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# Entire Staff of Moscow Film Museum Resigns in Protest at New Director

By Allison Quinn

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The employees of the State Central Museum of Cinema quit their jobs en masse over what they describe as their new director's "incompetence" in every aspect of the institution's work.

An open letter to Culture Minister Vladimir Medinsky announcing that the decision has been posted on the museum's website, signed by all 19 members of its professional staff.

Larisa Solonitsyna was appointed director of the museum by the Culture Ministry on July 1, replacing Naum Kleiman, who had served as director since 1992. Kleiman became the museum's president after Solonitsyna took the helm in July, but he was among the staff members who resigned on Monday.

"The team's distrust of the new leadership has grown as she has demonstrated her incompetence more and more, in terms of both the museum and cinematography aspects of our business. As the authoritarian style of her leadership has bled through, the non-

transparency of her decisions has come accompanied with a stubborn unwillingness to listen to the opinions of her employees," the letter said, adding that Solonitsyna had no experience working in a museum.

"As a result of the 'activities' of the new leadership, it has not only become impossible to work productively — it's become unbearable to be located in such an atmosphere of animosity, offensive suspicion and disrespect toward people," the letter said.

The museum's staff has previously been vocal about its dissatisfaction with the new director. In October, 13 staff members filed a petition demanding Solonitsyna's resignation, in part because of her decision to fire Maxim Pavlov, the museum's longtime deputy director of scientific outreach activities.

At that time, several employees resigned in protest of Pavlov's dismissal, though Solonitsyna shrugged off criticism of her leadership, saying the dismissal was in line with optimization measures, news site Lenta.ru reported.

The museum, established in 1989, is renowned for its film collection, with over 150,000 titles in its electronic catalogue.

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