

Circus Forced to Stop Live Fish Regurgitation Act

September 08, 2010

The  **Moscow Times**

SYDNEY — A Russian circus has been forced to cancel an act in which a woman swallows a live fish and regurgitates it after Australian officials deemed it cruel.

The New South Wales Department of Industry & Investment put a stop to the act by the Great Moscow Circus, which is performing in Sydney, after receiving complaints from the public.

Officials said the trick was in breach of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act.

"Circuses operating in NSW [New South Wales] must comply with prescribed standards for the welfare of animals," the department said a statement.

The decision was welcomed by animal rights campaigners.

"Scientific research shows fish are capable of suffering and are therefore protected under the NSW Prevention of Cruelty to Animals act," Animals Australia executive director Glenys Oogjes said in a statement. "Far from educational, this was an inhumane and foolish act

which reflected badly on the Moscow circus."

Greg Hall, general manager of the Great Moscow Circus, said the ban came as a surprise.

"The act has been only going for four or five weeks, and we haven't had any complaints until today," Hall said.

But he said live fish would no longer be used in the act. "The other fish are now living in showbiz retirement, off-site," he said.

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