

Russian Film Critic Charged Over ‘War Fakes’ Flees House Arrest

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Yekaterina Barabash. **Sergei Fadeichev / TASS**

Russian film critic Yekaterina Barabash fled house arrest and failed to appear at her trial on charges of spreading “deliberately false information” about the Russian army, state media [reported](#) Monday, citing anonymous sources familiar with the case.

Barabash, 64, was [placed](#) under house arrest in February over social media posts in which she allegedly spread “false information” about the Russian Armed Forces.

Moscow’s branch of the Federal Penitentiary Service [discovered](#) she had violated the terms of her house arrest on April 13, according to the state-run RIA Novosti news agency.

Authorities have since issued an arrest warrant, RIA Novosti and TASS [reported](#) Monday.

Exiled news outlet Meduza [noted](#) that Barabash’s name does not currently appear in the Interior Ministry’s wanted persons database. Meanwhile, the RBC news site reported that criminal proceedings against her were suspended for unspecified reasons.

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On Monday, a Moscow court [ordered](#) Barabash to be placed in pre-trial detention in her absence. She did not attend the hearing, and her lawyer, Mikhail Biryukov, declined to comment, RBC said.

A vocal critic of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, Barabash wrote in March 2022 that Russia had "bombed the country" and "razed whole cities to the ground."

Shortly after launching the invasion in February 2022, Russia criminalized public criticism of its military operations abroad.

Barabash, the daughter of prominent Soviet literary critic Yuri Barabash, has worked for outlets including Nezavisimaya Gazeta, Forbes Russia and Interfax. In 2016, she said she was fired from Interfax for criticizing the government.

Russia's Justice Ministry added her to its "foreign agents" registry in April, accusing her of spreading "fake news" about the 2022 invasion of Ukraine.

AFP contributed reporting.

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