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Director Bogomolov Resigns as Head of Moscow Art Theatre School After Appointment Backlash

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Konstantin Bogomolov. **Vasily Kuzmichenok / Moskva News Agency**

Russian theater director Konstantin Bogomolov said Wednesday that he would step down as acting head of the prestigious Moscow Art Theatre School (MKhAT), coming less than a month after his controversial appointment following the death of its longtime rector.

Culture Minister Olga Lyubimova last month named Bogomolov as acting rector of MKhAT, the educational arm of the Moscow Chekhov Art Theatre founded by Russian theater legend Konstantin Stanislavsky and play director Vladimir Nemirovich-Danchenko in 1943.

The appointment sparked outrage in the theater community since it was made just shortly after the death of former MKhAT rector Igor Zolotovitsky. At the same time, Bogomolov graduated from a rival theater school.

“Dear friends, I have asked the culture minister to relieve me of the duties as rector of the

school-studio," Bogomolov wrote on his Telegram channel.

"From the bottom of my heart, I wish the school and its current and future leadership luck and patience," he added without explaining his decision.

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Bogomolov's resignation comes after graduates of MKhAT signed an open letter to Lyubimova urging her to pull his nomination. The minister has not yet publicly reacted to his announcement on Wednesday.

Bogomolov, who already holds leadership positions at two Moscow theaters, previously dismissed the criticism against his appointment at MKhAT as "naive and foolish."

Anonymous sources told Meduza earlier that his appointment had been pushed through by "influential friends" of both him and his wife, socialite-turned-journalist and former presidential candidate Ksenia Sobchak.

The Kremlin reportedly views Bogomolov as a "young, talented and patriotic director" after his transformation from opposition-minded liberal to loyalist intellectual.

Bogomolov has expressed support for Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine, though the recent pushback against his appointment centered around theater tradition and garnered the support of both pro-war and anti-war alumni.

Russian exiled media noted that Bogomolov failed to stay at the helm of MKhAT despite efforts by state-run news outlets to discredit those opposed to his appointment.

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