

Inside ‘Akvadiskoteka,’ the Viral Russian Protest Anthem Inspired By ‘Putin’s Palace’

January 25, 2021



What happens in the akvadiskoteka stays in the akvadiskoteka. **Screenshot Youtube Chicken Karry**

Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny’s recent [investigation](#) detailing a \$1.3 billion palace alleged to belong to President Vladimir Putin offered a possible rare glimpse at the president’s favorite pastimes.

While many rooms on the mocked-up floor plan published by Navalny became memes — including a now-notorious hookah lounge — one mysterious area of the palace simply labeled *akvadiskoteka* (aquatic disco) has captured the Russian internet’s imagination.

The fact that Navalny’s team failed to uncover what exactly the *akvadiskoteka* room is used for didn’t deter Russian memesters, who used the lack of information to let their imaginations run wild.

Some suspected the room might be used by far-right LDPR party leader Vladimir

Zhirinovsky...

Embed:

Как я представляю себе аквадискотеку pic.twitter.com/6mqRzhocCC

— Разбираются. Потерпите. (@Lndcalling) [January 20, 2021](#)

...Others imagined Putin enjoying a luxurious party of one in the *akvadiskoteka* room.

Embed:

Когда отдыхаешь в своей АКВАДИСКОТЕКЕ pic.twitter.com/tFGmAAAw08

— Dima (@dimakavakal) [January 19, 2021](#)

On Jan. 23, just as mass protests in Navalny's support were starting in the Russian capital, comedian and scriptwriter Alexander Gudkov took the joke a step further by [publishing](#) a now-viral music video titled after the mysterious aquatic room.

"An aquatic disco party is a really cool thing, but not while someone is in jail. We are for healthy competition in all spheres. We are against the imprisonment of the innocent," says the video description, referencing the arrest of Russia's most prominent opposition leader.

Embed:

In the video, a Sim-like character with Gudkov's face dances in the *akvadiskoteka* room depicted in Navalny's video. The bizarre visual is mixed with chaotic footage of a talking fish and a turtle as well as pictures of other rooms from Navalny's video. Eventually, cartoonish footage of a pole-dancing party is replaced by a video of an old man taking pills in a kitchen whose interior resembles that of the palace allegedly belonging to Putin.

Though the offbeat video might not make much sense to the casual observer, its accompanying song, written by popular Russian pop band Cream Soda, sends a poetic message to Russia's president.

"You are inviting me to the movies and for a couple of glasses. Inviting me to breathe in the shisha smoke, to chill on the covers, to watch the sunset from your marble boudoir," sings Gudkov. "You just don't understand that it is very old-school!"

The song quickly became a viral hit that protesters played and sang at Saturday's rallies — or, as many now call them, "the all-Russia aquatic disco parties."

Embed:

Тем временем на Цветном "аквадискотека". Ну, вы поняли
pic.twitter.com/3PEAcNk2vA

— Tramlertv (@Tramlertv1) [January 23, 2021](#)

Embed:

Полицейским включили песню «Аквадискотека». Пусть послушают, а вечером могут ещё фильм про дворец Путина за 10 млрд посмотреть
pic.twitter.com/EeGEiKxNyH

— Команда Навального (@teamnavalny) [January 23, 2021](#)

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