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Moscow Park to Host Performance Honoring Vysotsky Friday

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Soviet singer, songwriter and actor Vladimir Vysotsky

Moscow's Hermitage Garden will host a "Night of Poetry" performance on Friday to commemorate the legendary Soviet singer, songwriter and actor Vladimir Vysotsky who died 35 years ago this week.

The performance — organized by the celebrated Taganka Theater, on whose stage Vysotsky appeared from 1964 until the final days of his life, and an association of its actors — will begin at 10:30 p.m. on Friday and is expected to run through the morning of the next day, the anniversary of Vysotsky's death on July 25, 1980, at age 42.

"The commemorative night [will follow] a new, non-standard, 'other format,' fundamentally different from ordinary concerts," the theater said in a statement. "The 'other format' is when there is no stage and audience, when every viewer easily becomes an actor, and an actor a viewer. Where anyone can become a participant in the amazing creative process."

Anyone in attendance would be able to recite poetry or sing a song to "pay tribute to the poet, actor and singer, who is known to and loved by practically all of our compatriots," Taganka Theater director Irina Apeksimova said in a statement.

Most of Vysotsky's songs were available only through underground recordings during his lifetime, yet he was one of the most famous people in the Soviet Union, and one who was nearly universally loved.

He also played lead parts in several films, and his performances on the Taganka stage helped the theater gain widespread acclaim.

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