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Russian Court Overturns Acquittal of LGBT Activist on Pornography Charges

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Artist Julia Tsvetkova. **From personal archive**

A court in Russia's Far East has overturned feminist and LGBT activist Yulia Tsvetkova's acquittal for charges of "pornography," her lawyer and mother said on Tuesday.

A judge in the remote city of Komsomolsk-on-Amur in July 2022 cleared Tsvetkova of all charges brought against her after she was detained in late 2019 and placed under house arrest for posting a series of abstract sketches of female genitalia on social media entitled "The Vagina Monologues."

Tsvetkova's case prompted nationwide pickets and online flashmobs protesting her prosecution, with her supporters insisting Tsvetkova had displayed non-pornographic, body-positive images.

On Tuesday, a court of cassation in the port city of Vladivostok overturned Tsevtkova's initial acquittal and sent the case back to Komsomolsk-on-Amur for reconsideration.

Related article: Russian LGBT Activist Faces Porn Trial for Vagina Drawings

“The appeal is lost, the case is entering another round,” Anna Khodyreva, Tsvetkova’s mother, wrote on Facebook.

Tsvetkova’s lawyer Alexander Pikhovkin linked the overturning of the acquittal to Russia's gradual slide into social conservatism.

“There’s no motivated decision yet, but we can understand that this is about spiritual stables,” Pikhovkin wrote on Telegram.

Tsvetkova, who was also labeled a “foreign agent” last year, fled Russia after her initial acquittal, meaning that she is unlikely to face jail time even if sentenced in absentia.

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