British Director Takes On 'War and Peace' in St. Pete

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Gergiyev conducts a new production of Prokofiev's "War and Peace."

The Mariinsky Theater finished its season with a performance of Sergei Prokofiev's "War and Peace" late Tuesday that would be broadcast the next day in cinemas in six different countries.

The opera, directed by Graham Vick with set design by Paul Brown and Mariinsky maestro Valery Gergiyev conducting, was performed at the Mariinsky II as part of the "Stars of White Nights" festival in St. Petersburg.

Vick is a daring director and told critic Bryan Appleyard in The Sunday Times earlier this year that his version of "War and Peace" is more "War and World," reflecting the fact that "mir" in Russian means both "peace" and "world."

He told Appleyard that part of his contract says that Russian flags cannot be shown on the

stage in the performance, a point that has the critic saying that Russia is going backwards. Vick has responded: "Yes, that's right. It's a roller–coaster country: backwards, forwards."

"In Britain we have had a privileged generation who have managed to live so long without a war. Now something is on the move. I think what is happening in Russia will lead somewhere. It's rather serious. I hope it doesn't."

Appleyard summed up Vick by saying that he "startles for a living." In his version of Mussorgsky's "Khovanshchina," the mass suicide will see everyone die by plastic bag and not by fire.

He did not give anything more away about his production of "War and Peace."

Cinemas in Britain, Ireland, The Netherlands, Germany and Croatia will show the 235–minute production Wednesday evening.

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