

Legendary Russian Ballerina Plisetskaya's Ashes to be Spread Over Russia

By [The Moscow Times](#)

May 04, 2015



Maya Plisetskaya in Carmen, 1974

The ashes of Maya Plisetskaya, the renowned Bolshoi Theater ballerina who died this weekend, will be spread over Russia in accordance with her wishes.

Bolshoi director Vladimir Urin said Plisetskaya left instructions for her to be cremated and, after the death of her husband, the composer Rodion Shchedrin, for the ashes to be joined together and spread over Russia.

In a statement carried by Russian news agencies, Urin cited a section of Plisetskaya's will that he said had been given to him by Shchedrin.

Plisetskaya, whose career at the Bolshoi spanned more than 35 years, was regarded as one of the greatest ballerinas of the 20th century. She died Saturday in Germany of a heart attack

at age 89.

Urin said a private memorial service would be held in Germany.

She gained international fame for a fiery, emotional style that contrasted with the more demure performances traditionally expected of ballerinas.

Under Joseph Stalin her family were branded "enemies of the people", her father falling victim in 1938 to one of the regime's bloody purges while her mother was sentenced to several years in a labor camp.

Plisetskaya was also disadvantaged by growing up Jewish at a time in the late 1940s and early 1950s when the Soviet leader was gripped with paranoia about imaginary 'Zionist' plots.

"Endless suffering and humiliation fill my memory," she wrote in her 2001 autobiography.

"What drove her past all obstacles and hazards were her unbending determination and her refusal to do things any way but her own," dance critic Robert Gottlieb wrote in the Los Angeles Times in 2001.

(AP, Reuters)

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