

Bolshoi Ballet director in acid attack

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The artistic director of Russia's Bolshoi Theatre is in hospital because someone threw acid in his face. Sergei Filin, 42, was attacked

outside his apartment building as he was going home from work. Moscow police say the attacker was wearing a mask and that there were no witnesses. Mr Filin has severe burns on his face and doctors are battling to save his eyesight. A hospital spokesperson said Filin may have to go to a hospital in Belgium for more treatment. The police believe the attacker works for the Bolshoi Ballet. Filin has to make many decisions about who dances and who doesn't. Many performers and staff have criticized him for his tough management style.

The Bolshoi is a world-famous ballet company that was founded in 1776 by Moscow prosecutor Prince Pyotr Urusov. Russia's Empress Catherine II gave the Prince permission to organize theatre performances, masquerades, balls and other forms of entertainment for ten years. It rose to fame in the early 20th century because of the amazing technique and athleticism of its dancers. Today, it is the largest company in the world, with around 220 dancers. Mr Filin became the Bolshoi's principal dancer in 1990 and stayed in the position for nearly two decades. He became the company's artistic director in 2008. He won many awards, including the People's Artist of the Russian Federation award in 2001.

Sources: BBC / The Moscow Times / Wikipedia

Writing

Everyone should know the history of ballet and go to see many ballets. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

artistic / hospital / acid / attacked / witnesses / eyesight / treatment / decisions / world-famous / permission / entertainment / amazing technique / dancers / awards

True / False

- The director of a Russian ballet company threw acid on a dancer. T / F
- Police know what the attacker's face looks like from video cameras. T / F
- The victim may be moved from a Moscow hospital to one in Belgium. T / F
- The director was popular with staff, who agreed with all his decisions. T / F
- The Bolshoi Ballet first started in the 18th century. T / F
- The Bolshoi Ballet didn't become world famous until the 20th century. T / F
- The Bolshoi Ballet is the world's second largest ballet group. T / F
- Sergei Filin was artistic director of the Bolshoi for nearly 20 years. T / F

Synonym Match

- | | |
|---------------|------------------|
| 1. attacked | a. care |
| 2. witnesses | b. skill |
| 3. severe | c. hard |
| 4. treatment | d. authorization |
| 5. tough | e. bystanders |
| 6. founded | f. role |
| 7. permission | g. ambushed |
| 8. technique | h. prizes |
| 9. position | i. started |
| 10. awards | j. very bad |

Discussion – Student A

- What springs to mind when you hear the word 'ballet'?
- What do you think about the attack on Sergei Filin?
- What would it be like for a ballet director never to see again?
- What do you think of ballet?
- Which is better, ballet or hip-hop? Why?
- Who do you think attacked Mr Filin and why?
- How will the attack change Mr Filin's life?
- How tough do you think it is being a ballet dancer?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| 1. someone threw | a. witnesses |
| 2. there were no | b. Prince permission |
| 3. doctors are battling | c. style |
| 4. make many decisions about who dances | d. in 1776 |
| 5. his tough management | e. athleticism of its dancers |
| 6. founded | f. to save his eyesight |
| 7. Catherine II gave the | g. of entertainment |
| 8. other forms | h. acid in his face |
| 9. the amazing technique and | i. many awards |
| 10. He won | j. and who doesn't |

Discussion – Student B

- Is it important people look at ballet?
- What three adjectives best describe ballet?
- What's your favourite dance form?
- Do you like dancing? Why/Why not?
- What do you think of the fitness and athleticism of ballet dancers?
- What punishment should the attacker get?
- What advice would you give to Sergei Filin?
- What questions would you like to ask a ballet expert?

Spelling

- astriict director
- apartment gudibnil
- there were no itsessnew
- esvree burns on his face
- go to a hospital in Belgium for more etaetrntm
- Filin has to make many soisnceid
- fdunode in 1776
- gave the Prince oipsesrnm
- amazing unigeetch
- tistcilhame of its dancers
- for nearly two saeddce.
- He won many srwaad

Answers – Synonym Match

1. g	2. e	3. j	4. a	5. c
6. i	7. d	8. b	9. f	10. h

Role Play

Ballet expert - You think ballet is the greatest art form in human history. Tell the others three reasons why. You think everyone should see a few ballets every year. You think it will make everyone more intelligent. You also think everyone should take ballet lessons in elementary school.

Hip-hop dancer - You think ballet is only for rich people. You think hip-hop is the best form of dance in human history. Tell the others three reasons why. You think everyone should take hip-hop lessons in elementary school. It's a great form of exercise and today's kids love it.

Ballet dancer - You think ballet is the greatest art form in human history. Tell the others three reasons why. You hate hip-hop. Tell the others three reasons why. BUT... ballet is vey tough. You have to practice for many hours a day. It's also painful. Parents usually make their children do ballet.

Folk dance teacher - You think everyone should learn the folk dances of their country. Tell the others three reasons why. You think ballet doesn't teach children much and is for rich kids. Hip-hop is just noise and will not be popular in 20 years. Folk dances are an important part of a country's culture.

Speaking - Dance

What's best? Rank these and share your rankings with your partner. Put the best at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- ballet
- tap dancing
- Salsa
- folk dancing
- hip-hop
- Flamenco
- Tango
- your own

Answers – True False

a	F	b	F	c	T	d	F	e	T	f	T	g	F	h	T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.