

Pussy Riot Documentary Makes Oscars Longlist

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The documentary by Mike Lerner and Maxim Pozdorovkin debuted at the 2013 Sundance film festival and is in the running for an Oscar.

"Pussy Riot: A Punk Prayer," a film exploring the characters behind Russia's most talked about feminist art collective, has made the longlist for Best Documentary in the 2014 Academy Awards.

Fifteen of the 147 films originally considered are still in the running. The list will be narrowed down to five in January with the winning film to be announced at the awards show on March 2.

The documentary introduces viewers to Nadezhda Tolokonnikova, Maria Alyokhina and Yekaterina Samutsevich, the three women whose 40-second "punk prayer" in Moscow's Christ the Savior Cathedral in February 2012 led to convictions of hooliganism motivated by religious hatred and two-year prison colony sentences for Tolokonnikova and Alyokhina.

The trial drew condemnation from the international human rights community but the band found little support in Russia, where only 6 percent of respondents said they sympathized with Pussy Riot in a September poll conducted by the Levada Center.

Directed and produced by Mike Lerner and Maxim Pozdorovkin, the film employs footage of the trial and other Pussy Riot protests in addition to interviews with band members, the defense team and their families.

Other documentaries still in the running for the Oscar include the Danish genre-bender "The Act of Killing," Canadian actress-turned-director Sarah Polley's "The Stories We Tell" and "The Square," a tale of political activism in Egypt.

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