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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Musician, Actor and Writer Pyotr Mamonov Is Dead at Age 70

The frontman for Zvuki Mu died of complications from coronavirus.

July 15, 2021



Pjotr Mamonov performing at the concert in honor of his 65th birthday. June 17, 2016 **TASS**

Pyotr Mamonov, one of the most important figures in popular culture in the late Soviet and post-Soviet era, died on July 15 from complications of coronavirus. He was 70 years old.

Mamonov was born in Moscow in a family of the intelligentsia – his father was an engineer and mother a translator of Scandinavian languages. He had a counter-cultural streak from an early age, playing in rock n' roll bands in the 1960s and 1970s and getting into street fights. He studied at a printing institute and for several years worked a series of jobs connected with printing and publishing, followed by a period of taking largely menial jobs — a bathhouse worker, an elevator operator, a grocery store worker, and coal furnace stoker. He also translated from English, Danish, Norwegian and Swedish.

Although he had played in bands for many years, his success came with Zvuki Mu in 1982. He quickly became one of the most popular musicians in the Soviet Union and gained popularity

abroad when he collaborated with Brian Eno. Mamonov played in various incarnations of Zvuki Mu on and off until a few years ago.

Mamonov was equally renowned as an actor. Beginning with his role in Pavel Lungin's "Taxi Blues" in 1990, he performed in dozens of film and theater projects, such as "Is There Life on Mars?" and "Chocolate Pushkin."

After converting to Orthodoxy in the 1990s, Mamonov lived in a village and turned down many acting and other projects. He agreed, however, to play the role of a monk with a tortured past in Lungin's "The Island" in 2006. The film won many Russian and foreign awards, and garnered Mamonov a Nika for best actor. In 2009, he played the role of Ivan the Terrible in another Lungin film, "Tsar."

Mamonov continued to write, perform and act in various projects until 2019 when he suffered a heart attack and required triple bypass surgery and a lengthy period of recovery.

Mamonov was admitted to the hospital for Covid patients at Kommunarka on July 1 after experiencing symptoms of coronavirus and difficulty breathing. He was put into an induced coma and on a ventilator. His wife, Olga Mamonova, said that they had tried to take him off the ventilator without success. On July 14, she said his condition was growing "worse and worse" and that the doctors were not going to make another attempt to take him off the ventilator.

Funeral arrangements have not been announced.

Below is the 1989 performance of Zvuki Mu on the television show "Muscial Ring" that catapulted Mamonov and the group to stardom.

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