



NEWS EMBARGOED TILL 5PM, 21 JANUARY 2011, FRIDAY!

**THE MUSICAL ARTS OF THE PAMIRS:
University of Central Asia launches seminal series on
Pamir music and heritage**

Dushanbe, Tajikistan, 21 January 2011 - *The Musical Arts of the Pamirs, Volumes I, II, and III* was launched today at the Ismaili Centre, Dushanbe. Published by the University of Central Asia (UCA), the three-volume set is part of a five-volume series on folk music, oral history, and theatre traditions from the Pamir region of Tajikistan.

Widely viewed as the most comprehensive work on Pamir music and heritage to date, *The Musical Arts of the Pamirs* is the culmination of approximately 40 years of field work by Dr Nizom Nurdjanov, along with his colleagues, Dr Fayzulla Karomatov and Dr Bahriniso Kabilova.

The series features re-publications of the first two volumes of *The Musical Arts of the Pamirs*, first published in 1978 and 1986, respectively. First commissioned in 1959 by the Institute of History, Archaeology and Ethnography of the Academy of Sciences in Tajikistan, this seminal work captures the findings of a nearly 20-year exploration of the Pamir region of Tajikistan. Though widely viewed as a rare collection of primary source materials, the volumes have long since been out of print.

The third volume, *Ritual Music: Wedding, Birth and Funeral*, which focuses on the ritual folk music of holidays and traditional community celebrations, is the newest contribution to the planned five-volume series.

Guided by a mission of preserving cultural heritage as an asset for the future, the University of Central Asia first began working with Dr Nurdjanov's team in January 2009 with the goal of reviving decades of research on the diverse musical traditions of the region. In partnership with UCA and The Christensen Fund (TCF), the series seeks to contribute to the preservation and revitalization of traditional Tajik music.

The series is a testament to the legacy of Dr Nurdjanov's fifty year career at the A. Donish Institute of History, Archaeology and Ethnography within the Academy of Sciences of Tajikistan, where he has served as professor since 1951 and published over 35 monographs and 850 articles on the diverse cultural traditions of Tajikistan.

For Dr Nurdjanov, the publication of the *Musical Arts of the Pamirs* is an especially meaningful achievement in his long and illustrious career. "It has been an honor to work with UCA and to revisit our early years of research from 1959. Reproduction of our first works and developing a third volume has allowed us to modernize our efforts and reach out to the next generation."

UCA is also supporting the production of *Volumes IV and V*, scheduled for completion in 2011. “UCA is proud to be the publisher of this important work,” said UCA Director General Dr Bohdan Krawchenko. “Tajikistan’s uniquely rich cultural heritage needs to be preserved, understood, and shared with new generations, both regionally and internationally. This does not happen by itself; it requires serious scholarly effort. Nurdjanov’s work is a great example of the role that scholarship plays in documenting cultural treasures and informing the future by understanding the past.”

The co-authors of Volume III include Dr Karomatov, Head of the Music Department of the Hamza Hakim-zade Niyazi Institute of Fine Arts in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, and an expert on Uzbek and Tajik music; and Dr Kabilova, a Senior Fellow at the A. Donish Institute of History, Archaeology and Ethnography at the Academy of Sciences in Tajikistan who writes extensively on Tajik folk and modern music.

For further information please contact:

Nisar Keshvani
Communications
University of Central Asia
138 Toktogul Street, 720001 Bishkek
Kyrgyz Republic
Mobile: +996 (0) 770 822 851
Email: nisar.keshvani@ucentralasia.org

Munira Shoinbekova
Communications Officer
Aga Khan Development Network
8-10 Gani Abdullo Street, Dushanbe,
Tajikistan
Mobile: +992 93 500-82-92
E-mail: munira.shoinbekova@akdn.org

Notes:

The University of Central Asia

The University of Central Asia (UCA) was founded in 2000. The Presidents of Tajikistan, the Kyrgyz Republic, and Kazakhstan, and His Highness the Aga Khan signed the International Treaty and Charter establishing this secular and private University; ratified by the respective parliaments, and registered with the United Nations. UCA brings with it the commitment and partnership of the broader Aga Khan Development Network. For more information on UCA, please visit website at www.ucentralasia.org.

The Aga Khan Development Network

The Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN), is a group of development agencies with mandates that include the environment, health, education, architecture, culture, microfinance, rural development, disaster reduction, the promotion of private-sector enterprise and the revitalisation of historic cities. AKDN agencies conduct their programmes without regard to faith, origin or gender. For more information on AKDN, please visit website at www.akdn.org

The Christensen Fund

The Christensen Fund (TCF) believes in the power of biological and cultural diversity to sustain and enrich a world faced with great change and uncertainty. TCF focuses on the “bio-cultural” – the rich but neglected adaptive interweave of people and place, culture and ecology. The Fund’s mission is to buttress the efforts of people and institutions who believe in a biodiverse world infused with artistic expression and work to secure ways of life and landscapes that are beautiful, bountiful and resilient. For more information on TCF, please visit their website at: <http://www.christensenfund.org>