

Kremlin Orchestra Plays Concert for Pediatric Burn Unit

By [Benedetta Zanardi Landi](#)

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Children's Hospital Fund director Mikhail Kazbekov with Kostya, 17, a burn victim who has been a patient of the hospital over the past 10 years. **Benedetta Zanardi Landi**

The Kremlin Chamber Orchestra will play a grand gala concert in the Tretyakov gallery on May 13 to benefit Russia's largest pediatric burn unit at Moscow's Speransky Children's Hospital.

The concert, "Life Goes On," where the orchestra will play a piece each by composers Mozart, Elgar, Dvorak, Brahms and Janacek, is organized by the burn unit's charity arm, the Children's Hospital Fund and the International Women's Club.

"It takes a lot of time and effort to continue our programs and our existence: The charitable events are vital," said Mikhail Kazbekov, director of the fund.

The burn unit at the Speransky Hospital has 90 beds, taking care of 1,500 children a year.

Severe burns often require long, repeated and expensive treatment.

The Children's Hospital Fund was set up in 2001 by leading doctors, including the director of the Speransky Children's Hospital.

The fund grew out of an earlier charitable program, "Project Hope," that was set up in 1989 after the explosion of a gas pipeline caused burns for more children than the Russian government could deal with and the United States was asked for medical support.

"American specialists came here from 1989 to 1997 and set up really good programs including burn treatments, surgery, infection control and, most important, rehabilitation and burn care," Kazbekov said. "We had here very good professionals, but they were mostly treating burns in a conservative way."

Since then the fund has helped organize educational exchange programs for doctors so they can learn the latest methods of treatment in this field.

In Russia, burns occur about 10 times more frequently than in other developed countries, Kazbekov said. According to statistics, burns are the third-biggest cause of mortality after traffic accidents and criminality among children and teenagers. In Moscow alone, 12,000 children are burned every year by fire, hot liquids and chemical substances or as a result of electric trauma.

The psychological aspect of the burn victims and their families is also of great importance. The fund runs a pioneering program of psychosocial rehabilitation of burned children, recognized by the European Burns Association.

The psychosocial program is extremely important because most of the time children are depressed, have fears and their self-esteem drops dramatically. Our goal is to help them socialize and help them build a normal life, Kazbekov said. "We help the mothers and families not feel too guilty for what happened, because their intense feeling of guilt sometimes jeopardizes family relations and prevents normal socialization of the burn victims."

"Life Goes On" is at 7 p.m. on May 13 at the Engineer Building of the Tretyakov Gallery, 12 Lavrushinsky Pereulok. Metro Tretyakovskaya. Tel. 256-6444, www.childhospital.ru. Tickets cost 700, 1,000 rubles and 1,300 rubles.

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