

Moscow's Pioner Cinema Fined for Showing Film Featuring Depardieu as Stalin

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Le divan de Staline / Alfama Films

The only movie theater in Moscow to screen a banned satirical feature about Josef Stalin's death has been fined over a lesser-known film about the Soviet dictator.

Police [raided](#) the historic Pioner Cinema last month on the second screening of "The Death of Stalin" after Russia's Culture Ministry banned it on ideological grounds.

Related article: [Why Russia Has a Problem With 'The Death of Stalin' \(Op-ed\)](#)

The magistrate court fined Pioner 80,000 rubles (almost \$1,400) for screening the French-language drama "Stalin's Couch" without a license around the same time as "The Death of Stalin," the Vedomosti business daily [reported](#) Tuesday.

According to Vedomosti, Pioner's legal defense has argued that "Stalin's Couch" — starring

French-Russian citizen Gerard [Depardieu](#) — did not need a distribution license because it was screened as part of a festival.

If the court sides with the Culture Ministry over “The Death of Stalin,” Pioner Cinema could face a fine of up to 200,000 rubles or a 90-day ban for a repeat offense.

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