The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Theater Pulls Musical After Protests

By The Moscow Times

September 30, 2012



Vladimir Dyadenistov playing the role of Christ in a St. Petersburg performance of the musical.

A theater in Rostov-on-Don has canceled a performance of a popular Broadway musical after local Orthodox Christians protested that the show misrepresents Christ.

The theater was set to stage "Jesus Christ Superstar," a rock opera loosely based on the Gospels' account of the final days of Jesus' life, in the southern city on Oct. 18, but organizers halted ticket sales Saturday after local residents filed complaints with prosecutors and theater management, RIA-Novosti reported.

In complaints to prosecutors, Orthodox protesters said Christ's character was portrayed inaccurately in the musical and cited a bill being considered by the State Duma that would criminalize blasphemy, news site Fontanka.ru reported.

Prosecutors are set to review the complaints next week.

Rock Opera, the St. Petersburg-based company that was to perform the musical at Rostov-

on-Don's philharmonic hall, has staged "Jesus Christ Superstar" four times locally without residents expressing concern, Komsomolskaya Pravda reported, adding that the show was sold out every time.

Commenting on the canceled performance, well-known blogger Rustem Adagamov tweeted that "Orthodox philistines" were to blame.

"In my time, it was shameful for a Moscow student not to know the main arias from 'Jesus Christ Superstar,' everyone had recordings of this rock opera," he wrote.

Related articles:

- Theater Plus: Happy 95th Birthday, Yury Lyubimov!
- 'Don Juan' Probes Age-Old Myth of Great Lover
- Fomenko Studio Takes on Nabokov's 'The Gift'

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2012/09/30/theater-pulls-musical-after-protests-a18153