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**Episode Title: Following the stories... (Series 1 Finale)**  
**Interviewee: Susan and Holly** without guests  
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**Holly Taylor-Zuntz:** Welcome to Voices of the Ancestors, where we explore Georgian polyphonic songs and the women who sing them. The voices today are me Holly Taylor-Zuntz and I'm in Oxford, UK

**Susan:** and me Susan Thompson in Tbilisi, Georgia. And it's our last episode of series 1 !

**Holly:** Yeah, more on that in a minute. But first, Susan, tell me how is life in Georgia?

**Susan:** Oh Holly you know I'm gonna say it's great - and it is. What have I been doing? I've been going to these weekly singing workshops that [Tamar Buadze](#) has started in a park in Rustavi. Um -and I don't know if you remember but in our 'live' show, at the beginning of the year we asked listeners who their dream guest would be on Voices of the Ancestors - and Geoff Burton said Tamar Buadze.

**Holly:** Oh yes, of course I'd heard of her because she's the person whose taken Laz songs that are in one voice and created harmonies for them, which we've been singing. So I was really happy to get to meet her um at her first workshop. And it was pretty lucky that her ex student was visiting from America and could interpret for us. And I think you and I are quite used to you know 'community' singing in the UK and Europe, but Tamar thought this was the first time it might have been done in Georgia. And I'm pretty sure she taught Aghdomasa Shena because we were there and you know it was Easter time!

**Music:** *Live recording of Tamar Buadze teaching Aghdomasa shensa.*

**Susan:** Yeah wasn't it a funny feeling when Tamar moved on to teaching the American song The River is Flowing - she was sounding out each word in rhythm - we are so used to doing that in reverse! So yeah, to be surrounded by Georgian people finding their way around english words - it was funny.

**Music:** *Live recording of Rustavi community singing The River is Flowing.*

**Susan:** And I love that Tamar is running these workshops - she, er you know when we were chatting with her, we managed to understand that she wanted to bring a sense of joy to her community, because everybody had been so down with the pandemic. And it really has been a

joyous thing to meet the community in Rustavi and to sing with [Turtachela](#). Um I've been to several of these workshops now and Tamar is a really gifted leader and it is an absolute joy to be part of.

**Holly:** Yes and I think our listeners - especially Geoff- would love, if we returned with an interpreter and we could make a full podcast episode for series 2.

**Susan:** mm

**Holly:** So as we said, this is the end of our first series, and I'm really proud of what we've made Susan. Since summer 2020 we've been working on this podcast, non-stop. We launched it in October at the [Symposium on polyphony](#) which was brilliant and since then we have managed to create 12 episodes with 10 different guests. And our episodes have been listened to thousands of times in the UK, America, Georgia, Australia, Turkey....all around the world. And this just feels like a really good moment to just pause.... and think about our next steps.

**Susan:** Yeah, I mean you say pause - but really we're not going to be taking a break, will we? - It's just we won't be putting out new episodes. Instead I can see we'll be spending our time speaking to potential sponsors for series 2. And, and planning how to make our work sustainable.

**Holly:** Absolutely. And not to mention, we're doing a theatre residency next month! (*Shared laughter*) That little thing - so yeah last year, before the pandemic, when Voices Of the Ancestors was a theatre show, and it wasn't yet a podcast, we applied for a residency at a theatre in Clapham, in London called [the Omnibus](#), and that was part of this scheme which helps emerging artists to develop a new piece of work. And we found out that we were successful with that (woo!) at the same time as they closed their doors because of covid (boo!). But now they are open again (woo!) and we are finally going to be developing our theatre show!

**Susan:** Oh I know - we're gonna be playing around in that rehearsal room and singing Georgian songs for 3 days and then sharing whatever it is that we make in a 20 minute live performance. So, if you're gonna to be in London on 26th July 2021, you can come along and be in the audience!

**Holly** Yep, we'll put out information for that on our mailing list closer to the time. So do find the [link](#) in show notes to join the mailing list if you are interested. Now, thanks to our superstar supporters on Ko-Fi. Your donations are more important than ever as we go through this next stage to develop the podcast! And you know Susan and I, we love making this podcast. It's a real joy. It allows us to follow the stories of songs and meet these incredible female singers we might not have had access to otherwise. And if you're enjoying listening to this, just please consider paying us for the work that we do. Um buying us a coffee once a month is just a really simple way for you to support our work. I mean if you met Susan and I in person, would you buy us a coffee, or a mint tea? If the answer is yes, that's all we're looking for! Er You can go to [ko-fi.com/voicesoftheancestors](https://ko-fi.com/voicesoftheancestors). And if you can't afford that, you don't have to! You can listen for

free! And those of you that can afford it, you're paying for the person that can't! But a really simple thing that everyone can do is, is just tell someone about the podcast!

**Susan:** Oh yeah, word of mouth it's the oldest but the best! And of course we want to continue the podcast. Ah - We've got so many ideas for the future! In fact, we've already got several recordings in the 'can' from people we've met in Georgia. Like, so I'm really keen to share with you some high energy singing, there was this joint concert between [Sakhioba](#) and [Kasletila](#). Ah it just needs a bit more time, to go back and listen to them with an interpreter, just to find out how this group come to be singing these classic songs from the mountains of Svaneti when they live so far away in the desert region of Georgia.

**Music:** *Ensemble Kasletila (live recording from concert with Sakhioba in Udabno)*

**Susan:** I mean does that sound like something you'd like us to make into a podcast episode? Oh - Holly is nodding there! To wrap up series 1 it would be great to hear from our listeners - from you -um, so we've created a [survey](#) so that you can tell us all about the sorts of episodes you'd like to hear in Series 2.

**Holly:** Yeah - So to have your say, click the link in the show notes to the [survey](#). And if you can't wait until series 2, we'll be putting out a special one-off episode hosted by guest editor [Jen Morris](#)! And that's gonna be with [Bridget Boyle](#) from [Kitka](#) - I'm so looking forward to that.

**Susan:** Oh me too. I'm intrigued to hear with er, from the perspective of people in America how the Georgian songs have reached them. And then, for Series 2 we want our podcast to be sustainable so we're gonna need to attract bigger donations or sponsorship, or possibly and sponsorship. So please fill out that [survey](#) - um it's gonna be open until the end of August. And if you are listening and you're thinking - do you know - I know someone who could introduce Holly and Susan to some funders and they share the same values. Well if you are sitting there thinking that - please let us know in the [survey](#).

Or maybe you yourself would like to [commission](#) an episode and you have got an idea - well our Ko-fi page is now open for [commissions](#)! What sort of episode would you [commission](#) us to make?

**Holly:** Oh Susan I have to say I find all this asking for money quite funny. It kind of reminds me of one of those um begging, or pleading songs that we came across in Shilda, Kakheti.

**Susan**

Really - you mean the Sagalobeli?

**Holly:** Yeah, so that was a woman called Niniko who we interviewed along with her granddaughter. And she was a member of a women's ensemble called [Nelkarisi](#). And that's

another golden hour of interview which is just waiting to be turned into an episode for you. I think we've gotta go back and find that story, haven't we?

**Susan:** For sure, I mean there are so many reasons. I mean partly that Sagalobeli, that pleading song. They were telling us how this woman from the village had learnt it and performed it on stage in Tbilisi and how proud they were about this. And you and I are fairly sure that person is Magda Kevlishvili, who leads [Mtiebi](#) and [Amer Imeri](#) and who we interviewed earlier in the year. So we kinda need to follow that story and piece it together and make sure we are putting 2 and 2 together and making 4 and not 5. But also, do you remember we set them that challenge to learn a song for when we come back for the grape harvest. Because they want, they wanted to be able to sing for us, and they used to when they were much younger - but they haven't been doing it recently and they just couldn't quite get it together. (**Holly:** yes, yeah) you know, and also then there was just that thing, right at the end. and we were chatting away - and we'd got them singing just a little bit but then we realised we'd met one of those, I don't know, one of those traditions, or norms here that we are not quite sure about and that Niniko was just a bit concerned because she said - oh oh I wonder what the neighbours will think I'm not supposed to be singing my husband died recently and we were mortified.

**Holly:** And just finally, I want our listeners to know about this young women's ensemble we met in [Telavi](#) called [Mze Shina](#). And that was another interview where we set up our [TULA mic](#), and there was the usual chaos of singing, and speaking, and translating, all at the same time. I haven't even listened back to that recording yet, but I just know there were some golden moments that we've got to turn into a full episode. Like when Lana, from Pankisi sang a Kist song, and I'd never heard anything like it before. So let's end our series with Tsinskaro from Mze Shina's new CD and it's gonna be Lana giving the call. So thanks everyone for listening to Voices of the Ancestors, I've been Holly Taylor-Zuntz

**Susan:** And I've been Susan Thompson. We're looking forward to hearing from you in the survey (it'll only take 5 minutes of your time). And see you in series 2!

**Music:** *Tsinskaro, Ensemble Mze Shina*

**Outro Music:** *Ialoni*

**Holly:** Thank you for listening to Voices of the Ancestors with Holly Taylor-Zuntz and Susan Thompson. The music in this episode was by Ialoni, Kasletila, Mze Shina, Tamar Buadze and Ninko or Naniko Ergeshidze. For more information about this and other episodes go to [voicesoftheancestors.co.uk](http://voicesoftheancestors.co.uk) where you'll also find transcripts of all our episodes. And thanks to all of you for listening and supporting us in our first series - you know - we wouldn't have made all these episodes if there wasn't anyone listening. So keep in touch and see you soon - Bye for now.

**Music:** *Tsinskaro*, from Ensemble Mze Shina CD;

**Live recordings:** Tamar Buadze and the Rustavi community workshop *Aghdomasa shensa & The River is Flowing*; Naniko (retired member of Nelkarisi Ensemble) *Sagalobeli*; Ensemble Kasletila (live recording from concert with Sakhioba in Udabno).

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