

# RUSSIAN ART + CULTURE



## WINTER GUIDE

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## THE ANTROPOV FOUNDATION LAUNCHES ITS LONDON PREMIERE OF THE VYSOTSKY DOCUMENTARY... ODESSA NOTEBOOK

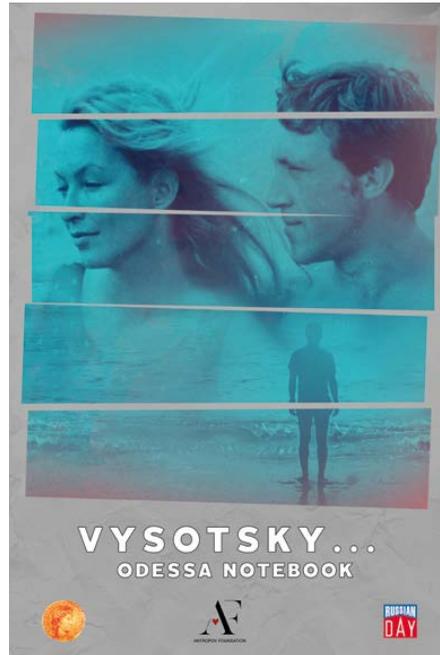
By Irene Kukota



On 30th November, *The Antropov Foundation* jointly with *Apollo Film and Russian Day*, launches its first London event – the premiere of the documentary film *Vysotsky. Odessa Notebook* directed by Anatoly Balchev and produced by Mark Ivasilevitch.

Despite the actor, poet and bard Vladimir Vysotsky enjoying a semi-mythical status in the USSR, he is relatively unknown in the West. This was in spite of marrying a French actress of Russian descent, Marina Vlady, and touring France, Poland, USA, Mexico, Canada and other countries. Nevertheless, with ever-increasing interest in his person and poetry in the UK, the organisers are hoping that the documentary, based on reminiscences of Vysotsky's friends and colleagues, will be enthusiastically received, especially as the launch, will be attended and inaugurated by his son Nikita Vysotsky.

"I am ready to die here a hundred times and to be born a hundred times again", - said Vysotsky about Odessa. The subject for the film was chosen because, "for Vysotsky and his actress wife Marina Vlady, Odessa was the city of light, happiness and love", - commented producer Marc Ivasilevitch. Indeed, the city



The documentary will launch on 30th November, at 18.00 at the Mayfair Hotel Cinema Theatre, London

had a very special place in the artist's life and career: from 1966 onwards, he starred in iconic films shot at the Odessa Film Studios, such as the mountain climbing drama, *The Vertical*, the comedy, *Dangerous Tour* and the criminal detective tele-series, *The Meeting-Place cannot be changed*, for which Vysotsky was

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posthumously awarded the USSR State Prize for the role of Sharapov. It was in *The Vertical* that his songs were first performed as a film soundtrack and then released as his first solo record. Even when he did not reprise any roles at the Odessa Film Studios, Vysotsky would frequently compose songs or soundtracks for the films produced there, and a bronze monument of Vysotsky now stands in front of the Film Studios. Yet, despite all that, the role of the city in Vysotsky's career remains greatly underestimated and unexplored. The event organised by the *Antropov Foundation*, based in Monaco and London, intends to bridge this gap and introduce Vysotsky to London audiences.

To find out more about the upcoming premiere, we approached the founder of the *Antropov Foundation*, Alexey Antropov for a short interview.

**Q: How did you come up with the idea of screening a documentary on Vysotsky in London?**

**A:** For many people, including myself, Vysotsky remains the epitome of the Russian soul, with its breadth and depth, strengths and weaknesses, without hypocrisy. It is also for this reason that most of his poetry remains relevant today.

**Q: What other projects were organised by the fund?**

**A:** Recently, we held the first International Philanthropy Summit in Monaco, which focused on the issues of social responsibility. We held it for people who identify themselves as "citizens of the world."

**Q: What prompted you to do charity work?**

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**A:** Many years ago, I met the Chilean philosopher and humanist, Darío Salas Sommer. His philosophy and books changed my whole life, communicated to it a sense of meaning and purpose, and prompted me to become involved in charity projects. Sommer's best-known book is the *Morals of the 21st Century*. By the way, from the whole range of Russian music, Sommer chose the songs of Vladimir Vysotsky and was an ardent admirer of the bard.

**Q: How do you define the mission of your charitable foundation?**

**A:** It seems to me that philanthropy as such is geared towards continually encouraging a person to develop and reveal his or her best qualities, while restraining base animal impulses. Therefore, the main mission of philanthropy is the social influence exercised upon an individual with the aim of making him or her more humane and ethical in their thoughts, words and actions.

**Q: What are your immediate plans and projects after the screening in London?**

**A:** We will continue to support the film projects of Anatoly Balchev and the art projects of sculptor Mikhail Shemyakin. The foundation also publishes an international periodical named *Nachalo*, which consolidates people who would like to exercise their critical thinking and reason. All these projects have a strong humanist component, and are meant to help people improve, even if only slightly.

More information about the upcoming premiere will be published on our website.

[www.antropov-foundation.com](http://www.antropov-foundation.com)