

Socialite Sobchak Secretly Marries Opposition-Minded Actor

By [Lena Smirnova](#)

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Sobchak giving a speech at a free elections rally in December 2011. **Maxim Stulov**

A wedding that could easily bid for the status of the most sensational — and unexpected — nuptials of the year took place over the weekend when socialite and opposition activist Ksenia Sobchak wed actor and fellow opposition supporter Maxim Vitorgan.

Friday's wedding came as a surprise to the friends and family of the couple, who didn't start dating until late fall, after Sobchak ended her much-publicized relationship with opposition leader Ilya Yashin. The newlyweds confirmed their new status but refused further comment.

"Yes, we're married, but I don't want to talk about it," Vitorgan said, while Sobchak posted a picture on her blog of two intertwined hands in wedding rings.

The couple invited people to the film club Fital, and most guests thought they had come to see the premiere of Vitorgan's new movie. Instead, Sobchak and Vitorgan came on stage and told

everyone that they were now married.

Sobchak's mother, former Senator Lyudmila Narusova, said later that the wedding was very low-key and didn't feature most of the usual traditions common in Russian weddings. She added that she knew about the wedding plans a month in advance but was not allowed to share the information.

"This is not a hasty decision. People close [to the couple] knew about it a month ago. She just hid this well from the press. She wanted it to be her holiday and not the paparazzi's," Narusova told the Russian News Agency, also denying reports saying her daughter is pregnant.

One of the guests, pop singer Natalya Ionova, who is also known under the stage name Glyukoza, tweeted "Ksenia Sobchak knows how to surprise her friends, but today we are in shock!" and proceeded to share photographs from the wedding on Instagram.

Sobchak's marriage brought a wave of attention to the family of late St. Petersburg Mayor Anatoly Sobchak, who was President Vladimir Putin's political mentor in the 1990s.

But the once-powerful family lost its ties to the country's leader, in part due to Sobchak's efforts with the opposition movement. In June, while speaking at the Federation Council, where Narusova was still a senator, Putin didn't address her by name and patronymic, but he did so with other parliament members who asked him questions.

Narusova, who represented the Bryansk region in the Federation Council, lost her seat in October after the newly re-elected Governor Nikolai Denin nominated someone else.

Some see Sobchak's marriage to Vitorgan as a way to get the family out of the spotlight it was in when Sobchak was dating the more radical Yashin. During that relationship, Sobchak was arrested and faced a criminal case, and her apartment was searched.

The laid-back Vitorgan, best known for his role in the comedy "Den Vyborov" (Election Day), a satirical portrait of Russian gubernatorial elections, is the son of esteemed Soviet actor Emmanuel Vitorgan. He has said that his "Western" appearance has led many Russian filmmakers to choose him for roles in which he played a foreigner.

The twice-divorced actor is nine years older than the 31-year-old Sobchak and has two children from his previous marriages.

Besides Yashin, Sobchak previously dated and almost married the Russian-born American businessman Alexander Shusterovich, but the wedding was canceled a day beforehand.

Sobchak also had a relationship with Sergei Kapkov, the current head of Moscow's culture department and also a prominent businessman.

Staff writer Alexander Bratersky contributed to this report.

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