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Russian Artist Pavlensky Appeals Fines for Burning FSB Doors

By The Moscow Times

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Russian performance artist Pyotr Pavlensky has appealed a recent court decision regarding his setting fire to the headquarters of the security services, the RBC news website reported Thursday.

In the appeal, Pavlensky's lawyers Olga and Dmitry Dinze stated that the court had not taken the defense's position into account and misinterpreted the action's artistic value in the political sphere. The action was performance not crime, their statement said.

The defense also cited questionable eyewitness testimonies and various procedural violations committed by the court during the proceedings as reasons for their appeal, RBC reported.

In Pavlensky's performance art action "Threat. Lubyanka's Burning Door," he set fire to the doors of the Federal Security Service (FSB) building in Moscow on Nov. 9, 2015.

After seven months in prison, Pavlensky was set free on June 8. He was found guilty of

damaging a cultural site, and was fined 500,000 rubles ($7,600) and an additional 481,500 rubles ($7,300) for repairs to the door. The appeal has asked that the court reverse the decision to fine the artist.

During the trial, Pavlensky filed a complaint to Prosecutor General Yury Chaika, accusing the FSB of damaging culture heritage themselves. He alleged that the FSB building doors were replaced in 2008 without the proper authorization required of such cultural sites.

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