

Rock Stars Raise Money for Bolotnaya Defendants

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Correction appended:

The greats of Russian rock, many of whom who rose to fame as glimmers of protest against the controlled political climate of the Soviet Union, offered their voices and influence to today's political opposition in a packed concert on Sunday.

The RokUznik (Rock Prisoner) concert at Moscow's Mir concert hall raised more than one million rubles (\$31,000), all of which will go to paying the legal fees of the defendants in the ongoing Bolotnaya Case, Argumenti.ru reported.

Twelve men and women are standing trial for violence against police and participation in mass riots at Bolotnaya Ploshchad on the day of President Vladimir Putin's inauguration in May 2012.

Some of them have already spent over a year in jail awaiting charges. Several other protesters have sought political asylum abroad for fear of prosecution.

"Despondency is a sin, we have to hang in there and get those guys out, because it is completely awful. And there are very many who aren't in this auditorium today who share our opinion, absolutely," Yuri Shevchuk, frontman of beloved rock group DDT, told the audience, Grani.ru reported.

Shevchuk, Andrei Makarevich of Mashina Vremeni (Time Machine), Yevgeny Khavtan of Bravo, Vezhliy Otkaz (Polite Refusal) and Zorge, a recent instantiation of the group Tequilajazz, all played for the packed auditorium.

They were joined by up-and-coming rapper Noize MC and Moscow-based psychedelic rock group Kira Lao, representing the next generation of Russian musicians.

To ensure the festive ambience didn't distract too much from the matter at hand, a short film by musician Sergei Popov related the story of the Bolotnaya Case before the performances.

In between acts, actor Mikhail Yefremov read out testimonies collected by the Commission for the Public Investigation of the Events of May 6, an organization of human rights activists, experts, and public figures that has collected more than 600 statements from witnesses of the protest who concluded that there were no mass riots that day.

The festival was organized by RosUzник, a non-profit organization devoted to funding the legal defense of those arrested for political protest.

An earlier version of this article stated that 30 Bolotnaya suspects had fled Russia to avoid prosecution. While several protesters who believed they could be prosecuted have gone to European countries seeking asylum, 28 is the number of people originally implicated in the Bolotnaya case.

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