ARTISTS

George Donadze, artistic director
Zurab Tsiskialashvili, director
Irakli Tkvatsiria
Tornike Merabishvili
George Gabunia
Elizbar Khachidze
Serge Orushadze
Giorgi Khunashvili
Zviad Michilashvili
Lasha Metreveli
Batu Lominadze
Zaza Zuriashvili

PROGRAM

Mravalzhamier (Long Life)
Onia
Tu ase turpa ikavi

Circle Dance
Shavi shashvi
Tsmidao gmerto (O, Holy God)
Saidumlo utskho da didebuli (A Mystery, Strange and Most Glorious)
Tkveta ganmatavisulfebelo (As the Deliverer of the Captives)
Motiskuli krestesagan gamorcheuli (Apostol Distinguished by Christ)
Akebdit sakheisa upilsasa (Praise Ye the Name of God)
Sashot mtiebisa (Out of the Womb)
Imeruli naduri

Tsintskaro
Gandagan

Khasanbegura
Veengara
Chakrulo

Chochkhatura

Kakhetian table song
Traveling song, Guria region (yodeling)
Lyric-love song, accompanied by traditional string instrument (panduri)
Svaneti region
Hunters’ song, Guria region
Religious hymn
Religious hymn
Religious hymn
Religious hymn
Religious hymn
Work song, Imereti region (Western Georgia)
Lyric-love song, Kakheti region
Dancing song, Aadjara region, accompanied by traditional instruments (chiboni and chonguri)
Historical ballad, Guria region (Western Georgia)
Lullaby, Samegrelo (Western Georgia)
The crown of Georgian folk songs. It belongs to the family of long Kakhetian table songs.
Gurian work song

PROGRAM SUBJECT TO CHANGE. Please be considerate of others and turn off all phones, pagers, and watch alarms, and unwrap all lozenges prior to the performance. Photography and recording of any kind are not permitted. Thank you.

36 STANFORD LIVE MAGAZINE SEPT/OCT 2016
BASIANI: THE STATE ENSEMBLE OF GEORGIAN FOLK SINGING

ABOUT THE ENSEMBLE
Ensemble Basiani was created in 2000 under the blessing of his Holiness and Beatitude Ilia II, Catholicos-Patriarch of all Georgia, to perform and promote Georgian traditional polyphony at home and abroad. It became the Folk Ensemble of the Georgian Patriarchate. The ensemble is part of the Patriarchate Choir of Tbilisi Holy Trinity (Sameba) Cathedral, which participates in services conducted by the Patriarch. Ensemble Basiani is composed of singers from different parts of Georgia. Most members come from families that perform traditional singing, and many members have sung folk songs in different ensembles since childhood.

In 2013, after 13 years of working hard and performing Georgian folk music all around the world, Basiani was given the title of State Ensemble of Georgian Folk Singing by the government of Georgia!

The ensemble’s repertoire consists of the oldest folk songs and traditional religious hymns from all parts of Georgia and diverse monastery chanting schools. It completes the program by researching and reviving songs from ancient archived phonological and notated recordings or studying songs directly from famous singers and conductors of older generations active in different regions of Georgia.

Basiani has recorded and released nine different albums, one of which was exclusively released by Ocora Radio France in 2012, spreading Georgian polyphony all around the world. The ensemble’s latest recording—a four-CD album called 102 Georgian Folk Songs and Traditional Hymns—was released in 2013, as the landmark work of Basiani.

Ensemble Basiani has performed at numerous international festivals and visited some 20 countries. But in recent years, it has received special international acclaim and recognition, giving performances in some of the world’s most well-known concert halls and international festivals, including the Auditorio Nacional de Música (Madrid), the Gulbenkian Great Hall (Lisbon), the Concertgebouw (Amsterdam), the Aldeburgh Music Festival (Aldeburgh, England), the Church of St. Mary the Virgin, Lincoln Center’s White Light Festival (at the conclusion of the 2012 American tour), the Grand Hall of D. Shostakovich St. Petersburg Academic Philharmonia, the Kilkenny Arts Festival (Ireland), Alice Tully Hall, and Lincoln Center’s Mostly Mozart Festival (New York, 2010), where Basiani performed Georgian traditional polyphony at a concert titled Bach and Polyphonies. The event was widely lauded by the American press, including the New York Times and the Wall Street Journal.

“Basiani” is the name of one of the regions in Southwest Georgia (in what is modern-day Turkey, northwest of the town of Erzurum). In 1203, Georgian royal troops defeated the conqueror there with the victory consolidating Georgia’s position in Asia Minor.

Ensemble Basiani is presented on tour in the United States by David Eden Productions and Pemberley Productions.

ZURAB TSKRIALASHVILI
Born in 1980, Zurab Tskrialashvili was part of Martve, the children’s folk choir, from age 9 to 16. He attended music school and college in Tbilisi before studying at the Sarajishvili Tbilisi State Conservatoire for a master’s in choral conducting. Tskrialashvili has been part of the Tbilisi Holy Trinity Cathedral Patriarchate Choir since 2000, first as a singer and, since 2013, as the director. In 2002 he was the conductor of the Folk Ensemble Kolkheti. In 2007 he also became an assistant professor at the Giorgi Mtatsmindeli Church Chants Institution of Higher Education, and from 2011 until last year he was a choir teacher at the Kiketi I. Gogebashvili School. He is currently the Children’s Folk Choir Conductor at the Folklore National Palace.

GEORGE DONADZE
Born in 1979, George Donadze was a member of Bichebi children’s folk choir and studied at Tbilisi Music College between 1995 and 1999. Donadze was the Children’s Choir Conductor at Tbilisi Music School between 1997 and 2000, prior to becoming both the conductor of the Tbilisi Holy Trinity Cathedral Patriarchate Choir and founder and conductor of Ensemble Basiani. He earned a bachelor’s and master’s in choral conducting at the Sarajishvili Tbilisi State Conservatoire and in 2006 became the choir conductor of the Giorgi Mtatsmindeli Church Chants Institution of Higher Education. He became the Georgian Chanting Foundation’s projects chief in 2012 and the Folklore State Center of Georgia’s director in 2014. In 2013 Donadze became the artistic director of Ensemble Basiani.