

Russian Anti-War Poets Jailed for 'Inciting Hatred' Toward Troops

December 28, 2023



Artyom Kamardin and Yegor Shtovb in court. t.me/ostorozhno_novosti

Two Russian anti-war poets, one of whom accused police of rape, have been sentenced to lengthy prison terms on charges of “inciting hatred” toward soldiers, the independent news website Novaya Gazeta Europe [reported](#) Thursday.

Artyom Kamardin and Yegor Shtovba were [detained](#) in September 2022 after criticizing President Vladimir Putin’s “partial” mobilization for the war in Ukraine during poetry readings on central Moscow’s Triumfalnaya Ploshchad.

During the 1950s and 1960s, Triumfalnaya Ploshchad — then known as Mayakovsky Ploshchad after the renowned poet — served as a key gathering spot for unofficial poetry readings and subsequently for expressing dissent.

Kamardin was reported to have been hospitalized following his arrest after police allegedly beat him and raped him with a dumbbell.

Moscow's Tverskoy District Court found Kamardin and Shtovba guilty of “inciting hatred” toward pro-Russian rebels in eastern Ukraine and “calls for actions against state security,” according to Novaya Gazeta Europe.

Shtovba was sentenced to 5.5 years in prison and Kamardin received a 7-year prison sentence. Both poets deny the charges against them.

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Слушатели кричат «Позор!» после приговора «Маяковских чтений» Артему Камардину и Егору Штовбе. Камардину назначили 7 лет колонии, Штовбе — 5,5 лет. После задержания Камардин рассказывал о пытках

Видео: Осторожно, новости pic.twitter.com/RvJ43EqifX

— Медиазона (@mediazzona) [December 28, 2023](#)

“What have I done that’s illegal? Read poetry?” [said](#) Shtovba in his closing speech Wednesday, according to the independent Mediazona news website.

Kamardin told the judge: “I fear that neither my physical nor mental health will withstand prolonged imprisonment.”

“My convictions will not change, as they didn’t under torture, they wouldn’t with a real sentence, and they wouldn’t even under the threat of death,” Kamardin said.

Prosecutors had requested longer sentences for Kamardin and Shtovba.

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A third defendant, Nikolai Daineko, was earlier [sentenced](#) to four years in prison after entering a plea deal and testifying against Kamardin and Shtovba.

After the verdict, authorities detained journalists from several state-affiliated and independent news outlets outside the courthouse, according to several publications.

Kamardinov’s wife Alexandra Popova, who was [dragged](#) out of the courtroom after she started chanting “shame,” filmed herself alongside the detained journalists inside a police van.

“We’re sitting here next to NTV [state broadcaster journalists], so at least we’re equal in some areas,” Popova [said](#) on video.

Popova was also detained following the September 2022 anti-war poetry readings. She [alleged](#) at the time that authorities superglued her face and threatened her with gang rape.

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