

Russian Theater Director, Playwright's 'Terrorism' Case Transferred to Military Court

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Russian playwright Svetlana Petriyuk and stage director Yevgenia Berkovich. **Stanislav Krasilnikov / TASS**

A Russian military court will hear the “terrorism” case against theater director Yevgenia Berkovich and playwright Svetlana Petriyuk over their award-winning play about Russian women who fall in love with Islamist militants, prosecutors [said](#) Friday.

Berkovich and Petriyuk were arrested in May 2023 on the accusation of “justifying terrorism” with their play “Finist the Brave Falcon.” Berkovich and Petriyuk, who deny their guilt, are scheduled to remain in pre-trial detention until at least May 4.

The Moscow Prosecutor’s Office announced in a statement that it had approved the indictment against Berkovich and Petriyuk, who face up to seven years in prison if convicted.

It said it handed the case to Moscow's Second Western Military Garrison Court without specifying when it was scheduled to hold hearings.

Related article: [Russia Adds Theater Director Berkovich, Playwright Petriychuk to 'Terrorists and Extremists' List](#)

“According to investigators, Petriychuk drafted the script of the theatrical play ‘Finist the Brave Falcon,’ which psychological and linguistic expertise found to contain signs of justification and propaganda or terrorist activities,” the prosecutors said.

“Then, Berkovich and Petriychuk jointly staged the play, which was publicly demonstrated at various festivals, in theater organizations and on the internet,” the law enforcement body added.

This week, Russia’s state financial watchdog Rosfinmonitoring added Berkovich and Petriychuk to its list of “terrorists and extremists,” allowing authorities to freeze their bank accounts without a court order.

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