

# [***La Scala performers and workers call for Gaza cease-fire before opera-ballet set in conflict***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BHK-NPR1-DYMD-60GP-00000-00&context=1516831)

The Associated Press

March 10, 2024 Sunday 7:15 PM GMT

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**Section:** INTERNATIONAL NEWS; ENTERTAINMENT NEWS

**Length:** 248 words

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**Dateline:** MILAN

**Body**

MILAN — Just before an opera-ballet set in conflict, La Scala’s principal dancer Roberto Bolle, general manager Dominique Meyer and other members of the dance company, orchestra and stage crew faced the audience as the curtain rose. It revealed a banner with the imperative: “Cease fire.”

The sentiment referring to [*the war in Gaza*](https://apnews.com/hub/israel-hamas-war) received a standing ovation lasting at least two minutes Saturday evening before the final performance of the opera house's original production “Madina.” It tells the story of a Chechen woman who is manipulated to become a suicide bomber after she is orphaned and raped by Russian soldiers.

In a title role performed by La Scala ballerina Antonella Albano, Madina repents at the last minute and throws down her suicide vest inside a crowded Moscow café.

Albano, “Madina” composer Fabio Vacchi and conductor Michele Gamba were also among the dozens of La Scala performers and staff who stood beneath the banner.

It was the famed Milan theater's first comment on the war in Gaza, but not the first time it has waded into the ***politics*** of war.

La Scala music director Riccardo Chailly held a concert for peace in Ukraine in April 2022, with proceeds going to help the population hit by the war. The theater joined others in dropping Russian conductor Valery Gergiev from its program because of his failure to distance himself from the invasion. Ukrainians later protested La Scala's staging of the Russian opera [*“Boris Godunov,”*](https://apnews.com/article/putin-entertainment-music-europe-9ded0d381bb2cc6f9228aa308501360c) for the opening of its 2022-23 season.

**Load-Date:** March 10, 2024

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