

Actor Jailed for ‘Spraining’ Policeman’s Shoulder at Moscow Election Protests

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Pavel Ustinov **Sergei Fadeichev / TASS**

A Moscow court has jailed an actor for 3.5 years Monday after finding him guilty of dislocating a riot police officer’s shoulder during anti-government protests last month, despite his claims that he was a bystander.

Pavel Ustinov, detained Aug. 3, is among a [dozen](#) activists and passersby held on various charges relating to mass election protests that rocked the Russian capital this summer. Videos [show](#) Ustinov, 23, [standing](#) on Pushkin Square as riot police closed in on him and began clubbing him as he attempted to break free.

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The Tverskoy District Court sentenced Ustinov to three years and six months on the charges, the Mediazona news website [reported](#) Monday.

Prosecutors had sought a six-year prison term for Ustinov and a court [refused](#) to consider the two videos of his detention as evidence. Ustinov [denied](#) his guilt and said he had merely been a bystander at the protest.

Konstantin Raikin, director of the Satirikon Theater and one of Russia's most celebrated actors, [called](#) Ustinov's criminal case a "misunderstanding that could have a tragic end."

The Memorial human rights group has [declared](#) Ustinov a political prisoner.

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Ustinov's verdict was read by judge Alexei Krivoruchko, whom the United States [blacklisted](#) in 2013 for extending lawyer Sergei Magnitsky's detention two months before his death. Magnitsky died in jail in 2009 after being arrested by officials whom he had accused of defrauding the Russian government.

Tens of thousands took to the streets over the summer to demand free elections after several opposition-minded candidates were barred from contesting seats in the Moscow city legislature, triggering the largest sustained protest movement in Russia since 2011-2013.

Police briefly detained more than 2,000 people, handed short jail terms to nearly all of Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny's entourage and used force to disperse what they said were illegal protests throughout the weeks of demonstrations.

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