

Pussy Riot Members to Attend Singapore Art Awards Ceremony

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Pussy Riot's work, "Punk Prayer: Mother of God, Put Putin Away," is nominated alongside pieces from artists Daniel Crooks (Australia), Baden Pailthorpe (Australia) and Yang Yong Liang (China) in the digital/video category.

Pussy Riot members Nadezhda Tolokonnikova and Maria Alyokhina will make their first international public appearance since their release when they attend an awards ceremony and art showcase being held in Singapore this weekend.

The punk art collective are on the shortlist for a prize at the inaugural Prudential Eye Awards, which recognizes emerging contemporary Asian artists, AsiaOne reported Monday.

A public relations representative confirmed to The Moscow Times that the awards believe the two former prisoners will attend the ceremony and had gone through the necessary visa requirements.

Their work, "Punk Prayer: Mother of God, Put Putin Away," is nominated alongside pieces from artists Daniel Crooks (Australia), Baden Pailthorpe (Australia) and Yang Yong Liang (China) in the digital/video category.

The winner of the category will receive \$20,000 and the overall winner from the ceremony's five categories will receive an additional \$30,000 and an opportunity to exhibit their work at the Saatchi Gallery in London.

The two recently-freed Pussy Riot members will reportedly attend the exhibition opening and showcase on Friday, followed by the awards ceremony on Saturday.

Russian art critic Andrei Yerofeyev, who was fined 150,000 rubles (\$4,500) but avoided jail time for organizing an expedition at the Sakharov Center in 2007 that featured supposedly blasphemous art, sits on the seven-member judges panel which helped create the shortlists from a group of 500 nominees.

Tolokonnikova and Alyokhina were released in late-December under a president-sponsored amnesty bill after serving most of their two-year sentence for hooliganism. The pair were convicted in 2012 for the nominated "Punk Prayer" performance at Moscow's Christ the Savior Cathedral, where they called for the ouster of President Vladimir Putin.

Since being released and reuniting in Siberia, Alyokhina and Tolokonnikova have returned to Moscow and made numerous media appearances. The pair also plan on advocating for the rights of those still in the Russian prison system.

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