The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

In the Spotlight

By Anna Malpas

March 17, 2011



This week the tabloids have been discussing former Miss Universe Oksana Fyodorova and the end of her very public love affair with blond crooner Nikolai Baskov.

Fyodorova, a luscious former policewoman, was crowned Miss Universe in 2002, but was officially dethroned for failing to carry out engagements. She in turn complained about having to do an off-color interview with U.S. shock jock Howard Stern in which she was asked about anal sex. At the time, she said her career was more important to her, although she has long since hung up her epaulettes. Back home, Fyodorova was hired to spice up the toddlers' television show "Good Night, Little Ones," in which she interacts with some disheveled 40-year-old animal puppets. She married a German model, but they were later reported to have separated.

Baskov, who is divorced with a child, is a classically trained Bolshoi opera singer who has turned to syrupy pop, made a success of it and even presents a Saturday-night television light-entertainment show.

The rumors that the two were a couple began about three years ago. They were often

photographed in public together, even though Fyodorova towers over Baskov in her heels.

Fyodorova and Baskov have always been rumored to have a strictly for business romance, a common practice among Russian stars, because they can get better publicity and cuddly photo-shoots, while doing whatever they want on the side.

They certainly have a mutual interest in publicity, because Fyodorova is trying to break into pop. They sang a duet called "Love is Right," whose video shows them passionately kissing in a hotel room while being pursued by paparazzi.

Their romance sounded phony because reports read too much like press releases. Last year we learnt that Baskov spent $100,000 on a ring from Tiffany's for Fyodorova, while she responded with a $250,000 ring for him. Some bloggers even suggested jewelry firms were giving the stuff away for product placement on "Good Night, Little Ones."

Russian media reported this month that Baskov and Fyodorova had broken up, making the announcement after singing together at a concert. Baskov's press service confirmed this to RIA-Novosti.

Then Moskovsky Komsomolets alleged that the reason for the split was that Fyodorova was pregnant and Baskov was not the father, making it increasingly difficult to maintain their relationship. Fyodorova visited a swanky Moscow maternity clinic for a checkup, it reported, while the father was rumored to be a wealthy businessman.

Express Gazeta said rumors linked Fyodorova to the former owner of a Siberian aluminum factory, picking its words carefully since it said he was also the honorary president of the boxing federation.

Fyodorova later denied the pregnancy rumor, telling Komsomolskaya Pravda that she heard of it from newspaper reports. "Nikolai and Oksana talked to the media too often and in too much detail, and it seems over the top to announce a breakup on stage after singing a tacky song," Komsomolskaya Pravda wrote.

"Maybe all this great love story was blown up especially to go on the cover of glossy magazines and tabloids," it wrote, reeling in shock, while refusing to admit that it is a tabloid.

"Naturally, there was nothing between them but a relationship of trade and business," music critic Artemy Troitsky said bluntly on Ekho Moskvy radio. He alleged that Baskov is not interested in women and said he preferred the approach of British pop singer Cliff Richard, who simply never talks about his sex life. "There, they have a custom of telling the truth, more or less. For some reason, it's not the custom to tell the truth in our country, even when it's clear to everyone."

Original url: https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2011/03/17/in-the-spotlight-5697-a5697