

Soviet Rock Star Prosecuted for ‘Putin’s Ass’ Anti-War Speech

May 19, 2022



Musician Yuri Shevchuk. **Kirill Zykov / Moskva News Agency**

A Russian rock legend has been charged with “discrediting” the Russian military after making an anti-war speech at a show in central Russia.

Yury Shevchuk, the frontman of 1980s rock band DDT, is already known for his [direct confrontations](#) with Russian President Vladimir Putin, [support](#) for anti-Kremlin activist collective Pussy Riot and [opposition](#) to Russia’s annexation of Crimea.

“The motherland, my friends, is not the president’s ass that has to be slobbered and kissed all the time,” Shevchuk told an 8,000-strong crowd at DDT’s concert in Ufa Wednesday.

“The motherland is an impoverished babushka at the train station selling potatoes.”

Ufa-based producer Radmir Usayev later [wrote](#) that law enforcement authorities arrived at the Ufa Arena to interrogate Shevchuk for more than an hour after the show.

“They isolated Yury from the group and the band director (posting two special forces officers

at the dressing room entrance) and talked for an hour about the concert and Shevchuk's statements about the war and the motherland.”

“They even wanted to detain [Shevchuk,] but at the last moment they were smart enough to suggest that Yury sign a police statement,” Usayev wrote on Instagram.

Shevchuk now [stands charged](#) with “discrediting” the Russian military. If found guilty, the musician faces a fine of up to 50,000 rubles (\$800).

Russian authorities have launched more than 2,000 such cases since Moscow invaded Ukraine on Feb. 24.

At least 133 others face up to 15 years in prison under tougher criminal legislation that bans the spread of “fake news” about the military.

The two laws, swiftly passed after Russia sent troops into Ukraine, have been widely criticized as silencing opposition to the war.

Authorities previously [canceled](#) DDT's concert in the Siberian city of Tyumen last month, which Shevchuk publicly linked to the venue's decision to display a banner with the Latin letter “Z” as a symbol of support for Russian forces in Ukraine.

Original url:

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2022/05/19/soviet-rock-star-prosecuted-for-putins-ass-anti-war-speech-a77732>