



Friday, November 15, 2019, 8pm
First Congregational Church

Ensemble Basiani

State Folk Ensemble of Georgia

George Donadze, *artistic director*
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Cal Performances' 2019–20 season is sponsored by Wells Fargo.

PROGRAM

Megruli alilo

A Christmas ritual song from the Samegrelo region

Mravalzhamier (“Long Life”)

A banquet song from the Kakheti region (Eastern Georgia).
The Georgian *supra* (banquet) usually begins with this song, which lifts the spirits of everyone at the table and helps create a festive mood.

Orira

A travel song from the Guria region in western Georgia, employing the *krimanchuli* technique (Georgian yodel). There is no fixed text.

Tsintskaro

Tsintskaro is the name of village in the Kakheti region.
This is a lyric-love song about a star-crossed lover.
A young lady from his village catches his eye, but his feelings are not reciprocated.

Raiudo

A circle dance song from Svaneti, in the northwestern mountain region of Georgia. Circle dance songs are among the oldest surviving forms of Georgian musical folklore in terms of traditional performance characteristics and form. They are accompanied by dances that have become inseparable from the songs. There is no fixed text.

Agdgomisa dge ars (“Day of Resurrection”)

Paschal Irmos (troparian), Gelati monastery tradition

Shobaman shenman (Thy Nativity, O Christ Our God”)

Troparion to the Feast of the Nativity, Shemokmedi monastery tradition

Odoia

A work song from Samegrelo in Western Georgia, sung during the hoeing and weeding of a cornfield. “Odo” is a name of an ancient god of agriculture.

Chven mshvidoba (“Peace to Us”)

A banquet love song from Guria. The three voices improvise independently, both melodically and rhythmically, creating a polyphonic mosaic.

Namgluri

A laborers’ genre song from the Kakheti region

(continued)

Khasanbegura

A historical ballad from Guria, employing the *krimanchuli* technique (Georgian yodel).
One of the crowning achievements of Georgian polyphony.

During the second half of the 19th century, Georgia's provinces of Guria and Achara were caught in a political conflict between Russia and Turkey. Some nobles decided to use the conflict to their own advantage. One such figure was Khosro Tavdgiridze, who had been involved in a dispute with Prince Gurieli and emigrated to Turkey.

There, he was promoted, receiving the title of *Kasan-beg* (bey),
becoming a commander of a military unit.

Some researchers believe that the music of "Khasanbegura" was created earlier, and that this historical text was set to it later. Romain Rolland and Igor Stravinsky were fascinated by "Khasanbegura" and its remarkable polyphony.

Tsmidao gmerto ("O, Holy God")

A liturgical hymn

Sashot mtiebisa ("Out of the Womb")

Introit to the Feast of the Nativity, Shemokmedi Monastery tradition

Voisa & Gandagana

A dance song from the Adjara region in Western Georgia.

This is a comic song about love, accompanied by
the *chiboni* (a wind instrument) and *chonguri* (a string instrument).

Va giorko ma? ("Don't You Love Me?")

A love song, accompanied by *chonguri*, from the Samegrelo region

Chakrulo

Another crowning achievement of Georgian traditional polyphony, "Chakrulo" belongs to the family of lengthy Kakhetian banquet songs. Considered part of world's cultural history, the song was included on the gold record attached to a Voyager space probe in 1977. This is a polyphonic example of a popular monophonic love-song—with simple, melodic expression and soft, velvety harmony.

Chochkhatura (*naduri*)

A Gurian work song. The *nadi* (hence *naduri*) is given special significance in Guria.

If a family hoed its field without a *nadi*, it would be called inhospitable.

If the village had no singers for the *naduri*, they were specially invited from other villages. The people gladly worked together with the singers of the *nadi*, as the work then became more cheerful. Field *naduris* are the longest and most sophisticated antiphonal work songs, and they number in the dozens. Most antiphonal *naduris* of this region are four-part, an unusual phenomenon in world musical folklore, and their texts often have nothing to do with working.

*Tonight's concert will last approximately 70 minutes
and will be performed without an intermission.*

For Ensemble Basiani in North America

Pemberley Productions

Tim Smith, *general manager*

Bryony Taylor, *associate general manager*



Ensemble Basiani was created in 2000, becoming the folk ensemble of the Georgian Patriarchate. In 2013, the group was given the status of State Ensemble of Georgian Folk Singing by the government of Georgia.

Ensemble Basiani is composed of singers from different parts of Georgia. Most members come from families that perform traditional singing and many have sung folk songs in other ensembles since childhood.

Since the day of its inception, Ensemble Basiani has actively revived and popularized many examples of Georgian traditional polyphony. The group has rediscovered a large number of traditional folk songs, released many albums, participated in numerous internationally acclaimed festivals, and performed at prestigious venues around the world, including the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, the Gulbekian Great Hall in Lisbon, the Grand Hall of the Saint

Petersburg Academic Philharmonic Society, the Aldeburgh Music Festival (England), the Killenny Arts Festival (Ireland), and many others.

Ensemble Basiani has previously visited the United States three times (2010, 2012, 2016), performing in prestigious venues including Lincoln Center (NY), Stanford University's Bing Concert Hall, The Town Hall (NY), and Krannert Center for the Performing Arts (IL). The group last appeared at Cal Performances in 2016.

"Basiani" is the name of one of the regions in southwest Georgia (northwest of the town of Erzurum, in what is now Turkey). In 1203, Georgian royal troops defeated the enemy there, consolidating Georgia's position in Asia Minor.

In Georgia, the battle of Basiani is associated with devotion, unity, and love of homeland. The members of the ensemble wish to present their beloved music with similar devotion.

Megruli alilo

Shobis makharobelni vart

Kristeshobas mogilotsavt

Otsdakhutsa dekembersa

Qriste ishva Betlemsao

Angelosni ugaloben

Dideba magalta shina

Es rom mtskemsebma gaiges

Mividnen da takvani stses

We are the heralds of the Christmas Carol

(Alilo),

Celebrating you at Christmas.

On the twenty fifth of December,

Jesus was born in Bethlehem.

The angels were chanting,

Glory in the highest.

The shepherds, knowing this,

Came to worship.

Mravalzhamier

Nurtsa ikharos mterma chvenzeda, arts ara

gaukharnia!

Tsutisofeli ase—dges game utenebia;

Rats mtrobas daungrevia, sikvaruls ushenebia!

Long Life

May no enemy defeat us—and they haven't yet!

The world is like this—day follows the night;

Love restores everything destroyed by conflict.

Agdgomisa dge ars

Agdgomisa dg ears, gavbrtskindebodet ats

erno! Pasqa uplisa, pasqa, romlita qristeman

gmertman sikvdilisagan mikhsna da qvekanit

tsad aghmikvana supevad dzlevisa, mgalo-

belni dghes.

Day of Resurrection

The day of Resurrection! Let us be illuminated,

O ye people! The Passover, the Passover of the

Lord! From death unto life, and from earth

unto heaven hath Christ our God brought us

over, singing a song of victory.

Shobaman shenman

Shobaman shenman, qriste ghmerto, agh-

moubrtskinva sopelsa nateli metsnierebisa,

rametu romelni varskvlavsna msakhureben,

varskvlavisagan istsaves taqvanistsema sheni,

mzeo simartlisao! Romeli aghmoubrtskindi

maghlit aghmosavaltad, upalo, dideba shenda!

Thy Nativity, O Christ our God

Thy Nativity, O Christ our God, hath arisen upon the world as the light of wisdom. For at

it, they who worshipped the stars were, by a

Star, taught to adore Thee, the Sun of

Righteousness, and to know Thee, the Orient

from in light. O Lord, glory to Thee!

Chven mshvidoba

Chven mshvidoba da gamarjveva!

Peace to Us

Peace to us and victory!

Namgluri

Glesav da glesav namgalo,
 Namgalo chemo rkinao
 Gaglesav da migayoleb
 Namgalo chemo rkinao

I'm sharpening you, my sickle
 My sickle, my iron
 I'll sharpen and take you with me
 My sickle, my iron.

Khasanbegura

'khasan-begi tavgiridze, gariskhuli
 ghvtisgan erti,
 tatrıs pashoba ishova, sul mtlad daavitsqda
 ghmerti.
 shekvetilshi shemovida, idzakhoda:
 "olan geti";
 lanchkhutamde mas vatsalot, mere chven
 gviquros, erti.
 chven gakhlavart gurulebi, brdzola gvkonda
 shukhut-perdshi,
 mteri ise davamartskhet, mtkhroblad ar
 goushviti erti.
 chemi dzmai khasan-pasha tavmochrili dev-
 inakhe,
 radgan chemi dzmai iqo, vai metki, devidzakhe.
 tsina ghamit man gadagvtısva, mit deigo tsudi
 makhe,
 radgan chemi dzmai iqo, bolos maints me
 davmarkhe.'

Khasan-beg Tavdgiridze, who rejected God,
 Sought the Turkish title of pasha, completely
 forgetting God.
 He entered Shekvetili, crying in Turkish,
 "I am here!"
 We'll allow him to pass as far as Lanchkhuti,
 Then let him see what we do.
 We are Gurians. We had a battle near
 Shukhut-Perdi.
 We defeated the enemy leaving no one
 to tell the tale.
 I saw my brother, Khasan-Pasha, beheaded.
 As he was my brother, I cried out, "Woe is me!"
 The previous night he had fought us, snaring
 himself in the process.
 Because he was my brother, I buried him.

Tsmidao gmerto

Tsmidao gmerto, tsmidao dzliero, tsmidao
 ukvdavo, shegvitskalen chven!'

O, Holy God

O, Holy God, O, Holy Mighty,
 O, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us!

Sashot mtiebisa

Sashot mtiebisa tsina gshev shen, hputsa
 upalman da ara sheinanos. shen khar mgvdel
 ukunisamde tıessa mas melkisedekissa.'

Out of the Womb

Out of the Womb, before the morning star
 have I begotten Thee: the Lord hath sworn
 and will not repent: thou art a Priest forever,
 after the order of Melchizedech.

Va giorko ma

Va giorko ma, va mortsonqo ma
 ishen qu gorluafu da skani chirima

Don't You Love Me?

Don't you love me, don't you like me?
 Don't you want me, Makharia, my dearest?

Chakrulo

Khidistavs shevkrat piroba, chven gavckhdet
gvidzli dzmania.

Chavukhtet mukhran batonsa, tavs davangriot
bania.

Mukhran batonis kmobita, pkvili ver davdgi
godrita,
dekeuli ver gavzarde, kalo ver vletse mozvrita.

Khmalo khevsurets nachedo, telavshi tushma
gagpera,

Mepe ereklem gakurtkha, saomrad jvari
dagtsera.

Matsale ertits avleso, khmal-chakhmakh
tsetskhlis kvesia,

Sultsmindad mogamkevino, rats chemtvis
dagitesia

We swore brotherhood at Khidistavi,

To attack Mukhran batoni, break down
the door.

Due to the servitude to him I could not save
any flour, could not breed a cow and could
not thresh wheat with a bull-calf.

The saber forged in Khevsureti,
Tushetians ornamented you in Telavi,
King Erekle blessed you for the war.

Hey enemies you have defeated me,
but I don't weep, weeping is for the weak.

I have many times been in this state,
but never complained.

I will sharpen my saber, get my fire-shooting gun,
And will make you pay for all the harm you
have done to me.