



**Vodafone
Albania
Foundation**

Moj Gjirokastra me Vulë (My Gjirokastra of Values)

Reconnecting Youth with Heritage through Iso-polyphonic Singing

The ancient tradition of iso-polyphonic singing is deeply intertwined with Albanian national identity, particularly in Southern Albania, and is still performed at significant social and community occasions. Iso-polyphonic Singing has been recognized as an Intangible World Heritage by UNESCO. Therefore, Albania has an obligation towards the world community to safeguard this tradition.

Due to the rapid changes in society, iso-polyphonic singing is practiced today only by very few, mostly elderly men, and since it is not transmitted to the young generation, the tradition is in acute danger of getting lost.

To help solve this problem, Roland Çenko, a master of iso-polyphony is training 14 pupils of 13-15 years of age selected from general schools. Training sessions will be held over nine months two times a week. This will be a basis for their continuing practice so that they will be able to transmit their skills to the next generation.

They will present their results on a CD recording as well as a public concert at the end of their training. The revenues from the CD will be used to pay the teacher for another year of teaching.

Roland Çenko is a life-long practitioner of iso-polyphony and is considered one of the best traditional masters of this tradition. He is the leader of an iso-polyphonic group called "Argjiro", with whom he has performed in Albania and several European countries.

The project, with a budget of 1,568,000 ALL, is endorsed by the Gjirokastra Conservation and Development Organization (GCDO). Prof. Dr. Vasil M. Tole, the foremost scientific authority in the field, as well as a group of iso-polyphonic singers from Gjirokastra will provide expert support.

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