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‘Moscow Does Not Believe in Tears’ Star Vera Alentova Dies at 83

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Vera Alentova in the Soviet film “Moscow Does Not Believe in Tears.”

Acclaimed Soviet and Russian actress Vera Alentova, best known for her starring role in the Oscar-winning film “Moscow Does Not Believe in Tears,” has died at the age of 83, the Pushkin Drama Theater said Thursday.

Alentova rose to international fame for her portrayal of Katerina Tikhomirova in the 1979 film, which won the Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film. The character’s journey from a struggling young woman to a successful, independent Muscovite made Alentova one of the most recognizable actresses of her generation.

The Moscow news outlet Msk1.ru reported that Alentova was taken away on a stretcher earlier Thursday after feeling unwell during a farewell ceremony for fellow actor Anatoly Lobotsky.

Neither the Pushkin Drama Theater nor Msk1.ru mentioned the cause of death.

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Born in 1942 in the northern town of Kotlas in the Arkhangelsk region, Alentova grew up in a family of artists. She graduated from the Moscow Art Theater School in 1965 and soon became a leading figure on the Soviet stage and screen.

She joined the Pushkin Drama Theater shortly after graduating and spent more than five decades there, earning acclaim for her performances in both classical and contemporary productions.

Alentova appeared in more than 30 films and television series during her career and received numerous honors, including the U.S.S.R. State Prize in 1981. She was named a People's Artist of Russia and was awarded the Order of Friendship in 2001.

She was married for 48 years to actor Vladimir Menshov, who died in 2021 at age 82.

Alentova is survived by her daughter, actress and television presenter Yulia Menshova.

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