

Russian Performance Artist Pavlensky Nominated for FSB Prize

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Pyotr Pavlensky

Controversial performance artist Pyotr Pavlensky has been nominated for the Russian Security Services' (FSB) Prize for Literature and the Arts for the artistic protest which saw him light the door of the FSB headquarters on fire.

Maria Baronova, a co-ordinator of the "Open Russia" human rights project, nominated the artist for the performance, which Pavlensky entitled "Threat."

The Russian Security Services' Prize for Literature and the Arts awards artistic work on the subject of the FSB.

Pavlensky poured gasoline on the door of the FSB headquarters in Lubyanka in November 2015 and set it alight in protest against repressive government policies.

Baronova, who is to run in the upcoming Duma elections, said that the nomination had

already been accepted.

“I believe that Pavlensky's work has a lot of great artistic value,” she wrote on her Facebook page. “It is worthy of the highest consideration of FSB award organizing committee, and I ask them to appreciate Pavlensky's art.”

Pavlensky's action at the FSB headquarters was banned from the Innovation Art award in February. The work was disqualified due to its "obvious violation of the law."

Several members of the jury panel left the competition and the remaining experts refused to vote on the visual artwork nomination following the disqualification of Pavlensky's work, according to the center's official statement.

Pavelensky is currently awaiting trial for the protest under vandalism charges. Prosecutors in the case claim that the door held significant cultural value as the building has been used as headquarters for the security services since the Soviet era.

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