

Russia Sentences 'Masyanya' Creator to 4 Years in Absentia Over Anti-War Cartoon

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Oleg Kuvaev. **Oleg Kuvaev (CC BY-SA 4.0)**

A St. Petersburg court has sentenced Oleg Kuvaev, creator of the animated series “Masyanya,” to four years and one month in prison in absentia over an episode that investigators said urged Russian soldiers to surrender or desert.

The city’s Nevsky District Court found Kuvaev guilty of publicly calling for actions against state security and failing to comply with obligations imposed on people designated as “foreign agents,” the city courts’ press service [said](#).

The court also barred him from publishing online or administering websites for four years. Kuvaev has lived in Israel since 2006.

Investigators said Kuvaev’s 2023 episode “Idoliada,” the 169th installment of “Masyanya,” contained calls for Russian servicemen to surrender, desert and disobey their commanders.

The episode also promoted “I Want to Live,” a Ukrainian project that helps Russian soldiers surrender, according to investigators.

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Case materials [cited](#) by the courts’ press service described the cartoon as expressing “ideological hatred and hostility” toward Russia’s government and officials, as well as opposition to the invasion, which Moscow calls a “special military operation.” Investigators argued that its verbal appeals were directed against Russian state security.

Those allegations placed the cartoon’s political message at the center of the criminal case. According to the exiled news outlet Mediazona, the court questioned Justice Ministry expert Vladislav Ivanov and two viewers, Nikita Sotnikov and Nikita Grishchenko.

The viewers objected to the episode’s portrayal of the Russian military, saying it mocked the Armed Forces and could lead audiences to side with Ukraine, Mediazona reported.

The criminal case was [opened](#) three years ago. Russian authorities designated Kuvaev a “foreign agent” in December 2023.

Related article: [The Unlearned Lessons of 'Masyanya,' Episode 162](#)

Kuvaev has continued to produce anti-war work from abroad, including an AI-generated animated video parodying the Soviet song “May There Always Be Sunshine” [released](#) in November 2025.

The video depicted rag dolls dressed as Soviet schoolchildren, wearing red Young Pioneer neckerchiefs, flying on missiles above ruined cities and sheltering from bombardment. Its lyrics replaced the original song’s wish for peace with wishes for perpetual war and slaughter.

Kuvaev presented the video as “new Russian children’s songs.”

He has also [said](#) he hopes Russia will break up and its ethnic republics will become independent, contrasting that position with what he described as the views of the Russian opposition.

Responding to the verdict, Kuvaev dismissed the proceedings.

“There is really nothing to say,” he [said](#) in comments reported by the Astra Telegram channel. “Except perhaps: ‘I regret and express concern about the state of sanity in the rotten empire’.”

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