

Depardieu Meets With Putin and Receives Passport

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The  **Moscow Times**

French actor Gerard Depardieu has met with President Vladimir Putin and received his Russian passport, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said Sunday.

Over dinner on Saturday, Putin and Depardieu discussed the upcoming feature film "Rasputin," in which Depardieu played the main role, Peskov said, Interfax reported.

The movie is a joint project between Rossia-1 and France Televisions and is scheduled for release later this year.

"Gerard, are you happy about that work?" Putin asked in footage of the meeting shown on Rossia-1.

"I am very happy about everything. Have you seen the movie? I sent it to you," Depardieu responded.

The Kremlin said in a brief statement Sunday that Depardieu was on a private visit.

Putin gave Depardieu Russian citizenship in a decree on Thursday. The actor has been protesting attempts by France's Socialist government to raise taxes on the rich, drawing gibes from some government ministers.

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