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Zvyagintsev's 'Leviathan' Picks Up 6 Awards at Russian Film Ceremony

By The Moscow Times

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Director Andrei Zvyagintsev poses at the Russian premiere of his film "Leviathan" in Moscow on Jan. 28, 2015.

Russian film critics have named "Leviathan" as the winner of half a dozen awards at a ceremony in Moscow, despite concerns that its gloomy view of President Vladimir Putin's Russia could dampen its chances of a wide domestic release.

Director Andrei Zvyagintsev's Leviathan won six awards at the Russian film critics' Bely Slon (White Elephant) ceremony on Tuesday, according to list of the winners published online by the Russian Union of Cinematographers.

In addition to winning prizes for best film, best director and best screenplay, Leviathan also picked up awards for best female lead, for the film's actress Yelena Lyadova, best male lead for actor Alexei Serebryakov, and best supporting actor for Roman Madyanov.

Leviathan has already received rave reviews from abroad — winning a Golden Globe and picking up a nomination for an Academy Award — though the film has been criticized by some Russian officials for portraying their country in a negative light.

State-run television channels has also sought to brush over the film's foreign success. But 1.5 million illegal downloads of Leviathan from within Russia have encouraged domestic movie theaters to screen the film, Britain's The Guardian cited the film's producer Alexander Rodnyansky as saying.

Leviathan is expected to show in at least 638 screens around the country when it opens Thursday, the report said.

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