



# Window

## BACTRIA Newsletter

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 5

JUNE 2008

WHERE  
CREATIVITY  
MEETS PEOPLE

### UPCOMING EVENTS:

- 6 June—5 July  
Fête de La Musique
- 15 June  
Public Art Exhibition  
Opening  
(18:00)
- 20 June  
Two Generations—  
Exhibition Opening  
(18:00)
- 24 June  
Cultural Coordina-  
tion meeting

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## Message on the Board from Georgy

What a wonderful idea the French had! They have created “Fete de la Musique”, an annual celebration of music that has been organized in France and in French speaking countries since 1982. And of course such an excellent opportunity to celebrate music cannot be left unnoticed and unmarked in a country like Tajikistan, where music is an integral part of everyday life. Music has a very special place in Tajiks’ hearts and they take every chance to pay respect to their rich musical heritage. Tajik folk music is played in all walks of life from birth to death, including weddings and holidays, like Navruz. Classical music genres, like shashmakom, falak, gurguli, etc were developed by professional musicians. Each region takes pride in their own distinct tunes, but many of the instruments (doira, daff, setor, dutor, rubob, nai) are common around Tajikistan.

You can see an excellent collection of national instruments at Gurminj Museum (located next to Vefa Center), which also hosts a series of summer concerts on every other Saturday organized by BACTRIA. Nowadays of course other genres have also appeared, like world music, a kind of fusion of traditional and contemporary music to which the rhythmical sounds of Tajik music easily lends itself. And let’s not forget about popular music! Experiments with music of other cultures such as rock ‘n’ roll, heavy metal and even rap made its way to Tajikistan and found their followers.

The day of “Fete de la Musique” is for everyone, who plays music...ANY kind of music! It is the absolute celebration of sounds and creativity. But how can one day be enough to show

all? BACTRIA therefore made the decision: Let’s have the whole month of June devoted to music!

We have brought a wide range of programs together to match the taste of many if not all. It is up to YOU now, to come, select and participate. The more the better!

Georgy Mamedov  
BCC Program Director

## Fête de la Musique

Completely different from a music festival, the Fête de la Musique is above all a free popular fête, open to any participant (amateur or professional musicians) who want to perform in it. This Music Day allows the expression of all styles of music in a cheerful atmosphere. It aims at a large audience, working to popularize musical practice for young and not so young people from all social backgrounds. It gives an opportunity to communicate and share a very special moment through music.

Musicians are asked to perform for free, and all the concerts are free for the public. It’s the reason why they play in open air areas as streets and parks or in public buildings like museums, train stations, and castles. Furthermore, the Fête de la Musique is a way to encourage the major music institutions (orchestra, operas, choirs, etc.) to perform outside their usual locations. In this way it offers an opportunity to develop exchanges between city centres and their outlying areas, to offer concerts in hospitals or in prisons, to promote encounters and exchanges between young musicians and well-known talents.

dred countries in Europe and over the world. It takes place every 21st June, the day of the summer solstice in the northern hemisphere.

Thanks to the impulse and the dynamism of the French cultural network abroad (the departments of Cultural Affairs at the French Embassies, French Cultural Centers and Institutes and the Alliances Françaises) the Fête has an important international growth. Indeed, a lot of events are now set up by local organisers (Ministries for Culture, City Councils, local artistic associations, etc.). Fête de la Musique is reinvented again and again, taking care of each country’s cultural specificities. In this way, it will become a real emblematic event in most of the countries.

[www.fetedelamusique.culture.fr/87\\_English.html](http://www.fetedelamusique.culture.fr/87_English.html)

Bactria\_Sound



Launched in 1982 by the French Ministry for culture, the Fête de la Musique is held in more than hun-

CinemArt

## Music on the screen

June 5<sup>th</sup> 18:00

### “Chicago”

Director: Rob Marshall

Language: Russian

June 12<sup>th</sup> 18:00

### “Jesus Christ Superstar”

Director: Norman Jewinson

Language: English

June 19<sup>th</sup> 18:00

### “Cabaret”

Director: Bob Fosse

Language: Russian

June 26<sup>th</sup> 18:00

### “All that Jazz”

Directors: Bob Fosse

Language: Russian

## Music, music and more music

Bactria\_Sound

Fete de la Musique in Dushanbe is making a tradition by being organized for the third time in a row. The venues this year will be **Bactria Cultural Centre** and **Gurminj Museum**. Following the musical heritage of Gurminj Zavkibekov, well-known musician and artist, the museum has already been THE PLACE FOR MUSIC for quite some time offering a large variety of music genres and a cozy atmosphere. Bactria Centre has been hosting classical musical afternoons on the first and last Saturdays of the month and this time it will house the Music School Festival, which will be organized within the framework of Fete de la Musique. Children from eight music schools will demonstrate their talent to the public on the four Fridays of June at 6pm. The festival also provides opportunities to musicians to not only

perform, but also to give master classes and workshops. This year, the festival introduces several participants from abroad. The British Reggae Band “Maroon Town” has an innovative blend of get-up-on-your-feet-and-dance music with noticeable elements of Ska, Rap, Jazz, Soul, and Funk. Most of their songs are original, and their Rap-style lyrics are positive, non-violent, and uplifting. “Maroon Town” along with the well-known local band MIZROB will open this year’s festival. The American music group “Poetica Musica” is a consortium of musicians that specializes in early and contemporary music played on rare and unique instrumental combinations. The festival also boosts having Jean During, one of the most prevalent ethnomusicologists in Central Asia and Iran, among its participants, who will perform his own compositions

with Tajik musicians. As the idea of Fete de la Musique was born in France, we devoted a concert exclusively to French music, performed by the Ensemble “Slavyani” from Slavonic University and also by Gerard Deshaes, a French pianist, along with two local musicians. The closing day of the festival will present an Oriental music day, with the performance of the Tajik musical group «Навои Дарвоз», the music group of the Indian Cultural Centre, Dushanbe followed by a jam session.

## Event Calendar

Date/time	Venue	Event	Date/time	Venue	Event
6.06. 6:00 p.m.	Bactria Cultural Centre	Music Schools Festival opening <i>Music School # 6</i> <i>Shahidi Music School</i>	20.06. 6:00 p.m.	Bactria Cultural Centre	Music Schools Festival <i>Ensemble “Hunerog”</i> <i>Music College</i>
7.06. 5:00 p.m.	Gurminj Museum	Tajik music concert <i>Falak performed by Panjshambe Jorubov and SAMO</i>	21.06. 6:00 p.m.	Gurminj Museum	<i>Jean During and local musicians perform his own composition of traditional Iranian music.</i>
9.06 6:00pm	Bactria Cultural Centre	<i>Meeting with composer, Tolib Shahidi</i>	23.06. 10:00am	Bactria Cultural Centre	Indian Dance master class
11.06. 6:00 p.m.	Bactria Cultural Centre	Official opening of the International Music Festival 2008 <i>British Reggae Band “Maroon Town”</i> <i>jam session with MIZROB</i>	23.06. 5:00pm	Gurminj Museum	Indian music master class
12.06. 10:00 a.m.	Gurminj Museum	British Reggae music band “Maroon Town” workshop	24.06. 6:00 p.m.	Bactria Cultural Centre	Classical music concert “Poetica Musica” American contemporary classical music
13.06. 6:00 p.m.	Bactria Cultural Centre	Music Schools Festival <i>Aminzoda Music school</i> <i>Sevar Music School</i>	25.06. 6:00 p.m.	Bactria Cultural Centre	Classical music concert <i>French oboe player with local musicians</i>
14.06. 5:00pm	Bactria Cultural Centre	French music day <i>Gerard Deshaes, Irina Aroutounian, Tolib Mullodjanov, Vladimir Pustovarov</i> <i>Ensemble “Slavyani”</i>	27.06. 6:00 p.m.	Bactria Cultural Centre	Music Schools Festival <i>Oleg Haritonov</i>
			28.06. 5:00 p.m.	Gurminj Museum	Rap concert museum <i>DJ Ismail</i>
			04.07 6:00 p.m.	Bactria Cultural Centre	Dance night
			5.07. 6:00 p.m.	Bactria Cultural Centre	Oriental music day «Navoi Darvoz»

## Meet the Team—Faruh's winning ticket

Every one of us at one time in our lives takes the winning ticket. For me personally the winning ticket concerns life, destiny or simply a favorite job, to which you go with a desire and from which you return with pleasure. And what makes work to be so attractive and desired. First of all people, with whom you share the same views, goals and aspirations; people who think alike with you, and with whom in the process of creating something move in the same direction. It can happen at least one time in one's life, but one needs to be prepared that it might not happen at all.

I have found all of them above, but not right away. The "artistic road" for me started in a very non-artistic way – first I was dealing with totally unbelievable things, like trading gasoline, vodka and pirated discs; I was learning and teaching English at the same time. I started independent life early and forced myself to deal with serious, correct, and economical activities. I took any work I found; from working at a service center of a mobile phone company on the weekends and nights, to working at the university – painting over pencil drawn school desks; till this day I hate any manifestation of vandalism.

Finally I stepped on an entirely new path when as a 3<sup>rd</sup> year student I received a tempting offer from my group mates at university, Georgy Mamedov and Sergey Chutkov, to work on the organization of the International Theatre Festival (ITM), which took place in Varzob and where all the

elite of European and Central Asian theatre represented themselves. It was a great experience, in spite of all the difficulties, because the organizers had to carry all imaginable loads, pre-



pare tables for coffee breaks and for meals, make the stay of foreign guest comfortable in every way, sometimes translate and above all have a constant and losing battle with the staff of the hotel, which refused to react to problems, like malfunctioning outlets and taps, inconsistent water supply, windows falling out of their frames and many others.

Following this experience, came a symposium on the protection of Sogdian wall paintings, after which Georgy made me an offer I simply could not resist. The content of this offer was something like this: "Let's work together, but for free". And it all took off, project after project came our way, "Restoration of Paintings in Extreme Needs", "Gathering" at Gurminj Mu-

seum, Pre-Islamic Heritage in Tajik Culture" in Behzod Museum and the sensational NaturArt project in the Pamirs.

I became fond of this small NGO "Restorers Without Borders, Tajikistan" and I became a part of something important, a team of like-minded people. The main difference between an organization and a team, between colleagues and like-minded people lies in the fact that a team of like-minded people selflessly strives for the same goal and works together as one. We sometime don't know how to do something and to us no one pays for helping each other, but when we are a team it does not matter. And now we all work in BACTRIA, our team has grown, became richer and we work for one goal in a harmonious team. Bactria Cultural Centre for me is a totally new step in life. Work here is fascinating and unbelievably interesting. Here everything is so close and real: paintings, contemporary art, music, literature. Every time we organize a concert, exhibition, meeting with writers, we present a holiday to the people; again and again we see how the world around us is changing and becoming better. This is my winning ticket.

Faruh Kuziev  
Assistant to Program Director,  
translator

## Summer School at Bactria

One of the main objectives of Bactria is to democratize access to education, information and culture. Thanks to the support of the French Embassy, Bactria organizes extra-curricular activities for disadvantaged children of Dushanbe who do not have the chance to be involved in the regular activities of the center during the year.

This new initiative started last year through the organization of a Summer School involving 20 children from two centers; the Special Vocational School for juvenile offenders and the Refugee, Children and Vulnerable Citizens Center. Last year's experience was a real success as both children and Bactria's team worked together on interesting educational and creative activities, which enabled the children to discover new ways of expression through learning a foreign language, music, arts and handicrafts. In June 2008, Bactria will again host 20 children from the Special

Vocational School and from an orphanage. A rich program will be waiting for the children as they will not only take basic French language classes, but will also participate in outdoor art and theater classes and in music classes, which will take place at the Gurminj Museum of Musical Instruments. On top of this, the children will better understand the culture of their country through visits to Tajik museums; the Museum of Antiquities, the Ethnographic Museum and Behzod National Museum.

.....and, of course, they will have no choice but to indulge in music because in June, both Bactria and Gurminj Museum will be THE PLACES for new music experiences. (See more information about the Music Festival on page 2) A special concert will be organized for the Summer School children in Gurminj Museum on the 26<sup>th</sup> of June and the closing day of

the Summer School, (June 5<sup>th</sup>) will coincide with the last concert of Bactria Music Festival, 'Oriental Music Day'.

Marielle Dupont  
BCC director

## Nature's Force

Martha Jackson-Jarvis, a Washington, D.C. based sculptor, has exhibited widely in the United States

including a solo exhibition at the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C. in 1996. She has constructed several large scale public projects using various stones, glass, clay, cement, steel, etc. The obsessions that awaken mixed-media artist Martha Jackson-Jarvis each day emanate from her love of family, her passion for cooking, and, from her unabashed fascination with the elastic dimensions of clay. For years, the material has served as the basis for her site-specific floor mosaics and installations, for landscape projects, for her complex coterie of sculptural objects. *Music of the Spheres* and *River Spirits of the Anacostia* are two recent projects

in the District of Columbia, and *Techno 368* will be installed in the Bronx. Each installation tempers its urban setting, contrasting the architectural with the ethereal, physicality with myth. The projects not only

reference years of study and aesthetic development, they also, through their erudition and elegance, offer glimpses into the essence of the woman herself.

Each work is encoded with layers of identity-based and universal messages, touchstones open to interpretation at each viewer's level of understanding. Densely textured references accompany the abstract in the vivid palette she employs. Through imagery that reflects the African American and human experience and found objects with personal and general resonance, Jackson-Jarvis provides a readable amalgamation of painting and sculpture. Jackson-Jarvis's art is peppered with references to the mores, art, and deities of Africa, whose art she admires for its "immediacy and humanity." The African concept of *ashe* or energy courses like a pulse through her early works and informs her public artworks, albeit on a grander scale. "I'm interested in those kinds of in-between places where light, reflection, texture, and form all merge to make this unknown thing happen. This unknown thing has to do with energy and life and force, and it speaks to each of us in a different way," she says. "It's something I grasp for."

Excerpts from the article "[Martha Jackson-Jarvis: The Process of Discovery](http://www.sculpture.org/documents/scmag04/jf04/jarvis/jarvis.shtml)" by Curtia James <http://www.sculpture.org/documents/scmag04/jf04/jarvis/jarvis.shtml>

Martha Jackson Jarvis will be visiting Tajikistan in June and work with local students and artists to create a public art work in Bactria Cultural Centre. Anyone interested is invited to watch the artists working in BACTRIA from the 10-13<sup>th</sup> of June. She will also be visiting several art institutions and give master classes as well as public lectures.

### Public Lectures and Talks:

**June 6<sup>th</sup> 16:00** Lecture: Contemporary Art: Public and Environmental Art  
Bactria Cultural Centre

**June 9<sup>th</sup> 16:00** Meeting with the artist  
American Corner in the library of Academy of Sciences

**Exhibition opening is on June 15<sup>th</sup> at 18:00 in Bactria Cultural Centre**



*Crossroads*, 2005, Brick, steel, mortar, glass tile, and stone, H 20 ft.,

## Environmental Art

The term can be used generally to refer to art dealing with ecological issues and/or the natural environment, by raising awareness of the fragility of nature (includes landscape-based photography, painting, drawing, book-works and site-specific art)

investigating natural phenomena (includes scientific illustration as well as interdisciplinary art practices)

using natural materials gathered outdoors (such as twigs, leaves, stones, soil, feathers; which is often called Nature Art)

not contributing to environmental degradation (includes 'green' work made from bio-degradable or recycled materials; & 'Eco sculpture' which is sensitively integrated into a natural habitat)

The term is also used to refer variously to [Site-specific art](#) or to [Environmental sculpture](#), which are often used to create work which is 'environmental' in the former sense, but can also relate to other aspects of their 'environment', such as the formal, the political, the historical, or the social context.

It is possible to trace the growth of environmental art as a 'movement', beginning in the late 1960s or the 1970s. In its early phases it was most associated with sculpture — especially [Site-specific art](#), [Land art](#) and [Arte povera](#) — having

arisen out of mounting criticism of traditional sculptural forms and practices which were increasingly seen as out-moded and potentially out of harmony with the natural environment. The category now encompasses many media.

Recently [Sustainable art](#) has emerged as an alternative term to environmental or green art, in recognition of the challenges that [sustainability](#) brings for contemporary art as a whole.

In identifying Environmental art a crucial distinction lies between environmental artists who do not consider the damage to the environment their artwork may incur, and those who intend to cause no harm to nature. Indeed, their work might involve restoring the immediate landscape to a natural state. For example, despite its aesthetic merits, the American artist [Robert Smithson](#)'s celebrated sculpture [Spiral Jetty](#) (1969) involved inflicting considerable permanent damage upon the landscape he worked with. Smithson using a bulldozer to scrape and cut the land, impinging upon the lake. This *Environmental Art* also raised awareness of the importance in recycling materials.

[Alan Sonfist](#), with his first historical Time Landscape sculpture, proposed to New York City in 1965, visible to this day at the corner of Houston and LaGuardia in New York City's Greenwich Village,

introduced the key environmentalist idea of bringing nature back into the urban environment. Today Sonfist is joining forces with the broad enthusiasm for environmental and green issues among public authorities and private citizens to propose a network of such sites across the metropolitan area, which will raise consciousness of the key role that nature will play in the challenges of the 21st century. The sacredness of nature and the natural environment is often evident in the work of Environmental Artists. [Chris Drury](#) instituted a work entitled "[Medicine Wheel](#)" which was the fruit and result of a daily meditative walk, once a day, for a calendar year. The deliverable of this work was a mandala of mosaiced found objects: nature art as [process art](#).

Indeed, such criticism was raised against the European sculptor [Christo](#) when he temporarily wrapped the coastline at Little Bay, south of Sydney, Australia, in 1969. Local conservationists staged a protest, arguing that the work was ecologically irresponsible and adversely affecting the local environment, especially the birds that nested in the wrapped cliffs. Complaints were only heightened when several penguins and a seal became trapped under the fabric and had to be cut out.

## Language and Coffee

### Deutschklub

am 3. Juni 2008 um 16.00 Uhr

16.00 -18.00 Kaffeerunde und Information für DAAD Stipendienbewerber - 2008: Hochschulsummerkurse und Semesterstipendium in Deutschland

### English Coffee Hour - 4 p.m.

4<sup>th</sup> June

An introduction to Blues Music  
David Schafer, US Embassy  
Dushanbe

11<sup>th</sup> June

Introduction to Reggae Music  
Presentation by the musicians of the British Reaggae Band 'Manroom Town'

18<sup>th</sup> June

Percussion Clinics -  
Introduction to drum music  
Edgar Leon, US Embassy Dushanbe

25<sup>th</sup> June

Introduction to contemporary American Music  
Presentation by the musicians of the American Band 'Poetica Musica'

### Club Voltaire

le 5 juin à 16h00

Introduction a l'ethno-musicologie  
Jean During- Musicologiste

le 12 juin à 16h00

La place de la musique classique française dans les opéra-ballets au Tadjikistan.

### Bactria\_Lingvo

Amal Khanum - Coordinatrice des activités pédagogiques et culturelles du Centre Culturel Bactria

le 19 juin à 16h00

La musique populaire française  
Lithida Sitthisay

le 26 mai à 16h00

La musique classique européenne  
Guillaume Deshayes  
Joueur professionnel de haut-bois au conservatoire de Paris



DAAD

## Environmental Art (cont.)

Conservationists' comments attracted international attention in environmental circles, and lead contemporary artists in the region to re-think the inclinations of Land art and Site-specific art.

In comparison, a committed Environmental artist such as the British sculptor [Richard Long](#) has for several decades made temporary outdoor sculptural work by rearranging natural materials found on the site, such as rocks, mud and branches, and which will therefore have no lingering detrimental affect. While leading Environmental artists such as the Dutch sculptor [Herman de Vries](#), the Australian sculptor [John Davis](#) and the British sculptor [Andy Goldsworthy](#) similarly leave the landscape they have worked with unharmed, and in some cases have in the process of making their work revegetated with appropriate indigenous flora land that had been damaged by human use. In this way the work of art arises out of a sensitivity towards habitat. Probably the most celebrated instance of Environmental art in the late 20th century was *7000 Oaks*, an ecological protest staged at Documenta during 1982 by [Joseph Beuys](#), in which the artist and his

assistants highlighted the condition of the local environment by attempting to reforest polluted and damaged land with 7000 oak trees. In the last two decades significant environmentally-concerned work has also been made by [Rosalie Gascoigne](#), who fashioned her serene sculptures from rubbish and junk she found discarded in rural areas, [Patrice Stellest](#), who created big installations with junk, but also pertinent items collected around the world and solar energy mechanisms, and [John Walseley](#), who hikes through remote regions, gathering visual and scientific data, then incorporates visual and other information into complex wall-scale works on paper. Environmental art or Green art by Washington, DC based glass sculptor Erwin Timmers incorporates some of the least recycled building materials; window glass.

Site-specific art is [artwork](#) created to exist in a certain place. Typically, the artist takes the location into account while planning and creating the artwork.

Land Art, Earthworks or Earth Art is an art movement which emerged in America in the late [1960s](#) and early [1970s](#), in which land-

scape and the work of art are inextricably linked. Sculptures are not placed in the landscape, rather the landscape is the very means of their creation. The works frequently exist in the open, located well away from civilization, left to change and [erosion](#) under natural conditions. Many of the first works, created in the deserts of Nevada, New Mexico, Utah or Arizona were [ephemeral](#) in nature and now only exist as video recordings or [photographic](#) document.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Environmental\\_art](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Environmental_art)



Robert Smithson: "Spiral Jetty" (1969)

## Reading forever - library of Bactria

One of the main information points in Bactria is its library. Its leading specialist, Gulchera Djumaevna Isabaeva, commands several languages, a skill that benefits her in working in a multi-language library as ours. We have a good collection of books in Tajik, Russian, English, German and French, focusing on mostly culture and history. Art books on the works of Michelangelo, Levitan, Vrubel, Aivazovsky, Theophanes the Greek, movies of Russian and Western avant-garde, Vomov, and Italian Renaissance are the most valued pieces of the collection. Fundamental works dealing with the First and Second World War constantly remain in the focal point of readers. Especially interesting is our selection of literature of Tajik history,

like the works of Ashrafa, Maitdinovy, and Frei. The library also holds a collection of atlases and picture books. Among its literature pieces we must mention the luxury edition of Tolkien, the books of Houellebecq, French and German works in original language. We have several dictionaries in different languages. The library constantly increases its collection and in the near future we are expecting some American Classics and books on contemporary arts.

In the reading room of the library, we regularly organize book shows, like "Contemporary French Literature", "Contemporary American Literature", "Arts of the 20<sup>th</sup> century", "History of the Second World War", and "Social problems in contemporary literature".

### Bactria\_Bookshelf

Our movie library also boosts a great selection of popular and artistic works from all over the world, like films of Chaplin, Wenders, Jarmusch, Spielberg, Muratovy, Soloev, and Lungin. We regularly organize meetings with artists, writers, musicians, etc. This year the list of our visitors included American poet, Brenda Flanagan, Tajik writer Eleonora kasimova, rock-musician and writer, Kide and Russian-Tajik writer Timur Zulfikarov. On June 9<sup>th</sup> visitors to BACTRIA's library will have the pleasure to meet Tajik composer, Tolib Shahidi, who will present his latest CD.

We would like to invite everyone to our library!  
Opening Hours: Mon-Fr: 13:30 - 17:30

## Return to Edem

If Adam and Eve had not been expelled from Paradise and an angel had not stood guard with a Jedi-like sword, this ill-fated couple with time would have desecrated the Garden with nitrite, Freon, and with crumpled beer cans. Human beings make mistakes unlike the rest of nature, which does not; nature just harmoniously evolves to correct our mistakes and to enlighten us.

Fish dying in an oil spill – this is a vicious mistake, while the disappearance of dinosaurs caused by a meteorite is a normal natural cataclysm. Glaciers, tsunamis, or meteorites – or even radioactivity of Hiroshima – are not mistakes; it is all development.



Man punished with intellect and free will is frequently at fault in front of nature (mothers or punitive organizations) yet constantly wants to "merge" something with something. Experiments of amalgamation are regular. Here, for example not long ago a group of doubtful characters was thrown into the open arms of nature and left there for a week and a half. The activity, called artistic workshop "NaturArt", took place in the Pamirs, in a high altitude botanical garden, on 2320 meters above sea level (Khorog, GBAO, Tajikistan). Organizers: Restorers Without Borders, Tajikistan (Dushanbe); curator: Pavlos Konstantinos Politis (Tashkent); supported by SDC.

Khorog – this is such a place where isolation is immediately prevalent; however this isolation is not negative like that of a corrective-labor camp, but rather a worthy one. This small town with its 30 thousand locals is a place, where next to cars, donkeys roam freely, fences are made of rocks, in the local Central Asian University western teachers give lectures, and where in one of the cafeterias a cook wearing national dress speaks English. The native tongue of the Pamiris is not Tajik, but Shughnan and Rushan, eastern groups of Iranian languages. I remember a phrase "Tama Kabultsa", with which our driver greeted everyone in the town, including the policemen. It means something like "Hey dear". Pamiris speak in Russian with Tajiks.

It is indeed some "Other" world and we lived on its very top – above the town stretched-out lies the botanical garden, where everything grew with the exception of palm trees. It especially had a lot of apple trees.

Infiltration to such a world however takes energy and above all a long and difficult road. From Dushanbe there are planes to Khorog, but in summer times, one might have to wait couple of days for a seat. We

traveled for two days on a serpentine road winding along the steely water of the Pyanj River, observing the neighboring Afghanistan, whose mountains were entwined with such narrow paths that from afar it seemed that only Mujahedin in ballet shoes could pass by each other. On the paths flocks of sheep were creeping along by climbing on the rocks; a technique which they periodically demonstrated. From time to time, border guards appeared in pairs (in winters they patrol in groups of four, because hungry wolves often come down from the mountains). They stopped us once to ask for cigarettes.

Jamshed Kholikov, as part of his long-term project, took photos of the great variety of eclectic Soviet bus stops, while we were driving by them. He was sitting on an uncomfortable seat, ready for the next shot, helped by a fellow artist, Buston, who highlighted the objects by saying: "Djama, bus stop, thirty meters... twenty...ten..." Jamshed is planning to create a real bus stop and use it as a mobile exhibition space – a good metaphor for the Central Asian locality and flexibility.

On our way, we often saw remains of the civil war, like destroyed tanks. "This is the area the tank controlled" – commented the passengers. "And from these hills it was hit." The feeling remained with me. In the botanical garden I made photo artworks "Mimicry"-camouflaged leaves (nature masks scars of the war under social mind - people like to dress in camouflage and khaki colors not only in Tajikistan but all over in Central Asia).

Of course our bus broke down and of course on the mountain pass. While the drivers repaired the engine (two hours), every passing vehicle stopped and their drivers gathered with ours for a consultation. No one left until the car was repaired. Passengers of the volunteer consultants did not protest, just waited quietly – they honored drivers' law. Then our Native American artist performed a healing dance around the car and we continued our trip. On the way back we were stopped by agents from the Drug Control Agency and searched our car and bags for almost three hours with the help of a small spaniel named Jackie, who finally only took a pickle from Inna's jar.

Botanical garden. We had four computers, but did not always have electricity. Female artists stayed in a small hostel, but did not always have water. The other artists lived more adventurously – in the Museum of Pamiri Nature, in the middle of the exhibition, in a model of a Pamiri house. Pamiri houses have windows on their roofs and around the walls spaces for sleeping. The male section of artists and organizers, about fifteen people, slept there on mattresses. At nights there was volcanic snoring and Buston recited aloud Tajik poetry in his dreams (he called this specialty of his "dream-art"). For sanitary facilities there was a waterfall near the museum and the woods.

The museum was used at its maximum – the office was set up in one of the rooms and in an empty one I prepared for my performance "Mountain Tango". There we practiced with Bahrom for several nights. We called this room the dancing hall and arranged seating

for those who came in to watch us, sitting on Chinese mattresses (the empty bags of sleeping blankets), each giving us advice. For the performance I needed a camouflage shirt – finally a really dirty and stinky one was taken from the guard of the botanical garden, who in exchange got a clean CIA shirt from one of the organizers. Here I'd like to use the opportunity to give my regards and admiration to the organizers and technical group. Georgy Mamedov, director of "Restorers Without Borders", gathered an excellent group. They did not only organize the life and work of the artists, but with enthusiasm joined the artistic projects, even the highly labor-intensive ones. Heroic Adrienn, for example, helped the Iranian Akhmad Nadalian to carve patterns in rocks. Nadalian travels all over the world looking for good stones to carve fish on them and then leave the stones behind where he found them – he showed us a map: his fish sit on all continents, including Africa.

A memorable moment: In Khorog, on the square next to the town's theatre, a blitz-exhibition took place, displaying the results of the workshop. In the middle of the introductory speeches, when all the projectors were ready to show the new video art works, the electricity suddenly went off (true, electricity always suddenly goes off – it is just such a natural cataclysm). But the audience did not even manage to grumble, as on the horizon appeared Sergey, calmly pulling from somewhere a wire – and I understood that with will even electrons can be made to move. Within five minutes we had electricity.

A perfect decision of the organizers was that they have invited Jamshed Kholikov as an artist and consultant. His participation practically guaranteed success. Within the past couple of years he organized all contemporary art events in Dushanbe. In the city there is no contemporary art center, but there is Jamshed,



national pride of Tajikistan. In the Pamirs because he constantly helped others – filming, making a montage, preparing for the exhibition, - he put off the execution of his own artwork and only managed to accomplish what he wanted at 5 am right before our departure.

Returning to the deficit of electricity. As it is well-known, artists are such people who use electronics. Everyone had a great number of photo and video cameras and gadgets, but there were not enough outlets. We took care of the cameras and the rest of the electronic devices remained uncharged.

## Apprendre le français de façon ludique...

Quoi de plus ennuyeux que l'apprentissage d'une langue étrangère sur les bancs de l'école? Combien de fois les étudiants ont-ils essayé de faire passer ce message sans se faire entendre....Il est donc peut-être temps de réagir et de proposer à nos jeunes apprentis des activités qui leur permettront d'aborder le français à travers une nouvelle approche liant création, saveurs d'ailleurs, découverte de la littérature française classique sous un nouvel angle et pratique de la langue française.

Alors ceux qui veulent changer d'air sans pour autant laisser de côté leur volonté d'apprendre le français sont

invités à se joindre aux ateliers de cuisine et de chant qui seront conduits au cours du mois de juin par une francophone avide de transmettre son savoir à nos jeunes étudiants....

Un séminaire ouvert aussi bien aux étudiants qu'aux professeurs de français sera également conduit le 9 juin au Centre Culturel Bactria.

### Ateliers de cuisine française

Mardi 3 juin - 14h00 – 16h00

Mercredi 11 juin - 14h00 – 15h30

### Ateliers de chants – contines françaises

Mercredi 4 juin – 14h00 -15h30

Lundi 9 juin – 14h00 -15h30

Mardi 10 juin – 14h00 – 15h30

Mardi 10 juin – 14h00 – 18h00

Séminaire – 'Comment susciter, éveiller l'envie et le désir de connaître quelques-uns de nos grands écrivains à travers quelques textes choisis pour leur actualité. Regard porté sur la société en général. Analyse et étude des comportements humains à travers l'humour et l'ironie.'

Invitée – Pierrette Villard - francophone agrégée de Lettres

Pour toutes les personnes intéressées, veuillez contacter Yulduz pour vous inscrire-227 02 57 [bactria.education@acted.org](mailto:bactria.education@acted.org)

## Return to Eden (cont.)

Therefore Surayo Tuichieva and her helpers sent mountain text messages to each other by creating two-meter tall smiley faces and punctuation marks, which they painted white, on the side of some hills. Such difficult, labor-intensive work behind a light idea is an anti-pragmatic manifestation and expression of the difficulties of communication efforts. And while it is indeed a Sisyphus-work, it has long-lasting results. The mountainsides of Central Asia are often decorated by such messages, mostly advertisements, but not always. Once I saw a sign "SOS" at Lake Issyk-Kul in Kyrgyzstan.

The highest place of the botanical garden where I climbed was the environs of the toilet. It towered over the small hostel with a set of stairs leading to it – from it great views opened to the village lying below. Toilets and the meaning of survival that connected to them became an important theme of the artistic process. Artists were thrown into nature to live in Spartan conditions, which more or less seemed ecologically clean.

Bahrom Ismatov (Dushanbe) made the most intelligible project about the theme of ecologically clean existence – On his photo series "Molds", literary, the print of some of the artists' faces in cow dung can be traced. Artists were boldly experiencing life with their own skin, entering in it without a gasmask, veil, or mosquito net – a gesture that would have been highly valued by many bright teachers. The participants' faces were gleaming, as in antique Greek times, when warriors pressed their faces against the mother-earth to receive positive energy. Their faces met the face of nature.

Arthur Boljurov (Bishkek) hung an MTV logo, replacing the sign M (for men), on the wooden toilet door and took photos of it. The logo looked surprisingly natural looking on its place as if it always hung there and they took it exactly from here to the TV. Well, television is also like a wooden box containing nothing important.

Jamshed Kholikov, prepared elegant roses out of toilet paper made in Dushanbe, called "Bouquet", and planted them in one of the flower beds in the botanical garden. Toilet paper is a significant cultural product, with not less significant meaning. It is white and fuzzy, but no one looks to it for its whiteness, but for its predetermined future – it is as fatal as life itself.

Arthur Boljurov received permission for his other project from the administration of the botanical garden. He climbed up high on a tree and saw off the branch he was sitting on – a distinct trademark of his performance. "And what if he lands on the saw?" – came the alarming question. But Arthur fell lightly, even virtuously and walked out of the camera, dragging the sawed off branch behind. Jamshed recommended implementing a practical joke by carrying Arthur to the camp in our hands, asking to call a doctor from the town and film the reactions of the uninitiated. The plan however failed, because Sarvinos, a participating journalist, arrived to the camp earlier and told the others about the successful results of Arthur's performance.

All in all, communication between nature and culture took place. Artists temporarily ascended to the garden, there they carried out their right to

make mistakes, then left cigarette butts behind them and took discs with the results of the interactions to Dushanbe.

Nature remained shining in its own rightness.

When we were leaving water was gushing from the tap (actually we could not turn it off at all) and electricity was on everywhere. It looked like a farewell.

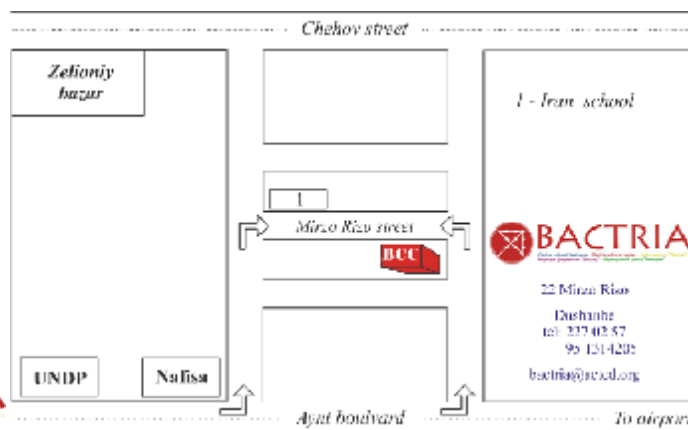
As it is said in the Old Testament – "let there be light..."

Oksana Shatalova (Kazakhstan)  
Journalist, artist



## WHERE CREATIVITY MEETS PEOPLE

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