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Maria Smorževskihh-Smirnova, the director of the Narva Museum, Estonia, was charged by Russia's Investigative Committee, the country's equivalent of the FBI, on July 17 and added to an international wanted list.

[According to a report by The Art Newspaper](#), the Narva museum displayed a large banner on May 9, the date of Russia's Victory Day celebrations, which showed a composite photo of Putin and Hitler combined into one face.

The composite photo was mounted on the wall of Hermann Castle, facing Russia and visible from across the Narva River. The portrait carried the caption: "Putler War Criminal!"

Narva, Estonia's third-largest city, sits directly across the river from Russia's Ivangorod. The two cities are linked by a fortified bridge. Russia has long claimed Narva as part of its historic territory, and analysts have suggested it could be a potential point for a future Russian incursion into Estonia.

Smorzhevskikh-Smirnova [tells news outlet Estonian Public Broadcasting \(ERR\)](#) that the composite photo was intended to send a message to Russia.

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"[A full-scale war](#) has been going on next to us for four years, which Putin unleashed. We call a dictator a dictator; war crimes, war crimes," she says.

Now, [in a statement](#), Russia's Investigative Committee has announced that it is pressing charges of "rehabilitating Nazism and publicly disseminating knowingly false information about the use of the Russian Armed Forces" against Smorzhevskikh-Smirnova.

The museum director was placed on the international wanted list by Russia's Investigative Committee, and a detention order was issued in absentia.

Estonia's minister of culture, Heidy Purga, tells *The Art Newspaper* that Estonia will not back down over Smorževskihh-Smirnova's composite photo and "any attempts by Russia to threaten our cultural institutions or people, or to rewrite history, only strengthen our resolve to stand for democratic values that represent the free world."

The news comes after a [photographer was sentenced to sixteen years](#) in a Russian prison for sharing a publicly available book and declassified archival photographs of Soviet bunkers. 35-year-old photographer Grigory Skvortsov, known for his images of industrial landscapes and rooftop views, was convicted of treason last month for sharing the images.

Image credits: Header photo via [Facebook/ Narva Museum](#).

LAW, NEWS
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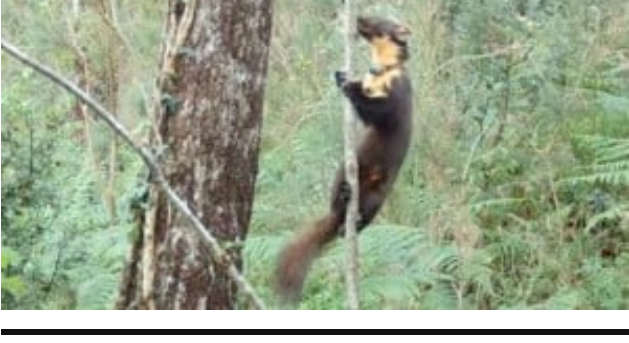
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