

AS LONG AS IT MAY TAKE – ARTISTS IN RUSSIAN DETENTION

with, among others, Irina Sherbakova, Nadya Tolokonnikova (Pussy Riot), Slavoj Žižek, those affected, and activists

Symposium and talk on November 9 and 22 at the Belvedere 21, in cooperation with artmov

The list is alarmingly long, and each story is equally devastating. Artists and activists in Russia who defy politically motivated attacks on freedom of expression face existential consequences. Their actions demonstrate their willingness to take risks in the fight against oppression. This series of events, conceived by artmov and the Belvedere, aims to bring visibility and solidarity to their plight.

Stella Rollig, Belvedere General Director: *We wish to draw attention to the plight of dissident artists in Russia by giving a voice to those close to them, who are unable to speak out themselves due to systematic repression and imprisonment. The Belvedere stands in solidarity with activists in Russia and those in exile who also use their art to protest and promote freedom.*

Simon Mraz, co-founder of artmov: *The symposium, As Long as It May Take, is an initiative to mobilize and motivate artists and cultural workers living and working in Austria to address the issue and develop artistic initiatives and concepts to inspire and bring hope to detained artists and their families.*

SYMPOSIUM: *As Long as It May Take – Artists in Russian Detention*

The symposium will open on November 9 with Irina Sherbakova, a scholar of German and cultural studies, who will speak about the relationship between free critical thought, artistic creation, and Russian state power throughout history. Sherbakova is a founding member of the human rights organization "Memorial," which has been campaigning since 1989 for a historical reckoning with Stalinist tyranny and protecting human rights in Russia. In 2022, the organization was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

Following the introduction of some of the currently imprisoned artists and their work, family members and close friends will share insights into the nature of these imprisonments and their perspectives. For instance, lawyer Ksenia Karpinskaya will speak about her client, theater director Evgeniya Berkovich, while Maria Bovenko will talk about her friend, the artist Lyudmila Razumova, and Mikhail Kaluzhsky about his colleague and close friend, the playwright Svetlana Petriyuchuk. After a short recess, activists living in exile in Vienna will discuss their perspectives on the potential for resistance and solidarity from afar. The panelists will include Pavel Kogan, Lölja Nordic, Lidia Ozerskaia, and Sasha Skorykh.

TALK: *As Long as It May Take – Artists in Russian Detention*

Sasha Skochilenko was imprisoned in April 2022 for an artistic campaign against the Russian invasion of Ukraine. She was released as part of a prisoner exchange in August 2024. On November 22, she will speak with her mother, Nadezhda Skochilenko, and her partner, Sonya Subbotina, about maintaining contact with them during her detention.

Pussy Riot co-founder Nadya Tolokonnikova experienced what countless dissident artists and activists in Russia still endure, spending almost two years in prison from 2012 to 2013. During this dangerous period of detention, an exchange of letters developed between her and influential philosopher Slavoj Žižek, which was published in 2014 under the title *Comradely Greetings: The Prison Letters of Nadya and Slavoj*. This event will facilitate the first personal meeting between Tolokonnikova and Žižek more than a decade after their initial correspondence.

The symposium on November 9 will be held in German and Russian, while the discussions on November 22 will be in English. Both events will be filmed and photographed.

Free tickets are available [HERE](#).

Supported by the Federal Ministry for Arts, Culture, Public Service, and Sport.

Press images can be downloaded [HERE](#).

For media accreditations and inquiries, please contact:

Belvedere Public Relations

Irene Jäger

Phone: +43 (01) 795 57-185

Email: presse@belvedere.at

ARTMMOV

 Bundesministerium
Kunst, Kultur,
öffentlicher Dienst und Sport

EVENTS

[SYMPOSIUM: *As Long as It May Take – Artists in Russian Detention*](#)

[Saturday, November 9, 2024, 5:00 PM – 8:30 PM](#)

After a keynote speech by Dr. Irina Sherbakova, family members and close friends of artists imprisoned in Russia will give their accounts (Panel 1), followed by Russian activists in (Viennese) exile sharing their perspectives (Panel 2).

[TALK: *As long as it may take – Artists in Russian Detention*](#)

[Friday, November 22, 2024, 6:00 PM – 8:30 PM](#)

Communications from Prison: Sasha Skochilenko, Nadezhda Skochilenko, and Sonya Subbotina, moderated by Simon Mraz

Nadya Tolokonnikova Meets Slavoj Žižek, moderated by Stella Rollig