

# Russia's Bolshoi Drops 'Nureyev' Ballet Over LGBTQ Law

By [AFP](#)

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Bolshoi General Director Vladimir Urin (C) gives a news conference on the theater's plans for the 248th season, April 19, 2023. **Alexander Shcherbak/TASS**

Russia's Bolshoi Theater has permanently dropped a ballet about Russian dance legend Rudolf Nureyev following the toughening of "gay propaganda" legislation, its director said on Wednesday.

The ballet was staged by Kirill Serebrennikov, one of Russia's most innovative and successful directors, who left the country after President Vladimir Putin sent troops to Ukraine in February 2022.

"Nureyev" is based on the life of ballet superstar Nureyev, and its use of onstage nudity and profane language has outraged Russian conservatives.

The dancer defected from the Soviet Union and found new fame in the West before dying from

an AIDS-related illness in 1993 at age 54.

"The Nureev ballet has been withdrawn from the repertoire," Bolshoi director Vladimir Urin told reporters in Moscow.

He said the move was linked to the toughening of a 2013 law against so-called "gay propaganda."

An amendment approved in December 2022 widened a ban on "the propaganda of non-traditional sexual relations," which initially applied to children, to adults.

Urin said in comments carried by Russian news agencies that the Bolshoi pulled the plug on "Nureyev" as soon as Putin signed the bill into law.

In May last year, the Bolshoi had already canceled three performances of "Nureev."

In March last year, Serebrennikov was allowed to leave Russia, where he was found guilty in 2020 of embezzling funds at Moscow's Gogol Center theatre.

His supporters say the conviction was revenge for his criticism of authoritarianism and homophobia under Putin.

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