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Episode Title: Khatia Turmanidze Finds Her Voice

Interviewee: Khatia Turmanidze

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Khatia Turmanidze:

“And pandemic was so stressful as well. But we had a time to work for the stress. So this was how we doing that. We was singing and dancing. And it was the best medicine for stress.”

Holly Taylor-Zuntz: Welcome to Voices of the Ancestors, where we explore Georgian polyphonic songs and the women who sing them.

Susan Thompson: The voices today are me, Susan Thompson in Tbilisi

Holly Taylor-Zuntz : And me, Holly Taylor-Zuntz. And I'm safely back home in Oxford, UK. But today we're bringing you an interview we recorded while we were up in the mountains of Ajara - the village of Merisi to be more exact. We managed to grab half an hour with Khatia Turmanidze to tell us what it's like growing up in a folk family.

Susan Thompson: Oh but first - Holly, tell me how are things back in the UK

Holly Taylor-Zuntz : Oh it's great thanks, it's really nice to be back - erm and lots of new projects happening now that things are opening up. And there's two exciting events that I wanted to share with our listeners actually. So the first that I'm going to be hosting a Q&A session with Nino Naneishvili after Ialoni's concert which is going to be streamed by [Oxford Contemporary Music](#) so that's going to be coming from Tbilisi to a cinema here in Oxford and we're actually gonna be in the cinema watching it - so exciting, and it's also gonna be available on line. So if you're listening in real time, that's happening TONIGHT on Thursday 3rd June. But I'm told it will be available to watch for a week afterwards, so do check out the link in the show notes to the Oxford Contemporary Music website. It's gonna be a great opportunity to support our Georgian friends in their folk experiments.

Susan Thompson: Oh my goodness that's such great news. And for anybody that hasn't caught up with the back issues of the podcast, take a listen to episode 3 where Nino Naneishvili is our guest and also episode 9 where I was on a trip with Ialoni into the mountains of Adjara.

Holly Taylor-Zuntz :

Yes. And if you're more interested in singing than listening to Georgian Songs, there's an opportunity to learn a Georgian song from me on Sunday 6th June. I've been invited to join

[World of Voices](#) to teach an online Georgian singing workshop with them, and I'm so excited 'cause it's gonna be people from all around the world so I'll be in Oxford teaching a Georgian song, and there's someone gonna be coming from Sweden and Senegal um so yeah everyone is welcome, wherever you are in the world. Do check the link in the show notes to that.

Susan Thompson:

Ah that sounds brilliant - you did such a great job teaching when, when I visited you when you were in [Gomarduli](#), and that was immediately before we went to the Turmanidze's, so I'm sure it will be really exciting.

Holly Taylor-Zuntz

Yes I really wanted to teach the song Merisuli, which is kind of their village song from Merisi. So that when they came to visit us in Gomarduli um we could sing together. So just for a bit of background Gomarduli is also a village in Adjara erm although it's still a 2 hour journey between Merisi and Gomarduli due to the mountains. Erm and I was there as a singing teacher, I was living there for about a month and Susan came and stayed and we invited the Turmanidzes for a supra - which was just so...yeah..I think the time of that supra, the start time changed about four or five times didn't it?

Susan Thompson:

Oh I know it did and we must have said that joke word that we have 'gegmaybe' so many times that day. Gegmaybe it will happen, gegmaybe it will happen at 5, gegmaybe it will be at 7, who knows.

Holly Taylor-Zuntz

Yeah so er, for anyone who doesn't know our in joke - the Georgian word for plans ins gegmebi, so we just like to play on the fact that nothing in Georgia is predictable by using the word gegmaybe. We have a lot of gegmaybees don't we?

Susan Thompson:

Well we do. I mean that particular day we were waiting on Malek, I think, who was coming up from Batumi with all the shopping to cook for the supra. So we had to wait until the marshrutka arrived um and think she was, she had been sent to go and buy the right sort of meat, because some of our guests were muslims, because the village of Gomarduli is a muslim village. Um and to honest with you, I er, I think in the end the Turmanidze's came we had the beginning of the supra and then they left before Malek had arrived.

Holly Taylor-Zuntz

Yeah because we, they had the curfew, they had to get back before the curfew didn't they.

Susan Thompson:

Oh that's right. Yeah.

Holly Taylor-Zuntz

I mean it was fine in the end because we kinda just continued the supra by going to visit them in their village. (Susan:so true) In Merisi a few days later so it all worked out fine.

Susan Thompson:

Oh it did and it was so nice because we er our taxi driver was from Gomarduli. Um and so we set off and he'd never been to Merisi before so he was having to do the Georgian thing of making lots of phone calls on the way to make sure we were going the right route, and then there was that moment when I, I couldn't quite work out what was happening because I was sitting in the back but you got the best view, didn't you of why he slowed down so suddenly.

Holly Taylor-Zuntz

Oh yeah of course that was when these two black figures crossed our path and it turned out they were wolves.

Susan Thompson:

Yeah, and there was that long conversation when we went through all the animals that were in that um [Datvma Lkhini](#) song. The datvi, bear and the mgeli, wolf and mela, fox and tura, jackal. And he was so certain - no it's not a jackal, it was a wolf, it was mgeli so yeah that was um so special.

Holly Taylor-Zuntz

Yeah and think the journey just got more exciting from there really because the road to Merisi's - well the closer you get the bumpier it gets and windier you know you are winding around these mountains and you know the driver was getting quite agitated wasn't he. Saying why would anyone live here? .

Susan Thompson:

Yeah and we came round one bend and he could see that there was um, mechanical, what would it be a bulldozer I think parked up and it looked like there was just a landslip, a constant landslip that went over the road at that point. And you see him preparing himself and he just put his foot down when he got to that bit and went I'm getting past here as fast as I possible can. It was just crazy.

Holly Taylor-Zuntz

Yeah, I mean I was lovin the journey because the trees were getting steadily greener and um you were driving basically through cloud it was wet with moisture and it was also quite cold at that point as well.

Susan Thompson:

And all the waterfalls were really full and at their best because you were starting to get the snow melt at that time of year. It was amazing (**Holly:absolutely**) ... sorry we are at the same point aren't we..

Holly Taylor-Zuntz

And then when we arrived it was into just pure warmth in the main room of the house, is the room where everyone is because that is where the fireplace is.

Susan Thompson:

That's right and the first thing was - come and sit with me by the fire. Come and get as close as you can - that reminded me of visiting one of my aunts who, you know there was coal fire in the front room, and you all went in the front room and that's where you stayed, I think I was wearing every single item of clothing I had until we got into that room.

Holly Taylor-Zuntz

Yeah but also - the embrace of the family. We first were greeted by Jemal and Manana those are Khatia's parents and then as we got into the room around the fire we were sitting with Melek and Amiran, her grandparents and we were shelling walnuts and helping with the preparation of the supra and it - everything was just warm.

Susan Thompson:

It was, it was. And I couldn't believe I was finally there. I'd been nearly going to Merisi for probably, I don't know, 4 Yrs, 5 Yrs. I think, I realised while I was there that I'd met Jemal previously because he'd been in a concert in Batumi, where he'd been singing with [Moqvare](#) and I read up recently that Moqvare was started - it's a village ensemble, from that village - Merisi, it was started by - it must be his great grandfather - I think, or grandfather Revaz Turmanidze and that was in 1950. Um and the goal of the ensemble was to keep those songs from that village, from that area, alive. But not just, you know to sing them on a stage and do it like that but to transmit that folk knowledge to future generations. And I so felt like that was happening.

Holly Taylor-Zuntz

Oh wow. Well that's exactly - we saw the fruits of their labour really - speaking to 17Yr old Khatia whose now singing her family's songs.

Music: Ialoni

Holly Taylor-Zuntz

Hello Khatia welcome to the podcast.

Khatia Turmanidze

Hello, Holly.

Holly Taylor-Zuntz

Very nice to be here in your bedroom in Merisi.

Khatia Turmanidze

Yeah, I love my bedroom as well.

Holly Taylor-Zuntz

So maybe you could start by saying where we are and who's here and what the environment is like.

Khatia Turmanidze

So we are in Merisi in my bedroom, because here is more warm than anyone, anywhere else. This room is so old and nice. I loved being here and outside is rain, rain. And

Susan Thompson

and who's who's downstairs? I can hear some voices.

Khatia Turmanidze

There is my grandparents. They are looking Turkish. Sorry. Also. (*laughter*)

Holly Taylor-Zuntz

Ah there watching the TV programmes also, the Turkish TV programme

Khatia Turmanidze

Yes, and Jemal and Manana, my father and my mother.

Susan Thompson

Wow. And we're in - and Merisi, this part of Georgia is very close to Turkey.

Khatia Turmanidze

Yes, exactly.

Susan Thompson

In fact I'm sure I've talked to guests of yours who said Oh, yes, we went for a walk and we met to the border guard.

Khatia Turmanidze

Yeah, it's happening lots of time actually, because our mountain is really near to Turkish border. So there, there are always people who is keeping the border safe. So they are always checking our guests and they are listening how the people from other country are singing Georgian folk songs and they are just getting like wow - they all love it.

Holly Taylor-Zuntz

The border guards are charmed by the song.

Khatia Turmanidze

Yes, exactly. Always. And they are always, different different people on the border. So every time the emotions are same, like they are listening the first time when people from other country are singing Georgian song - so they are like, wow.

Holly Taylor-Zuntz

And you have a lot of experience meeting people from other countries who sing Georgian songs.

Khatia Turmanidze

Yes, but I think I look like this border, guys. Because every time when I'm listening how other people, from other countries are singing my village song I'm getting really surprised and full of emo.. emotions. I even love to talk about this actually. It's so nice. When the people far away, from far away, love your songs this much and they are learning and they are singing. This time I am realize how beautiful this song is, again, and how beautiful is my village.

Susan Thompson

And last night, you were showing us a video from when you were quite small. Can you, when, when. Do you remember when the first foreigners came here to sing?

Khatia Turmanidze

I remember everything. I remember everyone (**Susan:** Yeah) maybe I forget who is it has the last year. But I remember everyone from this group actually, because like I sometimes I even can't remember the conversations between these people. And this was really like first emotions to meet these nice people. And it was like, unforgettable experience for me, I think I think I will always remember this. And I, I spend really good time with them as well so.

Holly Taylor-Zuntz

So [the video](#), just for our listeners who might not have seen it. It's you're seven years old.

Khatia Turmanidze

Exactly.

Holly Taylor-Zuntz

What happened? they closed the road.

Khatia Turmanidze

So we was in a Keda. And we was coming back from Keda, when our friend Badri, bring the table in middle road. So he closed the road. And our guest was asking, what we can do now? And Jemali was, Jemali answered, we can call the police and police can bring them from the road, or we can join them. And we had a great table and great Supra there. People was coming with the cars, and we had the road close. So they was coming from the cars. They was joining our Supra and drinking few glass of wine as well. And next they was sitting, standing and looking how we were singing and dancing. And it was so nice.

Music**Susan Thompson**

But at that time, I think you were dancing. You were not singing.

Khatia Turmanidze

No at that time. I wasn't singing at all. Actually, never. (**Susan:** Never!) Because there was always my brothers who was singing. Yeah, they was good singers. And I was always prepared (prefer) to let them sing and listen to them. But this time I was falling, so falling in love with dancing. But now I change my interest. Now I love to look dance and love to sing. (*laughter*)

Susan Thompson

Wow. Did you hear your grandmother sing?

Khatia Turmanidze

Not me. But people say she was singing.

Susan Thompson

When we were introduced last night, she said oh, I don't sing anymore. Because I don't have a voice any more.

Khatia Turmanidze

She has, ah.. She has a throat ache for a long time. Like she can't even ate everything. So that's why she's not singing. But old time she was er.. singing with family as well.

Susan Thompson

So what happened to change for you to start singing?

Khatia Turmanidze

Okay, that's er ..this thing have a one story. Like, um, I was always listening songs. And I was happy with that. But I was never trying to sing because I was deeply believed that everyone should not sing in a family and one should dance. So I was really trying to start dance and learn dancing. But few years ago, like three years ago, or four years ago, there was one German girl Jakoba . And she came to us in, in um, spring. And the people usually groups are visiting us in a summer. So she was alone. And she was learning songs from Jemal. And they were singing in a two voice, the folk songs in the two voice and they didn't had the first voice. So she was asking, let's try, let's try I want to hear these songs in a three voice. And she was so cute. And I was really fall in love with her. So I decide to sing because of her. And I er know, I know I opened my mouth and I just sing I know this, all the songs. Maybe some of the parts I was wrong. But the mostly I know all the songs, because I'm listening. I was listening them all the time on the Supra. So next I start practice on the supra as well, of course where I learn this songs.

Music: Khatia sings on the supra

So Jakoba make me sing actually. After that it was Lloyd who was spend all the time with us and we was always happy to have Lloyd in our family.

Susan Thompson

He's not from Germany, is he?

Khatia Turmanidze

No, he's from Australia. Okay, so Lloyd was here, not just in summer. So that's mean, there was not a lot of people as well. And he was singing with er neighbors a lot. But it wasn't enough for him because he was always singing all day. He was working and he was singing he was looking the bees, and start singing 'dilas amdgaro putkharo'. He was singing every time when he was look something, which is in, which is a word in the singing sing lyrics. (**Susan:** I love this) So, Lloyd was asking me, let's try. Let's try. We have our favorite song now, which we are singing all the time when we are together. Maybe few times, sometimes in er tables. So after that, I started singing because I was so fall in love with songs and singing.

Holly Taylor-Zuntz

And what is the favorite song?

Khatia Turmanidze

Me and Lloyds and my mine favorite song is supruli. We're singing that all the time.

Susan Thompson

Which, how does it start? Because I've heard several.

Khatia Turmanidze

Wo de-eli a, delia vo, aba dela delia wo

Susan Thompson

So here's a recording from 2018, it catches the moment when Khatia starts to sing with Lloyd. You can hear that the room is full, with her father Jemal and guests from Australia and Canada - you can even hear them enjoying the sweets that Manana lovingly lays out for guests and I can imagine Khatia's grandparents are there, Malek and Amiran enjoying Khatias growing confidence in this moment. (*applause*)

Music: *Khatia sings Supruli, at the supra table with Lloyd and guests*

Khatia Turmanidze

That's a supruli.

Susan Thompson

I'm so glad I asked you. I now know that there's another supruli I need to learn?

Khatia Turmanidze

Yes, you have to,

Susan Thompson

I think so.

Khatia Turmanidze

It's so nice

Holly Taylor-Zuntz

I have a question about your voice? Did it come very naturally for you? Because I've heard you singing with a really strong voice. And I want to know, does that just come out of you? Or do you do some work?

Khatia Turmanidze

No, I've never work on my voice. And actually sometimes when I'm hearing my voice in videos or in some recordings, I know I have to work it because - I can understand I'm not doing the right breathe some time and so on, or in the recording I'm seeing every mistakes, but I'm never working for that in the table or something like that. I'm practice on the supra actually all the time.

Holly Taylor-Zuntz

I like this practice room.

Susan Thompson

Yeah I like this a lot. *Laughter*

Music: from a supra with Khatia 1st voice!

Holly Taylor-Zuntz

And It's easy for you to sing with the men in your family. Like you always take first voice or...

Khatia Turmanidze

Yeah, it's really comfortable for me. I'm the singing the first voice is my favorite. But I'm trying to sing bass as well, when sometimes my brother Beso is singing first voice, so I'm trying to sing bass with Jemal. Sometimes it's too deep for my voice. But I'm trying my best to sing bass with a man, that and that's not easy for me because men are not singing in a high, so bass is more, more deep.

Susan Thompson

And I wondered, you go to a boarding school, although I know you're very lucky today to be here with us. Or we're very lucky that you're here with us. And I wondered if you sing when you're at school with...?

Khatia Turmanidze

We have a school ensemble as well. Yes. And we are singing Merisian folk songs. We have um a nice teacher who is helping us to sing the right. But actually I know they're all the songs which we are learning so, because this teacher learned from our family as well. So I know all the songs.

Susan Thompson

How does the ensemble at school, how many people are there in it?

Khatia Turmanidze

We are 20 students in this ensemble. And we are meeting them two day in a week. But because of pandemic, we wasn't meeting a lot. And I was really missed to sing and we start last week to meet again each other and I was like I didn't want to stop when I start singing, I want this lesson to continue during whole day.

Holly Taylor-Zuntz

And is that just girls in your boarding school?

Khatia Turmanidze

No girls and boys together. Like, in boarding school, there's first floor for boys and second floor for er girls. And we have a one room where anyone can go and watch TV or play tennis or sing or do whatever they want. So I'm enjoying lot to be with my friends. I'm living there for during the six years with the same girls. So they are part of my family as well. Because I'm spending a lot time with them, more than my family sometimes.

Holly Taylor-Zuntz

So I'm wondering, do you ever have the experience to sing only with women?

Khatia Turmanidze

Yes. My friend, my friends in ensembles. Three of us are singing, sometimes together just girls. We like it and also my neighbors. They start singing in pandemic during the pandemic, actually. So, in this New Year, we was visiting all the family in this village and we were singing with the panduri and everyone was invited us and we visit every family actually we start from our family. We were singing here and when neighbors explore we can sing they start to invited us. And we spend great New Year's week actually (**Susan**: Wow) Yes,

Susan Thompson

Will you tell everyone what the pandemic at the beginning was like here because it's been different in different parts of the world. And

Khatia Turmanidze

yeah, when pandemic start and there was locked down in Georgia, everyone from city come back in a village. Even the people, even who are not living in here, but they visit us like Jemali's sisters came and start living with us and all the village was full of young people and full of people actually. So during the two week everyone was in their own houses and they was doing like they was worrying about their health. So in the during the two week or we all stay in the home. But after the two weeks that we all believed that nothing was wrong with us and we was absolutely healthy we had no Coronavirus symptoms, we start to visit each other and we close this village with our hands like we was no, no one let to go and no one let to come in, village. So

we were spending the great time, we were singing all the time. And like them, there was part of a part of days. Like in the morning we all was together. In the middle day. We was the woman's was together drinking coffee and men was was working and the afternoon the woman, woman's was together singing and dancing and men's was playing tennis and playing table games and so on, that's how we spend our whole quarantine.

Holly Taylor-Zuntz

Wow - I want to be in that quarantine. *(laughter)*

Susan Thompson

Wow. Isn't it funny how the pandemic in some aspects is so heavy, and urgh. But in others has enabled new things to happen.

Khatia Turmanidze

Yeah, for me the pandemic was really inspiring. So, I started playing guitar during the quarantine. **(Susan: The guitar)** Yeah, I'm not the best. But I'm trying. I start walking in the village. Before that I was spending all day in the house or in the yard but after the pandemic I was wake up in a seven o'clock and I was running and I was coming two hour, after two hours and after that it became part of my lifestyle because now I really love to walk again, yes, that's how it works. And actually pandemic make. we was always a big family, this village was always family, not just neighbors, but pandemic make us more near with each other. We start care with each other more and more. And we start to make friendship with not just our age, like Jemali's friends became my good friends as well. Amirani's friends became my good friend, there is no age separating now, like we all became one family.

Susan Thompson

So you were asking whether Khatia had experienced singing with just women or girls. And now I'm thinking, when did, when, do you sing with groups that are lots of different ages?

Khatia Turmanidze

Yeah. That's how it works. Actually, when it was in pandemic like, it was, it was, um, Amirans and Melek's generation, Manana's and Jemal's generation and my generation singing together all the time. And it was so funny sometimes because we were singing lot of different kinds of songs. Sometimes we're singing the polyphonic song, sometimes we were singing some modern songs, and they was like, we was like, come hear each other sometimes. It was so nice to spend time with them.

Susan Thompson

So were you teaching songs to your grandparents?

Khatia Turmanidze

No, No, I didn't. Sorry for that. But I think they are singing more good songs than I can teach. That's the answer.

Susan Thompson

Hello, it's Susan here with a gratitude spot. Thank you for listening today. And thanks to all our generous supporters for helping cover the costs of making this podcast. We hope our monthly Ko-fi supporters have found the extra recordings at [Ko-Fi.com/Voicesoftheancestors](https://www.voicesoftheancestors.com). There's the full uninterrupted episode with Joan Mills and the extended episode with Nino Naneishvili available on Ko-fi if you sign up and buy us a coffee once a month.

If you'd like to help out, go to the podcast website www.voicesoftheancestors.co.uk and click on the Ko-fi cups. If you'd like to help out, but buying a coffee isn't possible for you right now, tell some friends about the show - your word of mouth recommendation is really valuable. So, thanks again everyone, and now, back to the podcast.

Susan Thompson

I want to know your neighbors that started to sing during the pandemic. Are they still singing now?

Khatia Turmanidze

They was always singing actually. Like, sometimes I'm saying Merisi's singing village. Because there is a lot of people who can sing and they are singing so nice. And that's why Merisi have their own version of songs. But when it wasn't a quarantine everyone, everyone was so stressed with their jobs and works. And they had no time. And pandemic was so stressful as well. But we had a time to work for the stress. So this was how we doing that. We was singing and dancing. And it was the best medicine for stress.

Holly Taylor-Zuntz

But you must have missed having guests.

Khatia Turmanidze

Exactly. So it was, I was, I was, I was spending so good time. But after one month, I was telling to Jemal and Manana, I can't live like that anymore. Because then we spend every day, we spend a good time, and I was never sit down in a corner bored, bored. But I missed communication with the new people, with a guest. And I'm more er more open person. I love new people, to meet new friends, make new friendships. And I really missed this thing. And I was really looking forward to someone come in our house and I was telling Jemal and Manana, I promise I will do everything. I will help you with everything. If there will be same life, I will never say I'm lazy to do something. Yeah.

Holly Taylor-Zuntz

Where do your guests, the guests that come to Merisi? Where do they come from?

Khatia Turmanidze

Before pandemic you mean? Okay. From America, from Europe, from Australia, like really different countries. And I always love to listen them. And I always love communication with different people. And hear their er opinion, opinion about the same thing sometimes how they

are thinking and thinking in different they are all in from different cultures. So it's really interesting for me to talk with the people because I think, to develop, the best way to develop is to listen lots of different people. So that's how, what I was doing. I was always talking with people I knew the guest. And I was always happy to listen them as well. And I love to listen them. But the most favorite part for me is to share them my culture and how my village is living and what we are doing here. And before I will meet this much people, when I was seven years old, and I was looking outside, I was looking at the mountains, and I can see that's beautiful. But I was never saying it was beautiful. But when someone came here and was like, shocked how beautiful was this view look like? I was looking like, mmm what's special they are just mountains, but when times going on and on, I realize how beautiful is that? And I learned how to look everything with a guest eyes. So every day when I'm walking, waking up and going outside, I'm never looking this view as it's just the view I'm always saying, Wow. It's really beautiful. And it's always it seems like it's always new. This view for me. Yeah.

Susan Thompson

Well, my experience of is, it is always new, because the weather changes so much it changes, moment by moment.

Khatia Turmanidze

Yeah Exactly. But when I'm living here

Susan Thompson

Yes, yes. Well, I have a question as well, which is just about the future. Because I know we had a lovely discussion earlier today about how life here, you don't plan because it's not possible, things change too quickly and too often. But I wonder for you a young woman from these mountains, what dreams do you have?

Khatia Turmanidze

I want to go from Georgians, Georgia's border as well as see these people's cul.. culture who is coming to me and visiting me. I wish one day I can visit them as well in their country. But of course I'm going to live in Georgia and for this five year I have a little plans. 'Gegmaybe' *laughter* I want to, I'm in school now. So when I finish school I want to go in university in Tbilisi for four years. And after that, I don't know, I will plan next. But for sure I want to go in university.
(Susan: um OK)

Music

Holly Taylor-Zuntz

What does the voices of the ancestors mean to you?

Khatia Turmanidze

I think it means a lot. The voice which came, which, which stand strong during this centuries and this much years, mean a lot, because the stories how they was keeping their culture, culture and their voice and they stay as they was coming from, like they stay strong Adjarian woman's

and we had a terrible experience before, like in long time ago we was occupied by Turkey and it's still so clear in Adjara, when you're coming Adjara. Adjarian people never can forget that I think like you can hear these stories every day maybe, about this time, so they get lots of women die because they don't change their traditions and they stay how kind of people they was, they stay Georgian, they stay Adjarians and they stay um Christians again, they even don't change er religious religion. Sometimes the people was dying because of that. That's so it means a lot for me. Like every time when I'm breaking the corn bread, I'm doing cross because that's how Adjarian womens er was doing, when Adjara was occupied by Turkey and they was making cross because keep religy strong and teach their child's but for um people from Turkey they was telling that, lie, they will break the corn easy and that's why they was doing that but they was doing the cross and it's Christian things and to show their child's and try to, try to, don't forget that, so I'm remember that and I will never forget how they was how they, how loud is their voice that it's stand really strong for this much centuries and years. (**Holly**: It means lot.) Okay.

Music: *Merisuli*

Holly Taylor-Zuntz

Is there anything else you want to say?

Khatia Turmanidze

I want to say, the people who is listening to me. Hello, if I know you. Warm hug from Merisi. And if I don't know you, I hope you will visit our village and I will have this pleasure to talk and know you. And I'm really waiting the time when I can meet my old friends again and I can, I will have a chance to make new friendships with other people.

Holly Taylor-Zuntz

Thank you Khatia, we love you

Susan Thompson

so lovely. Yeah, yeah.

Holly Taylor-Zuntz

You're amazing. Yeah.

Khatia Turmanidze

I'm just worrying about my English, sometimes it's

Holly Taylor-Zuntz

Your English was so great, and everything you said was, I just everything.

Susan Thompson

Yeah, really, really great. And thank you so much. Thank you.

Khatia Turmanidze

Thank you. To give me this chance.

Holly Taylor-Zuntz

That was just like 30 minutes of gold. So thank you.

Music: Merisuli

Susan Thompson

Thank you for listening to Voices of the Ancestors with Holly Taylor-Zuntz and Susan Thompson. Our guest was Khatia Turmanidze. Music in the episode was by Ialoni, Sakhioba, Eteri Darchidze, the Turmanidze family. Thanks to Matthew Knight for sharing his recordings of Merisi. We're playing out with a recording of [Merisuli](#) by a trio from the Ecclesiastical Chant University of Tbilisi - a great example of a Merisian song being shared with the rest of the country. For more information about this and other episodes, visit voicesoftheancestors.co.uk. If there's ever a word you don't catch in an episode, take a look at the transcript on the website.

Transcribed by <https://otter.ai>

Thanks to Kazio Sosnowski for putting 'Merisi' on Vimeo and sharing the moment when the road was closed by singing and dancing.

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