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Beauty and the Beast Doesn't Promote Homosexuality, Russian Experts Conclude

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A still from the movie "Beauty and the Beast." **Disney Movie Trailers / YouTube**

The soon to be released Disney blockbuster Beauty and the Beast does not break Russian law by "promoting homosexuality," government officials have confirmed.

Russian Culture Minister, Vladimir Medinskiy, told reporters on Thursday that experts had recommended a 16+ rating for the family film.

"We checked the film [for "homosexual propaganda"] but didn't find anything," Medinskiy said. He claimed that the film had been checked "in detail" by Russia's conservative Likhachev's Cultural Heritage Institute.

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The film, a live-action remake of Disney's 1991 cartoon release, reportedly shows sidekick

LeFou, played by American actor Josh Gad, in love with his male best friend Gaston. The film's director, Bill Condon, told Attitude magazine that side-plot was Disney's first "exclusively gay" moment, and was designed to boost LGBT visibility onscreen.

Calls to ban the film in Russia were led by politician Vitaly Milonov, who spearheaded Russia's controversial law criminalizing "gay propaganda" in St. Petersburg. The legislation bans "promoting alternative sexual lifestyles" to children under the age of 18, and is often used as a reason to block events such as gay rights' marches.

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