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‘Death of Stalin’ Satire Film Revoked in Russia Over ‘Ideological’ Concerns

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The Death of Stalin

Two days before its premiere, the Russian Ministry of Culture announced that it was withdrawing the screening license of a satirical film about Stalin after prominent cultural figures expressed concern over its ideological content at a public screening.

“The Death of Stalin”☒☒ is a British-French political satire about the controversial Soviet leader, directed by Scottish writer Armando Iannucci and based on a graphic novel of the same name.

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According to a Culture Ministry representative, the screening license for “The Death of Stalin” was revoked for containing “information that is banned from distribution by Russian

law," the state-run TASS news agency reported Tuesday.

At a public screening of the film in Moscow on Monday, Russian cultural figures reportedly expressed unanimous disapproval of the picture and asked the ministry to temporarily recall the license for the film.

"The Death of Stalin' should not be shown in Russia due to signs of 'ideological animosity,'" TASS cited Yuri Polyakov, a member of the ministry's public council as saying.

"Not a single person expressed support for the film as an artistic or historical work," he said.

"The film insults our historical symbols -- the Soviet anthem, awards and medals," another ministry official was cited as saying by the investigative Novaya Gazeta newspaper after the screening.

"Marshal Zhukov is depicted as a jerk. Moreover, there are scenes of extreme violence in the film. That violates the rules for granting films rental licenses," he added.

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