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Sobchak Deletes Interview With Gay Singer After Roskomnadzor Flags 'LGBT Propaganda'

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Sergei Grigoryev-Apollonov and Ksenia Sobchak in the now-deleted interview. **Screengrab/YouTube**

Media personality Ksenia Sobchak said Wednesday that she deleted a recent interview on her popular YouTube channel after Russia's state media regulator warned her that it contained signs of "LGBT propaganda."

The interview, which was released in early September, featured the openly gay Russian-born singer and blogger Sergei Grigoryev-Apollonov, known by his stage name Grey Wiese.

Among other subjects, the Paris-based 44-year-old artist opened up to Sobchak about homophobia in his native Saratov region and life in Europe.

Sobchak attached the Russian regulator Roskomnadzor's warning in her Telegram post announcing the interview's "forced removal," expressing regret but affirming that she must comply with Russian law. She did not detail the exact content that was flagged.

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The incident follows the Russian Supreme Court's ruling in November 2023 that declared the so-called "international LGBT movement" an extremist organization. The decision opened the door for a broad crackdown on LGBT-related expression.

"There are currently very few enforcement cases under this law as it applies to media, and legal opinions differ widely," Sobchak wrote.

While the full-length interview is no longer available on Sobchak's YouTube page, some short-form videos featuring Grigoryev-Apollonov remained there as of Wednesday evening.

In later comments to the exiled broadcaster TV Rain, Grigoryev-Apollonov expressed surprise that the interview was published in the first place but pushed back against the claims that it constituted propaganda.

Grigoryev-Apollonov, who has 1.5 million Instagram followers, is the nephew of pop singer Andrei Grigoryev-Apollonov of the group Ivanushki International, which gained popularity in the late 1990s. His content generally focuses on music and personal life rather than politics.

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