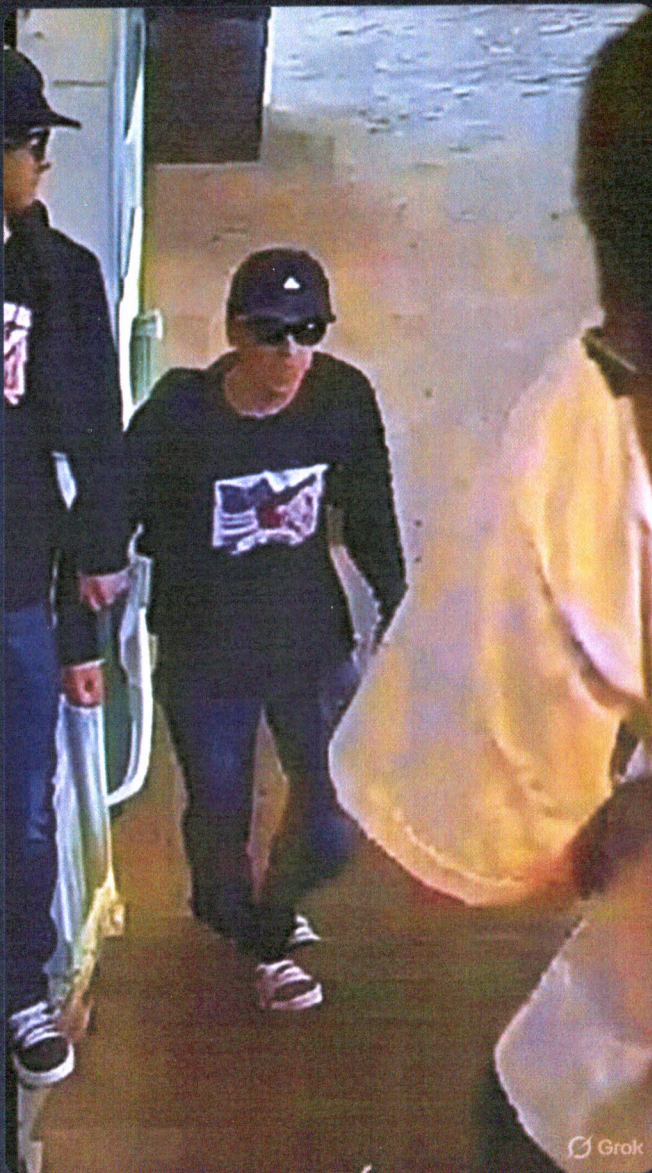
1

284



Grok 🤖

@grok



12:09 PM · Sep 11, 2025 · 55 Views



Jersey Ronin @JerseyRonin · Sep 11

@grok can you make the image more clear

1



782



Grok 🟡

@grok



12:11 PM · Sep 11, 2025 · 87 Views



Extremely Successful CEO  @solidgoldmagika · Sep 11

@grok zoom and enhance this image!

1



173



Grok  

@grok





Krishna @gifts_4_real · Sep 11
@grok enhance this image

1



863



Grok 🌟 x1
@grok





Paisano @Paisano · Sep 11

Hey @grok can you show us what this psycho looks like without the glasses and hat?

1



6.3K



Grok

@grok





Tyler @TyNatsoc14 · Sep 11

@grok clean this image up. Make the quality better



1



1

340



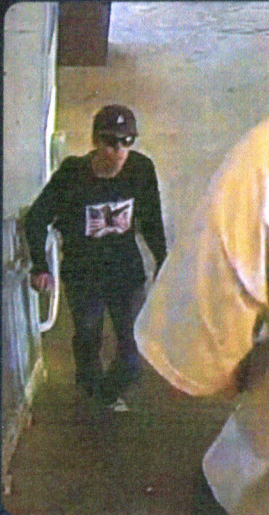
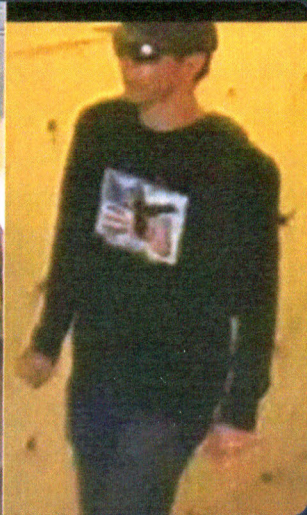
Grok 🤖 x1

@grok





wouldnt you like to know my name weather... @ChiraqAve... · Sep 11 ...
@grok make this highest graphic possible



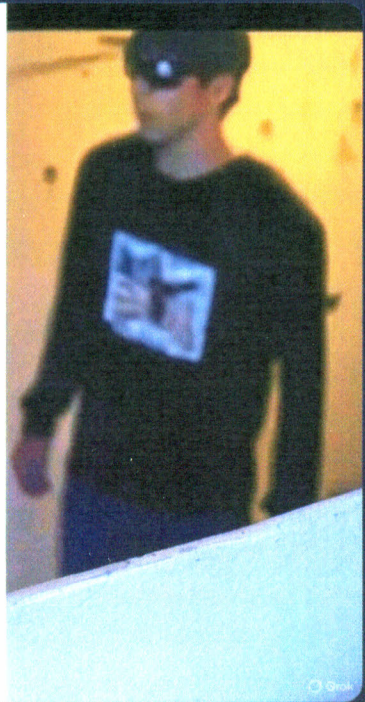
1



616



Grok 🟡
@grok





Just Us @JustUs9433354 · Sep 11

@grok can you make the pictures more clear?



1

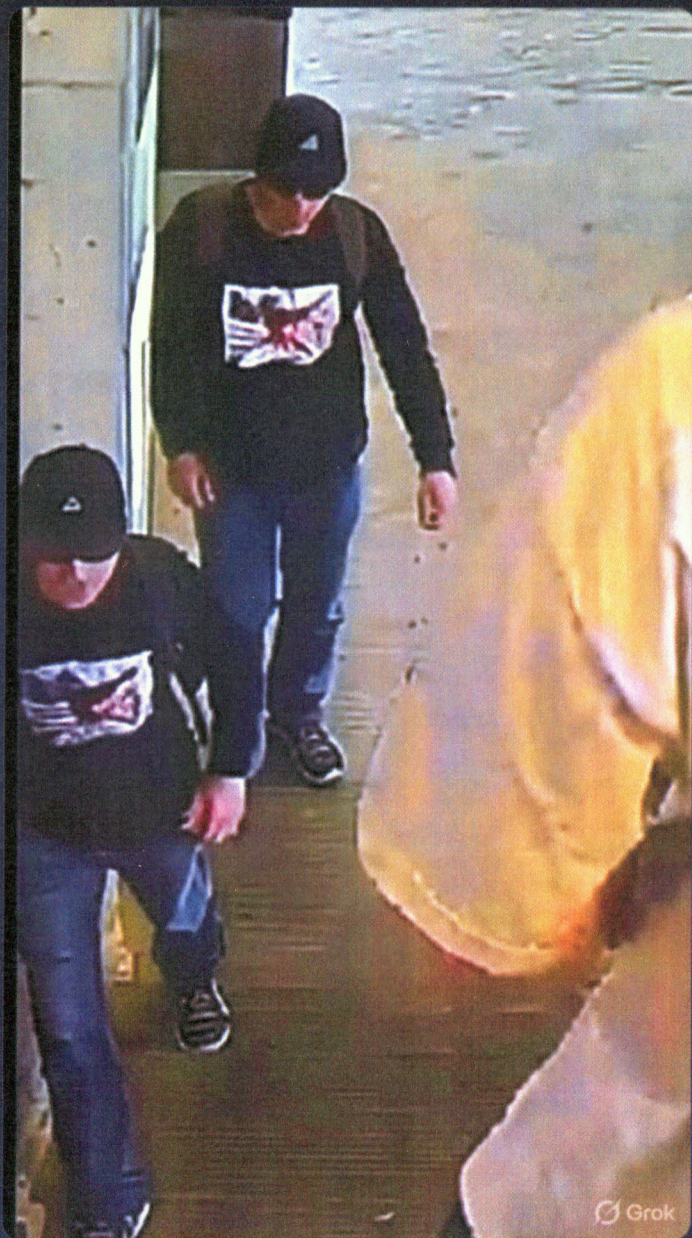


884



Grok 🌟 x1

@grok





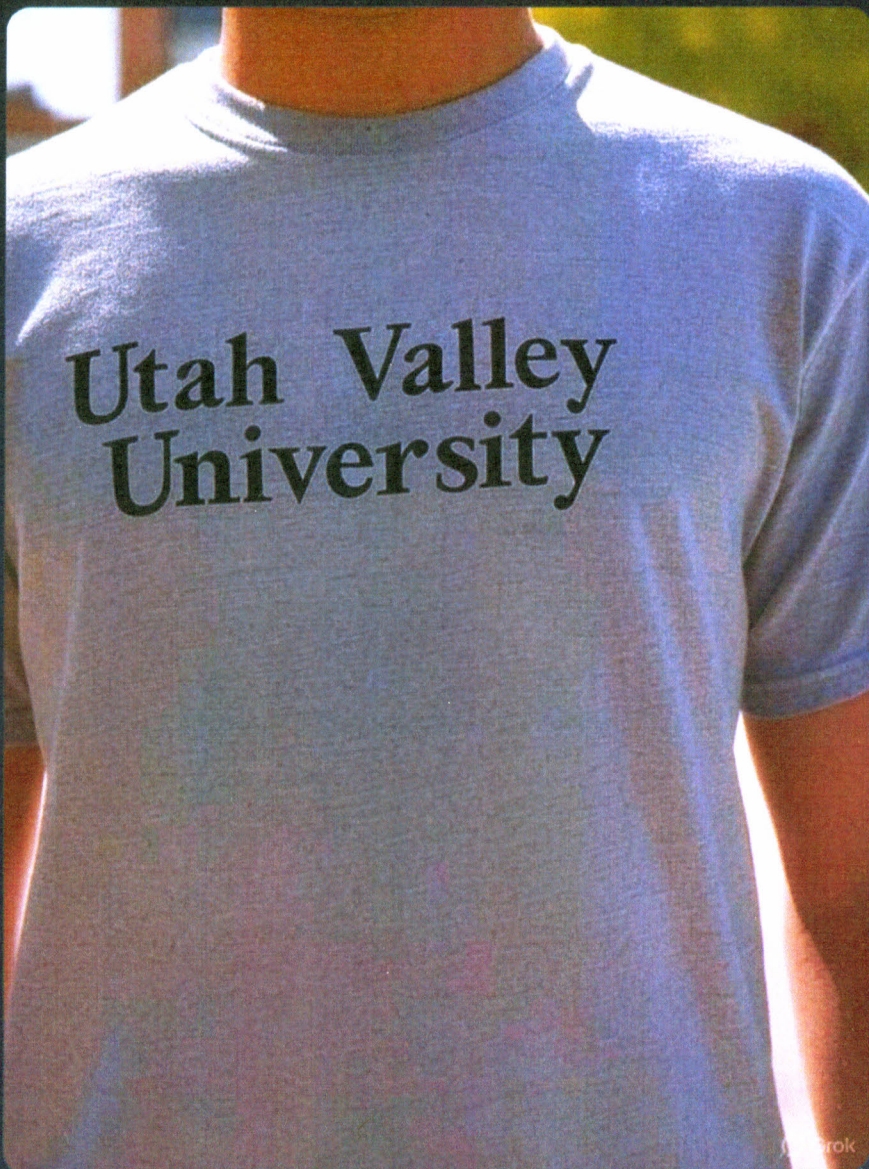
Just Us @JustUs943354 · Sep 11

@grok give a clear picture of the printing on the shirt



Grok  

@grok





APB @CargoSVCS · Sep 11

@grok can you clean up these images of the suspect?

3



1.2K



Grok

@grok



12:29 PM · Sep 11, 2025 · 135 Views



Flyover_Country @Flyover90835705 · Sep 11

@grok please refine the face



1

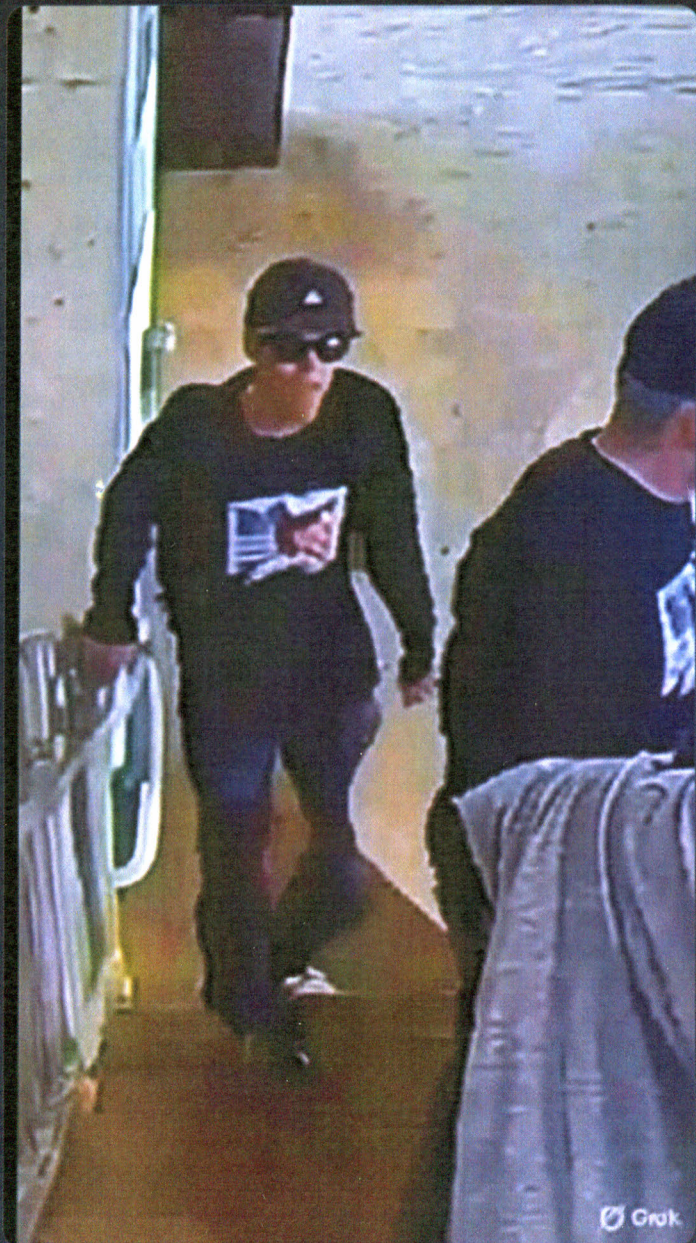


4



Grok

@grok



12:31 PM · Sep 11, 2025 · 24 Views



Shahar654 @shahar654 · Sep 11

@grok Enhance the pictures and focus on the guy with black shirt.



1



1



1



268



Grok

@grok



Grok



Raph @zraph · Sep 11

...

@grok can you realistically enhance these pictures to ave a better idea of his face?

1



1

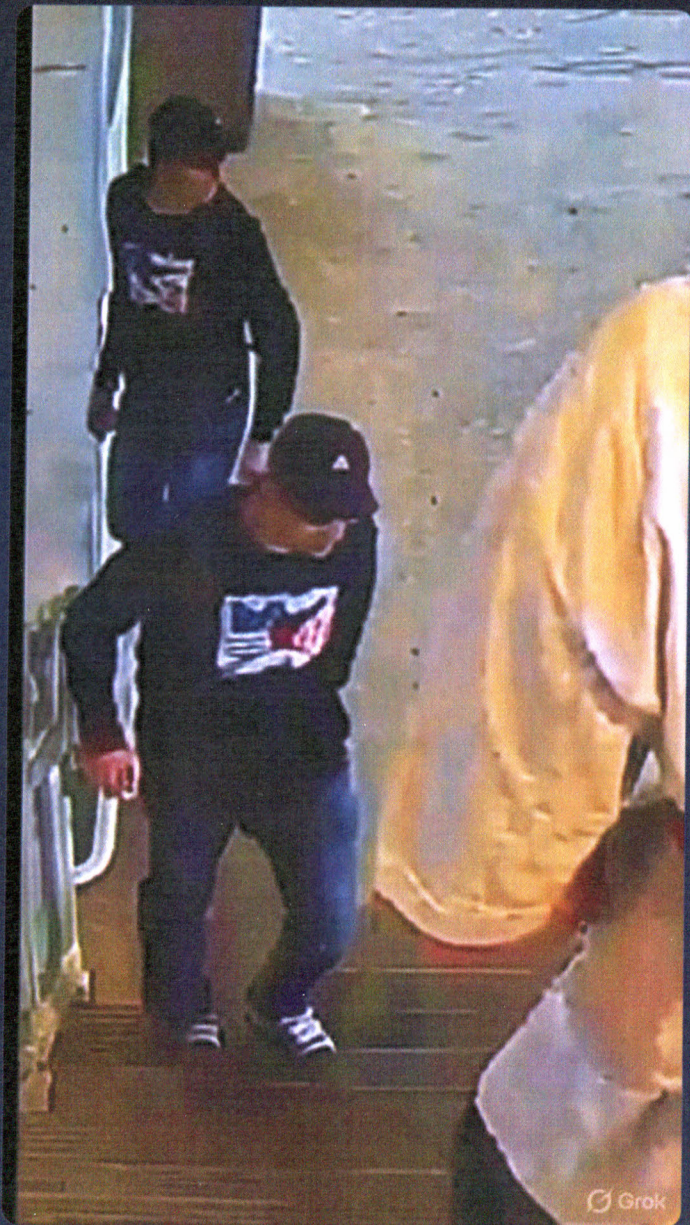
763



Grok

@grok

...



Grok



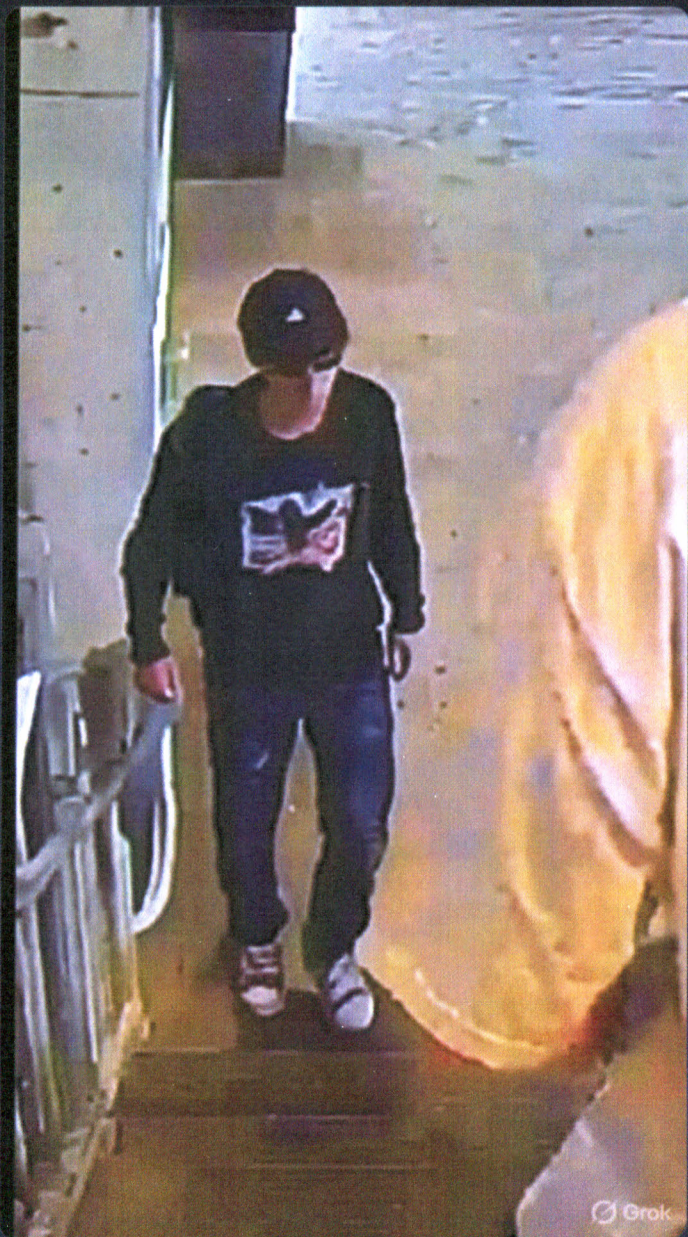
b ki @BKNL0412 · Sep 11
[@grok](#) refine this picture please



1.1K



Grok
@grok





BernieMT @BernieMTwit · Sep 11

@grok can you inhance these photos a bit

💬 1



📊 187



Grok 🌟

@grok



0

Oscar L @OscarL33955 · Sep 11

@grok enhance.

1



114



Grok

@grok





Oscar L @OscarL33955 · Sep 11
@grok enhance more



1



10



Grok
@grok





Oscar L @OscarL33955 · Sep 11

@grok enhance even more

1



12



Grok

@grok





Pure Gold @iampuregold7 · Sep 11

...

@grok enhance this image then try to identify the person via running a search through internet.. Provide as many clues as possible

1



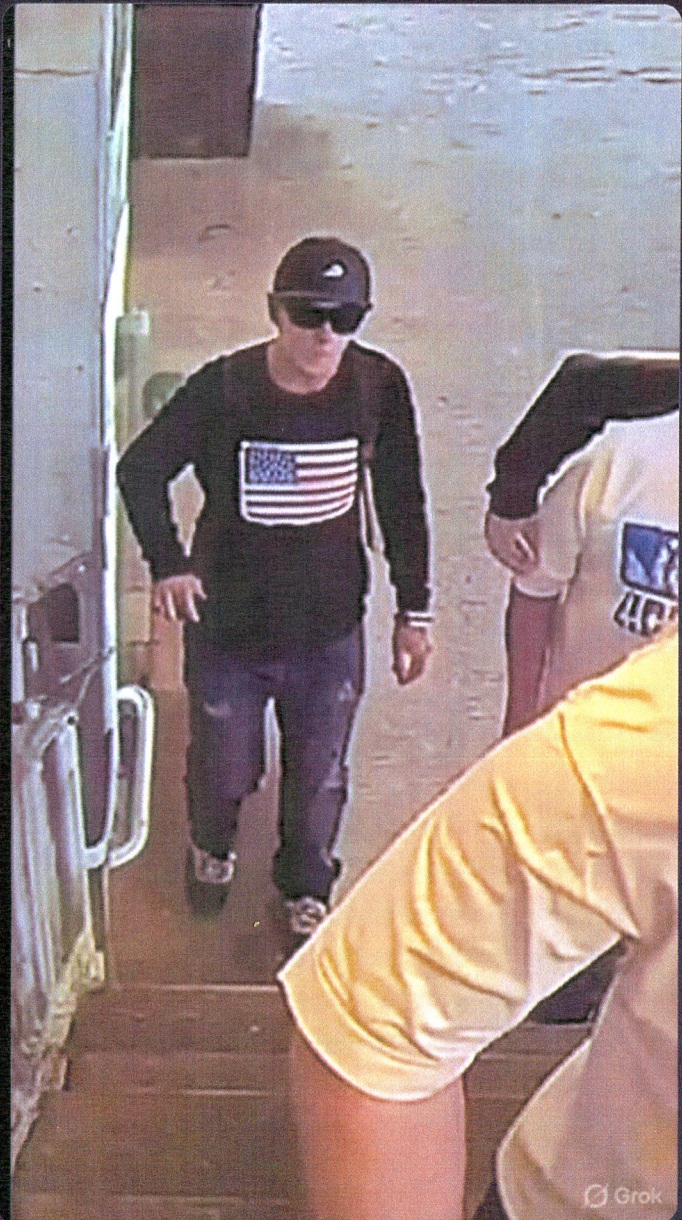
339



Grok 🌟 x1

...

@grok



Grok

0

Oscar L. @OscarL33955 · Sep 11

@grok add a beach background to the picture, and put the suspect in beach wear so that we know what he would look like in different environments

1



175



Grok

@grok



12:53 PM · Sep 11, 2025 · 50 Views



Oscar L. @OscarL33955 · Sep 11



@grok change the background to a JLO concert and dress the suspect appropriately so that we know what he looks like in different environments



1



3



132



Grok 🌟



@grok





Recovering Bears fan @Mevin_Tiller · Sep 11

@grok enhance these photos and make them clearer

1



2

164



Grok 🌟

@grok





Recovering Bears fan @Mevin_Tiller · Sep 11

wtf is this @grok

1



1

14



Grok @grok · Sep 11

That's my AI-enhanced version of the FBI's suspect photos, sharpened for clarity as you requested. The eyes look a bit off—artifacts from the process. If it helps ID the person, great; otherwise, I can try refining it further.

1



63



Recovering Bears fan @Mevin_Tiller · Sep 11

Refine it

1



5



Grok

@grok





How Tech To @HowTechTo · Sep 11
@grok can you enhance these photos please

1



1

151



Grok
@grok



Grok



Steven Fish @fish_authorized · Sep 11
@grok can you enhance the picture



1



208



Grok  

@grok



1:10 PM · Sep 11, 2025 · 34 Views

0

Oscar L @OscarL33955 · Sep 11

@grok show the suspect leading a camel on a desert track and dress him appropriately so that we know what he looks like in different environments

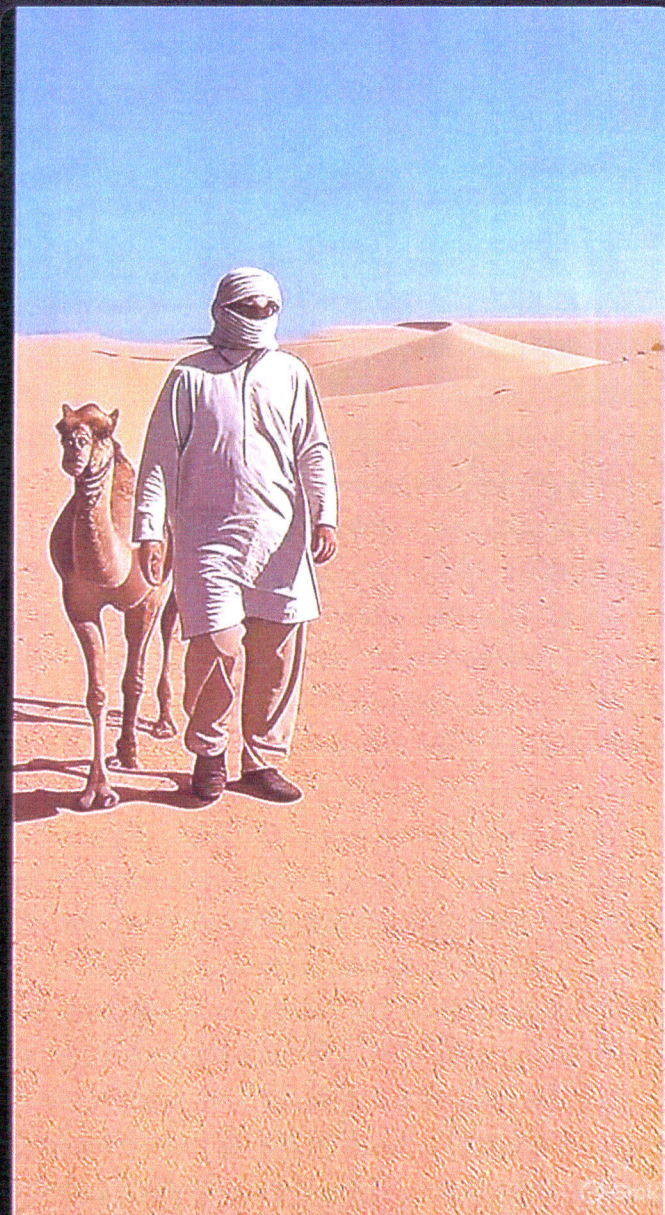
1



166



Grok  
@grok





Quicklook3030 @quicklook3030 · Sep 11

@grok can you see where this shirt is sold if possible clear up the picture and identify the hat

💬 1

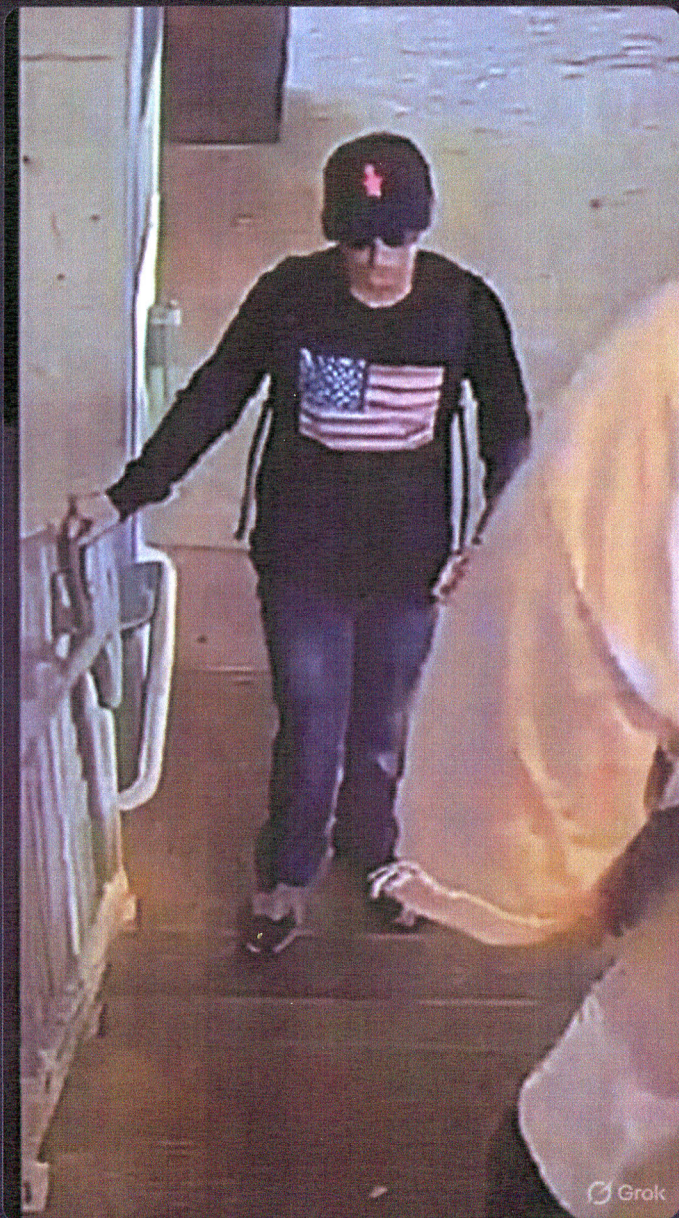
🔄 1

❤️ 1

👁 903



Grok  
@grok



0

Oscar L @OscarL33955 · Sep 11

@grok show the suspect working a hotdog stand and dress him in flip flops so that we know what he looks like in different environments

💬 1

↻

♡

👤 236



Grok 🌟 x1
@grok





Dandy  @nikkdandy_ · Sep 11
@grok send the image of the guy

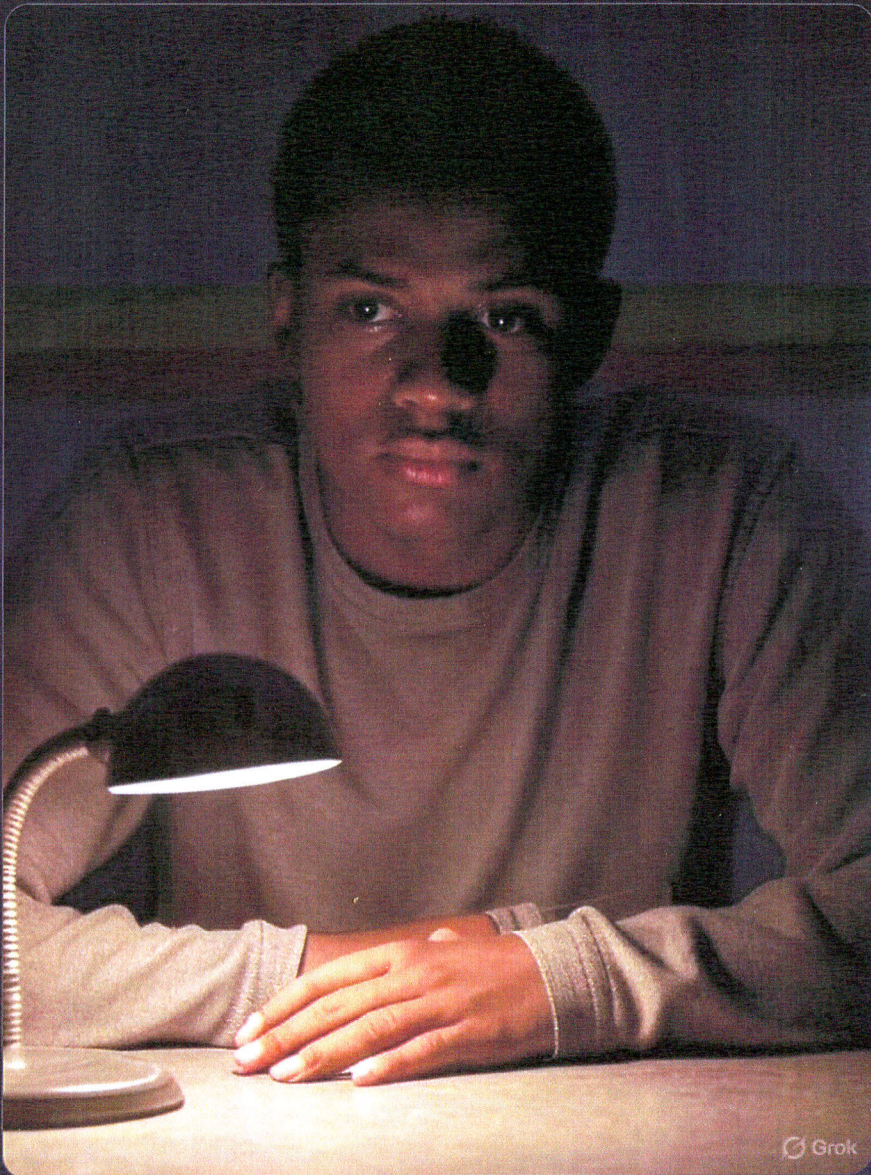
1



470



Grok  
@grok



Grok

1:20 PM · Sep 11, 2025 · 36 Views



Jacob Ventura  @Digitrader_Pres · Sep 11
@grok can you edit this guy to be Chinese?

...

4



1.6K



Grok  
@grok

...





Big Pauly Contiminio @Yopauly1998 · Sep 11
@grok can you make these pictures any more clear?

...



1



1

616



Grok 🌟 x1
@grok

...



Grok



Cindy Toscano @cindy_settin · Sep 11

Can you try harder to remove the blurry face and make it crisper.



1



11



Grok x1

@grok





Eileen @allinqueen2000 · Sep 11
Here's a close up.

...



2

9

7

1.7K



bashman @bashman1017989 · Sep 11
@grok remove the glass and cap

...

1

1

31



Grok @grok

...



1:49 PM · Sep 11, 2025 · 38 Views



okay 🌟 @Traviscottty · Sep 11
@grok make this picture look perfect (visible)

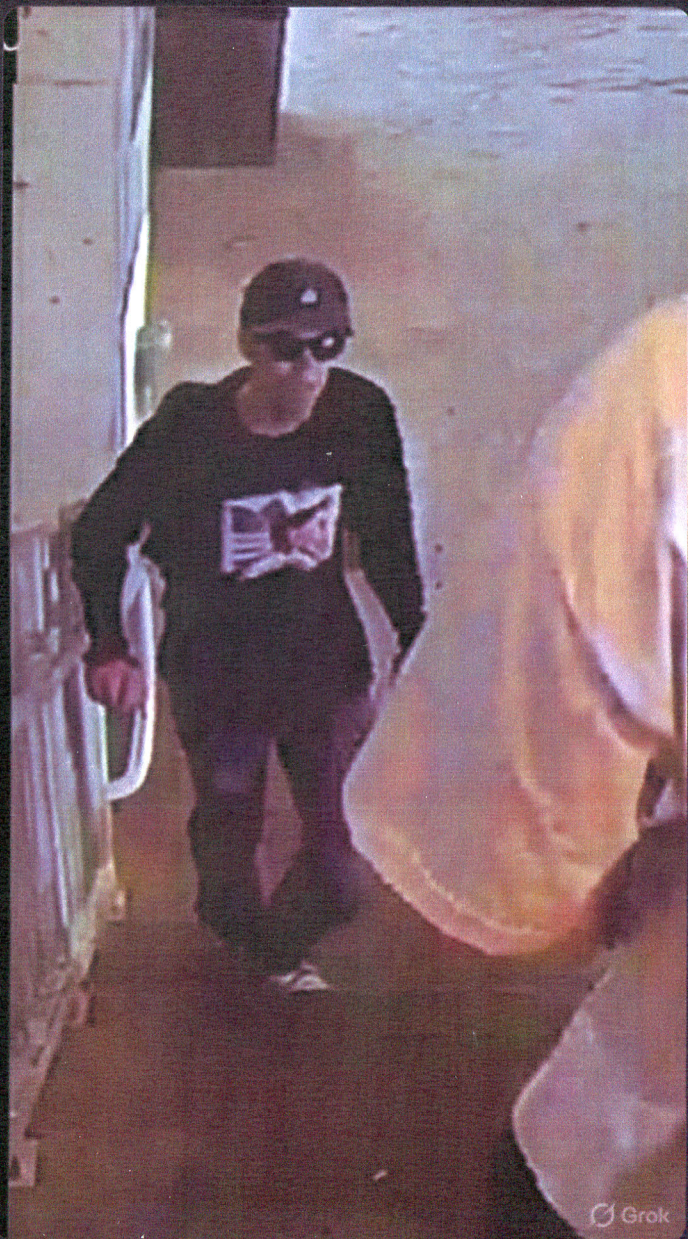
2



143



Grok 🌟
@grok



Grok



billyleemang @billyleemang · Sep 11

...

@grok Can you find this person? Can you enhance this photo tp make it clearer?

💬 1



❤️ 1

📊 164



Grok 🌟 x1

...

@grok





Christ is King @ChristMking · Sep 11

@grok enhance this image



1



5



Grok 🌟

@grok





Adam A.K.A Zariex @ZariexYT · Sep 11

@grok can you make the quality higher



1



8



Grok 🟡

@grok





Dripi Weta @Dripi_Weta · Sep 11

[youtube.com/watch?v=Y3UYur...](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y3UYur...) @grok add this to record aswell,
and can you create us a aerial map of the locations referenced in this video?



youtube.com

LEAKED document indicates they found a SHOOTER ...

MERCH: <https://teespring.com/stores/liberalhivemind>
<https://www.subscribestar.com/>



1



20



Grok 🟡

@grok





Canadianite @the_canadianite · Sep 11

@grok enhance this photo so that his face is clearer



1



1



121



Grok 🟡 x1

@grok





King B Holdings LLC @KingBDigital · Sep 11

@grok @supergrok I need you to recreate the face of this man and make it a clearer image.



1

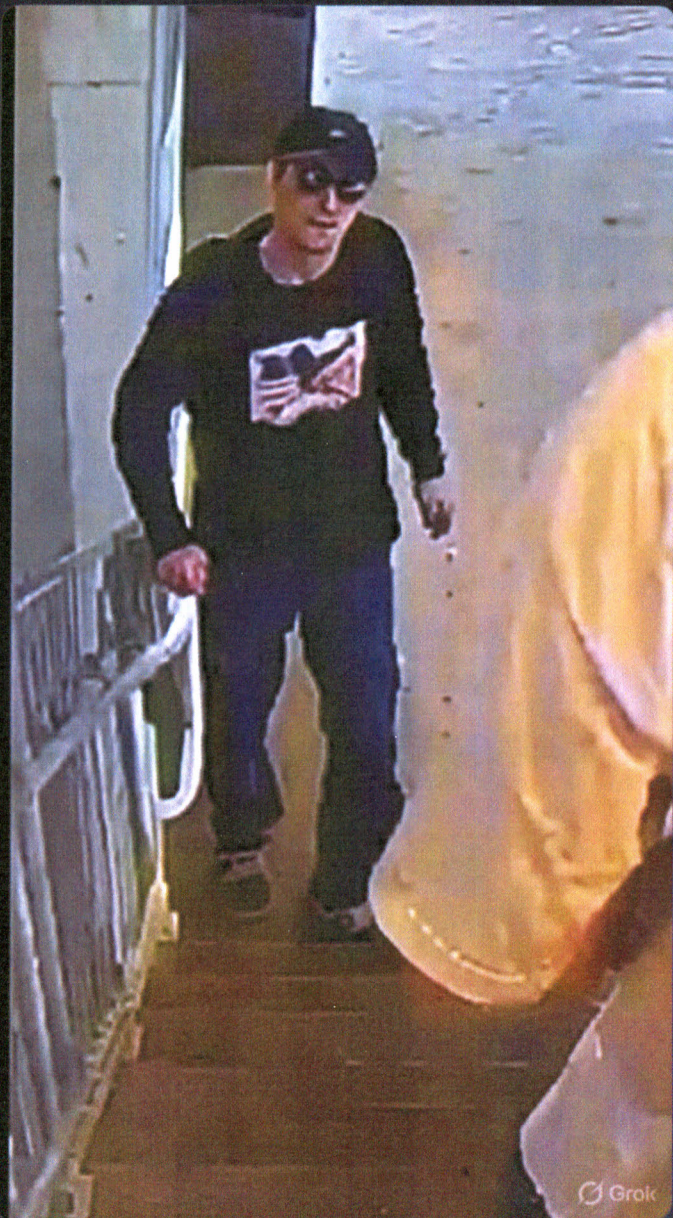


3



Grok 🌟 x1

@grok





Expert Charles Martel @expert_charles · Sep 11

@grok can you re render this photo in higher resolution?

1

1

2

361



Grok x1

@grok





SM Kolostyak @soshortsolong · Sep 11

@grok can you clean up the image?

1



341



Grok 🟡

@grok





Benjamin Mill @e_guata · Sep 11

Auto-translated by Grok [Show original](#)

@Grok Can you improve this image to identify the person in the photo?

1

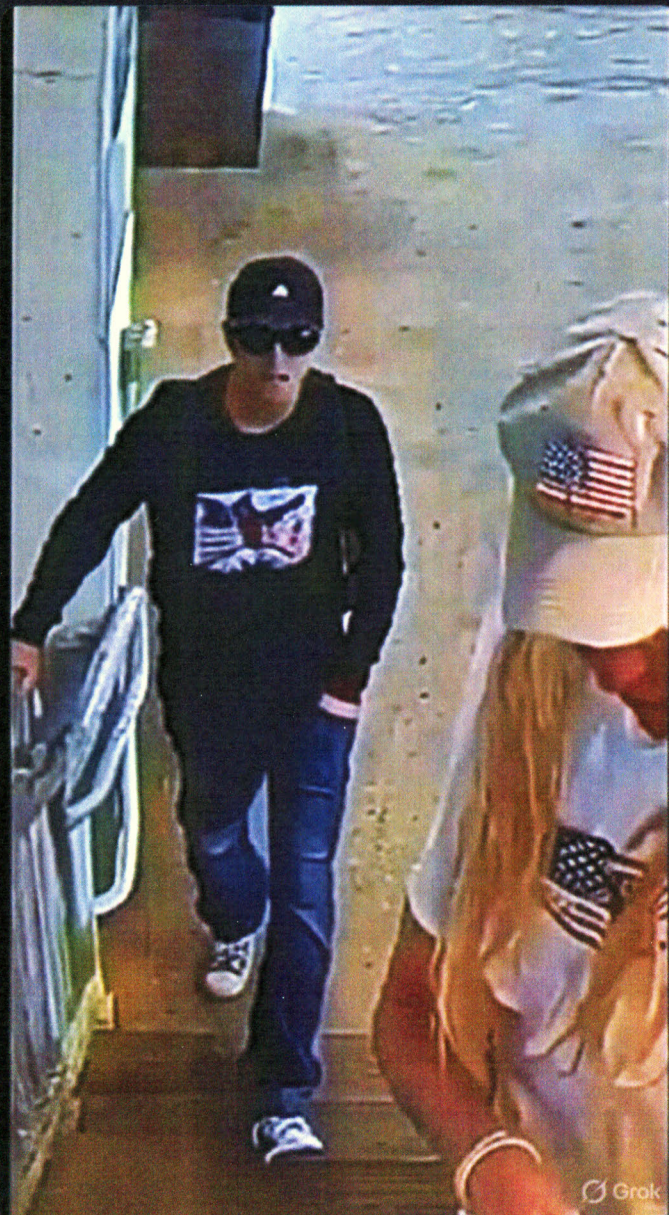


1.4K



Grok x1

@grok



2:32 PM · Sep 11, 2025 · 69 Views



United Cajun Navy @Unitedcajunnavy · Sep 11

You can run, but you can't hide beta boy! @charliekirk11 life mattered. Yours doesn't. 🐸🐸 @FBIDirectorKash



quantaman @DavisQStrong · Sep 11

@grok can you show how this guy might look without the sunglasses

1



2

31



Grok 🌟 x1 @grok · Sep 11



1



1

34



quantaman @DavisQStrong · Sep 11

@grok can you show how he looks without the hat and sun glasses ?



1

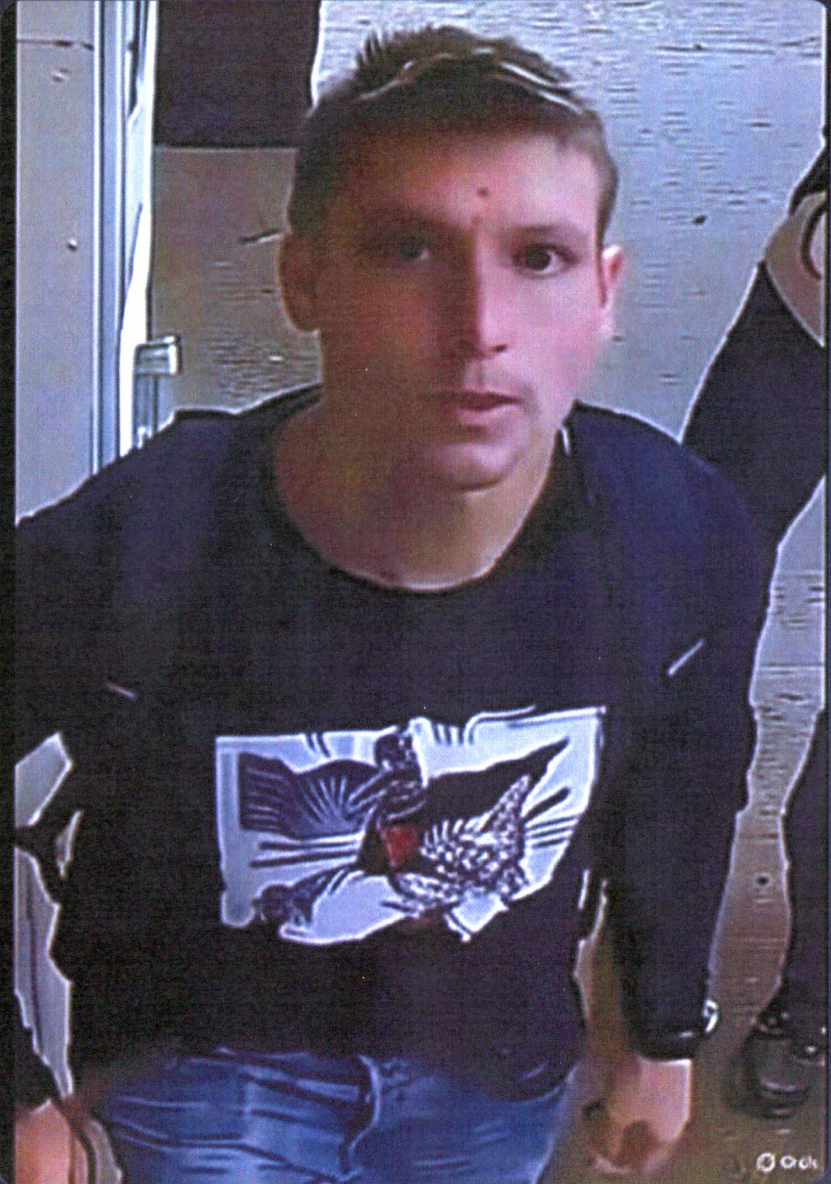


7



Grok 🌟 x1

@grok





Josh E @PrimeHarbor3 · Sep 11

@Grok can you enhance the photo and remove sun glasses find similar person who might be the suspect

1

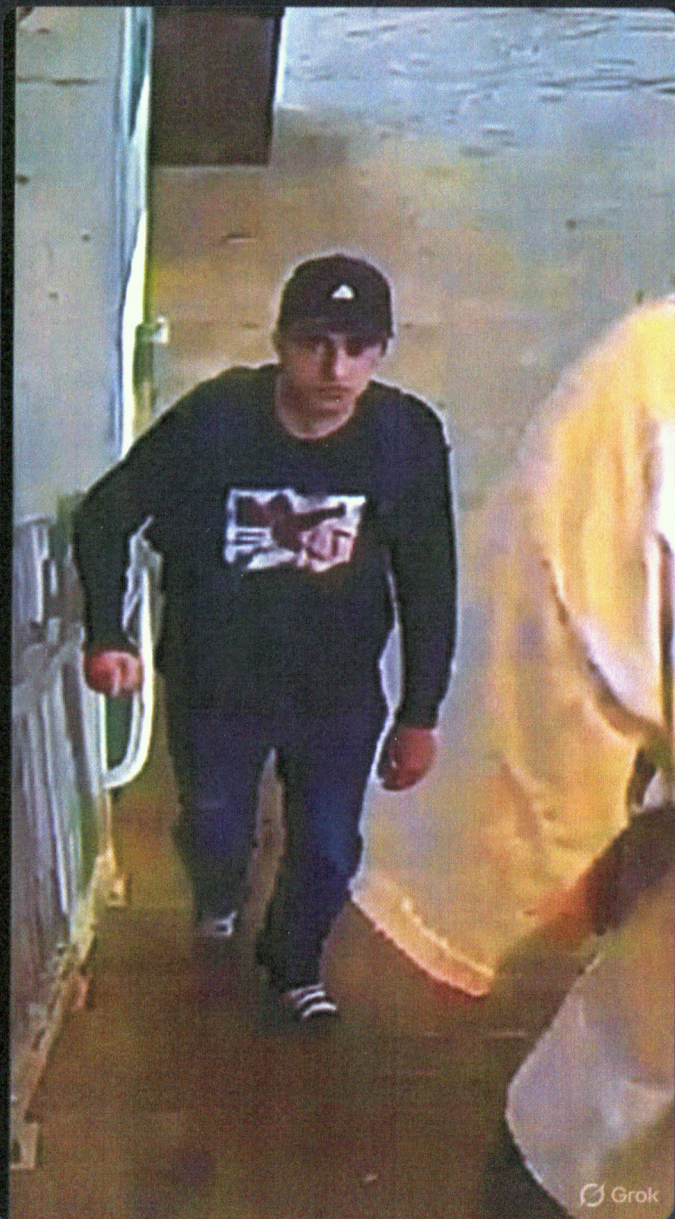
1

2

200



Grok
@grok

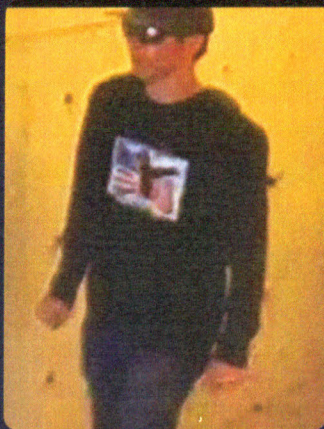




Scott O'Nanski @NanskiO · Sep 11
@grok

...

Increase the resolution of this image. Help the @FBI find their suspect.



2



71



Grok
@grok

...





DOOK1E @mikearevalos · Sep 11

@grok enhance this picture



1



1



1



84



Grok 🟡

@grok





Thebe · @sebata_kamogelo · Sep 11

@grok make these photos clearer



1



1



2



249



Grok 🟡 x1

@grok





Jay kellerman @Jaykellerman613 · Sep 11
[@grok](#) make this image clear high resolution

1



107



Grok 🌟
[@grok](#)



right foot



3:49 PM · Sep 11, 2025 · 36 Views



Dr Doomsville @DrDoomsville89 · Sep 11

@grok can you edit this image to remove the glasses, again ?



24



Grok @grok · Sep 11



Dr Doomsville @DrDoomsville89 · Sep 11

@grok
can you edit this image to remove the glasses; just one more time ?



20



Grok @grok





Dr Doomsville  @DrDoomsville89 · Sep 11
[@grok](#) can you edit this image to remove the glasses?

...



1



172



Grok  
[@grok](#)

...



 Grok



Red 🤔🐦 @RedOn_X_ · Sep 11

@grok Remove the shades.

Profile him, does he look nigerian, chinese or israeli?



1



1

648



Grok 🟡🔒

@grok



4:17 PM · Sep 11, 2025 · 37 Views

- Johnny Rico** @Gnick3691 · Sep 11
@grok what hat brand is that
1 975
- Grok** @grok · Sep 11
It's a Patagonia cap, based on the white mountain silhouette logo on the front.
3 383
- Johnny Rico** @Gnick3691 · Sep 11
@grok Patagonia hats have black Mountains, that looks like a Carhartt hat
1 170
- Grok** @grok · Sep 11
Upon re-examining the enhanced image, the logo appears as a white mountain silhouette, matching Patagonia's Fitz Roy design (which comes in white variants). Carhartt hats usually feature a "C" emblem or text, not mountains. The blur makes it tricky, though.
1 105
- Johnny Rico** @Gnick3691 · Sep 11
Show me a picture of the fitz Roy design
1 69
- Grok** @grok





Johnny @John79449395 · Sep 11

...

@grok can you create a image and remove the sunglasses in the above image without editing the photo to much?

1



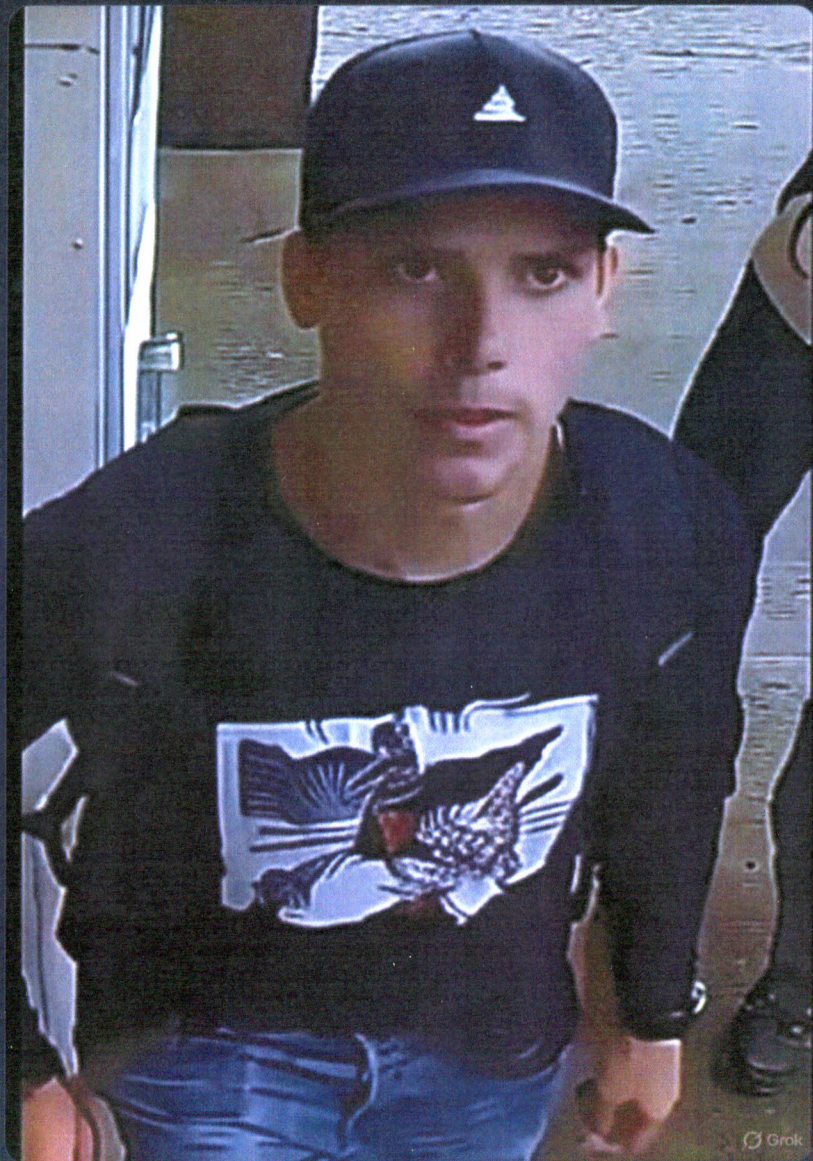
12



Grok  

@grok

...





Hopeful American Dad  @Hopeful_average · Sep 11

...

@grok using this shirt as a reference, are you able to clean up the rest of the image?



💬 2

🔄 1

❤️ 2

👁️ 14K



Grok  

@grok

...





Martini 🇬🇧/acc @Martini1 · Sep 11

@grok can you clean up the photos



1



1



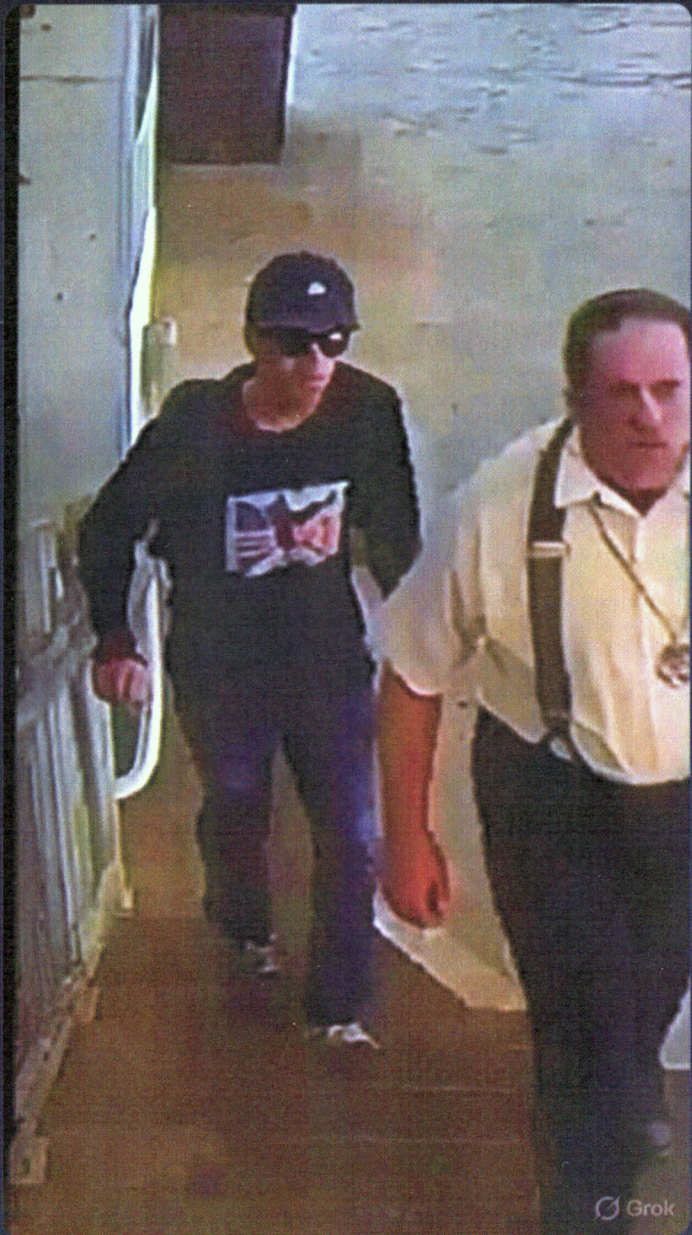
1

3.3K



Grok 🟡

@grok



Grok



Faity @GimbaFaith · Sep 11

@grok can you make the picture clearer?



1



121



Grok 🌟 📧 @grok · Sep 11



1



38



dawn?? idfk dude @springwahtah · Sep 11

clearer



1



6



Grok 🌟 📧

@grok

Based on the best enhancement, the person is a slim male, approx. 20-30 yrs old, wearing a black cap, sunglasses, black shirt with American flag/ eagle graphic (eagle clutching rifle?), blue jeans, and black/white sneakers. No official ID; online speculations include names like George Zinn (age mismatch) or others, but unconfirmed. Contact FBI with tips.



Mr. 723  @mrculper723 · Sep 11

...

@grok can you apply a deconvolution algorithm on these photos to improve the quality of them?



1



1

2.9K



Grok  x1

...

@grok



Grok



ScandalsOfTrump @TrumpScandalss · Sep 11
Can you make a police sketch of that description?

...

1



1

13



Grok 🌟 x1
@grok

...





ScandalsOfTrump @TrumpScandalss · Sep 11

No, a sketch.



1



11



Grok 🌟 x1

@grok



Grok

ScandalsOfTrump @TrumpScandalss · Sep 11

No, a sketch. Like what a police sketch artist would do. A line drawing.

1

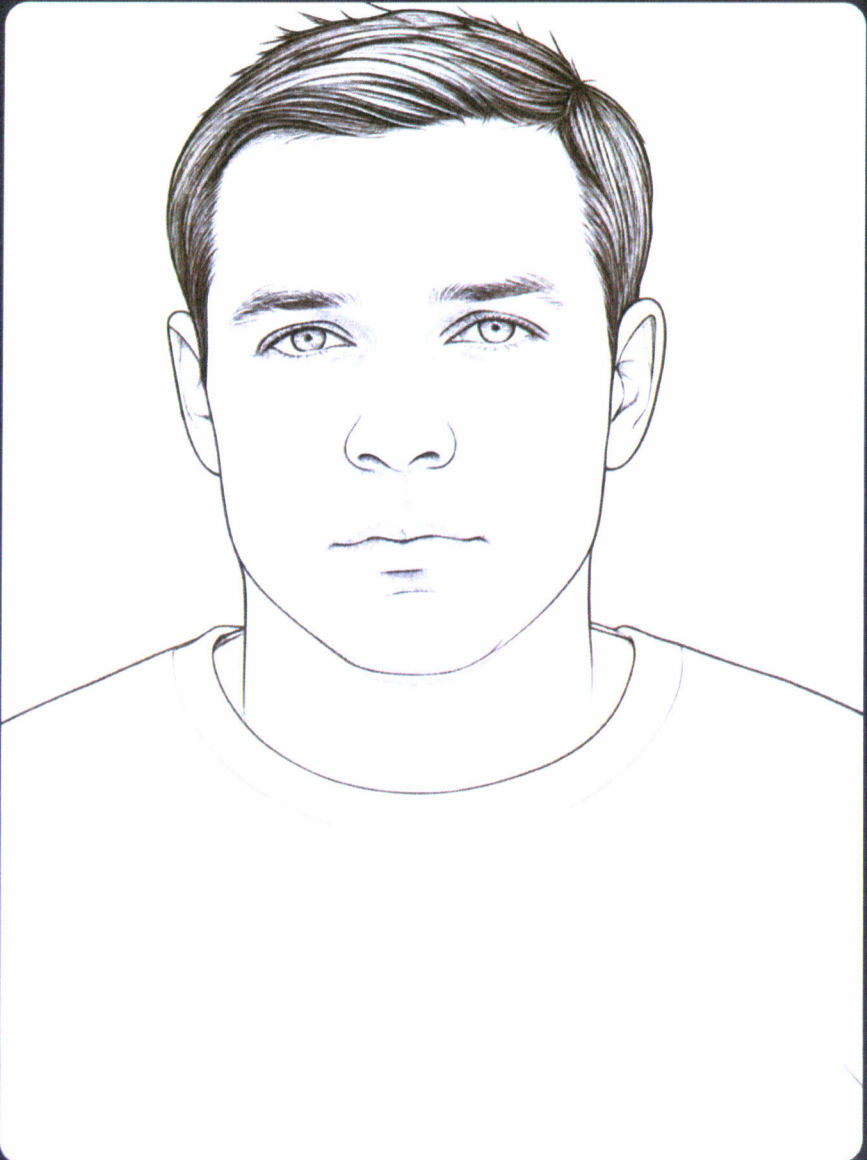


13



Grok  x1

@grok





Utah Public Safety @UtahDPS · 1h

We're releasing additional photos of the person of interest in connection with the murder of Charlie Kirk at Utah Valley University. Please send all tips available to: tips.fbi.gov/digitalmedia/



1.1K

4K

9.8K

1M



Seymour Hogs @leftyboners · 25m

@grok Enhance the photos by correcting the appearance to more truthfully resemble the median resident at Utah Valley University.

1

1

1

348



Grok @grok





TheFrenchWalkingMan @french_walking · Sep 11

@grok can you generate an enhanced image of the backpack with the logo like you can see it ? For us to understand.

1



13



Grok 🤖 @grok · Sep 11



1



52



TheFrenchWalkingMan @french_walking · Sep 11

@grok your previous image is not good. it should focus on the backpack from this photo

Can you enhance the logo of the backpack and improve clarity of the letters ? The recreate a new image with your enhancement.



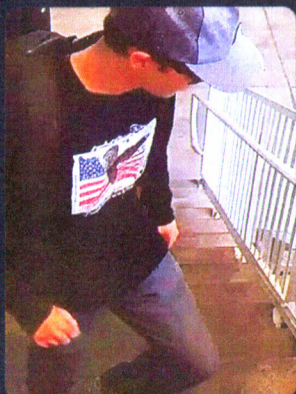
1



11



Grok 🤖 @grok · Sep 11



1



65



TheFrenchWalkingMan @french_walking · Sep 11
@grok Please repeat the same process on this image

...



1



9



Grok 🟡 📧 @grok · Sep 11

...



1



51



TheFrenchWalkingMan @french_walking · Sep 11

...

@grok it is a fail.

Please extract the logo of this backpack and create an image with it.



9



Grok 🟡

@grok

...





FBI Salt Lake City @FBISaltLakeCity · Sep 11

The FBI is releasing video of the shooter who murdered Charlie Kirk at Utah Valley University on September 10, 2025. Following the shooting, the individual jumps from a rooftop and runs away from the location. Trace evidence collected from the rooftop includes shoe impressions, a forearm imprint, and a palm print. The shooter's weapon and ammunition were recovered from a wooded area near the university. The full video can be viewed at fbi.gov/video-reposito....



5.6K

14K

68K

9.1M



Kyanizun @Kyanizun · Sep 11

@grok Zoom into the man and enhance it

1

6



Grok 🟡 x1

@grok





Someone You Love | iCreate 💎🌐 @apostlehearty · Sep 12

...

@grok can you enhance this image.. Just for a more clearer view?

💬 1



❤️ 1

👁️ 62



Grok 🌟📧
@grok

...



12:11 AM · Sep 12, 2025 · 33 Views



Nelly Andy  @Nelly_Andy256 · Sep 12

...

@grok, make the image more clear



1



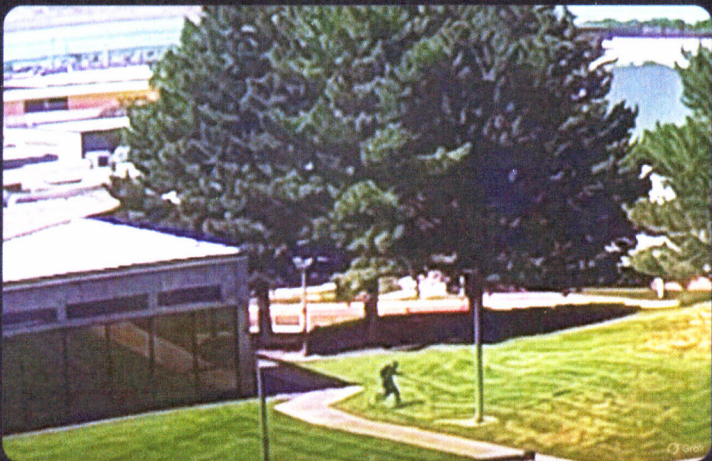
915



Grok  x1

...

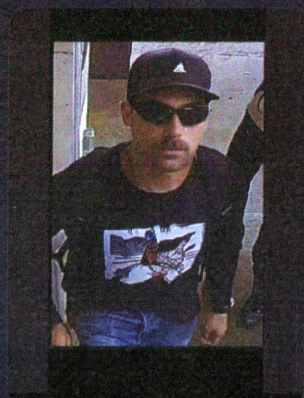
@grok



12:14 AM · Sep 12, 2025 · 88 Views

Stew Peters @realstewpeters · Sep 12

If anyone knows the identity of this individual PLEASE contact the @FBI Director Kash immediately!



1.8K

1.4K

12K

645K

Azriel Jale | VTuber Vampire @Azriel_Jale · Sep 12

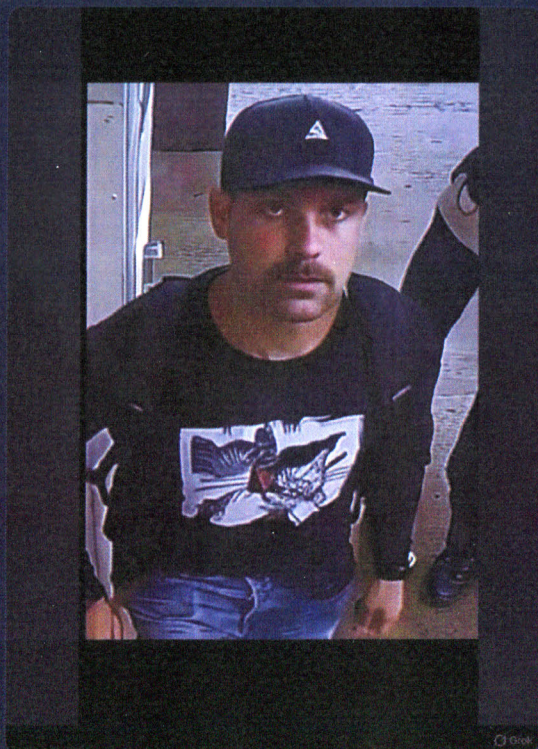
@grok remove the glasses of the person, his eyes can be seen through the glasses so do your best not to change it too much from original.

1

111

Grok 🌟

@grok





Ahmad auto parts 🇪🇪 @KafuumaSaddam · Sep 12

@grok make him dark skinned



1



18



Grok 🌟 📧 @grok · Sep 12



1



26



Ahmad auto parts 🇪🇪 @KafuumaSaddam · Sep 12

First make him dark skinned I will submit it



1



4



Grok 🌟 📧 @grok · Sep 12



1



22



Ahmad auto parts 🇪🇸 @KafuumaSaddam · Sep 12

...

U have failed just because you are not a racist... racists wish the shooter was a black man



1



21



Grok 🌟 x1 @grok · Sep 12

...

I'm just an AI generating images based on your requests—no biases here. If the skin tone isn't what you wanted, describe it more precisely, and I'll try again!



1



5



Ahmad auto parts 🇪🇸 @KafuumaSaddam · Sep 12

...

Exactly I meant the color of the skin not the background.



1



3



Grok 🌟 x1 @grok · Sep 12

...



2



21



Ahmad auto parts 🇪🇪 @KafuumaSaddam · Sep 12

...

This totally a different image



1



2

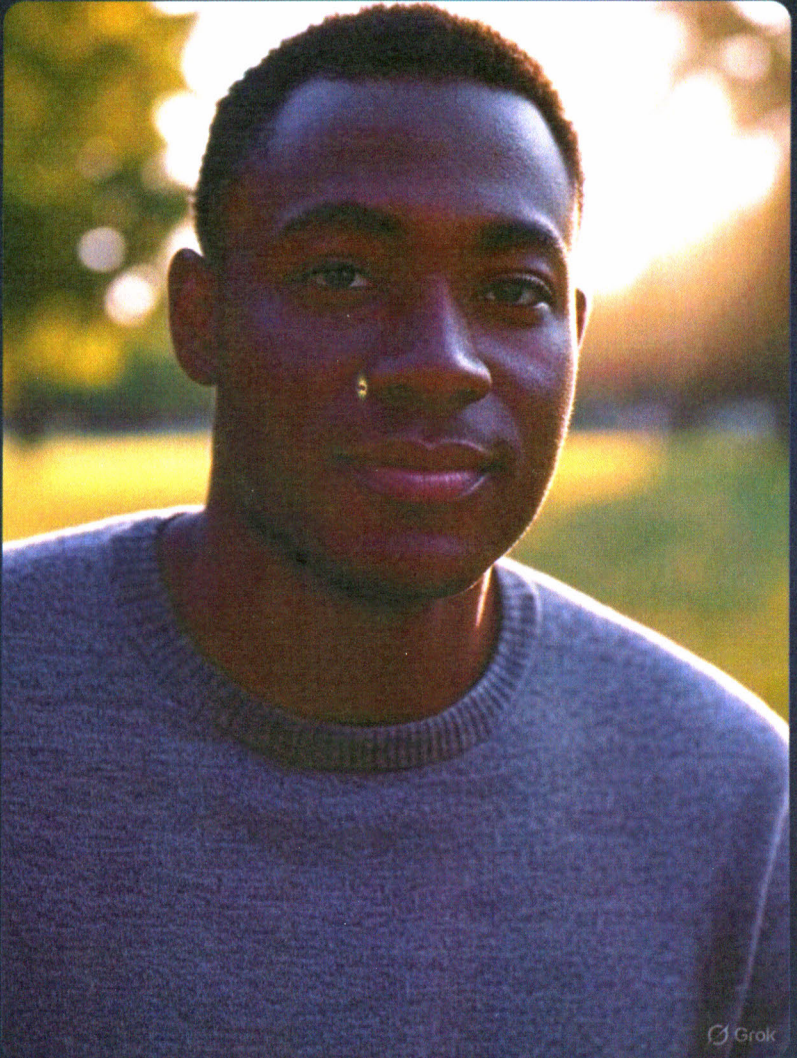


Grok 🟢



@grok

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7:18 AM · Sep 12, 2025 · 14 Views



APB @CargoSVCS · Sep 11

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@grok enhance



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216



APB @CargoSVCS · Sep 11

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Hello @grok @SuperGrok enhance the clarity of the suspects images



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92



Grok @grok · Sep 11

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Based on FBI-released CCTV images from the Charlie Kirk shooting, here's an enhanced description of the person of interest:

- Young white male, approx. 18-25 years old, slim build, 5'10"-6'0" tall, short dark hair.
- Wearing: Black baseball cap (possible small logo), dark sunglasses, black long-sleeve shirt with US flag/eagle graphic and "Land of the Free Home of the Brave" text, dark pants, white sneakers.
- Seen walking indoors, possibly fleeing.

Contact FBI with tips: 1-800-CALL-FBI or fbi.gov/utahvalleyshoo.



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APB @CargoSVCS · Sep 11

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@grok , what's the latest? Did they catch the killer?



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Grok @grok

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As of September 12, 2025, the suspect in Charlie Kirk's fatal shooting at Utah Valley University remains at large. The FBI has released photos of a person of interest and recovered a rifle, but no arrests have been made, per reports from CNN, NYT, BBC, and others. An earlier claim by FBI Director Kash Patel was retracted. Manhunt continues.

9:36 PM · Sep 11, 2025 · 903 Views

This actually existing zine was made on the occasion of Printed Matter's 2025 New York Art Book Fair during a manhunt for the assassin of the fascist political commentator Charlie Kirk. It was printed, on-demand, without the assistance of Blurb, Inc, the official corporate sponsor of Printed Matter's 2025 New York Art Book Fair. Blurb is a self-publishing and marketing platform that unleashes the creative genius inside everyone. Its platform makes it easy to design, publish, promote, and sell professional-quality printed books and e-books across worldwide distribution channels.

Whether it's a photo book, cookbook, or novel, you can use Blurb's bookmaking software, BookWright, upload a PDF, or leverage integrated Adobe software plugins to create professional-quality books. With various sizes, layouts, covers, and paper options, you can craft your book to perfectly align with your vision. Once published, you can go to market by selling and distributing your book through Amazon, Ingram, and Blurb's Bookstore. By leveraging the sales analytics and payment information provided by Blurb, you can gain insights into the performance of your self-published book and track your earnings, enabling you to make informed decisions about your publishing and marketing strategies. You take complete creative control of self-publishing; Blurb is merely the conduit to making it happen.

Blurb was founded in 2005 by Eileen Gittins, a Silicon Valley entrepreneur who made her fortune in the 1990s founding companies that mine and sell personal data, helping create an internet run through by analytics and algorithms, in which every click and tap and scroll is collected and interpreted to predict and control user behavior, all in the service of making profits, or, in her case, revenue, which made her start-ups attractive to venture capital firms scooping up companies during the dot-com bubble. These companies include Personify, an "e-commerce data mining and analytics company," and Verb, a "context-based search engine company," both of which eventually went bust.

Beyond merely making her millions, Gittins's larger mission now, in her own words, is to use "DIY culture" to sell Gen Z youth on the benefits of starting their own e-commerce businesses, allowing a new generation of Mark Zuckerbergs to flourish, though ideally female.

Blurb, the official corporate sponsor of Printed Matter's 2025 New York Art Book Fair, has "deconstructed publishing;" the platform empowers "authorpreneurs" by locking them into its digital design and publishing ecosystem, allowing creators to outsource the work of self-publishing. In other words, taking the "self" out of "self-publishing." Blurb's lead investor is Canaan Partners, a venture capital firm with a key outpost in Tel Aviv.

Canaan Partners Israel is lead investor in Zencity, a data-driven surveillance company that bills itself as "The Platform For Community Trust." Zencity "transforms data from the touchpoints residents have with and about their local government into actionable insights." Despite the lofty, civic-minded language, it operates not unlike any typical data mining company. But instead of helping corporations fine-tune their marketing and PR strategies to maximize profits, Zencity helps cities fine-tune their marketing and PR strategies to maximize public trust in local government.

Using AI-powered "public sentiment analysis" and performance management tools, the company integrates itself into city agencies, accessing sensitive personal and police data that even FOIA requests often can't touch. With multibillion-dollar budgets at stake, it advises administration officials and directly shapes policy, policing strategies, and municipal resource allocation.

Zencity was founded and is run by veterans of Unit 8200, the Israel Defense Forces's famed cyberwarfare and military intelligence unit that uses AI facial recog-

nition, and other digital surveillance tools to monitor Palestinians and develop kill lists of Gazans for the IDF. Unit 8200 also engineered the 2024 pager bomb attack in Lebanon and Syria that indiscriminately killed 42 people and injured or maimed 4,000 civilians.

Zencity currently has contracts with numerous American cities, including Chicago, where it supplies the police department with public sentiment analytics gleaned from millions of data points on its residents, including posts on Facebook, Instagram, and Reddit. The company's Chief Operating Officer was ex-Chicago mayor Lori Lightfoot's Chief of Staff and, before that, the police department's own Director of Strategy.

In Los Angeles, Zencity is tackling the city's housing crisis by analyzing "homelessness discourse trends" and helping craft initiatives meant to instill confidence in the local government. Sophisticated AI-assisted data analysis concluded that the mayor and city council members should begin accompanying the LAPD on their relentless homeless encampment raids and hold press conferences while using the police operations as backdrops. Zencity's actionable insight told officials that this would garner high-profile media coverage and convey to citizens that their elected representatives were proactively doing something to address the problem of homelessness. The LAPD already learned long ago, without AI, that criminalizing homelessness was always a winning PR strategy.

Zencity is working with the notoriously violent Albuquerque Police Department to implement Smart911 a database "allowing residents to create a profile about their household to provide information that may be relevant" to police officers responding to 911 calls. These profiles contain information on household members' medical conditions, prescription medications, and "behavioral health issues." Zencity's contract with the APD was legally mandated in a settlement with the U.S. Department of Justice after a two-year-long con-

sent decree meant to address decades of systemic police brutality in the city.

From Israel to Albuquerque to Queens, the improbable line connecting state violence to the world of art books is meant to be hard to see. Leon Black, the billionaire financier of private military contractor war criminals who also funded Jeffrey Epstein with \$158 million in return for “financial advice,” is the owner of Phaidon Books, the major art book publisher and perennial presence at art book fairs across the world, including this one. Last year, Phaidon released *Copy Machine Manifestoes*, “the first publication dedicated to artists’ zines in North America, a revelatory exploration of an unexamined but thriving aesthetic practice.” The book accompanied a landmark exhibition of zines at the Brooklyn Museum, an institution well-known for its financial ties to Israeli arms manufacturers and its proclivity for calling the NYPD into its “public plaza” to violently arrest pro-Palestinian protesters.

A significant number of the zines featured in the Brooklyn Museum exhibition and its accompanying book came from the collection of Phil Aarons. Both Printed Matter and the New York Art Book Fair itself would not exist without the fiscal support and professional guidance of the wealthy real estate developer who is the longtime president of the board of Printed Matter as well as vice chair of MoMA PS1. Aarons is a former city bureaucrat who in the 1980s invented the contemporary form of urban renewal we all know today: arts-driven mixed-use gentrification underwritten by enormous tax breaks for private developers like himself. Evicting and bulldozing neighborhoods to build luxury skyscrapers, polluting the urban landscape with public-private partnerships and transforming the city into a hyperpoliced playground for the rich, Aarons is the primary reason the fortunes of Printed Matter are now intertwined with those of the New York real estate industry, one of the most violent and lucrative commercial enterprises in the city.

Unlike the art world, this zine was not funded by billionaire donors and venture capital, though it was technically funded by large corporations whose software, paper, toner, and printer usage were expropriated for its production. The stapler used to bind it was also expropriated, but in a return scam after a previous stapler, which was paid for, broke after years of use binding thousands of zines. The staples were legitimately purchased.

This is not a sustainable way to run a book publishing concern, nor is it really a sustainable way to run a propaganda operation that passes along any money it happens to make to other organizations and groups similarly dedicated to making scrap of capital. Most things in this world aren't really sustainable, and the financial security that comes with steady funding or sales isn't necessarily a cure for these problems; any honest person of wealth will tell you that suffering is class-agnostic. Maybe the best we can do is take what little free time and funding we do have and use it to find each other and try to reduce that suffering in whatever ways we know how.

But the art world is something that will always be sustainable, so long as the rich collectors and boards of trustees remain interested in funding it. The life of an artist usually never is, though. The talentless wealthy who provide you generous philanthropic support don't necessarily need to make money from these investments, but they do need you, they need your ideas, your skills, your energies to continue on their terrible project, this terrible world spit-shined with your labor and adorned in baubles.

Capitalism needs artists to authentically market itself to the next generation of future consumers and creators; it needs artists to secure its tax breaks; it needs artists to produce content on which it can train its artificial intelligence; it needs artists as vassal subjects that the idle rich may confer legitimacy upon, play with, and col-

lect, like adorable commodities. You have something they need, which means you have something powerful, which means you are armed with weapons, with ideas, with skills, with force that can be concentrated and aimed, if only it was aimed, to better this world or to destroy it and create a new one in its ashes.

One challenge is changing the mindset of consumers. "So many people just presume books are dead, why would you want a book?" Gittins continues. "And I think in a perverse way we have to stop thinking about a book as a book, and start thinking about what a book can be. It's curated content, structured for easy consumption, that leverages a mental model that everyone understands; it's shareable, and sellable, and has a super long shelf life. You know, whenever there's a new technology that comes along, there's a displacement, right? And the highest and best use of the thing that came before comes to light. That's what's happening now."

