

For Immediate Release: October 19, 2022

[Cal Performances press room](#)



Images of Ensemble Basiani are available for download from the Cal Performances [press room](#).  
A video of Ensemble Basiani performing “Chakrulo,” one of the crowning achievements of Georgian traditional polyphony, can be viewed [here](#).

**CAL PERFORMANCES AT UC BERKELEY PRESENTS  
ENSEMBLE BASIANI**

**THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 3 AT 7:30PM  
AT FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF BERKELEY**

**CONCERT COINCIDES WITH  
GEORGIAN CINEMA: HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE BAMPFA COLLECTION  
OCTOBER 29 – NOVEMBER 27, 2022  
AT THE BARBRO OSHER THEATER AT THE BERKELEY ART MUSEUM AND  
PACIFIC FILM ARCHIVE (BAMPFA)**

**Both presentations honor and recognize 30 years  
of diplomatic relations between Georgia and the United States**

**Berkeley, October 19, 2022**— Ensemble Basiani returns to Cal Performances to perform a program of traditional Georgian music on Thursday, November 3 at 7:30pm in the intimate setting

of the First Congregational Church of Berkeley. The concert coincides with the Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive (BAMPFA)'s film series *Georgian Cinema: Highlights from the BAMPFA Collection* taking place October 29 – November 27 at the Barbro Osher Theater. Both presentations honor and recognize the current celebration of 30 years of diplomatic relations between Georgia and the United States.

The men of Ensemble Basiani are specialists in the ancient vocal traditions (among the world's oldest) of their homeland in the Caucasus, an art form comprised of religious hymns, monastic chants, epic ballads, and folk songs. The variety of Georgian vocal music varies from region to region and mirrors aspects of daily life—music for prayer, work, healing, love, play. Clad in traditional tunics and boots, the men of Basiani balance polyphony with work songs, circle dances, table songs, and the sound of *krimanchuli*, Georgian yodeling. The choir was created over 20 years ago under the auspices of the Georgian Orthodox Church to reclaim liturgical music suppressed under Soviet rule. Today, it continues to function as part of the Tbilisi Holy Trinity Cathedral Choir, its repertoire gleaned from rare and ancient manuscripts, vintage field recordings, and study in remote villages. Basiani refers to one of the regions in Southwest Georgia, in what is now Turkey, northwest of the town of Erzurum.

In conjunction with the Ensemble Basiani concert, BAMPFA will present a special film series that showcases a selection of works from its archive. Among the organization's treasured special collections are rare and distinctive holdings of Georgian cinema produced during the Soviet era and since the country's independence from the Soviet Union in 1991. The series features works by leading auteurs Tengiz Abuladze, Otar Iosseliani, Nana Janelidze, Sergei Paradjanov, Aleksandr Rekhviashvili, and Giorgi Shengelaia, as well as film directors who have established their careers in the last 15 years, such as Salomé Alexi and Rusudan Pirveli. This series offers the rare chance to view films that have not been seen since BAMPFA's *Discovering Georgian Cinema* retrospective, which was presented in a North American tour in 2014–15.

Consul General Levan Beridze shared, “The Consulate General of Georgia in San Francisco is extremely proud that these two prestigious arts organizations at UC Berkeley have chosen to present Georgian music and cinema. Georgia has long served as a cultural, educational, and commercial hub in the region, and music and cinematography are an integral part of its influence. We are honored to have our traditions celebrated with a special performance by the State Ensemble of Georgian Folk Singing—Basiani—and grateful for the opportunity to partner with Cal Performances and the Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive in highlighting Georgian culture. Many truly unique and extraordinary movies were born in Georgia in the last century and will live on as masterpieces portraying the country's unique expression of family values, friendship, love, decency, despair and so

much more. We believe these presentations will further strengthen cultural ties between Georgia and the United States.”

Ensemble Basiani’s concert is one of a number of performances exploring a diverse range of vocal styles and traditions at Cal Performances during the 2022–23 season. Other offerings include concerts by Soweto Gospel Choir (Nov. 5), Vienna Boys Choir (Nov. 26), and Tallis Scholars (Apr. 27).

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#### **CALENDAR EDITORS PLEASE NOTE:**

**Thursday, November 3, 7:30pm**

**First Congregational Church**

*Vocal Celebration*

**Ensemble Basiani**

#### **Program:**

The voices of Georgia’s Ensemble Basiani perform a concert highlighting the rich polyphonic music traditions of their homeland in the Caucasus. The diversity of Georgian vocal music varies from region to region and mirrors aspects of daily life—music for prayer, work, healing, love, play. Clad in traditional tunics and boots, the men of Basiani balance polyphony with work songs, circle dances, table songs, and the sound of *krimanchuli*, Georgian yodeling.

**Tickets:** \$48–\$78 (prices subject to change) Half-price for UC Berkeley students. Tickets are available at [calperformances.org](https://calperformances.org), by phone at (510) 642-9988, or in person at the Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall, Tuesday–Friday, 12–5:30pm and Saturday–Sunday, 1–5 pm. More information about student tickets and discounts is available at [calperformances.org/ucb-students](https://calperformances.org/ucb-students). For information about other discounts, visit [calperformances.org/discounts](https://calperformances.org/discounts).

**COVID-19:** Masking is required inside the performance auditorium, and is strongly recommended, though not required, for indoor lobby/waiting areas as well as outdoor spaces. Up-to-date vaccination is strongly recommended, though not required for entry. The latest information on Cal Performances’ COVID-19 safety policies is available at [calperformances.org/safety](https://calperformances.org/safety).

**October 29 through November 27**

**Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive**

*Georgian Cinema: Highlights from the BAMPFA Collection*

#### **Program:**

Among the treasured special collections within BAMPFA’s film archive are the rare and distinctive holdings of Georgian cinema produced during the Soviet era and since the country’s independence from the Soviet Union in 1991. This series features works by leading auteurs Tengiz Abuladze, Otar Iosseliani, Nana Janelidze, Sergei Paradjanov, Aleksandr Rekhviashvili, and Giorgi Shengelaia, as well as directors who have established their careers in the last fifteen years, such as Salomé Alexi and Rusudan Pirveli. For more information, visit [bampfa.org/program/georgian-cinema-highlights-bampfa-collection](https://bampfa.org/program/georgian-cinema-highlights-bampfa-collection)

**Tickets:** \$14 General admission—including same-day gallery admission; \$5 UC Berkeley students; \$8 BAMPFA members; \$10 Discount admission—UC Berkeley faculty & staff, Non-UC Berkeley students, disabled, 65+, 18 & under; and artists in the BAMPFA collection/MATRIX; \$2 to add same-day gallery admission with discount film ticket; \$6 Additional same-day feature

**COVID-19:** Face coverings are not currently required for admission to BAMPFA, but we continue to strongly recommend that our guests wear masks at all times during their visit to the museum. N95 or KN95 masks are preferred. The latest information about BAMPFA's COVID-19 safety policies is available at <https://bampfa.org/visit/plan-your-visit>.

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