

Bolshoi Theater Names La Scala's Vaziyev as Ballet Director

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Moscow's Bolshoi Theater

The Bolshoi Theater announced Monday that Makhar Vaziyev, the Russian ballet director at Italy's La Scala, will join the renowned Moscow theater early next year.

Vaziyev will replace Sergei Filin, who lost much of his sight as the result of an acid attack organized by a disgruntled dancer in January 2012. The attack shocked the international ballet world and exposed infighting within the theater.

In presenting Vaziyev, Bolshoi general director Vladimir Urin said he would officially take up his new post on March 18 when Filin's contract ends.

"Vaziyev will come as soon as the opportunity arises to discuss plans for the next season and decide organizational and artistic questions. I hope everything will go well," Urin said.

Filin's future was unclear. Urin said he hoped he would stay with the Bolshoi, but did not say what Filin's new role might be.

After the Bolshoi announced in July that his contract would not be renewed, Filin told the news agency TASS that he had "no grounds for hard feelings." He did not say what his next step would be, only that he "needed to go further to fulfill his professional goals and do something new."

Vaziyev was director of the Kirov Ballet of the Mariinsky Theater in St. Petersburg from 1995 to 2008, before moving to La Scala in early 2009.

His tenure at the Mariinsky Theater "marked the advent of outstanding performers and new choreographers," said Urin.

Originally from Alagir, a small town in North Ossetia in the Caucasus Mountains of southern Russia, Vaziyev was accepted in 1973 at age 12 to the Vaganova Academy in St. Petersburg, then Leningrad. After graduation, he stayed on at the Mariinsky, becoming a principle dancer.

Vaziyev on Monday expressed gratitude for everything the Mariinsky Theater had done for him.

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