

Orthodox Church Outraged by Silver Shoe Award

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The patriarch is awarded the Silver Shoe for "the immaculate disappearance of a watch" in the category of "miracles up to the elbows"

The Russian Orthodox Church on Wednesday lambasted a show in which Patriarch Kirill was given a mock award for "the immaculate disappearance of a watch."

The award was a reference to a Photoshop flub in which an expensive Breguet wristwatch was digitally removed from a photo of the patriarch but a reflection exposing the watch remained.

In Tuesday night's show, put on at the Russian Army Theater by the left-leaning Silver Rain radio station, TV personalities Ksenia Sobchak and Mikhail Shatz handed out awards "for the most dubious achievements in show business."

The show was an "event planned by active opponents of the church and its leadership," Russian Orthodox spokesman Alexander Volkov told Interfax.

In the category of "miracles up to the elbows," the watch award was dedicated to Vladimir Gundyayev, the civilian name of Patriarch Kirill.

A French-speaking man claiming to represent the Swiss watchmaker appeared on stage to congratulate the winner for his formidable PR for the brand in Russia.

Sobchak, who performed in a centaur-costume, later stressed in Twitter comments that the award was not dedicated to the patriarch but to the citizen Gundayev.

Silver Rain has periodically put on the awards ceremony, titled "Silver Galoshes," since 1996.

"Winners" have included Liberal Democratic Party leader Vladimir Zhirinovsky, Nashi spokeswoman Kristina Potupchik and the United Russia deputy who initiated St. Petersburg's anti-homosexual legislation, Vitaly Milonov.

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