

How Music Greats Said Their Good-Byes to This Legend

Music veterans, friends and family have paid tribute to Grammy Award winner Natalie Cole, celebrating the late singer's life at a star-studded funeral in Los Angeles.

Cole, the daughter of veteran performer Nat King Cole, died aged 65 on Dec. 31 of a rare lung disease that led to heart failure.

Music filled the service on Monday, with Stevie Wonder playing the harmonica and singing the Lord's Prayer. Mourners including Gladys Knight, Lionel Richie and Smokey Robinson, who called Cole "my friend, my buddy and many times my confidant" also honored the singer with a standing ovation.

"As much as I stood in awe of her artistry which ran so deep, when I think of her today I realize that it's her friendship that I will miss the most," music producer David Foster said.

Cole's family last week said the singer had been diagnosed with idiopathic pulmonary arterial hypertension five years ago after a successful kidney transplant in 2009.

She had undergone the operation after being diagnosed with hepatitis following a period of drug abuse. The jazz, pop and soul singer, whose career spanned five decades, then returned to perform around the world.

Known for songs such as "This Will Be (An Everlasting Love)" and "I've Got Love On My Mind", her biggest hit was a virtual duet with her late father of "Unforgettable". {eo}

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