

Mariinsky Soloist Killed in Vladivostok Car Accident

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Vitaly Ishutin

Vitaly Ishutin, a prominent Russian opera singer and soloist at the Mariinsky Theater in St. Petersburg, was killed by a speeding car in Vladivostok late Wednesday.

Local police said Thursday they have opened a criminal case into the incident in which the 27-year-old driver of a Toyota Crown lost control while traveling at high speed, hit another car and then struck Ishutin as he was approaching a pedestrian crossing.

Ishutin, 40, who was out shopping with his wife at the time, reportedly died at the scene.

The operatic director at the Primorsky Opera and Ballet in the far eastern city of Vladivostok, Ishutin was also a soloist at the Mariinsky Theater where he had performed in such operas as "Tosca," "The Magic Flute," "The Queen of Spades," "The Marriage of Figaro" and "War and Peace."

"Just today Vitaly was with us at a rehearsal — the soul of the company, a professional on the

stage, a beloved husband and father, a person who had so many plans and hopes," the Primorsky Opera and Ballet wrote in a statement on its website.

Ishutin's body will be transported to St. Petersburg for people to pay their last respects, news agency Interfax reported Thursday, citing the Primorsky Opera and Ballet's press service.

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