

Legendary Pianist Nikolai Petrov Dies at 68

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Petrov, left, and Alexander Sokolov, then-rector of the Moscow Conservatory, pictured in December 2002.
Igor Tabakov

One of Russia's most celebrated pianists, Nikolai Petrov, has died. He was 68.

Petrov had been recovering from a massive stroke suffered on May 15 while on tour in Minsk, NTV television reported.

"It is a huge loss for Russian culture," said Culture Ministry spokeswoman Natalya Uvarova, Interfax reported. "Petrov was a wonderful musician who made an enormous contribution to world performing culture."

Petrov came from an illustrious family of musicians — his father was a renowned bass at the Bolshoi Theater — and started learning the piano at the age of 4.

In 1962, Petrov was awarded the silver medal at the first Van Cliburn International Piano Competition in the United States. He regularly performed 70 to 100 concerts a year and played

with all the major international orchestras, including the Berliner Philharmoniker and Britain's Royal Philharmonic Orchestra.

Apart from performing, Petrov was a professor at the Moscow Conservatory and the president of the Russian Academy of Arts.

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