



WHERE
CREATIVITY
MEETS PEOPLE

HIGHLIGHTS:

6-7 DECEMBER
HANDICRAFTS
FAIR

11 AM- 4PM

19 DECEMBER

BACTRIA-
7YEARS
"OPEN DOORS"
11 AM-4 PM

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Interview with Marielle Dupont

G. It has been more the one year that we have been working together on the management of Bactria Cultural Centre. When I joined, you interviewed me for the BCC Newsletter and now, when you are leaving the country I want to interview you.

My first question will be - what was the most unexpected cultural experience for you while living and working in Tajikistan?

M. I would name two. First, NaturArt exhibition, as it was the first collective work exhibited in BACTRIA. I was pleasantly surprised by the high standard of this exhibition organized by Restorers Without Borders and by the relaxed atmosphere among the crowd including all participating artists, organizers, local and expatriate audience...Also it was the first time that I had a chance to discover the music of MIZROB. The second one was the rock concert we recently organized in collaboration with Oriono Youth Cultural Centre. It was an unexpected experience because it was very spontaneous. Bactria Music project Coordinator; Adrienn, just before leaving for vacation told us: 'we have this band coming from Afghanistan, organize a jam session at Gurminj Museum and depending on how it goes organize a concert if you think it's worth doing so'. The jam session went well, and however we were overloaded with work at this time but we took the challenge to organize a concert in one week and music proved again to be the best common language between artists from different horizons.

G. What was your favorite project and why?

M. No doubt, it was 2007 Music Festival. It was the first time I was organizing an event in an open air venue outside of BACTRIA and above all it was my first working experience with the people who would become few months later the heart of new Bactria team...Faruh, Anton, Sergey and you, and I got a first taste of what it feels like working with people who really love their job....and what results can be achieved when each person invests so much of its energy;

Davlat Nazri's performance at the end of the day was just a perfect gift.

G. Have you encountered anything in Tajikistan which made you change your opinion about your own country and your culture?

M. Over these past 2 years, I have not really changed my opinion about my country but rather found similarities between Tajikistan and France in the cultural sphere. The main one is the struggle artists have to go through to find their path in life, no matter where they were born. But if we talk about differences, one thing which stroked me from the very first days I spent in Tajikistan is the significant of music. The precise social meanings associated to each type of traditional Tajik music give it all its power. This is something I do not see at all anymore in France.

G. Did you have any professional ambitions when you arrived? Have you achieved them?

M. My current professional ambitions are very far from the ones I had when I came to work here. I had chosen to study Humanitarian Action and was very much looking forward to my first working experience in this field. Somehow I had this illusion that joining BACTRIA would be a way to conciliate my general interest in culture and my wish to implement projects which would benefit a large part of a population suffering from difficult economic conditions. I've become frustrated as I got to understand that the impact of educational and cultural projects can have greater effect by changing the general perception of the audience rather than increasing the number of people they reach. Over the past year, I had no choice but to admit that the most interesting projects were the ones which focused on small target groups which

were eager to spend time and energy to work with us on new initiatives trying to fulfil existing gaps in the Tajik cultural scene.

G. And my last question – What are your plans after returning to Europe and what will you wish to BACTRIA and its team?

M. I have no clear plan after returning to Europe, but I am trying to gain more experience in the field of culture. BACTRIA was very special because of the freedom we are given for new initiatives and of course because of the team. I wish I could find such a place again but I am afraid it is going to be hard so I may give myself one year to study Arts Management and understand what are the existing alternatives....my wishes to Bactria? To attract more and more passionate people who will make this place each time more special and attracting to those we are trying to attract. And of course I hope my successor will enjoy working with our charismatic Georgy...I definitely did.

conducted by G.Mamedov



Daler Nazarov: "We create our program spontaneously, right before the concert"

Bacrtia_Artistry

What image do Tajik musicians and music portray? What is the role of a contemporary musician? We looked to the interview below with Daler Nazarov to find out what his opinion on these issues are and where he places himself in the world of music.

Daler Nazarov, Tajik musician and composer, who does not like to be referred as "cult-like," but prefers to be called a "seeker," is performing in Moscow for the first time. However behind his back they all still call him "cult-like" and "legendary". Daler Nazarov is known by everyone in Tajikistan, by many in Asia, and in Europe they know him as the author of the hit "Turki Shirozi" (Shiraz Turkish Girl), the author of soundtracks to films like "Luna Papa", "Chic", "Sex and Philosophy" and others. His last film "Opium War" by Afghan director Siddiq Barmak received the "Golden



Marc Aurelius", the award of film critics for best film at the film festival in Rome. The music of Daler Nazarov deserves not only to be listened to but also to be discussed. The day before the concert "Ferghana.ru" correspondent met with Daler Nazarov.

FR: On the internet it has been written that you have not given a concert for long time, rather you have been writing music for films. For how long have you not been performing?

DN: In general we are not the concert type of band, rather we write music for films. For example in Moscow we have never performed. In Tajikistan we have shows, but true, not very often. However we did not have big pauses between concerts, otherwise we would have already broken up.

FR: Have any disks been released?

DN: Yes, two albums. "I am on the

road again" and "Air breathers"; they will be played at the concert.

FR: I would like to ask about "Air breathers" It is a wonderful idea, that all people in the world are unified and connected, just because they breathe the same air of this planet. – have you had this idea for awhile now?

DN: When ideas like this appear, you understand that you have always lived and breathed with them. But it became a conscious thought, when friends have appeared in many parts of the world. They all love each other and have an irresistible desire to live together. We breathe the same air which means we are all nearby. And thanks to music, there are ever more and more friends, and their interests are becoming mutual – and it is all because we breathe the same air.

FR: When did this idea form?

DN: Last year.

FR: Did this change your music? Often, when your worldview changes, so does the creative process.

DN: Yes, of course. But for me it did not change; it is enriched, acquiring great meaning; our goals became broader, and the music is more open, accessible by everyone. Our music was always directed to people and to their hearts, but now music gives us more opportunities to understand and feel what we all feel, while at the same time standing close to each other.

FR: You wrote about your music that "it was written through thousands of encounters, which took place and hopefully will take place in the future. Each of them left their history and breath on it, erasing borders between singers and listeners." Are these simply nice words or there is a real possibility for your friends to feel this in your music?

DN: Not only for my friends, but for everyone listening to our music, because when hearing music, it is unavoidable not to be a part of it. To me music is only alive when performers and the audience are present; then an exchange of depth takes place.... I always understood that I cannot live without an audience and people also wanted me. In this mutual attraction lies the real creativity. One can compose a lot while alone, but even more when in interaction with someone. In three words I wanted to say, that we are on the road of life, meeting various people, who might think that they remain unnoticeable to us from the stage. We don't only see a large

crowd, which simply listens and applauds, but every listener lives in our soul and our heart. We have a dialogue with each and every one of them separately, not with the crowd. And if we have the pleasure to get to know someone better, to look into their eyes and see some history in them, our next step will be filled with this meeting.

FR: If the public and the energy of public is so important, how come you spent so much time working for films. It is a completely different interaction with the audience.

DN: No, it is very much the same. Only that in films the reaction to my music is a bit delayed. In concerts you exist as an individual while in films you must open your personality. These are two possible ways on the same road. In films there is image, which metaphorically transfers the message of your music, while in concerts there is an opportunity to have direct and quick contact with the audience.

FR: In the program you will perform, you have new and old compositions?

DN: Basically we go to the concert with all the songs we have. Then in the hall, simply spontaneously put our program together, depending on the feeling that arises in us. It happens differently each time; we perform old songs as well as those that were composed not long ago. We are in Moscow for the first time; we need to see the place where we are going to play and listen to what the ground tells us. It is important for us that the place accepts us and gives its blessing to us. To arrive with a prepared program....we are not robots.

FR: How long have you been in Moscow?

FR: Do you already have feelings about what compositions are the best to perform in the Moscow venue?

N: A week and a half.

DN: There are general human values... I would not like to sing songs that are especially characteristic of Tajikistan or of Asia in general. We have songs that were composed after the realization that we are the children of a contemporary world; we are all Russian speakers, brought up in the same traditions and probably it will be interesting to feel this amalgam, this wonderful synthesis, rather than being fixated with typical ethnic ideas.

FR: It seems to me somehow that the public expects something ethnic from you. Am I mistaken?

Continuation on page 3.

4 December 5p.m
"Night on Earth"

Director: Jim Jarmusch
(USA)
Language: English with
Russian subtitles
Running time: 2:02

11 December 5 p.m
"Don't Grieve"

Director: Georgi Daneliy
(USSR)
Language: Russian
Running time: 1:29

18 December 5p.m
"Strawberries in the
Supermarket"

Director: Emir Kusturica
(Yugoslavia)
Language: Russian
Running time: 1:23

25 December 5p.m
"City Lights"

Director: Charles
Chaplin (USA)
Language: Mute
Running time: 1:27

DN: If they had expected us to be ethnic, we would have advertised that we play ethnic. We are not ethnic, we are seekers. I think that there are ethnic musicians coming to Moscow that can be a hundred times better than us. We are the children of Europe and Asia, and there is now a demand for Asian in Europe and European in Asia. We, from the bottom of our heart, and thankful for our lives, try to combine this in our music. I think this is more important, than simply going to the concert as some ethnic interest and feeling how much the performer is distanced from its audience.

FR: You feel that Europe needs Asia and in Asia Europe? It seems to me that the further we live from each other, the more we don't need each other. No?

DN: If you based this on the opinion of one or two people, then it might seem so. But if you meet seekers from the West, - for example India is a very good neutral territory – then you will see that they absorb with pleasure what we from the Central Asia radiate. And we take from them what they have. Western people teach us how to be more efficient and goal oriented, while we teach them the opposite, how to be open.

FR: Do you think there are many

people who share the idea of "Air breathers"?

DN: I hope the whole world. Love is a feeling which you cannot avoid, and everyone desires and we give love to everyone. We take everyone as our brothers, sisters and friends. Our tutors, teachers and relatives.

FR: For which film are you writing music now?

DN: Recently we finished the film "Opium War" by Afghan director Siddiq Barmak, which at the festival in Rome received the award for best film. It is a pleasure to me, because the music of this film was composed in the wave of such a state, in which we have been living for quite awhile. It was written through all the friends and all the encounters and now, you will also be with us.

FR: Thanks for your trust. Once in an interview you explained that you cannot tell a director immediately, whether or not you can write music for a film. You need to first see the film. And it happens that if the director wants to work with you, he constantly has to trust you, wait and not rush...

DN: To me the personality of the director and the actors who play in the film are very important. I must feel that I want to "jump into" the film, that there is a sincere interest in this work. That fact that I have

written music to some films does not mean that it will always turn out that way. There were incidents when I could not write music, therefore now I am very cautious. At the beginning I get close to the people who offer me work, because it is important for me to understand what their aspirations are. If they have human values I go with them. If they only follow personal profits, then it won't happen for us; I am not inspired. The director must trust me. If he invites me to work with him, he must trust me; and everything I give him, because it is from the bottom of my heart. And those directors never say to me that here needs to be redone or there it does not work....Because "redo" and "doesn't work" is not for me. The music was born. And if I can do something different, something better – it means that I was greedy first? That it just happened so?

Source: <http://www.ferghana.ru/article.php?id=5947>

Translation: Adrienn Hruska

Date with European Post-Modernism

Bactria_Bookshelf

Bactria Cultural Centre strives to familiarize its friends with various phenomena in culture. On the 28th of November, within the framework of European Week in Mayakovski Theatre, under the initiative of BACTRIA and the Delegation of European Commission to Tajikistan, a meeting with professor Spector, leading specialist in the field of European literature in the Slavonic University, took place. The theme of this meeting was "The birth of post-modernism in European literature and problems in its development." The meeting took place in the space of a contemporary exhibition, which added a special flavor to professor Spector's speech and created a unique atmosphere. The participants of the lecture and talk afterwards were Dushanbe intellectuals. Spector's lecture was, as always, extraordinarily informative, emotional and perfectly structured.

The main idea of the lecture was postmodernism – one of the phases in arts characterizing the contemporary worldviews of Western artists and thinkers – and how the postmodernist idea was characteristic not only of writers from the last third of the 20th century, but to some extent it was existent in the first half of the 20th century, in the 18-19th century and maybe even earlier. According to Spector the main value of post-modernism is that it is extremely democratic, absolutely tolerant to

other trends in literature, and it creatively reworks the achievements of previous generations of writers. One the main goals of post-modernist writers is to entertain the reader, drawing them into the play. Along with these, irony, the phenomena of "de-heroization", the denial of a hierarchy of artistic values, negligence toward moral social problems, and the



rejection of idealization of aesthetic values are all inherent to post-modernism. In her lecture she urged not to focus attention on the manifestations and theory of post-modernism, but rather to concentrate on its talented representatives, like Umberto Eco, Vladimir Nabokov, Hesse and others. It is the talent of the artist that makes them significant and not their affiliation to post-modernism, modernism or to any

other trends.

Professor Spector's answers to the participants' questions were interesting. She has stated that teaching post-modernism in universities and schools is entirely appropriate. To the question about the impossibility of combining the values of Tajikistan's traditional society with the content of modern and post-modern literature, professor Spector noted that in Tajikistan there has not been traditional society for a long time. She then followed this assertion with an interesting substantiation of her statement.

Some of professor Spector's claims are debatable. And it creates a wide field for discussion. The post-modernist atmosphere of the exhibition, the predominance of youth in the audience and the original view of the literature specialist turned this event into a post-modern phenomenon; an interesting fact in the cultural life of Dushanbe. Bactria Cultural Center is looking forward to future fruitful collaborations with professor Spector.

Dmitry Egarmin manager Resource Centre

Translation: Adrienn Hruska

Examens de DELF dans la région de Khatlon' Perspectives 2009

Bactria_Lingvo

Le Centre Culturel Bactria a été agréé comme centre de passation pour les examens de DELF (Diplôme d'Etude de Langue Française) en 2006. Pour la première fois en 2008, une session d'examens a eu lieu en dehors de la capitale tadjike avec 44 écoliers apprenant le français dans quatre écoles secondaires de la région de Khatlon. Ce projet a pris fin en novembre avec l'organisation de cérémonies de remise de diplôme dans chaque école.

Au-delà du renforcement de l'enseignement de la langue française dans les écoles secondaires du pays, ce projet s'inscrit dans une démarche globale de développement du réseau des professeurs de français du Tadjikistan avec le lancement d'une

nouvelle dynamique permettant un réel échange entre les professeurs de français des universités et des écoles secondaires du pays. Les professeurs de français des écoles secondaires de Khatlon, au même titre que les professeurs de Douchanbé, participeront désormais de façon régulière aux séminaires de formation organisés chaque année à BACTRIA dans le cadre de la Semaine de la Francophonie. De plus, ce projet ouvre de nouvelles perspectives pour les écoliers de Khatlon ayant réussi leurs examens de DELF, puisqu'en 2009 ils seront associés aux événements de la Semaine de la

Francophonie et passeront le niveau supérieur des examens de DELF à Douchanbé avec les autres élèves de français du Centre Culturel Bactria. Il est également important de souligner que lors des remises de diplôme, l'équipe pédagogique du Centre Culturel Bactria était accompagnée d'un professeur de français

de l'Université Pédagogique de Douchanbé, facilitant ainsi le contact entre ce dernier et les professeurs et parents des élèves désirant dans le futur poursuivre leurs études de français au niveau universitaire.

Dans le contexte difficile dans lequel se trouvent actuellement ces écoles (conditions de travail, niveau des salaires, perte de la maîtrise de la langue russe, manque de méthodes d'enseignement, déscolarisation des filles...), il est essentiel pour les directeurs des écoles, les

professeurs et les écoliers de sortir d'un certain isolement en développant des liens avec les établissements d'enseignement supérieur de Douchanbé.

L'éducation de la nouvelle génération vivant en dehors de la capitale du Tadjikistan est une étape indispensable au développement du pays et c'est dans cette logique que le Centre Culturel Bactria tente de décentraliser certaines de ses initiatives.

Marielle Dupont directrice BCC



Programme commun de bourse d'étude et de recherche pour la France

Bactria_Education

La fondation « Institut pour une société ouverte », l'Ambassade de France au Tadjikistan, le Centre Culturel Bactria, et le CNOUS (Centre National des Oeuvres Universitaires et Scolaires) collaborent ensemble depuis plusieurs années sur un programme de Bourse pour le Kazakhstan, le Kirghizstan, le Tadjikistan, et l'Ouzbékistan. En 2009, 15 étudiants d'Asie Centrale pourront obtenir une bourse afin de poursuivre une année d'études dans une Université Française.

Filières d'études proposées : Administration Publique, Ethnologie, Histoire, Philosophie, Sciences Politiques, Sociologie, Théorie du Droit, et Théorie Economique.

Admissibilité: Ce programme est ouvert aux étudiants répondant aux critères de sélection suivants:

- Etre titulaire d'un diplôme sanctionnant au moins quatre années d'études supérieures (ou être étudiant en dernière année avant l'obtention de ce diplôme);
- Postuler pour un Master (I ou II) dans une des filières mentionnées ci-dessus UNIQUEMENT;
- Justifier de très bons résultats universitaires;
- Posséder un niveau de français approprié

Financement: Les frais de scolarités et de logement, un billet d'avion aller-retour entre la France et le pays d'origine ainsi que, si nécessaire, des cours de langue, seront entièrement assurés par ce programme.

Pour plus d'information et pour retirer un dossier de candidature, contactez BACTRIA

Tel: (992 372) 218134; 270369, bactria.education@acted.org

Réunion d'information à BACTRIA : jeudi 11 décembre à 16h00

Consultations individuelles à BACTRIA : vendredi 12 décembre de 14h00 à 17h00

Contact : marielle.dupont@acted.org

Les dossiers de candidature dûment remplis devront être déposés ou envoyés avant le 15 janvier 2009 inclus au Centre d'Information sur l'Education OSI AF-Tadjikistan

734002, Dushanbe, Tadjikistan

Trade and Business Center "VEFA" 6 37/1 Bokhtar street, 4th floor, room №404

gulnora@osi.tajik.net

Pro Helvetia enables professional artists to spend residencies in Switzerland. Artist-in-residence stays can be organised for periods of between three weeks and six months. With this artist-in-residency programme, the liaison offices of Pro Helvetia are encouraging intercultural exchange in the fields of **visual arts, music, literature and dance**.

Cultural practitioners from countries and regions in which Pro Helvetia maintains a liaison office can apply for a stay in Switzerland. Applications are handled at the liaison office responsible (Warsaw, Cairo, Cape Town or New Delhi). Two to four residencies are granted from each of these four regions a year.

Conditions

Artists applying for a residency must have a convincing track record in the arts, be willing to engage with the culture of the host country and have the requisite language skills. Pro Helvetia gives preference to long-term projects that have a sustainable impact and international resonance.

Funding is available for:

- Travel expenses
 - Insurance
 - Costs of board and accommodation
- Enclosures (required)

Filled-in form

Curriculum Vitae

Relevant documentation of previous works and projects

Further material (CD-ROMs, videos, publications, etc.)

Motivation letter (why you want to go to Switzerland)

Deadline:

Applications must arrive at the Pro Helvetia office by December 31 each year.

Pro Helvetia Warsaw

Swiss Arts Council

ul. Chocimska 3/1

PL-00-791 Warsaw

Poland

Information: <http://www.prohelvetia.pl/index.php?id=36&L=2&tipUrl>

or getting in touch with the organizers

mwojciicka@prohelvetia.pl; tel. +48 22 881 06 88

If you need any help in filling documents you can contact : 918667562

Coffee Hours

Bactria_Lingvo

Deutsch Klub

am Dienstag, den 2. Dezember 2008, um 16.00 Uhr

Im Dezember-Deutschklub wird es um die richtige Erstellung von Bewerbungen und Lebensläufen gehen. Hierbei werden wir insbesondere auf die inhaltlichen und formalen Anforderungen des Lebenslaufes nach Europass eingehen und die Spezifika eines erfolgreichen Motivationsschreibens besprechen.

English Coffee Hour

December 3rd – 4 p.m.

'Summer Work and Travel USA 2009'

Davlatova Zebo – Coordinator Program for LLC Tomson (www.tomson.tj)

December 10th - 4 p.m.

'Introduction to CV and cover letter writing in English'

Curran Hughes
Resident Director of Language Programs at American Councils

December 17th - 4 p.m.

'Introduction to IREX exchange programs'

IREX Representative and IREX program Alumni

December 24th - 4 p.m.

'How to write a project proposal'

Faruh Khuziev
Bactria Project Assistant

Club Voltaire

le 4 décembre à 16h00

'Comment réussir un entretien d'emploi ?'

Commandant Eric Pasquier – Maître d'oeuvre, aéroport de Douchanbé

le 11 décembre à 16h00

'Introduction aux programmes de bourse SOROS pour la France'

Marielle Dupont – Directrice du Centre Culturel Bactria

le 18 décembre à 16h00

'Comment rédiger un CV et une lettre de motivation en français'

Philippe Garossi – Conseiller CIMIC auprès du DETAIR

le 25 décembre à 16h00

Fêtes de Noël ! Pas de Club Voltaire !

'Capacity building for students – entering the contemporary labor market in a professional way?'

Entering the contemporary labor market is not an easy step for contemporary young generations and job-hunt is one of the most studied phenomena of our time. BACTRIA's December Coffee Hours will introduce participants different tools for entering the labor market in a professional way.



Murgab: Travel Notes

In August 2008 some of BACTRIA's team members and Dinara Chochunbaeva took a trip to Murgab to meet local handicraftsmen and to discuss possible cooperations and future projects. One of BACTRIA's aims in terms of cultural development is the revitalization and support of Tajik handicrafts industry.

Every time someone is sent on a trip to the Pamirs, they must be prepared for an incredible adventure, for encounters with unusual people. In general, a business trip to the Pamirs can be compared with an unforgettable trip to the center of the Earth. We were moving along as always, with great delay, our UAZ was speeding by fields, vineyards, gardens freeing themselves from the burden of abundant crops, and by landscape that was gradually turning mountainous. In the thick mud hills more and more often mixed with rocks, which after a couple of hours grew to be great hulking mountains.

At the end of the day, we reached Tavildara, where lost, or rather hidden, among rocky mountains is a small lake, whose transparent water revealed its bottom, even at its deepest point. Here we freshened up, swam in this heavenly lake and soon were on the road again. On the left and right stood massive walls, the crimson rays of setting sun were bidding farewell by striking the mountain peaks. And there in the dark we were racing in the style of an "American roller coaster", soaring vertical upwards and falling also vertically down. Dinara, longing for a hot shower and

Khorog, which spreads out its narrow streets along the rocky side of the surrounding mountains. There we decide to celebrate and have breakfast in a restaurant. Nemadjon recommended the biggest restaurant, where we met a whole delegation of waiters. From them, the most representative came to us, a tall and graceful woman who, to Georgy's question of "What do you have for breakfast?" answered, "Plof, shurbo, gulash, beefsteak..."

In the shop De Pamiri, we were shown beautiful Pamiri handicrafts – knitted hats, woolen scull caps, hand-made cloth carpets and shirdaks with spectacular designs and ornaments. Most of these goods were made in Murgab and we were impatiently looking forward to meeting this amazing area. We were moving forward. We drove through the relatively prosperous Shugnan region, where we observed children trudging along the road to their mysterious school and again we were taken by the aspirations of these folk to knowledge.

Late evening, after driving through the 4100 meter high pass, we finally arrived in Murgab, the border of which is guarded by the silhouette of a mountain goat. There on the road we saw a large Chinese truck that had driven off the road, surrounded by a whole council of Chinese drivers. We tried to make a detour around it and got trapped by a pit as well but were lucky to have been rescued by our driver's friend.

Driving by a blue lake we were prompted to have dinner in a Kyrgyz yurt - where we were met by an unwelcoming Chinese sign, containing two hieroglyph - and definitely try fish Kyrgyz style. In the middle of the yurt stood a stove riveting us to its warm body. Jama photographed everything around; in this small yurt with a diameter of no more than 10 meters he managed to take about a hundred shots, probably intending to capture every square centimeter. The fish was amazingly tasty and Georgy was smiling satisfied – the first time in two days that he had a hearty meal. By the taste of the fish it was understood that all of its life it had lived in crystal clear water. Sitting on the kurpatcha in the dim yurt lit only by a kerosene lamp Dinara sighed and stated:

"This is how people used to live..."

"And the funniest thing is, that even now, it is how they live...- added Georgy.

In the city we felt like we were on a different planet, with negligible gravitation, from which everything moves slowly; to hurry in this region is rare. The roofs of the tiny, two-room huts are decorated by satellite antennas and solar batteries. Every now and then on the only street,

there is a cavalry of motorcyclists in varied colored overalls speaking in Italian, Dutch and some other, difficult - to-determine languages.

This is where our research of local handicrafts has started. The handicrafts association "Yak House" proudly presented us the achievements of their creativity; cloth carpets with dominating red and grey colors, orange and dark grey shirdaks, such beautiful that it was hard to imagine walking in them in shoes, bags, purses, felt toys personifying the main characters of Murgab – mountain goats and yaks and even cases for mobile phones. One immediately wanted to buy something and take it home; all of these handicrafts were irresistibly attractive and in them one can sense century-long traditions and laborious hand work. The women invited us for dinner, we agreed and after another hard walk, the whole crowd was sitting around a modest, simple table. Modest glances of some pretty girls; they started bringing various, previously unknown to us dishes; my attention was attracted by some appetizing looking balls, which had the color of rich pastry, reminding me of the color and smell of halva. I broke a piece off, put in my mouth and I realized that it is butter from yak milk. The girls could hardly hold their laughs.

It is necessary to mention that regardless of their dignity and wonderfulness, Pamiris and Pamiri Kyrgyz people have one serious flaw and it is the lack of their cuisine, which made me turn to be a cook in our hostel, and prepare food not only for our team but also for two foreign interns and a Swiss couple, who had been bicycling around the world for 14 months starting from Zurich. For the owners of the hotel, my ability to prepare puree was probably comparable to a David Copperfield magic show.

However all travels come to an end once, and here leaving the mysterious, secretive and incomprehensible to the plainsman's mind area of Murgab we passed by the same Chinese truck, which fell into misfortune and which, after three days, still had not been rescued. At that moment I realized that we might bear a company to it if not saved by our driver's friend.

We said good-bye to this severe region and on this freezing morning, which was covering the fields with a thin layer of snow and freezing puddles and reservoirs with thin crust of ice, our souls were already warmed by plans and interesting future projects.

Faruh Kuziev Program Assistant



a soft horizontal bed, was watching through the window, the wide-open chasm of the bottomless pit extended on our right side, threatening to swallow us along with our UAZ.

In the morning we rolled into

