



Series: 2

Episode Number: 3

Episode Title: Nino Kalandadze Makharadze Remembered

Interviewees: Nana Valishvili, Lola Surmanidze, Nino Naneishvili/laloni with prerecorded contributions from Eka Diasamidze Graham, Gio Baghashvili and Ketevan Nikoladze-Burk.

Date of Interview: Nana Valishvili 19.11. 2021; Lola Surmanidze 22.11.2021

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Music: Veengara - Mzetamze (Traditional Songs of Georgian Women - Facemusic Switzerland)

Montage of voices: I'm really grateful for everything to Nino. I can remember only best about her because she was so kind. Because she was really kind. She was a caring kind selfless and equally devoted friend who would give anything to help a dear one out. qoaltvis Nino iqo ketili dzalian gulis khmeri. She made everything what she could for everyone. Everybody loves Nino. (*laughter*)

Intro from Holly and Susan underscored by veengara:

Holly: 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.

Susan: And me, Susan Thompson, and we're joined by a rich tapestry of voices to pay tribute to the life and work of Nino Kalandadze-Makharadze. Now Nino was an ethnomusicologist, an editor and singer in Mzetamze which was a women's ensemble.

Holly: Yes and just like the Khevsuretian dress which Nino wore on stage with Mzetamze, which was embellished and changed over time, this episode has been pieced together using samples from friends, colleagues and students.

Susan: Ah Holly that's such a nice way of putting it. And a bit like those dresses where they are sort of pieced together from things from all over, the result of that process, when you are doing an audio as a tribute to someone's life. I mean it can never be a whole person's life. So I'd really like to thank you, Holly for stitching together all the different little bits of audio we have, um, to create that impression of Nino for our listeners.

Holly: It was a pleasure - a labour of love and a pleasure.

Susan: Um Yeah I have a great thanks to Nino's sister Ketii Kalandadze. Um in the early days after Nino's death she sent me this message - and she said

"There is no book published, project or any dissertation written about Georgian folk songs without Nino's help. I have no idea how she did it." Since then I look in all books to see if Nino's there. The one I brought back most recently about um Lechkumian Folk songs. I opened it up and there's Nino on the inside page as one of the editors.

Holly: Yes so many books from the [Chanting Foundation](#) and all sorts of other publications so, yeah it's thanks to Nino's sister Ketii actually and the [British Georgian Society](#) who awarded us a bursary. It's thanks to them that this episode was possible. And we were really touched by the wording of the award. The chairwoman said it was in recognition of our contributions to furthering the appreciation of Georgia's rich musical traditions in the UK and beyond. - which is lovely. (Susan: It is) So let's hope this episode continues that theme for you listeners.

Susan: That's right and we're going to start by hearing from Eka Diasamidze Graham, now she worked with Nino for a very short window of time at the folk music department. But I think that time was formative for Eka - it clearly had a big effect on her.

Music: instrumental

Eka Diasamidze Graham:

"Nino Kalandadze-Makharadze It's quite difficult to talk about her in the past tense. Nino, as we all know, devoted herself to Georgian culture, singing and studying Georgian traditional music.

She had profound knowledge yet she was very humble and sometimes even shy when someone would ask her opinion about the things she knew really well. Nino had a very subtle personality and for me it was always a great pleasure to be around her.

I had a privilege of knowing her from the very first year I entered the conservatory, along with the other professional ladies of her immediate circle I admire very much. These were and are the specialists in the field and I got to work with. Also I happened to attend her dissertation defence which um allowed me to understand better what was the main focus of her research among the vast number of genres where she was like a fish in water. And um, as you all know the centre of her study was Georgian lullabies. Now that I think about it, it would be a quite natural choice for someone like Nino. Lullabies require delicate manner of singing, at which Nino was absolutely incredible and er

Georgian lullabies also need modest manner of singing with a touch of melancholy sometimes, even sadness if you like. And I think Nino's voice had it all.

We all miss her dearly. Thank you for this tribute and may her memory be eternal.”

Music: Khevsuretian lullaby - Mzetamze (Traditional Songs of Georgian Women - Facemusic Switzerland)

Holly: That was Nino Kalandadze-Makharadze singing a [Khevsuretian Lullaby](#) and wow that was just so different to any lullaby I've ever heard before.

Susan: I know it's extraordinary, I mean if you hadn't told me it was a lullaby I really don't think I think it would have been one. And ah what Eka said about Nino's voice really came through in that piece, didn't it? I mean that sort of tender quality at the beginning was so delicious and then and then where it ended up with rrrrrrrr. I mean what was that?

Holly: I just don't know. So that song was chosen by Nino's friend and colleague Nana Valishvili when we asked her which song reminds you of Nino.

Susan: Yeah and she wasn't the only person to mention that song - it was obviously something that Nino really inhabited and held as true to herself. Yeah it really showed the full range of her singing voice and her personality I think all came through.

Holly: Absolutely and Nana was one of the first people we spoke to about Nino back in November 2021 which was a few months after Nino's untimely death and we spoke to Nana at the folklore state centre where she works as an ethnomusicologist.

Susan: Yes that's right and it was such a sad time for all the ethnomusicologists that had worked with Nino. Nino habited this world of academic institutions and expeditions out to villages collecting songs and meeting village people and I imagine her character was very well suited to that - to teasing songs out of people.

Holly: So here's Nana talking a bit about Nino's work bridging that gap between the folk world and the academic institutions.

Nana Valishvili: She worked very much in her profession, she made a lot of projects. Anzor Erkomaishvili last time they made together um biggest project about Georgian culture and history. And many editions of Georgian folk songs and also recordings. She's professor of Ilia University. But also she worked at the Conservatory and many times. By the way she started her work here at the Folklore State Centre after Conservatoire 3 years, she was specialist of folk um department here and then um to the Conservatoire and then I started my work on this – after Nino. (Susan – Aah) Yes. And also she made special programme for the Folklore laboratory of Conservatoire –

like the electronic library. (Susan – yes) And so and so – it's too much. (Susan – yes) er she was, very special personyes we miss her very much.

Music: Batonebis Nanina - [Frank Sherbaum recording](#) . Verse 1. (With all parts singing.)

Reference: Frank Scherbaum, Nana Mzhavanadze, Sebastian Rosenzweig, and Meinard Müller **Multi-media recordings of traditional Georgian vocal music for computational analysis** In Proceedings of the International Workshop on Folk Music Analysis: 1–6, 2019.

Holly: So this is Mzetamze singing Batonebis Nanina and you're hearing Nino on the top voice here. *Mzetamze* apparently means something like 'sun of suns' and it's also a place name in Georgia. And we've heard it's a mythological name, indicating female origins.

Susan: Yeah, now ensemble Mzetamze they formed back in 1986. There were 6 women musicologists, including Nino and Nana, from the Tbilisi State Conservatoire - and they focused exclusively on the traditions of Georgian women. And I was quite surprised that up until that point it was quite a small circle of specialists that knew this music. And apparently the initiative came from Edisher Garakanidze.

Holly: Yeah so it sounds like back in the 80s, women's repertoire was just not very well known or researched and so I guess this would have been the first women's group that you heard Susan?

Susan: Oh yeah for sure, I mean I'd heard Rustavi they'd travelled to the UK and been in concert and I think Mitebi had been over - but these were definitely the first women's voices, Georgian women singing, that I ever heard.

Holly: Wow so they are really pioneers.

Susan: Yeah, and luckily for you Geoff Burton has just found the recordings he made of Mzetamze when they toured the UK. So we can share a little piece of the excitement when audiences hear a dance song from one of Nino's favourite regions - Racha.

Music: Rachuli Satsekao dance song from live concert recording by Geoff Burton at SOAS London 2002 (with Daira being played - check out the last episode on folk instruments with Nino Razmadze!)

Holly: And I'm quite lucky that I came to Georgian singing a bit later and you know, they'd forged a path so that other women's ensembles could be heard and so I've heard lots of women singing but I'm still aware that it's - it's not quite as well known as the men's group and even from interactions I've had with other foreigners who've Googled 'Georgian singing' it's, it's still the men's group that are heard and that's why we started Voices of the Ancestors podcast, of course

Susan: That's right - with its focus on the women. So that we can show, shine a light on those women's voices and share it round the world a little more widely. I mean we're really lucky that Nino lived when she lived because there are recordings of her singing with Mzetamze and there are some video clips of Mzetamze performing, because they did travel around and tour. I found this morning one of them in [Kendall with David Burbage and the Lakeland voices](#) and that was rather lovely and then another that I'd never seen before and that was of [Mzetamze performing in Racha](#), in a church and it must have been one of the dance songs because at one moment they break into dance and Nino's there dancing and just watching I had one of those sort of flashback moments and I thought oh yes Nino I've seen you dance. There's something about, I don't know, there are particular movements for women when they're dancing and there's just the sort of modesty with which she performed, it, it was delightful.

Holly: Yeah and it's not, it's not any kind of equality or PC case, just to include women's repertoire. They are in their own right so fascinating and the people that I teach Georgian songs to are really interested to hear about the purpose of these songs. Because we know that all Georgian songs are sung for a reason and it's thanks to Mzetamze bringing to light the - so there's lullabies, songs to change the weather, songs for religious customs.

Susan: Well that's right and the fact that this group of women in Mzetamze were all academics and they really deeply researched this - I mean you should read the CD cover, the notes on their volume one and volume two recordings. They're so detailed and you get so much information from them - um you know even to the extent where, you know, the work songs - it's work traditionally done by women so - the production of processing of wool or the calming of cows during milking - I like that in particular and then there are the comical songs that the dance songs and and moving on to the you know the laments and the dirges

Holly: Yeah and then there's round dances too and of course not forgetting batonebi the infectious diseases and healing songs - of course I think they're pretty relevant today with covid and what not. So that's what we're hearing the Batonebis Nanina. And this

particular recording is really interesting because it was part of a project run by Frank Scherbaum and he was recording the women of Mzetamze using larynx microphones.

Susan: Yeah they were really pioneers. I mean they're really courageous - nobody else had, had been recorded in this way. It was in the early days I think of Frank's work with the larynx microphones and with Nana Mzhavanadze. Um You know can you imagine being a group of singers faced with somebody going - So I'd like to record you - but in intimate detail. I want to stick something on your larynx and then you know the recording will pick up just your voice and we'll be able to separate off the different voices and see how they're interacting in real time. I think I'd find that quite intimidating as a singer, but you know Nino and Mzetamze - they went for it.

Music: Batonebis Nanina - [Frank Sherbaum recording](#). Verses 2 and 3. (all voices)

Reference: Frank Scherbaum, Nana Mzhavanadze, Sebastian Rosenzweig, and Meinard Müller **Multi-media recordings of traditional Georgian vocal music for computational analysis**

In Proceedings of the International Workshop on Folk Music Analysis: 1–6, 2019.

Holly: Oh It's so wonderful to hear Nino's voice coming across beautifully on the top part there, especially as I never had the chance to meet her. Nino passed away in September 2021 in her mid sixties from complications with Covid. And Susan, I remember that you were in Georgia at the time.

Susan: Yeah that's right. And I kept hearing from people just how much Nino would be missed. Oh and how Nino was so very kind and how modest. And such a good friend and always ready to help as much as she could. Yeah I mean it was at her funeral that the idea for this episode was planted.

Holly: Oh really how?

Susan: Well there was a group of people afterwards standing outside the Anchiskati church and we were talking about how the characters of people are reflected in their funerals. Um because Anzor Erkomaishvili died earlier that year and he'd had a massive funeral - it was practically a State funeral in the Sameba Cathedral.

Holly: Is that the one ... the really big Cathedral you can see from all of Tbilisi with the gold roof?

Susan: Yeah that's right. It is quite near the president's palace - which sort of sets the scene somehow. Yeah and afterwards, after that funeral there was a whole procession and he was buried at the Pantheon you know on Mtatsminda. (Holly:Yeah) where there's poets and presidents are buried there. All very fitting for the great man of Georgian Folk.

Holly: Yeah - I remember seeing videos of like, the Svanetian group Riho processing up the mountain to the Pantheon.

Susan: Yeah that's right. And it's funny 'cause I heard another story that Nino's family were also approached and offered a resting place for Nino at the Pantheon (Holly: Oh really) yeah alongside all those presidents and poets. But that is not what happened - 'cause her children thought Nino was so modest, so shy almost, um that she wouldn't like it, so they said - no thanks.

Holly: Oh wow. That's a bit like someone kinda being offered an OBE and turning it down in a way.

Susan: Yeah - it is - isn't it. Yeah and it was at that point when we were having this chat when Nino Naneishvili said - well it would be a really fitting tribute to Nino if she could be remembered in a podcast episode.

Holly: Yes oh - I understand now and now she's gonna be here in this episode amongst songs and folk singers and ancestors.

Susan: Yeah. That's right. So because of that, the next music you're going to hear um, it's from a rehearsal, so it's with Nino Naneishvili and Ialoni. It's just a few days after that moment we were stood outside um Nino's funeral. And I wanted to pop up there because I wanted to speak - Nino wanted to speak - Nino Naneishvili that is - (Holly - which Nino are we talking about) there are so many Nino's in this episode sorry. So this is Nino Naneishvili she'd worked for many years with Nino Kalandadze Makharadze and felt she was a friend and a colleague and a really valuable resource and she wanted to talk about her for this tribute but life is so busy sometimes that never happened. So I'm just so glad I did pop up the hill and pop into that rehearsal and just sit, sit with everybody and just go - so what songs come to mind when you think of Nino? I hope their musical response to Nino's memory will capture the essence for everyone.

Music: Recording of Ialoni improvising Iavnana from Shalva Aslanishvili's old recordings in Racha.

Nino Naneishvili voice over: Nino's main theme was lullabies and sometimes also healing songs to work on it and she liked so much to go on expeditions to Racha regions and also she liked so much to work on the expedition recordings from Racha.

Music: Recording of Ialoni improvising Iavnana from Shalva Aslanishvili's old recordings in Racha.

Nino Naneishvili voice over: It's so nice lyrics. (Susan Yes) It tells that the moon is afraid. And it has 'guda' it's like a 'khurdgini' like a bag, a material thing ... which old people (Susan: carry on their back). It tells that this moon has this 'guda' with sleep ah with sleep inside. And I bring this 'guda' to my child. (*laughter*) it's so warm (Susan: that's gorgeous) Yeah and it's like to be friendship with nature....yeah... magic.

Music: Recording of Ialoni improvising Iavnana from Shalva Aslanishvili's old recordings in Racha.

Susan: Yeah so that was the recording with Ialoni in the early days after Nino died and I found that everybody I came across, who had known Nino just wanted to talk about her and the impact on their lives. So I moved down to Batumi and recorded another of Nino's students - Lola Surmanidze.

Lola Surmanidze: My name is Lola, from Batumi, from Georgia. I'm ethnomusicologist. I like folk music. Er Nino motivated me to work in folk music.
I - I believe that she's still alive.

Susan Thompson: Nino Kalandadze - Yes.

Lola Surmanidze: Yes - Because I don't believe that she, er - not with me. She was my great friend, close friend. She was like, mother in my profession. (Susan: Wow) So she was always with me and now I'm without Nino but. (nervous *laughter*)

Susan Thompson: But you still have a project (**Lola:** yes) That you were working on with Nino.

Lola Surmanidze: With Nino I worked on the project, it's about old archive recordings. In 2012 I found the old recordings. That was time, and when I studied at Batumi Art Teaching University and Nino was my supervisor.

Susan Thompson: Oh I see.

Lola Surmanidze: Now I finish this project myself. (Susan: On your own) All alone, yes. But it would be better to do it with Nino. (Susan: Yes. Of course.)

Susan Thompson: So, how did she help you? Was the archive in Tbilisi or in Batumi? Where was the archive?

Lola Surmanidze: Archive was in Batumi. (Susan: Ah) But there are recordings from 20th century in 60's, 50's years recordings. There are Adjarian and Gurian folk songs. um, especially it's really interesting Kobuletian er naduri, naduri songs yes, working songs.

Susan Thompson: So I think Nino knew the archive very well. She knew what other recordings there would be.

Lola Surmanidze: Yes, she knew. She knew everything about folk music, about recordings, everything she was, really competent person in this field.

Lola Surmanidze: I studied everything I know, everything I know I know from Nino. (Susan: Wow) I'm really grateful for everything to Nino. She was great person for me and not only for me. (Susan: Yes). For her, students, for her colleagues, for singers from Mzetamze and for everyone who knows, Nino. Because she was, really kind person. Really - she was good professional and really, at the same time, really kind person. (Susan: Yes) Yeah, everybody loves, Nino. She was positive person. (Susan: Yes). She was really very, very kind.

Music: Instrumental

Susan Thompson: Yeah it was quite surprised when I was chatting with Lola to hear her describe Nino as a positive person

Holly Taylor-Zuntz: Oh really how come?

Susan Thompson: Well I think it's because, because, I knew her sister Keti and what I've chat with Keti and ask how Nino was. And from time to time she'd sort of say - oh you know she's really not so good at the moment you know - she's she's in a really dark place. And I think I'd labelled her as someone, you know, who experienced depression. And somehow I never thought that somebody who experienced depression could also be really positive.

Holly Taylor-Zuntz: hmm wow isn't it interesting how sometimes the people who are the most kind, light giving, compassionate people are actually those who are struggling the most.

Susan Thompson: Yeah and I'm sure there's times I saw her, where she was really, you know trying to to do all the things you know are going to make life better - like I'm thinking all the times I saw her dancing and how that lifted her spirit so, you could just see it in her face

Holly Taylor-Zuntz: And it sounds like it didn't stop her working and helping people - she just kind of managed it by saying I'll help as much as I can but I'm not in a great place right now.

Susan Thompson: That's exactly right, that's what people said you know after the funeral that's what they were saying - she helped so much - she was so kind and often, you know, she was really struggling herself.

Holly Taylor-Zuntz: So let's just pause in this dark place for a moment, to hear a dirge from Shavsheti, sung by Ketevan Nikoladze, Nino's fellow singer in Mzetamze.

Music: Chemo Dav - Mzetamze (Traditional Songs of Georgian Women - Facemusic Switzerland)

Holly Taylor-Zuntz: The words of that funeral song feel so fitting:

My sister, why did you destroy my world so soon?

My sister, why did you leave this world so soon?

So to round off this tribute episode, let's return to Nana Valishvili at the Folk Centre, for a moment of reflection, and a spontaneous rendition of a much-loved Georgian song with quite philosophical lyrics, about the fleeting nature of life and existence.

Susan Thompson: So you know/knew Nino since you were 15? Yes. What do you think motivated her? Why, why did she spend her whole life helping everybody about folk music?

Nana Valishvili: Um – it was her character I think. She could not do it another way - take another way. (Susan: Yes)

Susan Thompson: One of the things Holly and I have talked about for this episode is, that in a year where so many people have died – Anzor Erkomaishvili and um so many, that Nino's character was quiet and reserved and humble and yet..... without her here so many projects will stop so her um she made a big difference (Nana V. Yes) even being quiet.

Nana Valishvili: That projects are waiting for other people to be continued

Holly Taylor-Zuntz: To be continued.

Susan Thompson: To be continued for sure.

Nana Valishvili: Er Sometimes I think that some people are very good professionals but around them are too much people who love them and everytime I think - What is our life?....without each other?

Holly Taylor-Zuntz: Ra aris tsitsotskhle

Nana Valishvili: Nino was following this way.

Live music: Holly, Nana & Susan sing: *Bindisperia sopeli*

Nana Valishvili: Madloba

Music: Instrumental

Holly Taylor-Zuntz: Thank you for listening to Voices of the Ancestors with Holly Taylor-Zuntz and Susan Thompson.

Susan Thompson: Weaving together this episode was a labour of love, and a big responsibility. Knowing that the British Georgian Society award covered some of the costs helped us to keep on going.

Holly Taylor-Zuntz: Susan this one has been nearly 2 years in the making.

Susan Thompson: Oh I know! And aside from the one off donation from the British Georgian Society we are still a listener funded podcast. Please become a supporter of the arts, on our donation platforms: www.ko-fi.com/voicesoftheancestors and on Patreon www.patreon.com/voicesoftheancestors.

Holly Taylor-Zuntz: Join our wonderfully generous community who help us weave together stories for you. Just think what new or old stories we can bring you, if we're able to travel to remote villages and hire translators.

Susan Thompson: Yeah it's weird but so often a Voices of the Ancestors episode has only been possible because we could seize the moment and be in the right place at the right time. Like Holly, when you went to Pankisi in February .

Holly Taylor-Zuntz: Oh yeah that was a chance meeting in a hot spring in Georgia that led me to collaborate with Ben and Lucy from the Youtube channel From Rust to Roadtrip on an [episode about Georgian polyphony](#). So I introduced them to the concept of supra, and to the youth choir Amer -Imeri, and we took a trip into the snowy villages of Pankisi.

Susan Thompson: Oh yeah, I've been up there, but never when it was snowing!

Holly Taylor-Zuntz: Yeah, this was pretty cool. So this is the Kist-speaking settlement near the border with Chechnia, where sufi rituals such as the Zikr ceremony are still practiced, but in danger of dying out. So our mini documentary is up on Youtube now so we'll link it in the show notes.

Susan Thompson: We've been wanting to make a podcast episode about that area for so long.

Holly Taylor-Zuntz: Yeah and I'd love to make a podcast episode and get really deep into the musical side of things, but that would require travelling there again and being there with a really good translator. So that is the kind of concrete cost that you can help with listeners. And more regular donors really does make a difference.

Susan Thompson: And thank you to our regular supporters. And thank you to the many people who've contributed to this tribute episode. Some have sat with us in grief, and some have been alone, recording thoughts and memories of Nino, all have been with us in spirit as the tribute took shape.

Holly Taylor-Zuntz: Thank you Gio Baghashvili, Ekaterine Diasamidze Graham, Ketevan Nikoladze-Burke, Lola Surmanidze, Nana Valishvili, Nino Naneishvili and Ialoni for your voices. And speaking of translators, thanks to all those who wanted to contribute but were not able to because we just didn't have a translator in the moment!

Susan Thompson: And for those of you that want to get into the detail of this episode we'll put any additional materials and links on the website, where there's also a transcript for you to download.

Holly: Please do help us out by sharing this episode on your social media's or by word of mouth or by email - it really helps us to get the podcast into more people's headphones.

Susan Thompson: Thanks for listening!

Additional resources:

Recordings of Nino and Mzetamze made by Frank Scherbaum and Nana Mzhavanadze in 2016.

'A special property of this collection is the variety of recording devices used. Besides a camcorder for video recording and conventional stereo microphones to capture the overall impression, each of the singers was recorded separately with a headset microphone and a larynx/throat microphone.

Throat microphones pick up the vibrations of the singer's throat and convert them to an audio signal. In this way, unwanted environmental noise is not recorded by the microphones, leading to a reasonable voice quality even in loud environments. This effect is especially useful when recording polyphonic vocal music performances, since every throat microphone captures the voice of only one singer while suppressing the other singers' voices.'

<https://www.audiolabs-erlangen.de/resources/MIR/2017-GeorgianMusic-Scherbaum>

At the bottom of this page, there is a search field. If you enter **Mzetamze**, you will see all the links to the videos and audio recordings of all the recording sessions with Mzetamze, from which you can select what you want to see/hear. It is worth emphasizing that the larynx recordings are only for computational analysis. The recordings worth listening to are all the others, in particular the headset microphone recordings.

Face Music Switzerland

Albi at Face Music Switzerland recorded Ensemble Mzetamze Traditional Songs of Georgian Women Vol 1 1996 & Volume 2 2000

http://www.face-music.ch/artists/ens_mzetamze.html

You Tube

- ▶ **Ensemble Mzetamze - Naï naï (in Kendal)**
- ▶ **Georgian women singers in Kendal**
- ▶ **Brigflatts Georgian Singers**
- ▶ **mzetamze eglise de fontarabie khunakatni ratcha**

Ben and Lucy from the Youtube channel From Rust to Roadtrip on an [episode about Georgian polyphony](#)

Tributes to Nino Kalandadze-Makharadze

Sung tribute to Nino from friends at the Symposium in 2022 - Khevsuretian lullaby followed by Chemo Tsitsinatela

- ▶ **ჩემო ციციანთელა / Chemo Tsitsinatela**



First Georgian women's traditional music festival "Nanina" held on May 1 and 2 2023 at the Folklore Center, Tbilisi. The festival "Nanina" is dedicated to the memory of one of the members of "Mzetamze", a famous ethnomusicologist, Nino Kalandadze, who made an invaluable contribution to the research of the Georgian cradle nana genre.

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