

New Bolshoi to Be Built For Ballet Blockbuster

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Baryshnikov turned down a role.

Director Valery Todorovsky will build a copy of Moscow's Bolshoi Theater for his new film "Bolshoi," which is set to begin shooting in the fall and will be released in 2015.

"I've spent a year embroiled in the world of Russian ballet. It's by no means a straightforward world, but I feel I've managed to grasp it," said Todorovsky, who had a huge local hit in 2008 with "Stilyagi," a musical about hip Soviet youth in the 1950s and 1960s, news agency ITAR-Tass reported Wednesday.

The greatest difficulty for the film, he said, is with casting because he has to find an adult actress for the lead role who is able to both act and dance to the highest level, as well as a child who will portray the film's heroine in her youth and who can also dance.

Todorovsky made the comments as he pitched for state funding at the federal fund that backs

local cinema production. He hopes to get 100 million rubles (\$2.8 million) from the state, close to a quarter of the film's total budget.

"We will have to partly built a Bolshoi Theater because it is easier than filming in the theater itself, which is expensive," said Todorovsky, the son of well-known Soviet director Pyotr Todorovsky, who died in May last year. The only area of the Bolshoi that the cast and crew will film in is the theater's dressing rooms.

Todorovsky said he almost persuaded legendary former ballet dancer Mikhail Baryshnikov to join the film, but he refused to come to Russia. Baryshnikov defected from the Soviet Union to Canada in 1974 and has never been back to his homeland. "But I still have hope that it will work out," Todorovsky said.

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