

Editor of Esquire Russia Quits

September 14, 2011

The  Moscow Times

The co-founder and editor of Esquire's edgy Russian edition is stepping down to start a children's camp.

Under Filipp Bakhtin's tenure, Esquire Russia grew into one of the country's most prominent general-interest magazines, with an eclectic mix of culture, politics and style.

It periodically drew attention for articles that featured criticism of the authorities. An article published in the September edition featured accusations that Chechen security forces were kidnapping with impunity.

Bakhtin said his decision to leave after seven years had nothing to do with alleged pressure from the government or from Sanoma Independent Media, the parent company of both Esquire Russia and The Moscow Times.

"There's no great scoop here," Bakhtin said, adding that his interests had wandered and that he did not want to rest on his laurels. "This is to Esquire's benefit."

Bakhtin has accepted an offer from a group of Russian developers to start a children's camp

in the Moscow region. He holds a university degree in education and has spent the past few summers running a camp in his native Pskov region. Up until now, he has referred to the camp as a "hobby."

Esquire also attracted attention from the authorities after it placed a nine-story banner featuring the cover of its April 2010 issue on a central Moscow street with the question: "Why do ballet dancers and gays join United Russia?" The advertisement was quickly removed.

In October 2008, prison officials placed former Yukos CEO Mikhail Khodorkovsky in solitary confinement for 12 days for granting an interview to Esquire. The punishment was later ruled illegal.

"I think he's brave, and he's a genius, and sometimes he's tough," said Svetlana Reiter, a freelance journalist who has regularly written for Bakhtin.

Mikhail Doubik, a member of the board of directors at Sanoma Independent Media, said the company does not plan to change the magazine's direction, and that the search for a replacement is ongoing.

Original url: <https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2011/09/14/editor-of-esquire-russia-quits-a9537>