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Interviewees: Holly Taylor-Zuntz and Susan Thompson

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Holly Taylor-Zuntz

Hi I'm Holly Taylor-Zuntz

Susan Thompson

and I'm Susan Thompson and we are your hosts on Voices of the Ancestors, the podcast which explores Georgian polyphonic songs and the women who sing them.

Holly Taylor-Zuntz

We're two British women who've been enchanted by this genre of music and we're not the only ones, UNESCO proclaimed Georgian polyphony an intangible cultural heritage of humanity.

Susan Thompson

Now you're not going to hear about Georgia USA, or Gregorian chanting, or even about the Georgian period in history but you are going to hear about a small country nestled in the Caucasus mountains where people have been singing folk songs and chants for centuries. Their unique language has produced songs about love, death and the joy of being a host with many guests. There are even healing songs for children suffering with a virus.

Holly Taylor-Zuntz

All these songs are full of harmony, in fact they're incomplete without it. You know if a Georgian hears a solo line of a song they just have to just have to come in with the harmony and then they'll have to find a third friend to complete the trio. 'Cause most Georgian songs are in 3 voices and it's this polyphony that makes a Georgian song more than the sum of its parts by the way polyphony literally means many voices.

Susan Thompson

Now, don't worry, you don't need to be a musicologist to listen to Voices of the Ancestors. You'll be hearing the stories behind the songs, more than about the songs themselves. It's not a travelogue, but you will be hearing about the journeys, geographical and spiritual, that the singers have taken to learn and perform this ancient music.

Holly Taylor-Zuntz

Our guests will be singers and teachers from Georgia, UK, America, Europe, maybe even Australia. Wherever folks have been smitten by the harmonies of Georgia.

Susan Thompson

So, where do the ancestors come in? Well these ancient songs have been passed down from generation to generation and now they are being passed on to us foreigners by a new generation of teachers. You feel connected to the past when you sing them and you can feel the ancestors energy in the music.

Holly Taylor-Zuntz

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