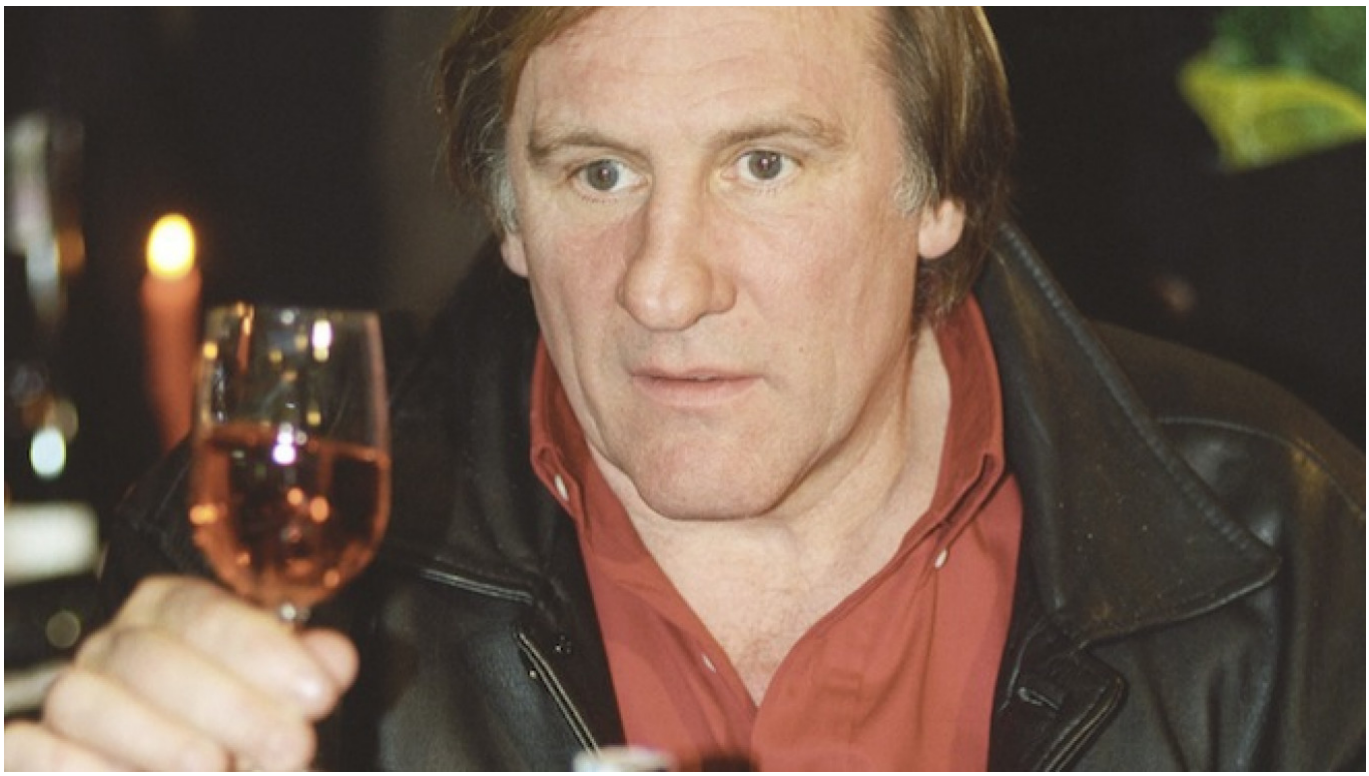
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New Film Starring French Actor Gerard Depardieu Hits Russian Theaters

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Gerard Depardieu

"Viktor," a new film starring famed actor and Frenchman-turned-Russian-citizen Gerard Depardieu, hit theaters across the nation Thursday.

The film follows protagonist Viktor, played by Depardieu, as he journeys to Russia to unravel the mystery surrounding the murder of his son. British actress Elizabeth Hurley co-stars as a Russian detective in the English-language film.

"Viktor" was filmed last summer in Chechnya and Moscow. Its world premier was at the Vyborg-based Window To Europe Film Festival in August, according to entertainment news site ScreenDaily. Prior to its nationwide release Thursday, Depardieu presented the film at events in Moscow and the Chechen capital of Grozny.

Depardieu was granted Russian citizenship by President Vladimir Putin in January 2013 following a tax dispute with the authorities in his native France.

He has retained a high profile since his arrival in Russia, where he seems to have a finger in every pie. He has starred in several films, and announced the launches of both a Moscow restaurant and a line of organic vodka.

Though Depardieu is registered in Saransk, the republic of Mordovia's capital city, he also enjoys honorary residency in Chechnya. He owns an apartment in a Grozny highrise, though he told state-run Channel One he would prefer to travel around Chechnya, searching for solace in the solitude of its rural villages.

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