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Russian Actress Criticizes Famous Father's Support of Ukraine War

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Actress Masha Mashkova. **Vadim Tarakanov / TASS**

A Russian actress has criticized her well-known actor father's support for the war against Ukraine, in a high-profile example of how the war has split many Russian families.

Vladimir Mashkov spoke at Friday's massive rally marking the eighth anniversary of Russia's annexation of Crimea and supporting Russia's "special military operation" in Ukraine.

"We are Russian people. We love our country. We are for a world without Nazism. We are for our army. For our president," Mashkov said at the rally at Moscow's Luzhniki Stadium, where President Vladimir Putin also spoke.

Mashkov's daughter Masha Mashkova, who is also an actress, spoke out against his comments days later.

"What's happening right now is just unthinkable ... and the fact that so many Russian people, including my dad, believe that this violence is somehow justified — it breaks my heart,"

Mashkova told CNN on Monday.

"It's nothing compared to what Ukrainian people experience now, dying."

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> "It's just unthinkable and surreal. And the fact that so many Russian people, including my dad, believe that this violence is somehow justified, it breaks my heart."
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> Russian actress Masha Mashkova condemns Putin's invasion of Ukraine despite her famous father's support of it. pic.twitter.com/YukE3wgbkq
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> — CNN (@CNN) March 22, 2022

Mashkova, who lives in the United States with her family, said that she has many friends and colleagues in Ukraine and that they never hated her for being Russian or asked to be "saved" by the Russian president.

During the televised interview, a CNN anchor asked Mashkova whether she believes that millions of Russians have no idea what's really happening in Ukraine because of the Kremlin's propaganda machine.

"I talked on the phone with my dad yesterday and now I do believe that unfortunately, yes," Mashkova replied.

The Russian state narrative of Putin's "special military operation" states that its troops are in Ukraine to rid the country of Nazism and protect ethnic Russians in eastern Ukraine from "genocide."

Related article: 'My Father Said I'm a Traitor Who Should Be Shot First': War in Ukraine Splits Russian Families

This narrative has largely taken hold among older generations who mainly get their news from state television. Younger generations, in contrast, are more likely to oppose the war, as they get their information about the war online, where footage of Russia's offensives on Ukrainian cities is well-documented.

The result has been a stark divide in opinions among many Russian families.

While Mashkov — who is best known to Western audiences for his roles in "Behind Enemy Lines" and "Mission: Impossible - Ghost Protocol" — has backed Russia's campaign in Ukraine, a number of Russian cultural figures have publicly criticized it, including prominent rock artist Zemfira, and rapper Morgenshtern.

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