

Clown Volunteers Tour Hospitals and Homeless Shelters, Bringing Cheer Ahead of Charity Concert

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Ilya Segalovich, the late co-founder of Yandex, embracing the clown-doctor Patch Adams at last year's Maria's Children charity ball.

Clown-doctor Patch Adams began touring Russian hospitals, homeless shelters and orphanages on Sunday, accompanied by 31 clown volunteers.

Adams and the volunteers, who come from the United States, Canada, Panama, Switzerland, Italy, Holland, Denmark, Japan and Russia use humor to bring joy to children and adults. Adams, who was made famous in a 1998 film about his life starring Robin Williams, has been coming to Russia for more than 25 years.

The group's Moscow visit will culminate Thursday night at a ball and art auction at GUM to benefit Maria's Children charity, which helps orphans in Russia. The charity is run by Maria

Yeliseeva, the widow of Yandex co-founder Ilya Segalovich, who was also a major supporter of the organization. The clowns will then continue their work in St. Petersburg next week.

This year's ball will be held on Nov. 14. For more information, visit www.mariaschildren.ru.

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