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Uzbekistan's club

MAGAZINE

TOP 20
PROGRESSIVE UZBEKISTANIS

ALISHER SADULLAYEV'S
YOUNG DISCOVERIES

SUBYEKTIV
POTENTIAL BEYOND LABOR MIGRATION



BEHZOD ABDURAIMOV
FROM CHILANZAR TO *CARNEGIE HALL*

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UZBEKISTAN airways

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Uzbekistan's club is an analytical, educational and entertainment magazine intended for all Uzbekistanis around the world. The publication covers pressing and thought-provoking topics for the nation, presents creative illustrations of talented authors. The views expressed in articles are the authors' and may not represent the viewpoint of Uzbekistan's club magazine.
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EDITORIAL

Forgotten feelings: the smell of printing ink, the rustle of pages... How often do we hold books in our hands today? Leafing through magazines? Hardly. The print information seems to be devalued. We flip through news feeds, social network pages, winding through miles of sentences and words. Barely dwelling on them for long.

But there are thoughts and ideas that need the weight they used to wield. Important words in need of the sense of physical touch. Of possession of the text in hands. Of contact.

We no longer carve letters on stone, nor on clay or wood, as our ancestors did. But we have in our hands the most perfect machines that allow us to make a wonderful magazine. Take it in your hands and feel how heavy it is. This is the weight of our words.

Uzbekistan's club is a magazine designed to set trends. A publication set to discover new names. A volume to set the tone for how our nation should look. What we preach is that Uzbekistan is a country of talented, hardworking and intelligent people. We intend to promote these values in this magazine.

Hence, the nation's best authors, progressive leaders, businessmen and women, and creative people are here with us. We hope in earnest that this magazine will not just entertain you, but also make you think. It will make you look at yourself from the side. Get inspired by new ideas. Meet interesting people. Learn original things about our culture and history.

Uzbekistan's club will be published several times a year. In Uzbek, and then in English. We will try to make it to a high artistic and intellectual level, so that you take pride in showing this magazine to your acquaintances, friends, whether in Uzbekistan or abroad, and say with delight, "I am from Uzbekistan!"

Welcome to Uzbekistan's club!
Sincerely,
The Editorial team

A GLOBAL CITIZEN

BEHZOD ABDURAIMOV

Text: Sasha Ivanyujenko

Remember the plot of the American movie *Home Alone*? As a child, Behzod loved that film very much, he used to watch it time and again every New Year. In the second sequence, Kevin meets a hawker in Central Park, who tells the story of his life's journey. Then they would go to the attic of Carnegie Hall and watch a symphony orchestra concert from there. "What a wonderful hall..." exclaimed the juvenile Behzod while watching the motion picture. "I wish to perform on that stage!"

Ten years later, the pianist Behzod Abduraimov gave his first concert at Carnegie Hall, playing the works of Johann Sebastian Bach, Franz Schubert, Ludwig van Beethoven, Sergei Prokofiev... And he earned the applause of the entire world.

Sufism has always had a role to play in Behzod's life. Although he calls night dreams a sign of one's daytime dreams, nevertheless, he has always attended to the feeling that some invisible but very kind divine power guides his life path, and therefore he follows the right path.



When Behzod was six years old, his mother took him to the Uspensky music school in Tashkent, the famous 'Uspenka'. She really wanted her son to be a student of the legendary Tamara Popovich. A warm autumn, a new suit that the mother has gone around for half of the city, a bouquet for the teacher, the handsome Zhukovsky street, the admissions exam...

And she, the celebrated Tamara, orders the little Behzod with a stern and ambiguous look from above, "Come on, do it." Behzod then makes a mistake in the third etude. Tamara Afanasyevna did not accept the bouquet from his mother. She said she needed talented people, not flowers.

Easy to say... But Behzod did it. Not all at once. A year later, he studied under another tutor, when the severe Tamara listened to his performance. We don't know for sure if her heart softened then. There is little doubt, however, that she gave Behzod a solid foundation in music, and the boy's talent flourished on the basis of it.

But he wouldn't want to practice it that much! He would love to be famous, perform and play in concerts! But playing gammas for four, five, six, seven hours in a row was rather thorny. He wanted to run around in the yard with his peers, play football, fly on a squeaky pony, and watch the rays of the sun shimmer in the stream. In addition, Behzod sat next to the piano every morning. The lesson would start at 08:29 and end at 12:19.

From Chilanzar to Uspenka you get by metro, tram, bus and a little walk. After Behzod's father passed away, the family's financial situation worsened. His mother had to raise four children on the salary of a kindergarten music teacher, and now the child started walking to school. All the way half the town, from Chilanzar to Sadik Azimov Street in the heart of the city. Two hours to Uspenka and two hours to go back home.

On Sundays, he would go to Tamara Afanasyevna's house in Uritsky Street, downtown Tashkent, to take extra lessons. Once, Behzod's little finger got damaged. His fingernails darkened and his eyes sparked like lightning. Although the pain was unbearable, he was very happy nonetheless. It seemed to him that he could skip class and at least have one Sunday off. His mother called Tamara Afanasyevna.

"Nothing terrible, let him come", was a dry reply from the teacher. Behzod came to the lesson. Tamara tied his little finger with his ring finger and ordered him to play. Nine fingers were left, which was enough for the professional. During childhood, he did not miss a single lesson with this instructor.

Queen. The founder of the piano school of Uzbekistan. She has coached myriads of gifted musicians. And they have conquered the most celebrated concert halls of the world and continue to do so...

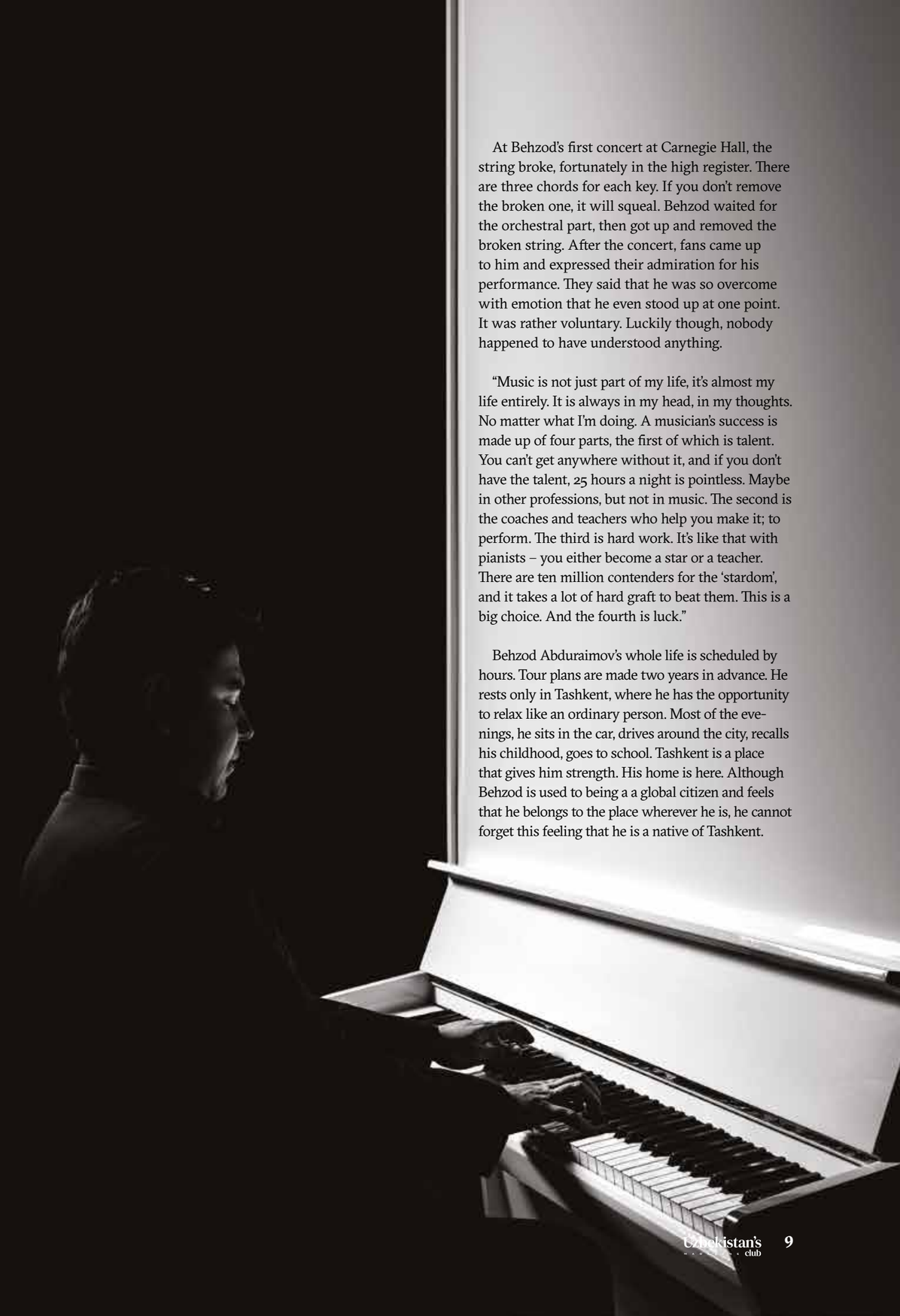
The ability of high-class instruction has allowed her to create a unique and incomparable style of schooling. After the lessons, Behzod would take his teacher by the arm and help her walk to the bus stop.

At the age of sixteen, Behzod went to Lake Como, Italy, to his second teacher, Stanislav Ioudenitch. Wikipedia refers to Ioudenitch as an "Uzbekistani-born American pianist". Behzod understood that he wanted to take lessons from him, a talented, calm, very intelligent person. Behzod would record each of his lessons, then come home, listen to them over and over again, and practice for many hours. And Tamara Afanasyevna's voice would not leave his ears: "Your animal is capable, but it does not know how to work". He worked and worked and worked.

As for the word animal, it was a compliment from a teacher who rarely praised. She would normally say, "You did half a penny better today". Virtuosity and mastery of the instrument were collected from half a penny. Every past day and every practice. As a result, he soon became the owner of a great skill that was recognized across the world.

The eighteen-year-old Behzod went on his first tour with Vladimir Ashkenazi, the great pianist and conductor whose records are on the shelf in Popovich's house. At that time, Ashkenazi seemed to the boy like a very distant star in the universe. Now he is rehearsing with his orchestra. China. Australia, Malaysia...

"I had a clear vision of what I wanted. But reality has always presented me with other and better options. In 2007, an acquaintance invited me to London, to a small concert in a church. At that time, I was without a big name, without any story. He took me to a London Philharmonic Orchestra concert. It was the first live concert I ever watched. Some pianist was playing a tune, and an acquaintance of mine, a historian and music lover, said, "Next time you are going to be on the stage, and I will sit here in the auditorium". I thought, maybe in a dozen years. Half a year later, I opted for a four-stage competition with the same hall and the same orchestra, and won. Ten months later, I actually played music on this stage, and my friend was sitting in this hall. "Veni, vidi, vici", he used to say.



At Behzod's first concert at Carnegie Hall, the string broke, fortunately in the high register. There are three chords for each key. If you don't remove the broken one, it will squeal. Behzod waited for the orchestral part, then got up and removed the broken string. After the concert, fans came up to him and expressed their admiration for his performance. They said that he was so overcome with emotion that he even stood up at one point. It was rather voluntary. Luckily though, nobody happened to have understood anything.

"Music is not just part of my life, it's almost my life entirely. It is always in my head, in my thoughts. No matter what I'm doing. A musician's success is made up of four parts, the first of which is talent. You can't get anywhere without it, and if you don't have the talent, 25 hours a night is pointless. Maybe in other professions, but not in music. The second is the coaches and teachers who help you make it; to perform. The third is hard work. It's like that with pianists – you either become a star or a teacher. There are ten million contenders for the 'stardom', and it takes a lot of hard graft to beat them. This is a big choice. And the fourth is luck."

Behzod Abduraimov's whole life is scheduled by hours. Tour plans are made two years in advance. He rests only in Tashkent, where he has the opportunity to relax like an ordinary person. Most of the evenings, he sits in the car, drives around the city, recalls his childhood, goes to school. Tashkent is a place that gives him strength. His home is here. Although Behzod is used to being a a global citizen and feels that he belongs to the place wherever he is, he cannot forget this feeling that he is a native of Tashkent.



Once, before a concert in Baden-Baden, he gave an interview and the journalist uttered a sentence Behzod did not agree with. He had to perform Rachmaninoff's third concerto, which was quite complicated at that time. For the Germans, Bach, Beethoven, Schubert are the Bible, that is, real music, while the rest are, let's say, imitations. Including Rachmaninoff. The journalist expressed his opinion that only Germans can understand Bach, feel the deep essence of genius thoughts, and Rachmaninoff can be understood only by Russians.

"Look," Behzod said. "I am neither German nor Russian. I am from Central Asia. What you're telling me is that I can't understand these geniuses to the end? For me, Bach, Schubert, Shostakovich, Rachmaninoff are the people of the world. They left their music to all of us, to all of humanity. If I were you, I wouldn't have those who understand us and those who don't. Music is a universal language. If it's not the case, what do you think I am doing here? Do I play music I don't understand?"

The pianist Abduraimov has become a talent belonging to all humanity. All corners of the globe – from small halls in quiet cities of the United States to prestigious halls that have shown Behzod's art in Paris, London, New York, Tokyo and Sydney, stand up and applaud him. Everyone comes to know our country by name, because this very talented pianist is from Uz... Uzbekistan. Where is that country, lad?

Tokyo is a special fave. Two months ago, there was a big concert in the Japanese capital city, where Behzod gave two concerts with a symphony orchestra and another solo concert. Before the gig, the Japanese presented him with a huge bouquet of flowers and a postcard written in Uzbek: "Mr. Abdu-san...".

While he was rehearsing in Sydney, a young man who was arranging chairs came up to Behzod and expressed his admiration for his performances and asked where he could get a disc with his music. Behzod told him that lots of great pianists have played these melodies and advised him to go to YouTube. However, the next day the young man came up to Behzod with a disc he had found, that is, with Behzod's recordings, and asked him to sign it. Then he invited him to go surfing.

In Tashkent, Behzod Abduraimov always gives concerts for free. Perhaps we hardly understand yet what kind of gift he is giving to everyone? And while he is here, it is good to use the opportunity to organize his concerts. For now, he gives more concerts in Carnegie Hall than in Tashkent.

Behzod's father, Abdurazzak Abduraimov, a talented physicist and mathematician, was an inventor. One of his inventions is a pneumatic engine, a machine that works in compressed air. The invention was patented, but there was not enough money for the copyright. The pneumatic engine is the eternal dream of humanity, it's environment-friendly, noiseless, free. Many scientists have tried to create a working model. The Abduraimovs had it, and Behzod walked around the yard in it. His father used to write letters, asking for funding, explaining the prospect of the invention. It was the nineteen nineties.

Then he died. A few years later, the French scientist Guy Negre presented his invention to the world – a compressed air engine. Then Behzod's mother received phone calls. However, by this time, all the drawings in the patent office had disappeared. Or stolen. And now, many years on, it's hard to get to the truth.

Everyone in this family is talented, and in this, for sure, there is a great service from his mother, who raised her children and made them all highly educated. Behzod's older sister Dilafruz Mamadalieva is a teacher at the Conservatory, while his younger sister Yulduz Abduraimova is an orientalist, she lives in the USA. His brother Javlon Abduraimov is an experienced surgeon... Brilliant kids of brilliant parents...

... At the age of eight, Behzod managed to make it to the concert of Alexei Sultanov, Tamara Popovich's favorite student, in Tashkent. Sold out, hard to get in, but he got lucky. This concert inspired him, he wanted to perform like Alexei Sultanov. He dreamed of becoming a great pianist.

Now, after his performances, children with burning eyes come to him. And Behzod sees his childhood dreams and himself in these eyes.

But now, it is he who is a source of inspiration.

ONLY FEMALE AMONG 60 MEN, I WAS A CLASS PRESIDENT



Text: Saidaziz Azamov

"IT was an enormous confidence I was awarded with, and surely it gave me a great delight. On the other hand, this was a giant sector with the most responsibility," Khilola Umarova recalls her astonishment at being appointed a government minister.

Her life saw an abundance of big and small surprises and shocks like this. Born in a town in Germany due to her parents' professional activity and having attended a kindergarten and primary school there, the little, hardly seven-year-old Khilola moves to the lively Tashkent, where almost no one speaks German. A little 'verstehen' of Uzbek she had at the time was not enough for her to be active in school to study well, as her military father, who had established strict discipline at home, would demand from her. The girl who masters the alphabet at the general education school no.241 learns Uzbek in full from children in a mahalla in Tashkent where her grandmother lived.

BORN IN EAST GERMANY IN 1988

Recalling that she and her sister's time was arranged day by day and even hour by hour, Khilola Umarova said that "even while in senior classes, we would beg our mother for permission to go out with our friends. My father, however, did not have any compassion in these kinds of matters," adds Khilola. "Only after getting married did I start to talk to my father easily, tell him about my worries, what bothers me, and so forth."

Our heroine's family wanted her to become a well-educated and sophisticated person, so they created all the conditions for her to study. Festive events at school were hardly possible without Khilola Umarova in the role of dancer, poem reciter, or presenter. She also proved proactive at the science Olympiads, always striving to show top results to see her family members proud of her and to hear praise from them.

In the 8th grade, whether influenced by books, the subliminal advertising in the movies she watched, or owing to fluency in foreign languages, she announced she wanted to be a diplomat. That proved a shocking blow for her relatives. Her obstetrician-gynecologist mother dreamed of seeing her daughter become a doctor, and her grannie hoped to see her as a lovely bride very soon. That was another test for her. She was convinced that that was the right profession for her and thus decided to persuade everyone of the aptness of her choice. Khilola told them that she would apply to the University of World Economy and Diplomacy (UWED), an incredibly difficult institution to be admitted to, and that if she failed, she would abide by their advice.

"Those times, not only girls who thought that their parents would have them get married if they failed to be admitted to a university, but also guys who were afraid to be considered a lower grade person had they failed – would go to entrance exams, held only once a year, with their hearts in their throats."

August 16, 2010. On the day the admission tests' results were announced, aka "mandate day," the applicant Umarova found her special code from the list of admitted people! But, in line with tradition in our heroine's life, the news that followed was no less shocking. In that year's course at the Faculty of International Economic Relations, she was the only young woman to study with 60 young men.

To our question, "Did you attend the university as the only girl with 60 guys?! Turns out, working in only-men teams is not new to you at all?" She laughs and says, "Yes, on top of that, I was a course leader, 'starosta'." As a matter of fact, now Ms. Umarova is the youngest and only female minister in Uzbekistan.

She married when she was a fourth-year student. Khilola became the bride to a large family amid the university classes gaining in complexity. But she thought otherwise, as she explained the situation to us: "I had to take an academic leave if I didn't study well and cope with household work at the same time. It would be a tragedy for me".

KNOWS EVERY ONE OF HER 1,136 STUDENTS IN THE AL-KHOREZMI SPECIALIZED IT SCHOOL BY NAME





Every soldier dreams of becoming a general. The UWED student, who believed that she would be allowed to make a career if she proved that she could manage studies, wifedom, and daughter-in-law duties well, fantasized about working in the system of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. But out of the need to take care of her child, who was born in the year she was graduating, Khilola chose to do an internship at her university. She later enrolled in the graduate course and began teaching at the premises.

Before starting to work with students, Ms. Umarova recalled that she used to teach German at school. This thought involuntarily had an energizing effect on the beginner university lecturer. Her first day as a teacher, while standing in front of youths, she says, proved a turning point in life – a dream of becoming an educator struck her for the first time.

"The flashing eyes of children looking at you with thirst for knowledge... their curiosity gave me those pleasant feelings that no matter what position I hold, I miss those moments and hold them dear. I clearly understood then that the sphere closest to my heart is education, enlightenment".

Khilola Umarova also tried herself and was hired as an entry-level specialist at a time when the newly established Inha University, in cooperation with Korea, was hiring advanced educators and manager personnel in the country through demanding and multiple-stage resume screening and interviews. With a master's degree, although she could work in higher positions in other organizations, she preferred the opportunity to work with foreign professors and get in touch with companies like Google, Microsoft, and Cisco. "In fact, I have never worked for high positions," Ms. Umarova points out during our interview.

Yet, in the list of surprises of fate for Khilola Umarova, there is a separate category called "unexpected positions," as we hinted at the start of our story. After several promotions, she became Vice-Rector of the university where she worked. Due to her doctoral studies at Inha in Korea, the scholar had to postpone her research to lead the newly established specialized Al-Khorezmi IT School in Tashkent.

Thus, only in 2023, when she became a minister, did she defend a doctoral (PhD) dissertation in management. Preparing to defend her thesis before a panel of commission members, Khilola Uktamovna Umarova turned into a student, an ordinary researcher. This can be seen in the videos shot at the event.

HAD SHE HAD THE POWER TO END SOMETHING IN THE WORLD, SHE WOULD DO AWAY WITH LIES

As our protagonist rises through career ladders, she perfectly understands the value of spending time with children and talking to them. That is the reason why, on Sundays, she tries to go out with the kids.

"When I was running an agency in this sector, my daughter failed the exams for the Presidential School. I said, "You have to study hard and try on your own."

For her kids to see their peers growing up in various conditions and environments, she would take them occasionally to orphanages to compare and think. "My mother always controlled and helped us to do our homework," Khilola says. "Parents have an extremely important role to play in the learning process. Unfortunately, during parental meetings at schools, we would rather discuss organizational issues than the state of our children mastering the subjects or what bothers them. This must be corrected. Parents, especially mothers, are assigned great responsibility. In order for our society to raise our daughters as wise women with their own views, with active civic stance, able to express their opinion on any issue, we need to bring them up properly from kindergarten, from school."

ALISHER SADULLAYEV'S YOUNG DISCOVERIES



Uzbekistan is a country of hidden talents. I came to this idea while a student at the Management Development Institute of Singapore in Tashkent and operating English conversation clubs at the Alisher Navoi National Library of Uzbekistan. Imagine hundreds of youths attending speech club meetings for a couple of years, learning English perfectly, and getting admitted to universities in the world's most advanced nations. Driven by success and a sense of mission, I decided to enhance in scale and open a network of training centers. Then, I came to the government owing to my entrepreneurship. When I became the deputy minister of public education, I wanted to see more of my peers, young people, both in the ministry where I worked and in general in all government agencies. I met dozens of talented and hardworking people, educated and competent, brothers, and sisters during my career. Below, I will cite just a small part of them. They include many of those who have studied and worked abroad, but every one of them is worth being regarded as a world-class specialist.



RUSTAM KARIYEV, 33, ENGLISH TEACHER.

Rustam is an Ibrat Academy mobile application product manager, professional English teacher, and holder of the prestigious CELTA certificate from Cambridge University. He studied at Malaysia's SEGI University courses and the Management Development Institute of Singapore in Tashkent. As a selfless pedagogue, along with training many students offline, he has conducted and posted about 200 video lessons titled "Learning English from scratch" on the page of Ibrat Farzandlari on YouTube.

SIROJIDDIN OLIMOV, 29, SPECIALIZES IN EDUCATION MANAGEMENT.

Sirojiddin earned his MSc in Education at the University of Edinburgh, Scotland, on a scholarship from the El-Yurt Umidi (Hope of the Nation) Foundation. He was the manager at the Young Leaders Development Project, at the Uzbekistan Teachers of English Association, and at the Office of the Five Initiatives of the President. Today, Sirojiddin contributes to the practical training of about 3,000 young people at Ibrat Camps to prepare for the world's top 100 universities.

FAZLIDDIN BAHROMOV, 32, PROJECT MANAGEMENT SPECIALIST.

Holding master's degrees from the Management Development Institute of Singapore in Tashkent and Webster University, Fazliddin Bahromov is currently a project manager at the Delivery Unit under the government of Uzbekistan. From his student years, he has been in entrepreneurship, heading the representative office of a British law firm in Uzbekistan, and opened a private clinic and optician's stores. Since 2017, he has been working in various positions in civil service, building on his experience in the private sector. Until 2023, Fazliddin used to lead the Innovation Department of the Youth Affairs Agency of Uzbekistan.

SAIDA RASHIDOVA, 38, UZBEK TEACHER, PROMOTER OF READING FOR CHILDREN AND MOTHERS.

Saida Rashidova encourages by her example to constantly learn and work on oneself. From age 15, she volunteered in social projects and studied Russian, English, and German. She has been in professional teaching for more than 10 years. In 2021, Saida was awarded the Tahsin Award for her children's "The Hat Incident" storybook. Currently, within the framework of the Ibrat Farzandlari project, hundreds of video lessons on Uzbek are prepared and brought to the attention of our compatriots and guests of our country.

RIAN MEHROJ, 28, YOUNG ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVIST.

Under the leadership of the Youth Enterprise Support Center of Uzbekistan and the Youth Entrepreneur University, Orian is working on projects that contribute to advancing the startup culture and business ecosystem among youth. He is also Vice-Chairman of the Central Asian Artificial Intelligence Association and founder of the Unicorns venture fund.

ULUGBEK ISMATOV, 28, MEDIA PROFESSIONAL, AUTHOR OF SOCIAL PROJECTS.

Ulugbek Ismatov is a Tashkent University of Information Technologies graduate keen on modern media, entrepreneurship, and social projects. The manager's curriculum vitae includes heading the MPMG project at the Youth Affairs Agency and experience with Be Creative, INTV, and Marketing.uz, Tezyoz.uz, Modul 5, Chegarasiz, and YouTube Uzbekistan projects.

NILUFAR AHMEDOVA, 24, INCLUSIVE EDUCATION SPECIALIST, PARA-SWIMMING CHAMPION.

Nilufar is the para-swimming champion of Uzbekistan. She heads a club on inclusive education at the Khorezm branch of the Youth Affairs Agency. She is an alumnus of the Faculty of Pedagogy at Urganch State University.

MIYASSAR DAULETBAYEVA, 17, YOUNG SINGER.

Still at school, Miyassar is an indomitable, big-stage-seeking, cheerful singer. This talented Karakalpak girl gained national fame through the project The Cover Up Kids. Winner of the Tahsin Award, she also earned a prize at the President-initiated Voice of Youth national festival in the Bozatau district of Karakalpakstan.

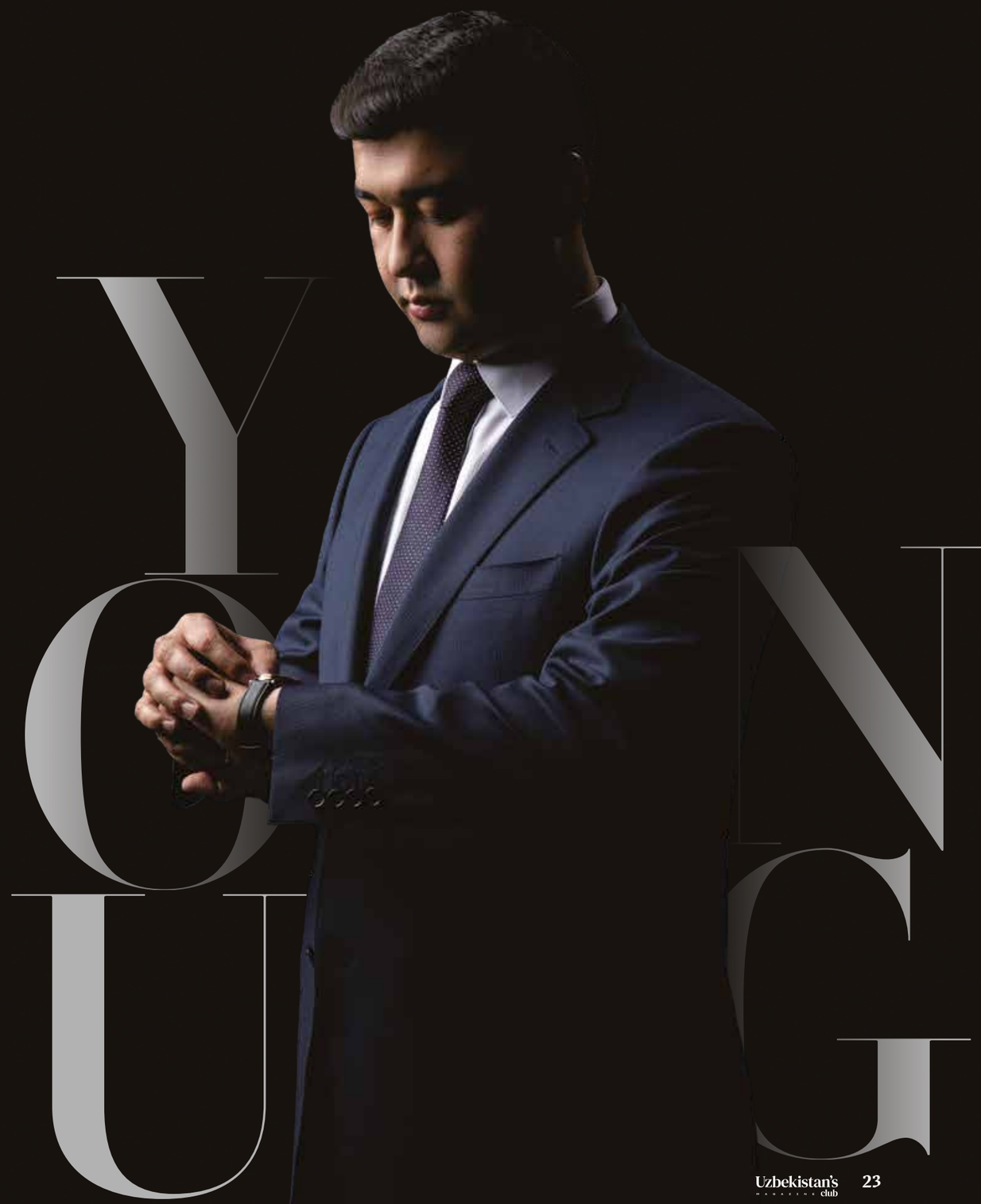
ISLOM OKHUNOV, 29, SCHOLAR OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, NATIONAL EXPERT.

Islom has worked in representative offices of the Youth Union of Uzbekistan, the Youth Affairs Agency, the Ministry of Youth Policy and Sports, and various UN agencies in this country. He participated in the 4th Young Leaders Forum within the framework of the Central Asian Youth Forum, the Organization of Turkic States. He's been part of such initiatives as Bukhara, the Youth Capital of the Turkic World, the Unicorns startup contest within the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), meeting of the Youth Council within the framework of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), Tashkent as CIS Youth Capital.

SHAHZOD BAHODIROV, 25, BUSINESSMAN.

He is the founder of training centers for thousands of young people who are the future of Uzbekistan. In particular, 1,100 graduates of the educational center Thompson School he founded have been enrolled in Uzbekistan's most celebrated higher educational institutions and advanced nations worldwide.

Interview by Saidaziz Azamov

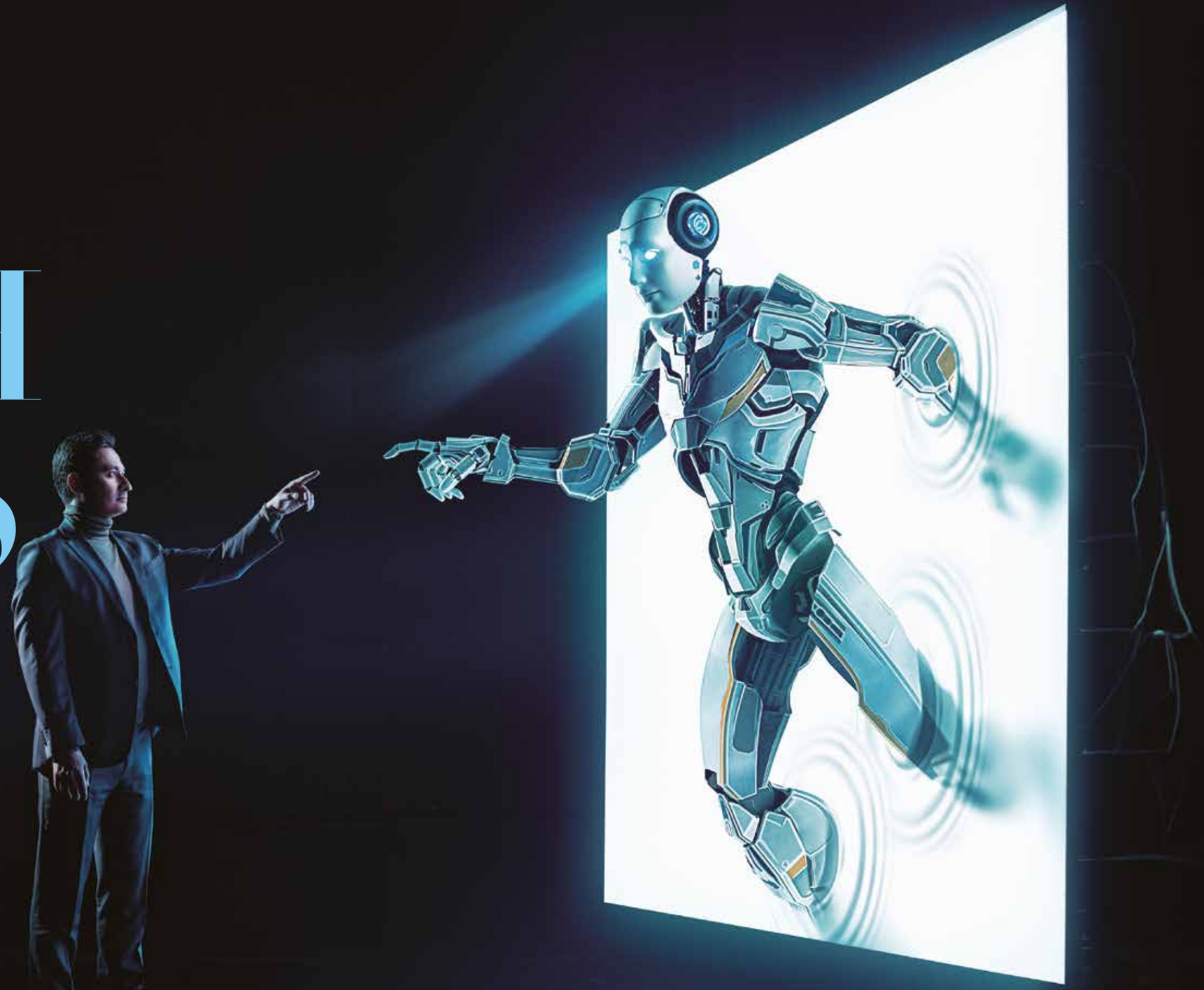


Ucell



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MUZAFFAR JALOLOV'S TRUTHS OF LIFE



BY 2030, MANY PROFESSIONS WILL MERGE WITH OTHER ONES OR DISAPPEAR ALTOGETHER DUE TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE.

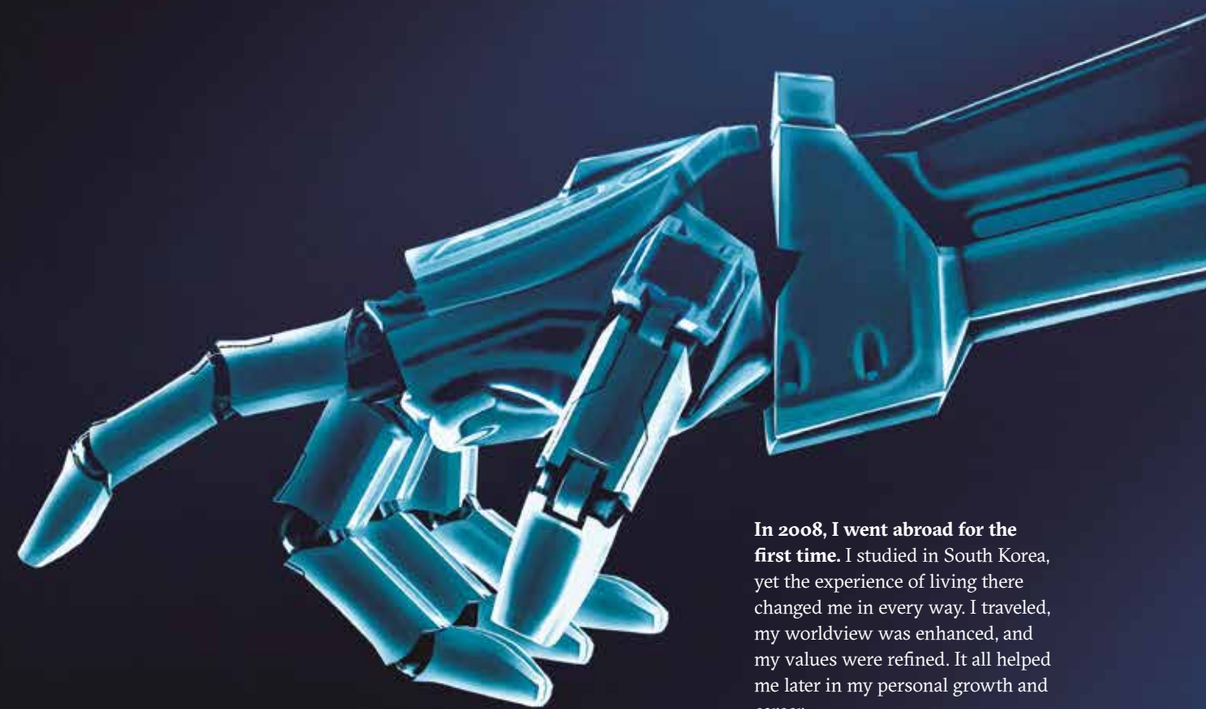
At 10 years old, when I was asked what I wanted to be, I used to say, "An astronaut." Then, my teacher suggested that one needs to study math very well to that end. I did what she said, but eventually, my dreams changed. When I graduated from the 8th grade, I was lucky to be one of the first to be admitted to a new lyceum set up under the Tashkent University of Information Technologies.

I came to understand from a young age that teachers cannot give me all the knowledge I need. They provide specialized knowledge. It is hardly enough. Soft skills like communication competencies, accessibility, and presentation skills are acquired through experience. Perfect knowledge can only be achieved through hard work.

One can scarcely avoid fate. If something is destined for you, it will definitely happen to you, and one should not deny or refuse it. I believe that whatever happens, whether good or bad, will ultimately be for the good. When you have a higher goal and strive for it, the good times and the bad times that come your way will only make you stronger.

It's hard for me to get up early, to be honest. I have a hard time waking up at 7. It matters little how many hours I sleep, and as long as I'm in a good mood, I'll keep working. Early in the morning, 'as recommended in books,' I have a healthy breakfast containing eggs, fruits, and milk. I drink two shots of espresso without sugar.





I love nature very much. I like lakes, and I like spending time along the lake in the Botanical Garden. I relax in nature with my friends, family, and loved ones. But I prefer to be alone and rest in silence.

It is quite important to labor hard and work on oneself. Attaining knowledge is hard work! This was taught to me at home since childhood. Also, learning not to deceive yourself is a vital habit. People are prone to lying sometimes, and even worse, to deceiving themselves, believing in it, and living with illusions. It is essential to strive to be sincere from a young age.

When people fail to meet my trust, I blame myself first. It's not their fault that I expected more from them. I accept the situation as it is. I don't keep a grudge. But I can express my thoughts to that person. If they come to a proper conclusion and change their behavior, I am forgiving and will continue to work together.

I like coffee because it is refreshing. I also like green tea.

In 2008, I went abroad for the first time. I studied in South Korea, yet the experience of living there changed me in every way. I traveled, my worldview was enhanced, and my values were refined. It all helped me later in my personal growth and career.

The newly-appointed rector Muzaffar and the current Muzaffar are completely different people. I gained much experience and have the knowledge and skills needed to develop and innovate.

I appreciate humility in people. This is one of the essential habits that disappear over time. Reserved nature adorns one and makes them successful. Regardless of position and income, a person should remain humble. I also respect straightforwardness. Unfortunately, some of our traditions discourage us from telling people their faults, and this may sometimes lead, quite surprisingly, to hypocrisy. This is barely good. As Mark Twain used to insist, the truth must be served like a coat and not thrown in the face like a wet towel.

First and foremost, I cannot tolerate hypocrites. Second, I hate envy (in a bad sense) in people. I feel sorry for them because they don't know how to envy in a good sense. When someone achieves something, others slander them and think up more lies. Third, I condemn laziness. If it were not for this indolence, there would be many more successful and happy people and families across the world.

Project managers, especially professionals who manage specialized IT solutions, are always in demand. By 2030, many professions will merge with other ones or disappear altogether due to the development of artificial intelligence. But there will always be a need for good project managers who work with coders and other parties to create IT products for, say, healthcare, urban planning, or agriculture. Data analysis is also a field that has become popular in recent years. As big data, their 'bread,' increases in volume, and so does the need for analysis and prediction, this profession continues gaining significance.

Unfortunately, I am a perfectionist. For me, everything must have its proper place. My loved ones and colleagues may suffer from this. Another of my bad habits is that I am a workaholic. This is good from the employer's point of view. I can be very productive, leave work late, and even stay overnight until I finish a task. But lately, I have been working on these bad habits because I have to devote time to myself, my family, and my children's upbringing.



Cycling is my passion. Every Sunday I go cycling. I go to the gym after work, 2-3 times a week. Sometimes I can't work out. I greatly regret missing physical training due to business trips or project deadlines.

I try to go to the premieres of action movies because I love motion pictures, especially in this category.

I believe our stance in the world will be bolstered if we make green policy the main driver of our economy, build our own Schengen area in Central Asia, and join the World Trade Organization.

Whatever happens in life happens for good. This is the reason why I never regret anything. If I could go back and correct my mistakes, I would spend even more time working harder on myself. I would improve my Korean. I'd attend more vocational courses because the free time I used to have ten years ago is not the case today.

If I caught a goldfish, I would pray for corruption to vanish. Regrettably, some people continue with corrupt behavior. Therefore, I wish we got rid of this virus and wish everyone lives happily, be content with work and family, love what they do, and do it wholeheartedly.

"ONLY BY HARD WORK CAN ONE SECURE PERFECT KNOWLEDGE"

"IF YOU STRIVE FOR YOUR HIGHEST GOAL, BOTH LUCK AND MISFORTUNE YOU FACE ON YOUR WAY WILL ONLY MAKE YOU STRONGER"



WHAT DELIVERY UNIT OF UZBEKISTAN DO?

AZIZA UMAROVA,
COORDINATOR OF THE DELIVERY UNIT AT THE AGENCY FOR STRATEGIC REFORMS UNDER THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF UZBEKISTAN

Delivery Unit was set up at the Agency for Strategic Reforms under the President of Uzbekistan in May 2023.

The Delivery Unit model emerged first back in 2001 in the United Kingdom. The scheme has proved highly effective in delivering results because it is based on a small number of priorities, data collection, and analysis, and it helps to eliminate the usual bureaucratic forms, ensuring swift problem-solving and accountability in the interaction among government agencies. Many countries followed suit, including Malaysia, Indonesia, Chile, Tanzania, South Africa, Sierra Leone, Ghana, Costa Rica, Australia, Pakistan, Peru, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, and Uganda.

DELIVERY UNIT

THE DELIVERY UNIT MODEL EMERGED FIRST BACK IN 2001 IN THE UNITED KINGDOM. THE SCHEME HAS PROVED HIGHLY EFFECTIVE IN DELIVERING RESULTS

Our office is an experimental ground where we refine approaches to public service provision, introduce social innovations, and develop new effective mechanisms.

The Delivery Unit focuses on three key areas in Uzbekistan: public education infrastructure, public health, and water supply. The Presidential Administration has approved 12 social indicators of grave significance for the well-being of citizens. For example, in the field of social healthcare, the objective is the provision of 8 million youths between the ages of 3 and 15 with iodine medicines. Or reduction of premature deaths from breast and cervical cancer among women. Or the centralized drinking water supply to 5.2 million people in remote areas. They are monitoring industrial wastewater in 10 major industrial cities or ensuring growth in the percentage of the urban population covered by centralized sewage systems. In the field of education, the main focus is on infrastructure. The number of new schools across the nation accessible for the disabled, furnished with water, Internet, and other relevant equipment. In addition, energy efficiency of social facilities and access to water and sanitation. All indicators are important for our citizens.

What does the Delivery Unit give us? Historically, emphasis has been placed in Uzbekistan on developing regulatory and normative documents during the execution of state programs. Still, much less importance is attached to the implementation of the tasks set forth nor to the evaluation of effectiveness in the application of programs. As a Delivery Unit, we aim to correct these shortcomings by focusing on tangible results instead. We ask questions like: How exactly are state programs implemented? Are citizens a part of monitoring results? Is growth data collected for goal progress analysis? Do all state agencies work together to achieve the goals set by the government? Do we need to change any moral norms and customs in society?



For example, if local water supply infrastructure projects are financed from the budget or loans from international financial institutions, it is possible to launch a feedback bot and place banners in settlements showing the amount of construction costs. The people need to know when exactly the water will reach their village via pipe. They need to know the color and parameters of the tube, how far it will go, and whether it will reach their homes or the main street where water will have to be brought in buckets. I would like to note that the current portfolio of international financial institutions in the field of water supply includes 22 projects worth more than 2.2 billion US dollars. It is almost impossible to monitor the implementation of projects without engaging the public on the ground. Citizens must become active participants in infrastructure projects.

In short, we ought to look for effective solutions to problems; one should not be afraid to be non-standard, and it is compulsory to evaluate the effectiveness and justify everything with statistics. However, in the meantime, you would wish to bring together all stakeholders to ensure the successful implementation of any government program. And, of course, strategic communication should not be forgotten to ensure serious effectiveness.

Until the end of the year, citizens can monitor the progress in implementing the goal based on GIS. In addition, we post a quarterly online report and hold press conferences to communicate the outcomes secured.

Delivery Unit operates at the Strategic Reforms Agency under the President.

Here are 12 priority areas we help government agencies achieve. They can be accomplished exclusively through cooperation and communication. It implies immense data analytics, social innovation, and community-based work.

IT IS VITAL TO DELIVER CLEAR AND ACCESSIBLE MESSAGES FOR THE TARGET AUDIENCE ON TV, RADIO, SOCIAL NETWORKS.

12 PRIORITY GOALS

I would like to note that in all state bodies, we meet progressive leaders and enthusiastic professionals.

1. Improving children's physical and mental development in all regions of the country by providing them with micronutrients, iodine pills, and anthelmintic drugs.

2. Reducing the number of premature deaths from cardiovascular and diabetes diseases among the population aged 30-69 owing to the early detection of the disease and promotion of a healthy lifestyle.

3. Cutting early mortality among women by detecting breast and cervical cancer early and sending them for treatment.

4. Delivering a cancer registry information system (international standards) that will serve as a basis for planning and evaluating measures to study cancer, prevent it, and combat it.

5. Creating an additional 2.5 million student places in schools by 2026.

6. Ensuring improved toilets for every school that meets drinking water, handwashing water, and sanitation standards by 2026.

7. Providing one in three schools with solar energy (panels, household appliances) by 2026 to support the learning process in the event of power outages.

8. Supplying an additional 5.5 million people with a centralized water network by late 2026.

9. Reducing risk to public health by cutting industrial wastewater in 8 industrial cities.

10. Increasing the current period of drinking water supply by 50% (in hours) in 6 regions outside the capital city.

11. Ensuring the population's access to information on drinking water quality.

12. Improving the provision of centralized sewerage.



OTABEK NURITDINOV’S Life Path FULL OF TWISTS AND TURNS

Otabek Nuritdinov was born in 1984. Currently, he is responsible for business management at Moneff, a company founded by Uzbekistanis in London, UK. The manager has been energetic in activities like uniting our diaspora in Great Britain through a great diversity of events and projects, including donation collection for the needs of the homeland. In our talk with Otabek, we explored his childhood, career periods, sports and health, family, mother, and dreams.



GROWING UP IN A **SCIENCE TOWN**

I spent my childhood in Tashkent, in the Ulugbek settlement, built for scholars of the Institute of Nuclear Physics. I was born to a family of physicists who came to the capital city from Samarkand to work at that Institute. My father, Izzatilloh Nuritdinov, is still a professor there. My mother, Hafiza Nasrullah, after working for a short time at the Institute, became active in social problems, women's issues, history, journalism, and philosophy and had a major role to play in the creation of the Women's Committee in the wake of Uzbekistan's independence.

Following our parents' suit, we came to get used to studying, researching, and working on ourselves as natural and innate qualities that every person should have. Moreover, my childhood coincided with the period Uzbekistan attained independence and was struggling to stand on its feet. In times when the government was barely able to fund science, watching scientists forced to get out of their comfort zone by trying themselves in various alien fields to make a living – taught me many lessons that I would need later in life.

My parents, the environment they created for us, how they brought us up, and the help and guidance from my brother and sister have been critical in what I have achieved today.

TÜRKIYE, DOWNTURN, ENTREPRENEURSHIP...

In Tashkent, I studied at a Turkish lyceum. I learned the Turkish language and culture with great enthusiasm. After not being lucky enough to go to the United States or Germany to study through various fellowship programs while graduating from the university, I went to Türkiye recommended by my brother, who lived in England at that time. And I lived there for as long as 6 years. Amid the global financial crisis 2008, the company I worked for struggled through troubles...

My mother encouraged me to be active and appreciate the value of working hard. Thus, the school summer vacations I would spend selling in the marketplace of our neck of the woods the somsa she would cook, then trading with buttermilk, melons, and watermelons in the Alai Market, carbonated drinks in the Sergeli Car Market, butchering and tutoring in Yunusabad.

Years later, I learned about the possibility of doing business in Türkiye. We bought a small advertising agency and quickly turned it into a leading digital marketing agency in our city. One of the biggest benefits of being self-employed is the freedom to manage your own time. Since I was a newlywed and had a child, that freedom meant a lot to me.

ADAMANT YOUTH. WITH SCHOLARSHIPS, NOT TUITION FEES. **INTERNET,** NOT MAINSTREAM...

Thanks to my father, who plays the tor and rubab and sings when he is free from science, and my mother, who writes articles on current issues for Uzbekistan's leading newspapers and magazines, I aspired to artistic creativity from childhood. I used to feel happiest if people enjoyed watching my drawings. Generating some emotion in people through creativity was like having a superpower. That was why I chose journalism after graduating: to influence people's lives and feelings on a larger scale. Due to my appeal to foreign languages, I aimed to attend the international journalism school of the University of World Languages.

When I took the exam for the first time in 2000, I was admitted on a tuition-fee basis. That is, I did not earn the government scholarship granted to those scoring highest on the exam. But I refused to take on the liability of paying fees for four years. I trained harder for another year and proved eligible for a scholarship on the second attempt. During my studentship years, I met a lot of good people, and I learned a lot. Education at the university, internship at the Marifat (Enlightenment) newspaper, and then a full-time job all allowed me to get in touch with journalism as it is in real life as much as the challenges it faced. I became interested in the emerging alternative media, especially the Internet, given the lack of freedom of speech in the print and television media, as well as the elements of internal censorship inculcated at the university.

Ultimately, I learned how to create a website and generate designs using Photoshop. I still feel the excitement when I recall the moments my classmate and friend, Davronbek Tojialiyev, and I uploaded the first version of what he created, the Ziyo.uz portal, to the Internet via my home computer.



FROM MASTERS IN UK TO **BIG FOUR** AND WORLD STARTUPS

The dream of studying and attaining qualifications in an advanced country and my brother’s advice about the more extensive opportunities available in the UK led me to move again. I earned a full scholarship to London Metropolitan University. After a year at the graduate school, I needed a sponsoring employer to get a work visa to stay in Britain. It was difficult to get a job in my field of marketing. However, global consulting and finance companies hire hundreds of students yearly. I got invited as an auditor at Deloitte because, when recruiting employees, they would emphasize human qualities rather than a diploma in finance. I learned the rest at ‘their faculty.’

Deloitte, one of the Big Four, where I worked for six years, and Mitsui, where I worked afterward, proved an important development factor in my life. Then I got invited to a company founded by London-based Uzbekistanis in fintech, a sphere at the intersection of my two experiences – marketing and technology, and finance. Left to choose between a corporate career and the startup world, I found the latter more attractive. Knowledge, experience, mistakes, conclusions, and personal and professional growth followed this decision, which I do not regret a bit.

THE BENEFIT OF HELPING **OUR WOMEN** IN RESEARCH

Two years ago, my spouse started training in nutritional therapy. At that time, we were keen on novelties in this field and started checking out various gadgets. One was a constant glucose monitor, which I wore for two weeks. Through this experiment, itself kicked off out of curiosity, we found out that the glucose in my body was higher than normal. Then I was diagnosed with prediabetes. Doctors insisted that I correct my diet and practice sports.

Initially, though, I barely considered myself a person close to sports. But eventually realized that practicing is critical for both personal and professional life. Our body, our organism, is like our house where we live for all our lives. I wondered why we should always be attentive to the house we buy and live in, repair it, buy equipment, and take good care of it, but worry little about our body, which we live with for a lifetime.

When it came to what sport to do, I opted out of jogging, for it seemed easiest for me. And because other sports need either a special place, or special equipment, or a team. All you need to jog is a pair of sneakers and a public place. Our CTO has been running professionally for several years. He gave advice and guidance and introduced me to a coach. I thus kick-started jogging.

THE MEMORY OF THE **MOTHER** AND LOOKING TO FULFILLING HER DREAMS

As I mentioned earlier, my mother was active in Uzbekistan in covering women’s issues, writing academic works and articles on the topic, and taking part in conferences. With my keen interest in the Internet, my mother learned about the unlimited possibilities of the World Wide Web, and in 2002 founded the first online magazine in Uzbek dedicated to women, ayol.uz. This platform, they believed, would help them reach out to the wider world.

Regrettably, my mother died in a car accident a few months after launching the site. In memory of hers, we decided to continue with her cause and run the site with our own efforts to realize her noble dreams. Within a brief time, the portal gained popularity and won several online contests. Alongside ayol.uz, we launched projects erkak.uz and farzand.uz. The goal was to become a resource for women, men, and those raising children.



THE DREAM OF **BENEFITING** OTHERS

My dream has always been the same: to be of use to others and help improve their lives, even if that change meant very little. From tiny things to the big ones, from drawing as a child and thus making someone feel good through easing the financial problems of millions of people with technological solutions... If I can contribute to any positive change in the world, I consider my dream came true.

A lot of young people are keen on my career ladder – the exodus to Türkiye, a master’s degree in England, and working in one of the Big Four – and turn to me for advice. I always try to help them with guidance. I write posts in Uzbek and English on social networks to share interesting information on the topics I learned and my experiences. In my philosophy, knowledge is a trust granted to us, and we are supposed to give it to others just as we have learned from others.

To be sure, we can bring more benefit in matters we understand and are close to us. I have lived abroad for almost 20 years. It is vital for Uzbekistanis living far from their homeland to bond with each other, support one another, and share advice. I try to participate in any Uzbek project in the UK. There are a lot of Uzbek young men and women growing up here who were born and raised in Britain. It is essential to teach them the Uzbek language and culture to help them preserve their values. In this regard, I also consider it an important mission to serve in initiatives and donations that connect expats with Uzbekistan.

The dynamics of Uzbekistan’s diaspora in the UK have always depended on the politics and the mood and attitude of their government back home. There have been times when members of the Uzbekistani community here tried to avoid the events that, by large, were hosted in our embassy in London. Compatriots gathered in smaller circles: financiers got together separately, refugees or policymakers flocked in their own company, others caught up in separate. So our diaspora was not strong and united.

Today, all Uzbekistanis in Britain are quite close-knit. We can see that from their active participation in charity projects undertaken in cooperation with EBRD, at humanitarian aid campaigns for the homeland during the pandemic, and at the festivities of Navruz and Independence Day. Probably the best example of this positive trend was the Uzbekistan Culture and Food Festival under the Tower Bridge in 2023, with thousands of participants coming together.

Another important issue for Uzbekistanis in Britain is the second-generation compatriots, our children, youngsters who are born and raised here. It is significant to teach them the Uzbek language and culture, as well as to help them conserve their traditions and values. Therefore, a group of Uzbekistanis set up the Uzbekistan Cultural Centre in 2018.

Diaspora events require team efforts and the unanimous and harmonious work of a lot of people. In these cases, someone should take the initiative, lead the project, and call on everyone to be active. If I see this need, I always take on the organizational tasks. I see this as my obligation and social responsibility.

Interview by Saidaziz Azamov

TURIN POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY IN TASHKENT

Uzbekistan's Club | ECOSYSTEM





A DAY WITH

SHOHISTA SAIDKASIMOVA

Text: Saidaziz Azamov

With its domed mirrored roofs and walls, the Glasshouse in the heart of Glasgow Botanic Gardens stands out sunbathing under the clear sky. Shohista Saidkasimova welcomes the summer of 2023 in her home in the West End of Glasgow, where she has been working for more than 20 years as a consultant eye surgeon, specialising in vitreoretinal diseases. Driving on the “wrong” side of the road feels natural to her now, and she no longer needs the help of local nurses to translate colloquial Glaswegian to standard English; everything is familiar and dear now.

But Glasgow is still not her native city. “When I go home, back to Tashkent, spend time with my family and loved ones, and taste norin and patir-non, I feel truly at home and happy,” she says.

“Upbringing in my family and Uzbekistan’s strong family tradition with respect for elders, modesty and sense of community was the foundation for my later accomplishments. In our family individualism was not suppressed but encouraged. My family nurtured the love for books, we had a large library and I used to spend many hours immersed in the beautiful worlds of classical literature...”

Our heroine loves escaping to the hills in the Scottish countryside. These boundless mountain ridges and forests remind her of childhood mountain climbing, the times when she would play on the streets and backyards with her sister and cousins in search of adventures. Perhaps these moments on top of the Scottish hills allow her to raise above the worries of everyday life, and escape into happy childhood memories.

Music for Shohista is another source of inspiration, in addition to spending time in nature. She took violin and piano lessons in a music school as a child. “Although I don’t practice instruments anymore, music is still very important to me and lifts me up.” she says. Music, like literature helps to enrich her life.

Our star, who grew up in a family of doctors, cannot even remember when she decided to become a doctor: “I do not recall ever making a decision to become a doctor, I always knew I would be one...”

Busy and lively West End of Glasgow hosts the University of Glasgow and its beautiful ancient buildings with dazzling cloisters which remind Hogwarts from Harry Potter movies and the Hunterian Art Gallery with its diverse exhibits. It is home to thousands of students and young professionals.

There’s also a lot of disadvantaged people in Glasgow due to generations of unemployment and deprivation, like in many parts of the world but the family support network is much weaker. Our heroine recalls the early days of working in Glasgow. “Friday night on call in the hospital in Glasgow’s East End was an unforgettable experience. Binge drinking and fights on a Friday (payday) night is a real problem there. I remember also being horrified to learn that the state funds long term regular prescriptions of opioids to the drug addicted population.”

Ms. Shohista Saidkasimova is a highly skilled and experienced ophthalmologist and vitreoretinal surgeon, a training lead for the British and Eire Vitreoretinal Society, as well as an examiner for the Royal College of Ophthalmologists. She has wide-ranging academic interests relating to ophthalmology, having published widely in peer-reviewed journals. She is actively involved in the training of the new generation of ophthalmologists.

“I knew I wanted to become a surgeon, initially I thought of neuro or cardiac surgery but after fainting in operating theatre due to smell of burning flesh, I realised I’m not physically strong enough to tackle general surgery. Ophthalmology seemed a much kinder option. In eye theatres, they played music, were very polite and relaxed. The beauty of ophthalmology is that we perform high impact surgery on a microscopic level where even the tiniest movement translates into life changing results”-she adds.

When, during her studies at the medical school in Tashkent, reading through Fedorov’s journal of eye microsurgery and coming across photo images of diabetic delamination, complex retinal surgical procedure, our heroine immediately realizes, “This is exactly what I want to do in the future!”



“At the time there was no vitreoretinal (VR) surgery performed in Uzbekistan and it became my purpose to become a world class VR surgeon.”

With immense gratitude does Shohista recall her teachers – the head of department, Alisher Khudoyberdiyev, who supported her entrance into a complex specialty, Feruza Urmanova, her mentor in cataract surgery, Murat Khojibekov, the motivating dean, Karim Yafasov, a pharmacology teacher who ran a hobby club of foreign medical literature.

There was a lot of interest in learning from foreign doctors who came to teach, encouraging students to learn English to engage and learn from them.

A female surgeon who came to this city from Tashkent in 2000 has overcome language and cultural barriers, hardships of adaptation to a new place, with the help from kind and supportive colleagues and her son who she calls her “bundle of joy and inspiration”.

She was a young specialist with a passion for vitreoretinal surgery, which the Uzbek medical science did not have in those years. And thanks to the reputation of the UK as one of the best centres for postgraduate medical training, and with support from the prestigious ORBIS organization, our future star physician decides to move to the country of beautiful mountains and lakes, Scotland. She gains further experience in prestigious medical institution in London and in other British cities, engaging herself in scientific research.

Located at the corner of Hyndland Road, Jelly Hill café invites for artisan coffee and freshly baked cakes. I found Shohista Saidkasimova sitting in the courtyard of the café next to the pedestrian path, where locals, and representatives of other ethnic groups talked to each other in their own languages or in mixed English. While sipping her beloved cup of tea, she thinks about the trials destined for her. “It is always difficult to make big decisions in life” shares Shohista, “I have had a lot of such decisions in my life. Moving country, passing medical exams in English, raising a child in a foreign culture... but there is a silver lining in every cloud. Difficulties make us stronger and more resilient.”

Our heroine has really come a long way, to reach her current position with highly valued job, the recognition of patients and colleagues, invitations to share her experience at international conferences including her research in reducing the recovery time after surgery and making surgery less traumatic.

“I love what I do and I’m very fortunate to be able to restore people’s sight, the best gift one has.” She continues to work on herself and improve her results. During her 25 years of work experience, she performed more than 10,000 surgeries with outcomes above the national average.

Also suggestive of her deep affection for her profession and duty as a doctor is Ms. Saidkasimova’s work as a volunteer all across the globe. “I enjoy helping poorer communities and love exploring new places, and so travelling to help is the perfect combination. We give up our holiday to work abroad in places of need and the rewards cannot be measured- smile of kids in Ethiopia, elderly Muslim peasant in Myanmar, grandma from the West Bank in Jerusalem, or a tear of silent Syrian child with shrapnel injuries in Reyhanhi, these are images that will stay with me forever.

In addition, she’s currently working on a series of educational eye health videos in Uzbek on YouTube with the participation of Uzbek doctors working abroad as well as foreign experts. By the way, about doctors from Uzbekistan: “Perhaps there are more of them abroad than we think. I know several of them in the US, Australia, Israel, African countries and in the former Soviet states.

For those who would like to gain experience abroad, learning English and reading latest research literature is the first step. Experience in a system with good undergraduate and postgraduate education system is the next. Uzbekistan may not offer this universally as yet but there are some excellent centres in the country. Another step will be to apply for scholarships and membership programs of international medical societies abroad.



TOP

Top 20 PROGRESSIVE UZBEKISTANIS

ACCORDING TO UZBEKISTAN'S CLUB



SAIDA MIRZIYOYEVA,
Aide to the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan



HAMID SODIK,
political scientist



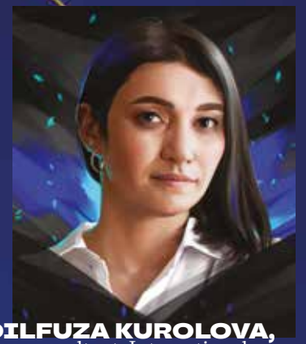
FIRUZ ALLAYEV,
Founder of Asaxiy and Asaxiy Books online stores



ALISHER SADULLAYEV,
Director of Youth Affairs Agency



AZAMAT ATAJANOV,
Editor-in-Chief, Gazeta.uz online newspaper



DILFUZA KUROLOVA,
law consultant, International Commission of Jurists



ZAFAR KHOSHIMOV,
founder of Korzinka supermarket chain



KOMIL ALLAMJONOV,
Head of Department for Information Policy, Presidential Administration



SEVARA NAZARKHON,
Honored Artist of Uzbekistan



BOBUR ISMOILOV,
artist



KAMOLA MAKHMUDOVA,
EBRD Director



TIMUR ISHMETOV,
First Deputy Adviser to the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan on Economic Development



AZIZ SHOHAKIMOV,
Art director and conductor, Strasbourg Philharmonic Orchestra



MIRSHAKAR FAYZULLOYEV,
standup comedian



NODIRBEK ABDUSATTOROV,
rapid chess world champion



IRINA MATVIENKO,
founder of Nemolchi.uz



BEHZOD ABDURAIMOV,
pianist



BEKZOD KHOSHIMOV,
economist



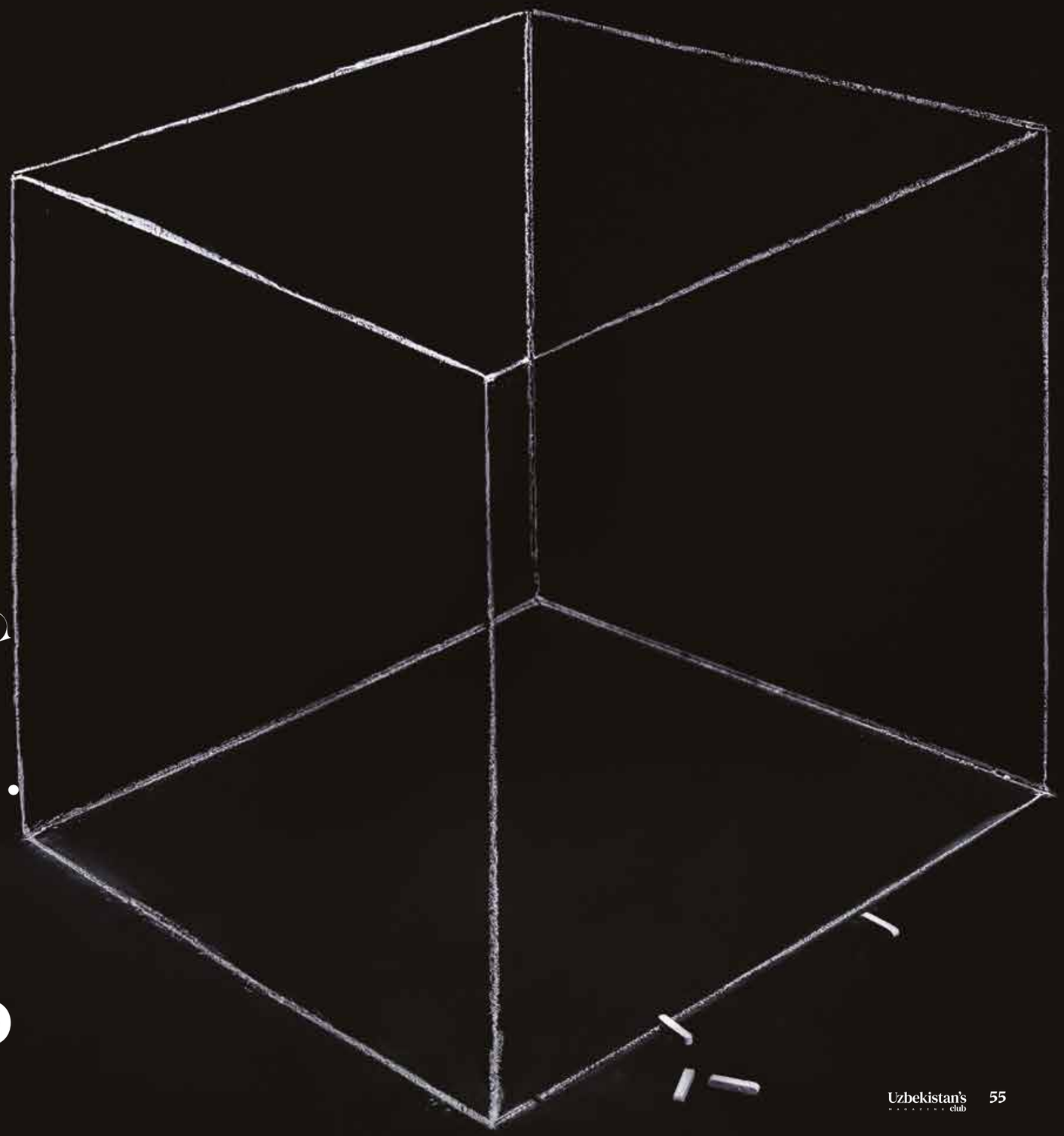
BOTIR KOBILOV,
economist

MUTABAR KHUSHVAKTOVA,
environmental activist, founder of O'rikguli project

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY OF BUSINESS.

HOW MUCH IS OUR SOCIETY WORTH?

Text: Sasha Ivanyujenko



The World Bank believes that Corporate Responsibility is the intention of entrepreneurs to contribute to sustainable economic development by working with staff, their families, the local community, and society at large to improve the quality of life in ways beneficial to business and conducive to development.

This exhaustive formulation of social responsibility has done little to add clarity to what our country has faced – mountains of contradictions, arbitrary interpretations, incomprehensible actions, incompetent PR and misunderstanding of why this is essential.

Society in Uzbekistan is scarcely inclined to calculate, and this grants big business a sense of full repayment of all debts to people. Every time journalists and bloggers talk about monopolies, trees cut down for new buildings, lack of gas in individual homes, general use of subsidies for electricity. In response, they are given a formulary that companies in this country consider perfect: "We provide jobs and pay taxes."

Most entrepreneurs consider social responsibility to be something like charity and goodwill, for which we need to be thankful.

But it is not. And if our society were able to calculate, then big businesses would heavily owe us. With taxes, you can build a hospital, but it is impossible to restore the health that the townspeople have lost due to dirty air. You can pay a hundred times more for water than an ordinary consumer, but can barely return the river.

Global business is possibly hurting the world by using common resources equal to its profits. And while it makes money, we are left with damage. Where people know how to count, business creates social strategies and programs to offset losses and pay off debts. In advanced nations, society demands that the debt be compensated not just to fellow citizens, but also asks what exactly the large corporation did for the world. This concept generates major policy strategies for environmental protection, improvement of living standards and new opportunities for depressed regions.

And this is fair.

Fair, ethical and, no matter how paradoxical it might sound, beneficial for the business itself.

For business, we and our consumption are critical



People are the value

The most valuable resource for any business is you and me. Consumption is the wind that pulls the sail of any business. And it is in its interests to make sure that we:

First, live long. For each entrepreneur, we cost very specific figures, namely, the cost of goods that we buy daily, monthly, annually. We buy avocados, change the home appliances, we have five pairs of jeans, although one would be enough. And every year our value grows; the more we live, the more we will let them earn on us.

Second: We should be healthy. A sick person's consumption drops, he/she works for medicines and feeds only pharmaceutical companies. Or does not work at all, is not treated and does not buy anything, looks into eternity and becomes cheaper for business before eyes.

Third, we should be ambitious. We should strive to the top of the pyramid, renovate our way of life, follow innovations, follow fashion, strive for excellence, study, travel. This means that we should have the opportunity to make good money, and the task of the business is not to save on our salaries and encourage us to improve in the profession. This is also a social responsibility.

Fourth: We should be patriotic. We not only have to be rich, healthy and alive, but the national business should try to make sure that we do not leave the country. This means making public space livable, air cleaner, water more affordable, cities greener, and roads more comfortable. The task is not trivial, but it is within the power of a business that really wants to grow in its own country.

ESG
(Environment, Social, Governance) metrics

Because doing business on scorched land is impossible. You can rule it and even maintain the appearance of a state. It can be robbed through proxy oligarchs. But it is impossible to honestly make big money.

If you do not invest in society, then sooner or later, it will cease to be valuable. Buckwheat, gasoline and sugar end up being the only things you can earn on. We have already had encountered that scenario, and famine continues to unfold in many parts of the world. And for this, among other things, you can "thank" the business that did not invest or fled the country.

Last, but not least, a consideration for every entrepreneur. A company can make a hundred dollars and the entrepreneur will eat it up. He will eat a hundred thousand, and a million. But it is physically impossible to eat hundreds of millions of dollars, if we are not talking about freaks who buy diamond toilets, personal Boeings and turn yachts into branches of the Louvre. Therefore, top corporations around the world create funds, come up with social programs, sponsor scientific developments and move humanity towards prosperity. This is their moral duty, which they give back to people with gratitude for allowing them to become super rich.

And it matters little how much you earn. It's just that everyone has their own measure, for someone it's an oil tank, for someone it's a cup. Cup is enough to feel yourself as a human being.

I would like ESG standards to be routine and commonplace in our country. I would like "charity" to disappear as a notion, to remain only in the form of sadaqa for mosques. So that press services and PR people do not expose photos of food packages that they distribute to the poor. I do not want to see charitable plov and one-time assistance to children from low-income families.

I would like an entrepreneur to be vocal about what they are doing to grow as a company, move the economy, and make society valuable and strong.

Well, or in the case of plov, well-fed :)

NETFLIX

Netflix is offering 13 months of paid maternity leave to all of its employees, including adoption cases. It can be taken at any time in a child's life, not just immediately after birth. This is a voluntary commitment that the company has made to improve the quality of life of employees. On average, Netflix competitors in the U.S. pay no more than 4 months of maternity leave.

WELLS FARGO

Wells Fargo, one of the major U.S. financial institutions, annually allocates 1.5% of its profits to more than 14,000 non-profit organizations. First of all, they address pressing issues of food security and renewable energy. In 2021, the company launched the Institute for Sustainable Finance, through which it is channeling $500 billion through to 2030 to fund projects in sustainable business and support scientific research towards reduction in carbon dependence.

Lego has set itself the goal of using only sustainable materials for the production of its goods by 2030 and completely eliminating plastic packaging by 2025. To do this, the company has invested $164 million to set up the Sustainable Materials Center, where researchers experiment with new biomaterials. By 2018, the company began producing 150 types of blocks made from sugar cane. They will gradually replace the traditional plastic Lego blocks.

Cloud software giant Salesforce has adopted a 1-1-1 model. The company donates 1% of its products, 1% of its shares and 1% of its employees' time to non-profit organizations. Together with schools in San Francisco and Oakland, the company developed and implemented a special project that helped improve algebra scores and raise the percentage of "good" and "excellent" scoring students in computer science. Thus, the company invests in its future employees from a very young age..

The task is not trivial, but it is within the power of a business that really wants to grow in its own country.



TOP 7

SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE COMPANIES

ACCORDING TO UZBEKISTAN'S CLUB

PAYME «PAYME MAHALLA» (SINCE 2022)

The Payme fintech application offers a special mechanism to enable users to be part of charity projects. To this end, they donate the accumulated loyalty points to certain missions created by the application. The key difference between this scheme and its counterparts is that Payme runs charity projects independently rather than just serving as an intermediary, transferring user funds. To date, more than 8 thousand people have been part of Payme Mahalla. During its missions, PCs and printers were purchased for schools in the Republic of Karakalpakstan and Namangan region, along with sports equipment and backpacks with stationery.

SANOAT QURILISH BANK "IBRAT FARZANDLARI" (SINCE 2023)

Sanoat Qurilish Bank has supported the project Ibrat Farzandlari (Descendants of Ibrat), set up with the help of the Youth Affairs Agency. The scheme seeks to offer the Uzbek youth free online video lessons to learn languages of the world. The project has grown considerably popular to date – more than 350 thousand people have subscribed to the Ibrat Farzandlari YouTube channel. The project can help people learn Arabic, Korean, Japanese, Italian, Spanish, Turkish, Indian, Karakalpak, English, German, Chinese, Russian, and French. The scheme has been 'enhancing' in geography, offering more different languages to learn.

COCA-COLA "COOZIN" (SINCE 2021)

During the pandemic, Coca-Cola supported the Coozin startup project, a home-cooked food delivery service. The scheme offers an opportunity for women who love and know how to cook deliciously to earn on their hobby. The platform helps housewives to get additional income and develop. In addition, with the help of Coozin, participants receive professional training in cooking. The platform has thus far had more than a thousand women from across Uzbekistan complete vocational courses.

"MATONAT FOOTBALL" CENTER FOR AMPUTEES' SOCCER DEVELOPMENT (2021-2022)

Matonat (Courage) is the world's most celebrated amputee soccer team. The legendary Uzbekistanis are five-time world champions. They started their fight on the football pitch back in 1988. Since 2021, InfinBank has sponsored the "Matonat Football" Center for Amputees' Soccer Development, designed to promote this sport in Uzbekistan. Thanks to support from the bank, the first-ever national championship among amputee footballers, the Independence Cup, took place in 2022. The Matonat club earned bronze at the World Championship in the same year.

INTERNATIONAL BEVERAGES TASHKENT PERSONAL COMPUTERS FOR NUKUS SCHOOLS (2022)

Major companies rarely attach significance to social responsibility projects in Karakalpakstan, and every one of the latter deserves keen attention. In August 2022, PepsiCo's bottler in Uzbekistan, International Beverages Tashkent, donated 400 personal computers to general education schools in Nukus. PCs are designed for the development of creative professions among youth – 3D modeling, video design, and other complex tasks. In accordance with the agreement, the Nukus branch of IT Park monitors the targeted use of computers in fifty-one schools.

AKFA GROUP MEHR DOG SHELTER (2021-2022)

In 2021, AKFA Group of Companies built a modern shelter for 1,000 dogs in the Parkent district of Tashkent region. Aviaries and veterinary units were placed on the territory of one hectare under a staff of employees, including professional dog handlers. More than 850 dogs found their home in the shelter a year later. They are fed, treated, and trained there. The shelter is home to dogs with disabilities. It also offers possibilities for classes with children, where they explore their love for animals. Regrettably, by 2023, AKFA Group seriously reduced funding for this unique project of business social responsibility, and now Mehr relies on the help of volunteers, sponsors, and patrons.

AGROBANK SCHOOL OF WATER WORKERS (SINCE 2023)

The extensive introduction of water-saving technologies has been a pressing issue in Uzbekistan amid the mounting shortage of drinking water. To address the problem, in May 2023, Agrobank set up and financed a project, School of Water Workers. Five training groups armed with modern equipment went on a tour across the country to teach water-saving technologies to 60 thousand farmers and 4 thousand mirabs (traditionally, water distribution control officers). By September 2023, over 50 thousand farmers have passed training through the scheme. Anyone willing can participate in the project for free – all you need is to submit an application by phone or using a Telegram bot.

SHUKHRAT
LATIPOV

Development & Demographic DIVIDEND



The foundations of national economic growth are universal all over the world and are well-studied. If formerly, priority advantages were prescribed to natural resources and geographical location, then now they are replaced by the quality of institutions, culture (attitude and trust of people to each other, social norms) and human capital.

Humanity is on the verge of the fourth technical revolution. It radically changes the labor market, with many professions simply disappearing or demand for them falling sharply.

We can see this in the case of Uzbekistan, where, as a result of the swift development of electronic trade in subsequent years, internet stores are reducing the number of traditional sellers. New banks with convenient and fast mobile applications demonstrate that it is possible to work even without a large staff of employees. Entrepreneurs are using artificial intelligence capabilities instead of a series of activities from journalists, copywriters, designers, translators and marketers.

This transformation can be benefited not by attracting raw materials or financial flows but by countries that have made the development of human capital a priority.

Human capital (HC) is the knowledge, skills and health that people invest and accumulate throughout their lives. This allows them to harness their potential as useful members of society, thereby contributing to national development.

Uzbekistan is rich in labor resources. However, it has had hard time converting them into human capital. UNDP Human Development Index (IRI, September 2022) ranks Uzbekistan 101st among 191 nations, along with Jordan and Libya. The country has entered the category of high IRI, but at the same time, its indicator is below the middle for this group, as well as for the countries of Europe and Central Asia.

The development of HC is facilitated by improving the quality of food, medical care, education, by job creation and training in professional knowledge. The experience of advanced nations confirms a direct link between the level of development of human capital and the level of socio-economic well-being.

I would like to dwell on education, taking into account the breadth of the subject area. The more educated people in the country, the higher the quality of HC, labor productivity, the level of innovation, while combating poverty, unemployment and crime is also more effective. Experience of developed countries is quite suggestive in this field ,and it is confirmed by various studies.

School education is the principal component in the formation of human capital. Spending on primary education has a positive effect on GDP growth in the long term in developing countries.

According to the statistics agency of Uzbekistan, the number of students in the country's schools has increased by 33.9% – from 4.82 million in 2016 to 6.46 million in 2022. During this period, teachers grew in number by 35.3% – from 400 thousand to 541 thousand. If seven years ago there were 12.06 students per teacher, now this figure has improved slightly – 11.93, however, still worse than in 2010, which was 10.9.

Official data suggests that in early 2021, the number of students exceeded the project capacity of schools by 1.2 million children, which resulted in overflowed classes, and students were forced to study in two shifts (about 75% of schools). If this continues in this way, this difference can reach 2 million by 2025.



EDUCATION • PROSPECTS • SCHOOL • INDUSTRY4.0

• INTELLECT • STATISTICS • UNIVERSITY • PISA • DEVELOPMENT • SINGAPORE • YOUTH

NOT NATURAL RESOURCES, BUT HUMAN CAPITAL IS THE #1 ASSET FOR FUTURE UZBEKISTAN

During 2016-2022, the number of schools increased by a total of 803 – from 9,719 to 10,522. However, only a part of this growth is due to the construction of new schools. After the transition to 11 years of education, the buildings of about 400 vocational colleges were returned to schools.

To enhance the capacity of educational institutions to 1.2 million people, it is necessary to conditionally build 1,000 schools with 1,200 seats each. If 40 schools are built a year, it takes 25 years to solve the problem (the number of students fluctuates, but this figure has been growing every year). In the meantime, according to preliminary estimates, the difference between the project capacity of students and schools at the end of the 2022/2023 school year reached 1.23 million people.



To improve the quality of education, qualified pedagogical personnel are also needed along with infrastructure. A decent salary would be required to attract and keep them.

Therefore, a sharp increase in funding for the educational and healthcare sectors is vital. As a solution, it is possible to consider the abolition of individual benefits and preferences for business, as well as the abandonment of state-owned enterprises that work at a loss. Then the budget will have trillions of sums of funds that can be redirected to the social sphere.

When it comes to a lack of schools, it is possible to temporarily use public facilities until new educational institutions are built. In particular, more than 1,000 government properties are now being traded. It will be advisable to carry out an inventory and determine on which building bases schools can be established that meet educational standards. On top of this, there are also former school and kindergarten buildings on the list of structures for sale.

In 2022, an assessment of the quality of education was launched within the framework of the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA), carried out by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in Uzbekistan. State organizations should actively use the results of studies as a means of improving education.

Our government, first of all, needs to ensure the quality of primary education of the population. It is important to develop a strategy for the long-term development of school education, discuss it with local and foreign experts, and take into account the opinions of scholars.

Then, on this basis, it is essential to establish a professional, additional and higher educational program based on the requirements of the national economy and development directions. The goal is to form a highly skilled workforce not only for the local but also for the world market.

For example, the government of Singapore was previously engaged in the professional training of technical specialists to work in their enterprises in cooperation with foreign companies. In doing so, the companies, on the recommendation of the government, prepared twice as many technical specialists as they needed, then selected the best graduates from among them.

The remaining qualified personnel were used to attract new investors. Later, the Institute of Technical Education under the Ministry of Education of Singapore was set up on the basis of professional training centers. To meet market demands for one or another, it began to attract employers to participate in devising training syllabi and courses.

Singapore's main government agencies work in harmony and act as a bridge between education and business, taking action in response to incoming appeals.

Our schoolchildren's successes in the International Mathematical Olympiad, that is, three bronze medals, and the victory in the World Chess Olympiad are surely a good indicator.

Progress is obvious. Nonetheless, it is crucial that we achieve the desired results and deliver the required conditions for building a country of intelligent people. An important role is to be played by the introduction of a system with consistent measures. That is, there must be continuity of efforts and coordination among different agencies. By changing its image, Uzbekistan can show that the country is rich not only in natural resources, but also in human capital.



KHUSHNUDBEK KHUDAYBERDIEV

LAWYER, BLOGGER

WHAT IS IT LIKE TO BLOG IN UZBEKISTAN

In Uzbekistan, the blogging industry has seen swift development amid the enhancement of the media world. To cite just one example, Uzbekistan has 132 thousand Telegram channels and 21 thousand open groups (chats), totaling 1 billion subscribers. This is the 3rd largest national indicator in the world after Russia and Iran. The number of subscribers of the Top 100 most popular Telegram channels operating in Uzbekistan totals 68 million 874 thousand.

So, who exactly is a blogger? What can be done to ensure quality content and get rid of fake news at a time of increased information flows?



STATISTICS

2,140 MASS MEDIA REGISTERED IN UZBEKISTAN

120,505 ACTIVE UZ DOMAINS.

31 MILLION INTERNET USERS. INCLUDING:

TELEGRAM	30,6 MILLION
OK	18 MILLION
FACEBOOK	7,6 MILLION
INSTAGRAM	7,1 MILLION
VK	1,4 MILLION
LINKEDIN	528 THOUSAND
TWITTER	148 THOUSAND



WHO IS A BLOGGER?

Article 3 of the Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan on Informatization provides the following definition: “Blogger is a natural person who posts information, including for discussion by users, of socio-economic and other nature on his/her freely accessible website and (or) website page in the Internet global information network.

In fact, everyone who falls under this definition is a blogger. This means there are several million bloggers in Uzbekistan, and there is nothing to worry about. Yet many hardly consider themselves a blogger. For example, Uzbekistan’s Minister of Digital Technologies, Sherzod Shermatov, has Facebook, Telegram, and Twitter profiles and regularly posts information. Is he a blogger, then? In accordance with the law, yes! But he barely regards himself as a blogger. There are millions of such examples.

THE DRIVER AND THE BLOGGER

In my opinion, to be considered a blogger, you need to look at the fact that it has become a profession and has earned income. I will explain it in the example of drivers. Who is a legal driver? A person driving a vehicle on the roads. Everyone who drives a car, regardless of profession or position, is a driver. But when it comes to the profession, we consider only people who work as drivers in an organization or earn money as taxi drivers. 10 million people drive in Uzbekistan, then there are 10 million drivers. But our mind accepts only those in professional activity and earn money as drivers.

It is the same with blogging. People who are constantly active, professionally engaged in this work and, perhaps, will receive income from it should be referred to as bloggers. Although, under the law, everyone who maintains a page on a social network is considered a blogger

IF YOU DON'T CRITICIZE, YOU ARE NOT A BLOGGER.

Looking at the issue from the subscribers' viewpoint is even more interesting. In international practice, bloggers create content on tourism, fashion, culinary, auto, sports, arts, and other entertainment topics, whereas, in Uzbekistan, a person who does not criticize the government and does not write about politics is not usually considered a blogger. True, the situation has lately been changing a little. I believe this is associated with the development of freedom of speech in Uzbekistan. Freedom of speech in this country has experienced a revolution, not an evolutionary development. Western nations have been developing evenly, while we opened up suddenly following a long period of closedness. It's like storing water in a dam for quite a long time and then releasing it.

People had a grave thirst for political topics, and therefore, there was a great demand for critical bloggers. As I said above, this trend will also calm down over time

STALKING THE BLOGGERS

In Uzbekistan, many believe that bloggers have been growing in number. They need to be regulated, and an organization needs to be set up to create a list of bloggers and issue them certificates. That is a misconception. Registering bloggers or uniting them into one organization will endanger our information space. Because any list eventually leads to a blacklist. This leads to growth in 'mask' and fake accounts and anonymous profiles.

Anonymity means no accountability. When reacting on their own behalf, anyone tries to write it as legitimately as possible. However, they know very little about the laws. And when they are anonymous, even if they are geniuses, they are stripped of all responsibility.

In Robert Louis Stevenson's Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, Henry Jekyll invents a medicine that turns the taker into a completely different person. Kind and good-natured by character, the doctor changes his appearance, becomes a savage, and commits murders. That is because people cannot recognize him by his face; he is anonymous, in other words.

That is why the more persecution the bloggers endure, the cloudier the information space, and the more the government suffers.

TOO MUCH OF LIABILITY

In Uzbekistan, the mistakes of journalists and bloggers are considered a serious crime. More specifically, in many articles of the Criminal Code, committing the same act in the mass media or on the Internet is regarded as aggravating.

For example, if you insult someone on a microphone in a stadium with 30 thousand people, that will be a case for administrative liability. If you do so on the Internet, it is a direct aggravating factor. Even if only 50 people saw your post. It makes little sense.

It is wrong to threaten a journalist or blogger with criminal liability for slander and insult. It should be gradually decriminalized and transferred to administrative jurisdiction. If someone's honor has been degraded, it generally belongs to civil jurisdiction. Let him collect a civil penalty for moral damage. There is little need for the state to intervene.

In many countries, defamation or insult does not cause criminal liability. In our country, regrettably, it remains one of the weapons of intimidation and persecution.



SUBJECTIVE

JAMSHIDKHON ZIYOKHONOV

POTENTIAL BEYOND LABOR MIGRATION





HOW CAN THE FOLKS DISCOVER ME IF I FAIL TO DISCOVER **MYSELF?**

Over the past three years, YouTube's Uzbek segment has grown significantly richer, with mounting quality content and a subsequent natural increase in interest among youth. People keep asking me, "I want to open a YouTube channel. What can I talk about?" That is the wrong question!

If you posed the question that way, you are not ready to develop a YouTube project. Before launching the Subyektiv project, I asked myself: Who am I? What knowledge or opinion can I contribute to society? What topics make me wonder or bother me? What topics am I ready to talk about endlessly?

Ecology! This topic had been bothering me for many years, so we dedicated the first issue of Subyektiv to environmental issues. It worked, with thousands of comments, tens of thousands of likes, hundreds of thousands of views... This is my advice to those who want to start creating on YouTube! By asking yourself these questions, you will find the answers to who you are and what you can offer to the public. Those who make it to this industry just to make money will hardly fly high.

PEOPLE **LIKED IT,** BUT NOW THERE'S LITTLE ROOM FOR COMPROMISE ON THIS ISSUE

Our value is to create interesting, quality, and useful content. Interesting but at the same time not useless, useful but at the same time not of bad quality. Everything matters.

If the purpose were just hype or recognition, we would just ask a famous person awkward questions, interview them, or do a little joke show. Unfortunately, our society still consumes more of this type of content.

When we started the Subyektiv project, it was an odd question how the Uzbek-speaking audience would receive that type of content, but the actual results were far from what we had expected. The project proved that it is possible to gain the attention and recognition of the audience even with quality and useful content. Thus, people are ready to consume high-quality content, and it is possible to reproduce such content without fear.



LAMENESS IN EDUCATION IS A **CENTRAL TOPIC.** IT IS A MIDWIFE OF PROBLEMS

The deplorable state of our education system led me to accidentally enter the media industry. I applied to a university, spending four years of hard work to prepare for admissions exams, and at that time, I had great expectations of higher education.

I was motivated by the thought that if it is so difficult to get into a university, then the knowledge provided there must be corresponding to it. Regretful as they are, the years I spent studying confirmed the opposite of that idea. I was completely disappointed with the higher education system and... decided to make a video about all the faults and shortcomings of the system. The video changed my life by 180 degrees and opened the way to the world of media.

Later, together with our team, we raised the issues of education, its level, and high literacy, sometimes separately, sometimes around our samples of creativity. Since, to my mind, most of the pressing issues in Uzbekistan are rooted in the lack of knowledge and education level. Had its quality been good in the past, and had it covered all the youths, would thousands of our compatriots be now sweeping the streets in Russia?! This is a question that does not require an answer.

POTENTIAL BEYOND **LABOR** MIGRATION

I was convinced of the fact that Uzbeks are not handymen after talking to some of our expats who have "fulfilled themselves" in different countries. To cite an example: myriads of our compatriots work for giant corporations such as Google, Microsoft, Amazon, eBay, and Facebook in Silicon Valley, considered the pivot of all new technologies and innovations on earth.

The most interesting part of the story is that the Google engineers I talked to come from remote villages in Uzbekistan that almost no one has ever heard of. But they have made their way from such environs to the top company in the world. I am convinced that Uzbeks, as such, can be discovered anywhere across the globe. If enough attention is paid to our country's education quality, imagine how much this effect will increase.

WE MUST LEARN TO **RESPECT** OURSELVES.

If we imagine a nation as a mosaic, each piece is a certain citizen. The USA, Russia, Korea – no matter where we are, every thought and impression formed about us cannot help but affect the nation's image.

While preparing our show about the US-Mexico border, I felt very sorry for our compatriots. Risking their lives, spending tens of thousands of dollars, and walking a long way through swamps, mountains, and forests to ask for asylum in a foreign country is sad. We should always bear in mind one thing: every Uzbek who illegally crossed the border, every national who went with a student or tourist visa and stayed illegally, will lead to a change in attitude towards the rest of our people.

Just one example: many Uzbek youths who go to the United States to study choose to stay longer than prescribed. This means that students who really want to go to study cannot get a visa because we all have 'Uzbek' written on our passports

POST SCRIPTUM

Every Uzbek citizen is an ambassador of Uzbekistan. I would like all our compatriots to feel this from the heart.

Globally, we all share the same mission: to say "I am Uzbek," not with shame but with pride. When someone says, "I am Uzbek," everyone should think of Uzbekistan as a wonderful people.

WOULD SHE

CHANGE THE WORLD WITH HIGHER EDUCATION?

I think any Uzbek girl wishing to get a higher education has to confront this doubting and dismissive question at least once in a lifetime. She has heard this from her parents, loved ones, relatives, and neighbors. I heard it, too, to be honest. Yet luckily enough, it was not my family members but a granny in our neck of the woods.

Someone having a son and a daughter happened to wonder, they say, which one of them he should send to a university.

The answer would suggest that he educate his daughter because, they said, a generation would be educated if one gives education to their son. If a daughter attains education, the nation will be educated.

To begin with, why does a girl need to study?

First and foremost, learning is vital for all of us, whether a boy or a girl!

It's no secret that a person who reads and studies has a broad outlook, wider worldview, thorough thought, and high humane values. If the parents are intelligent and enlightened, the children who they bring up will definitely strive for these values.

A strange trend is in progress in our society of late. People tend to refuse their daughters a higher education, nor would they have them acquire skills or vocational knowledge. Yet if a perfect match – in their view – shows up, they prove swift to get their daughter married. Well, she gets married and is in service of her in-laws, husband, and so forth. Time arrives when she is pregnant and needs to go to the doctor, and that's where all the mess begins. Her husband and Co. demand that she be observed and treated by a female physician, female nurses, and so on. Excuse me, weren't you the ones who used to insist that girls don't need to study?

And unfortunately, there are enough of those who think that way. And in the end, we must educate girls so that we get rid of such insulting demands. Education will help them find the place they deserve in society. It helps bolster their confidence. It benefits people around. Their children will be educated. Every family is kind of a cell of a whole society. As long as the cell is healthy, it is natural that the entire body, that is, the society, will be healthy, too, to develop and improve.

Lately, I feel very happy to see girls studying science, technology, medicine, culture, sports, and IT. If they put their acquired knowledge into practice and generate great things for humanity, we know for sure that the years spent seeking knowledge will prove worth it. Thus, do not block girls from the path of knowledge, but support them and give them wings! You will definitely see the fruit.

Here, I would like to tell you an anecdote.

Once, I received a call from an unknown number. It is a norm. I picked up the phone.

—Hello?

—Sister, assalamu alaykum!

—Waalaykum assalam!

—You don't recall my voice, do you?!

—No idea, sister, excuse me.

—Akida-opa, I am Muslima.

—What a surprise! How've you been?

We talked for about half an hour. This girl contacted us when we were distributing food with our volunteer team during the COVID-19 lockdown. His father was an ordinary worker, but at that time, he was unemployed. Mother was a housewife. Muslima is the eldest of three children, followed by two brothers. They are still in school. I gave their address to our teammates, and they went and gave them some food.

Muslima called me a year later. She even cried with joy.

So, as I mentioned above, the family is modest, prayerful, honest people. Dad is extremely humble. Muslima was keen in 3D design.

Should your father pay for your education or support the family in everyday needs?



Of course, tuition is not cheap, and a laptop that can use 3D software is also expensive. Her mother would object to her seeking knowledge because it meant a lot of money. So the former would wonder if the father should pay for the girl's education or support the family in everyday needs. You have brothers, too, the mother would point out. Our sister gets depressed because her dreams would hardly come true. The father, noticing his daughter's sadness, talks to her mother. The latter repeats the same words: Would she change the world with higher education?

Father leaves home, telling his wife he has a say in his children's lives. Everyone is confused. The girl hears scolding from her mother, saying that it was she who made her father angry. The brothers also join their mother to reproach their sister.

The next day, the father comes later than usual and tells his daughter to be ready tomorrow morning to leave home. Everyone in the house wonders what that would mean.

"Will keep caring for my daughter as long as I live. She will study!"



Early the next day, father and daughter leave home and take a bus downtown for a training course. The day before, the father had come to the course building that his daughter had told him about earlier and talked. The daughter's eyes are wide open in surprise. They go to a store selling electronic equipment. The father buys a laptop for his daughter for a solid sum. The girl feels extremely happy that she can't help but laugh and cry on the spot and say "Thank you, Daddy" from excitement.

When they go home, the mother meets them more displeased with words of scorn and disdain, while the father looks at her and utters, "As long as I'm alive, I won't leave my daughter alone. My daughter will study, grow up educated and be happy. No more objection. No more complaint!"

Thus, Muslima starts her studies in the training center, and eventually, she finds a job. She told me that her services soon got rather popular with locals. "I gave my first salary to my dad and mom. Dad couldn't help but almost cry, saying that he was very proud of her, and kissed me on my forehead. I found out later that he had agreed with his superiors to work in two shifts in order to earn a laptop for me and for my studies."

She told me she now wanted to buy a car for her father. "My dad is uneducated, he's been an ordinary blue-collar worker, he gave his everything for me, so much that now I want to make him happy. His birthday in February, so I must catch up with the day, saving money for a car. So far I have saved 1,875 dollars."

Honestly, I felt very glad for Muslima.

Fathers – who are heroes to their daughters, give them wings, and are kind to them – May your health be sound!

Akida Khanum



UZBEK CUISINE IN THE HEART OF LONDON:

OshPaz

makes tastes and cultures meet

Text: Nafisa Finey



To speak of London as the world's gastronomic capital would be an exaggeration. Yes, it is home to ritzy restaurants, the oldest and largest fish and meat markets, but not all dishes are native English (even their famed fish and chips is borrowed from the Jews). In addition, here you can't buy a pot-bellied, juicy Yusupov tomato, soaked in the aroma of sunny fields, with juice that is about to break through the thin skin and splash on you. Neither can one encounter Mirzachul melons, torpedoes with juicy white flesh and delicate taste, unforgettable aroma, nor hot, scalding patir from a smoking tandir. But, yes, now the British capital city can boast Uzbek pilaf!

For some time, the English did not eat well, and it was a historical problem. The world's first industrial economy had long relied on imported canned and processed foods. The chain linking land, agriculture and the consumer table has been severed.

Even the middle and upper classes would usually find themselves limited to a sad choice of fried and boiled meat, overcooked vegetables and faded sour puddings. To be sure, exceptions were in abundance: good restaurants, cozy local cafés, yet the British cuisine scarcely had the best reputation in Europe, nor among the Americans who lived here during the war.

By 1952, the range of available products began to change, although not quickly. Some of the most popular new goods were American imports. And there were reasons for that. Except from the natural refrigerator that winter presented in the UK, refrigeration was still a rarity. In 1960, only about a fifth of British households had refrigerators, and many used to buy frozen food from Argentina. Extensive supply chains that today provide exotic fruits and vegetables out of season did not exist. Melons and watermelons, avocados and mangoes were a curiosity.

But the British had a huge need for better food. The English love festive holidays and they have a huge range of them!

Since the 1950s, Chinese immigrants from Hong Kong started opening Chinese restaurants all over Britain. Sailors from Bangladesh began to seize empty shops selling fish sticks and corner shops for selling simple street food. However, the large-scale spread of Indian restaurants was still ahead. The UK's first Wimpy Bar opened in 1954, offering burgers and hot dogs, and became an instant success. Gaggia coffee machines brought good coffee to milk bars all over the country for the first time. Small Italian grocery stores sprang up in Soho and across Scotland.

The Uzbek cuisine found its niche much later. And it happened thanks to the street food Oshpaz, or rather its brilliant changemaker Muzaffar Sadikov, the founder of the chain, Uzbek pilaf fit into the gastronomic map of London.

Muzaffar flew to London to study information technology, he even has a diploma in IT. He had cooked since childhood. As a kid, in his spare time, he used to help his father and grandfather – cooks, with cleaning carrots for pilaf, boiling noodles for lagman and so forth. He would watch, learn, taste, smell, analyze proportions, combinations. At the age of 18, he could already cook pilaf on his own for a great number of people.

In London, he began a busy life: renting an apartment, preparing for exams, keep up with everything. Does this eternally awake and chewing city take energy or give it away? He had yet to find out.

Muzaffar found his niche. Like many students, he started with part-time jobs in restaurants. Nonetheless, fortunately enough, the hands remembered the skill of rolling dough, peeling vegetables. At first, he would take on everything. The restaurants he worked were Turkish, Italian and French, those are the people who really knew a lot about cooking. Muzaffar started as an assistant and worked his way up to chef. He was in demand: even French chefs recognized his talents. Thus, part-time work turned into the main craft.

But Muzaffar's real talent was barely in information technology, nor even in cooking. He could cook, and cook very well, but he turned out to be a talented entrepreneur.

He certainly wanted to bring Uzbek meals into the London life, feed them with fragrant pilaf and achichuk, treat them to tea from a bowl. Thus Muzaffar began to study the market, identify crucial locations, find useful contacts. Districts of London have different tastes, lifestyles, links to certain facilities, offices or houses.

Muzaffar's was a strong will to introduce Uzbek meals to the life and diet of Londoners

The popularity of Uzbek cuisine grew to become part of a big trend in street food markets.

Traditionally, tourists love the South Kensington area with its proximity to good shops, museums. Young people now have a new point for recreation and meetings – Battersea, an area beside a reconstructed power plant. The South Bank opposite the center is also a popular place for food of different levels and tastes, and it is home to convenient transport networks and a range of points of attraction – the South Bank embankment itself, the Tate Modern Museum, the Borough Market.
East London, historically poor and abandoned even less than a decade ago, has now changed a lot; new restaurants have emerged: the Olympic Village, East Village in Stratford, inherited after the 2012 Olympics. A large area in Canning Town, where a school and a concert hall of the English National Ballet are located on the territory of the London City Island residential quarter.
Yet it was problematic to find a place for Uzbek food, where you would expect a decent flow of customers and a stable income for the next five years. Muzaffar saw how Uzbek restaurants opened with a gracious menu, gorgeous serving, an interesting interior, and then quickly closed.
When he worked in an Italian restaurant, he would often walk down the streets and inquire into diverse concepts: Italian, Thai, Brazilian cuisine. After numerous studies, experiments and conversations with people, he came up with the idea of creating an Uzbek street food. He drew attention to the successful example of street food markets where people could enjoy dishes of different cultures. After all, in a restaurant you have to sit and wait for a customer to come in, and with street food you go to the customer yourself.
It's always easier to come up with an idea than to implement it. The more so in London. Where few people knew not only what the Uzbek cuisine was like, but also the geographical location of Uzbekistan. Where-where on the map is it, they asked him when he was knocking out a place for his first stall at the market in Soho. After he convinced them, told, showed, submitted the required documents, he had to wait for six months for a place to free up at the street market in Soho, known as Street Food Union. And after testing, a special commission tried pilaf, then allocated a tiny stall like the Pumpkin Godfather in the Cipollino fairy tale, 2 by 3 meters, so that they could cook pilaf for tourists and office workers for lunch.
"What? Pilaf?" his neighbors – Mexican, Indian, Greek, Italian cuisine chefs – would ask him with negligence.
"What, what?" the passer-by would wonder again, to whom Muzaffar and his team offered to try and test for free. Passers-by, tourists, office workers would stop, try, raise their eyebrows, smile.

At first it was very difficult, it was cold to stand on the market, there were times when the guys were happy if they managed to sell 20-30 portions of pilaf.
The first pilaf that Oshpaz sold was quite dietary, it was not that authentic, rich in spices and heavy, fatty. And it was adapted, designed for a static London resident. There was a little rice in it, a lot of meat, next to achichuk, a little cucumber salad with soured milk, Korean carrot salad, pickled cucumbers. Pilaf lovers grew in number from one day to another.
Six months later, the first complaint was to come, but not from customers. The market manager, in a typical restrained English style, sent a notification demanding to control the queue. The latter, the warning read, to the Oshpaz, closed all the neighboring stalls, and their owners complained that they had a hard time coping with the queue blocking them from the street. It was a success!
That's when Muzaffar looked around the market and realized that, as the ancestors used to say, he was visited by the goddess Humo, her other celebrated name being Semurg, that is, luck, and you need to grab her before it is too late.
Now the Oshpaz needed a permanent location, and Mercato Metropolitano was there to welcome it. Here Muzaffar had the opportunity to experiment with the menu and offer guests not only pilaf, but also other traditional Uzbek dishes such as manti, samsa and lagman. Manti, having become a hit of sales, opened new horizons of opportunities for Oshpaz. And it began to work successfully in various London markets, from Gherkin to Kings Cross.
The popularity of Uzbek cuisine in London became part of a big trend in street food markets. Now the most popular places to eat are Borough Market, Camden Market and Seven Dials Market, where Oshpaz cooks manti and lagman. Pilaf, the true king of Uzbek cuisine, has become a hit on Gherkin, where crowds of office workers enjoy this fragrant dish. It is remarkable that if a couple of years ago pilaf with mutton was hardly popular, now, cooked in accordance with all traditional canons, it has proved a success. Today you can go to the market and check out the magic: zirvak, a meat and veggie floor for pilaf, as well as rice languish in a huge cauldron, with a lot of vegetables, spices (a new trend is a vegetarian option), yet lamb pilaf is a hit of sales, nevertheless.
However, the Chef has little desire to stop there and take joy in his accomplishments. His confidence in the correctness of the chosen path is confirmed by his success and plans. He is preparing for the opening of new locations to present the atmosphere of Central Asia to Londoners and reveal to them the full depth of Uzbek culture through dishes.

Postscriptum from the author:

I remember the day when I went to celebrate Navruz at UCL, and the biggest queue was for pilaf at Oshpaz. A guy in such a native Uzbek skullcap was digging out layers of hot pilaf with a huge ladle, kapgir, from the smoking surface of a huge cauldron. He sprinkled each portion with pre-cut slices of meat. Then he laid out achichuk (salad with tomatoes and onions) next to it. There were pickles in a basket nearby.

I took a box of pilaf, sat down on a bench and closed my eyes. In my thoughts, I found myself on my grandmother's aivan, with a carved ceiling with ganj and windows in cracked wooden frames. On the hottest day it was cool there, and in winter my granny would set a cast-iron stove. In the center stood a simple wooden khontakhta covered with oilcloth. There was a dry isirik hanging on the wall, which my nan sometimes used when we had a cold. Suddenly I could smell spicy, piquant and delicious – she was serving pilaf... Perhaps Oshpaz managed to make Londoners fall in love with Uzbek meals, but it is for such moments that we love Oshpaz, for the opportunity to return to the past, and feel at home.

GOING BEYOND TRADITIONS

CULTURE

Text: Tigran Mkrtichev

It was formed a little later than the schools of Tashkent and Samarkand, but it actually has a very important place in the art of Uzbekistan. The further development of the Karakalpakstan school of visual arts is inextricably linked with the disintegration of the Soviet Union, the emergence of an independent Uzbekistan on the world map, and the extremely complex cultural processes that took place not only in Karakalpakstan, but in the entire country. How all this influenced the Karakalpakstan fine art is still a pressing issue to be brought to the level of professional research. There are artists who personally knew Igor Vasilyevich, who started working those years and continue to do so now: May they live long! Meanwhile, a new generation of Karakalpakstan artists has grown up, who are trying to go beyond the frontiers of the Karakalpakstan school of visual arts that has already had its mark in their works. These young people grew up in the Independence era. For them, the big world around them is concentrated in small gadgets, and it is possible to miraculously appear anywhere in the world through invisible internet networks. On the one hand, it opens up unprecedented opportunities. On the other hand, it masterfully sets the traps of postmodernism. At a time when artists of the older generation are trying to philosophize in their creations in order to perceive themselves and their art in a new space, and Tashkent art historians are looking for guidelines capable of taking the development of Uzbek visual art to a new level, the problem that remains unresolved, a small group of painters in Nukus were creating a trend boldly jumping over the traditions the Karakalpakstan visual art had formed.

They are not like the artists in their circle who are close to them with some kind of inspired stylistic 'insanity'. While preserving the bright palette of Karakalpakstan fine art, they offer a genre that can be defined as a search, a process, a movement. This dissimilarity forces us to look at them in the context of global arts. To be sure, the similarities that arise when looking at their work are generally considered the history of world arts. However, this does not reduce their creative value in any sense. The difficulty in their development is that they are almost in a vacuum; that is, the unformed art market of Uzbekistan barely knows how to approach their works. But that hardly stops them.

Before presenting the works of young artists, we should have told you these things above.

For people interested in fine arts, the word Nukus means a lot.

First and foremost, it is home to the Savitsky Museum; the State Art Museum of the Republic of Karakalpakstan is named after its founder, Igor Vitalyevich Savitsky, a Kiev-born Moscow artist.

A lot has been said and written about the founder of the museum and about the collection he amassed during the years he directed the venue. In the meantime, while giving an official definition, one should note that not all of the museum's collections belong to avant-garde art and its methodology, as they have suggested now. The museum collection is quite extensive and reflects the diverse developments of fine arts in Russia and Uzbekistan in the 20th century. Another aspect of the history of the museum collection, as researchers have repeatedly stressed, is the formation of a certain circle of artists who founded the Karakalpakstan school of visual arts in the 1970s and 1980s around the Savitsky Museum.



BAKHTIYAR

Bakhtiyar Serekeev is a graduate of the Kamoliddin Behzod National Institute of Arts and Design. As a student, Bakhtiyar clearly defined his creative ties with his motherland – the environmental destruction experienced by the region due to the drying up of the Aral Sea became the subject of his early work. The young artist saw what happened at that time and reflected the tragic situation in his works. Later, as an active person, Bakhtiyar traveled, took part in various projects and exhibitions, and experimented with colors and forms. It is noteworthy that he renounced direct ethnography, by means of which one usually demonstrates belonging to a school and a tradition. Instead, in his own modernist style, he addressed the inner problems of human being, without ethnic or religious affiliation. However, even if one has gone beyond the traditions of regional fine art in their work, they will continue to be an artist devoted to their treasured country.





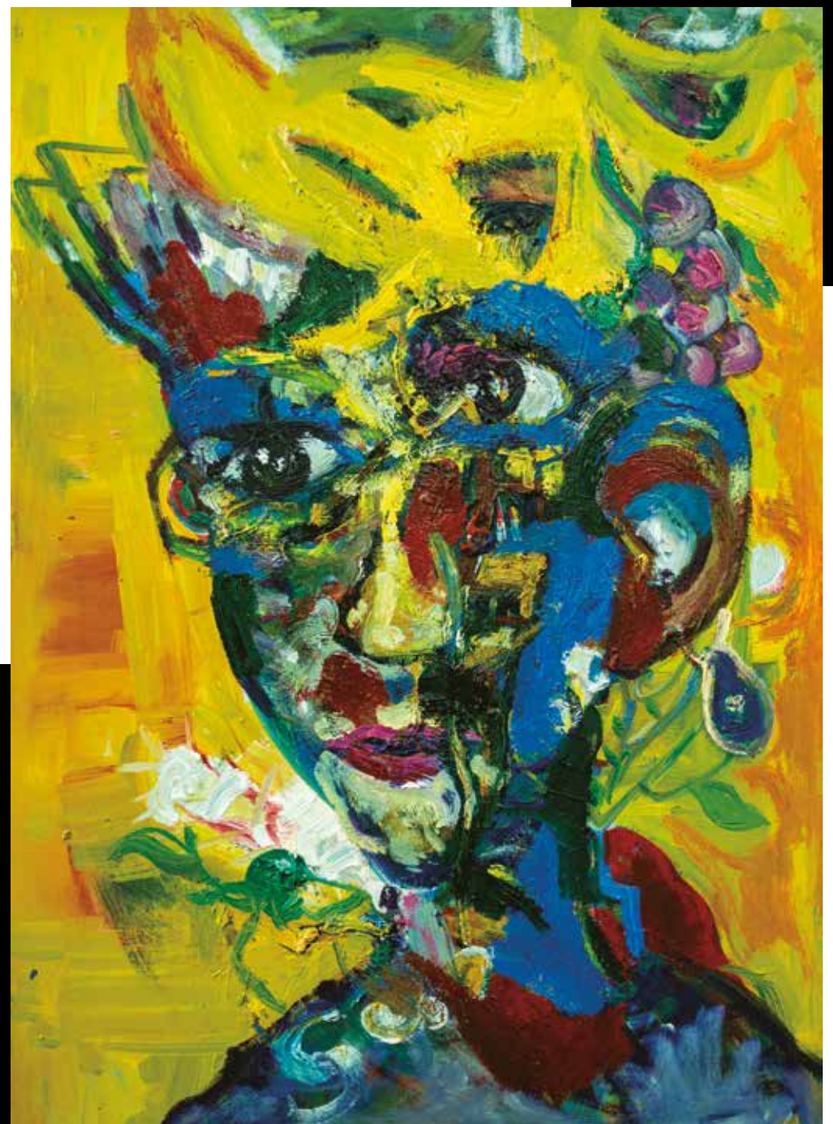
Temur Shardemetov is another representative of the new visual art of Karakalpakstan. Temur graduated from the Kamoliddin Behzod National Institute of Arts and Design as a theater artist and started his career as a decorator at the Mukimi Uzbek State Musical Theater in Tashkent. Several personal exhibitions in prestigious galleries in Tashkent (Bonumfactumgalerii, 2015; Ilhom Theater, 2016) showed that Temur entered visual art with his own worldview. He then returned home to Karakalpakstan, where he continued his formalist pursuits without succumbing to the bewilderment of his colleagues in the field of visual arts. His paintings, largely abstract, are built on his ability to find a unique combination of color and form. His works are like an endless battlefield of different colors, in which it is difficult to find the plot and determine who will win, as in a skirmish. But there is no doubt that the artist ends up the winner of these clashes.

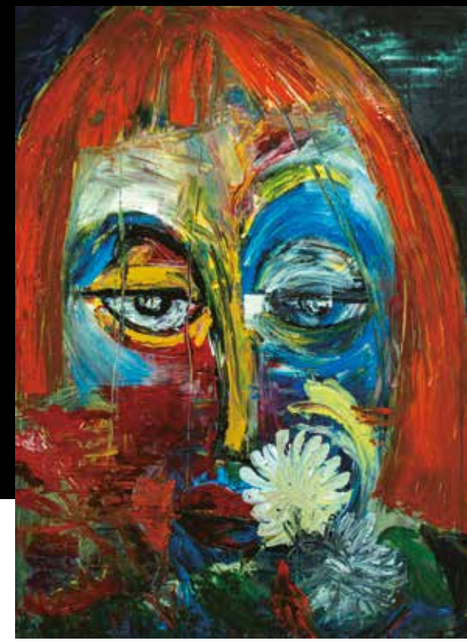


TEMUR

NAURIZ







Nauriz Aytmuratov studied at Children's Music and Art School No. 1 in Nukus, under Jonis Lepesov, a senior painter from Karakalpakstan who brought up several generations of art-lovers. After that, Nauriz graduated from several educational institutions, majoring in architecture. A modest and quiet by nature, this painter demonstrates in his works the immense potential of the colors associated with the Karakalpakstan art school. One of his favorite directions is the portrait, where the artist reveals the inner world of the model on the one hand, and his own perception of the world on the other – they are as bright as tradition, stylistically new and are set to remain traditional in the near future.

MAQOM — MUSIC FOR CHOSEN ONES



Text: Nikita Makarenko

●●●

...July. Uzbekistan. A hot, steamy day. You stop the car at an unnamed crossroads next to a village lost in sand and dust. At the roadside you see a small shop, and with it a chaykhana (teahouse). You come in to buy a bottle of water. A few gray-haired elderly men in skullcaps sit on the topchan (trestle arbor). They measuredly drink fragrant green tea...

...An old Chinese radio set hangs on a chipped wooden wall. It airs, through the interference, a familiar, but so complex and non-rhythmic music. Not at all like the one you were listening to in your car just a minute ago. The voice recorded decades ago performs maqom to the accompaniment of tanbur. The old men listen to it, swaying to the beat. It seems that time has stopped here forever...

Maqom. Amazing, magical music that has existed on this land for many centuries. Not just music, but a philosophy in its entirety. How often do we listen to it? What do we know about it? Where is the place of maqom in the modern world?

“Maqom combines philosophy, astronomy, psychology, poetry, mathematics, music and even medicine. When a musician touches a string, it begins to vibrate. These vibrations create sound waves that affect specific points in the human body. This concept of maqom dates back to the 11th century, to the great Ibn Sina, who recommended that patients visit musicians. They performed certain combinations of notes, the so-called ‘parda’. Each disease had its own combination of parda.”

This is the opinion of the Uzbek composer Jahongir Shukurov, a member of OMNIBUS, Uzbekistan’s only ensemble of modern academic music. For many years, the band have been working to preserve and promote the culture of Uzbek maqom on an international scale.

The cycle of six maqoms, called shashmaqom, is the most famed across the world. It includes works created in pardas under the names ‘buzruk’, ‘rost, ‘navo’, ‘dugoh’, ‘segoh’ and ‘irok’. Pardas are those combinations of notes. Mastering a certain parda, a composer or musician can create works in it, or improvise. Over time, performers and composers have accumulated a huge baggage of works, which was systematized and became canonical.

In 2003, shashmaqom was recognized by UNESCO as a Masterpiece of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. But today it is difficult to hear this grandiose work of art in its entirety. Most often, it is performed in parts. And even such concerts are a big event, gathering connoisseurs a few times a year. Maqom is not mass music. You will not hear it at the marketplace, at a wedding nor on the dance floor.

Thus, maqom has never been at the top of the charts. Since ancient times, ordinary people preferred simple folk songs and melodies. Maqom was court music – it was performed for emirs, khans, and experts among the aristocracy. The most celebrated maqom performance school developed at the court of the Bukhara emirs. It requires a special spiritual attitude and preparation from the listener. You must enter into timbre with it. And it’s not always easy! Often maqom causes a rare feeling in those who listen to it for the first time.

And here’s why: 95% of modern pop music in the world today is composed and performed in European modes, combinations of notes. It is what is familiar to our ear. “Do-re-mi-fa-sol-la-si-do”. Sing it in your head. Did you hear? That is the European diatonic mode. But since ancient times, local musicians have used completely different modes, in which there were other notes. Do you feel something unusual when you hear the tunes of a maqomist? Does it sometimes seem that they cut the ear?



This is how notes sound that do not exist in European modes, and which you are not used to hearing. Traditionally, maqom seeds contained 17 notes in one fret. 5 as many as in the European musical tradition, where there are 12 of them. These are the very “five extra notes”. They are also called “microtonal”, because they exist as if “in between” the European ones. Imagine the note ‘do’ and the next note ‘re’. The maqom note is somewhere in the middle.

Imagine Johann Sebastian Bach poring over music sheets in front of a dim candlelight. He composes another masterpiece – toccata in D minor. His recordings have survived to this day, and we know exactly how the composer wanted it to sound. With maqom everything is much more complicated! It has never had a musical system. Maqoms were transmitted only orally, from master to disciple.

All this has led to the fact that now we are not listening to the same maqom that we listened to at the court of the Emir of Bukhara. Or even not at all! After all, audio recordings from the 19th century have not been preserved at all. But there was a truly interesting story:

In the early 1920s, the Russian composer Viktor Uspensky witnessed the performance of maqom by the best court musicians of the Emir of Bukhara. Uspensky wrote down the work in European notation, using twelve notes. And those mysterious ‘non-European’ maqom notes that he was not able to write down he marked with question marks. But when his book “Six Musical Poems” was published in 1924, those ‘mysterious notes’ emerged without question marks. And 17-note music became 12-note.

In the 20th century, an entire canonical school was formed on the basis of this book – after all, no other records had survived. The musicians stopped improvising in the old ‘modes’, and instead they were memorizing works created using the European 12-note system, unable to convey all the richness of the maqoms.

“Even the tanbur, the stringed instrument used to play maqoms, is made for improvisation,” Jahongir Shukurov explains: instead of fixed frets like a guitar, it has ropes that can be moved up and down the fretboard. This was done so that the musicians could change the frets for each new maqom. But no one else does that,” Shukurov adds.

Shavkat Matyakubov, a renowned performer of maqoms, believes that thanks to the European notation, maqom has been preserved, otherwise it could have disappeared as a genre, not being integrated into generally accepted concepts in Soviet times: “It was a kind of sacrifice, but crucially we managed to save the art itself. Yes, the maqom has changed. But it has survived.”

Today, enthusiasts are trying to offer their own version of how the ancient maqoms could have sounded, using the preserved works of classical musicians. The OMNIBUS ensemble is studying antique treatises and consulting with musicians, collecting and comparing pieces of lost information. It’s like putting a puzzle together. In addition, the musicians have created a new notation system for maqom, which they use to work with European musicians and teach them the art of maqom. OMNIBUS have made the traditional maqom frets sound today on the violin, cello and other classical instruments.

Regrettably, young musicians are in no hurry to pick up this great genre. It is rather indicative that we have not been able to find out a single name of a solid maqom master under 35. There are simply no such bright young performers and artists in Uzbekistan today.

“Now people want to have fun. Sad and lyrical maqoms are not suitable for weddings and celebrations,” says Shavkat Matyakubov. “People don’t care if 12 or 17 notes are in tune. And, unfortunately, there are now even fewer maqom masters than these notes.”



TOP 3 MAQOM PERFORMERS OF ALL TIME ACCORDING TO THE OMNIBUS ENSEMBLE: YUNUS RAJABI, MAHMUDJON TAJIBOEV, ULMAS RASULOV.

GRANNY, MOMMY AND I



TIL LAN ISO

When my mother became a bride, according to her own words, she was the "most beloved bride" in the village. She used to recall this when she had a quarrel with father and used to utter, "My life is like the fate written in the newspapers – it's ruined". Mother would not say this just for fun, because everything she wanted in life or nothing at all turned out to be how she wanted. She used to regret recalling her memories of the times when she believed in life the most.

I now don't even believe that my mother was the most gorgeous bride in the neck of their woods, her life was no different from those of other women over there – bridehood is a time for every girl who enters a new household to get used to that family following the so-called life-changing wedding, whose euphoria lasts for a while.

Unlike my mother, my granny (my mother's mother-in-law) never recalled her past life with regret. Her grief was associated with what she would describe as the pending death.

One day it rained hard. It was a fierce shower. We had cattle and livestock. Livestock was the main asset, granny had three goats that used to give birth to twins every spring. She used to look after them herself. My mother had one dairy cow and her calf. Until a certain point, all the cattle belonged to my granny. I don't remember exactly what we did with all the livestock, whether we sold them out or bought something for the household.

Maybe because my granny had said that both the cattle and the house were all hers, my mother fell into the habit of making a separate fortune for herself by making money from her profession of nurse, from tips paid by patients served by her in their homes in the village. On top of that, mother used to sell medicines at home – albeit illegally. The drugs would be brought from pharmacies in the district center, and not only our fellow villagers, but also people from surrounding settlements would come to buy medicines. Our communities lay far from the district center. There were a few people selling medicines. In the end it became a good source of income that would bring money for my mother and us to study and live on.

It was a spring day when it showered. The grass had turned green and the cattle had just fallen into the blue grass. We would tie up the cattle in the open field. Granny brought her goats left in the field and went to tie them up in the nursery, and when she was returning home, her feet slipped on the mud in front of the gate, and her head and hair were covered in mud as much as the scarf that was always tied around her head.

It hurt my grandmother a lot when she fell in the rain, and worst of all, my mom had spilled a bucket of water in front of that gate, which would insult the granny even more. My mother, of course, did not do it on purpose, and granny knew it, but both of them could not miss any reason to blame and hurt each other. When granny entered the house with anger, hatred and humiliation, she came to me and uttered, "when I die, cry for me saying that it is my nanna who did not enjoy life". She didn't say anything else. Even if she said something, it would be not as important as that phrase, so that I can't really remember. The granny told this phrase in such a way that it was as if she was threatening me by shaking both my shoulders.

Even though she didn't come and shake me, her words shook my whole body and soul. She might have said something like this before. But she didn't say it in the same tone as she did that time, when she was void inside and really fed up with everything. To be sure, the pain and suffering in this sentence was meant to hurt my mother and make her feel guilty. My mother pointed to many sons and daughters-in-law out there in our village, disregarding their elderly mothers and leaving them without bread and butter, and said that my father always showed the highest love and respect for his mother (that is, my granny). Although my mother muttered these words with resentment, what I could see in her eyes was that she felt guilty.

Seemed there was no end to their stealthily beating each other, my mom and my nan. My father used to go fishing in the lake in our district, on the border with the neighboring country, which has become a source of livelihood for many people due to the liquidation of state farms and consequent loss of work. And the days when my father was not home, the quarrels escalated, and at those times I understood that when my father was there, neither of them was eager to vent their hatred toward each other.

Nor can I say that I was happy when my father was home. Now, my father and mother were quarreling a lot with each other, and, as my mother tells me with complaint and despair, that at those times my granny would not interfere to reprimand my father, urge him to stop beating his wife, but rather she would just prefer pouring oil into fire. But I never heard my gran say anything to my father about my mother. Usually, they would talk in secret separately. This is exactly what my mother could not accept. Only sometimes when I couldn't sleep through to midnight because of my thoughts – I would sleep next to my nanna – could I hear her whispering some things to herself.





"It is difficult to live this simple life!"



I would initially not pay much attention to this, but eventually, if I listened carefully, she would talk to herself about what my mother did during the day, and naturally she would be displeased, would think it was wrong and thus she would swear at and curse my mom. Granny used to do this every night. What I tried hard was to go to sleep earlier because I was sick of hearing these words time and again. I had to silently accept the curses directed at my mother as if I didn't hear them at all, because I knew that I wouldn't tell anyone about that, and I even gave up the idea of creating a bright life in my thoughts. Nor was my mother, in her turn, reluctant to address the same insults and curses to my granny.

Unlike my granny though, my mother would not whisper those things for herself; she used to do it overtly, and although she would refrain from addressing my granny directly, she would tell it to me in her presence as if she was talking to her. I couldn't understand at all why my mother hates me so much, curses and abuses me. From my gran's whispers I came to realize that, in fact, all those words of my mom were directed at the granny. But still, that would have a heavy impact on me, I would feel reluctant to do anything, and I would feel stupid in whatever I did and wherever I was. In fact, it was exactly the way my mother wanted my granma to feel. But even though I understood this with my child's mind, I could hardly bear it.

My mom and nan were completely different from each other due to the differing environment in which they had lived and, as a result, their views on life. My mother wouldn't show her emotions, pain, or laughter to anyone. She always demanded the same from me. To be sure, she never told me to keep my feelings in, but her demands should have led to that. In my opinion, that was in complete contrast to the openness of my grandmother. I am writing, but keep doubting whether I knew my nanny well enough to judge her – so I admit that I'm still wrong in some of my assessments about her.

I believe this closedness in my mother was due to her inability to accept life – I have no other answer for now. To accept a life that failed to give her what she wanted, even worse, that she was an ordinary human being, an ordinary woman in this life... What I saw in my mother was constant suffering, and because of her self-respect, I always thought there was something unusual in my mother, or perhaps this is how all children accept their mothers. Even when I was stuck between my mother and my grandmother, I knew that the latter was an ordinary person, but my mother was not like that in my opinion, and she should behave in accordance with the ideal of her self-dignity. Because of this, we had a lot of fight with my mother, we didn't understand each other at all, and I struggled for years to accept my mother as just an ordinary woman.

During one of our usual quarrels, when I jerked my mother and tried to explain something, she, now completely calm, said to me, "I am an ordinary woman, I have very little knowledge of anything, I have never left this village, I only know what is within the borders of this village, and so you don't need to explain that to me, that's what I am." I suddenly realized that my mother had already got used to her life (sometimes it is difficult for me to get used to the life my mother is used to). "It's hard to live this simple life!" It is clear that it was not my mother who uttered these words. Probably I said this when I was walking under the influence of what she said, or it was someone else, maybe I overheard someone talking on the street, or maybe it was just a hallucination...

My mother, my grandmother, and I were alone in our simple lives and have had a hard time understanding each other. Every one of us had divinely requests of our own. My mother would pray for some things when pouring oil on the edges of the cauldron on the stove, my granny would do the same while going to bed, whereas I prayed looking at water in the well. The pleas of our souls were the only solace and consolation for my mom and grandmom in the face of their simple and inevitable fate, and for me it was the hope of leaving our neck of the woods for far away.

ENVI
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SALTY LIVES





**I AM A MOTHER.
I AM A PROTECTOR.
I AM A GUARD OF
THIS LAND.**

**THE SUN NO
LONGER LOVES US.
IT SCORCHES AND
HURTS.**

**MAN POISONS THE
PLANET. AND THE
PLANET CHANGES US.**

**I LIVE LESS.
I BREATHE HEAVIER.
I DRINK SALTY WATER.
MAYBE, IT'S MY
TEARS?**

**OH, MAN! STOP YOUR
RUNNING FOR JUST A
MINUTE.**

AND THINK.

ABOUT ME.



SALTY LIVES

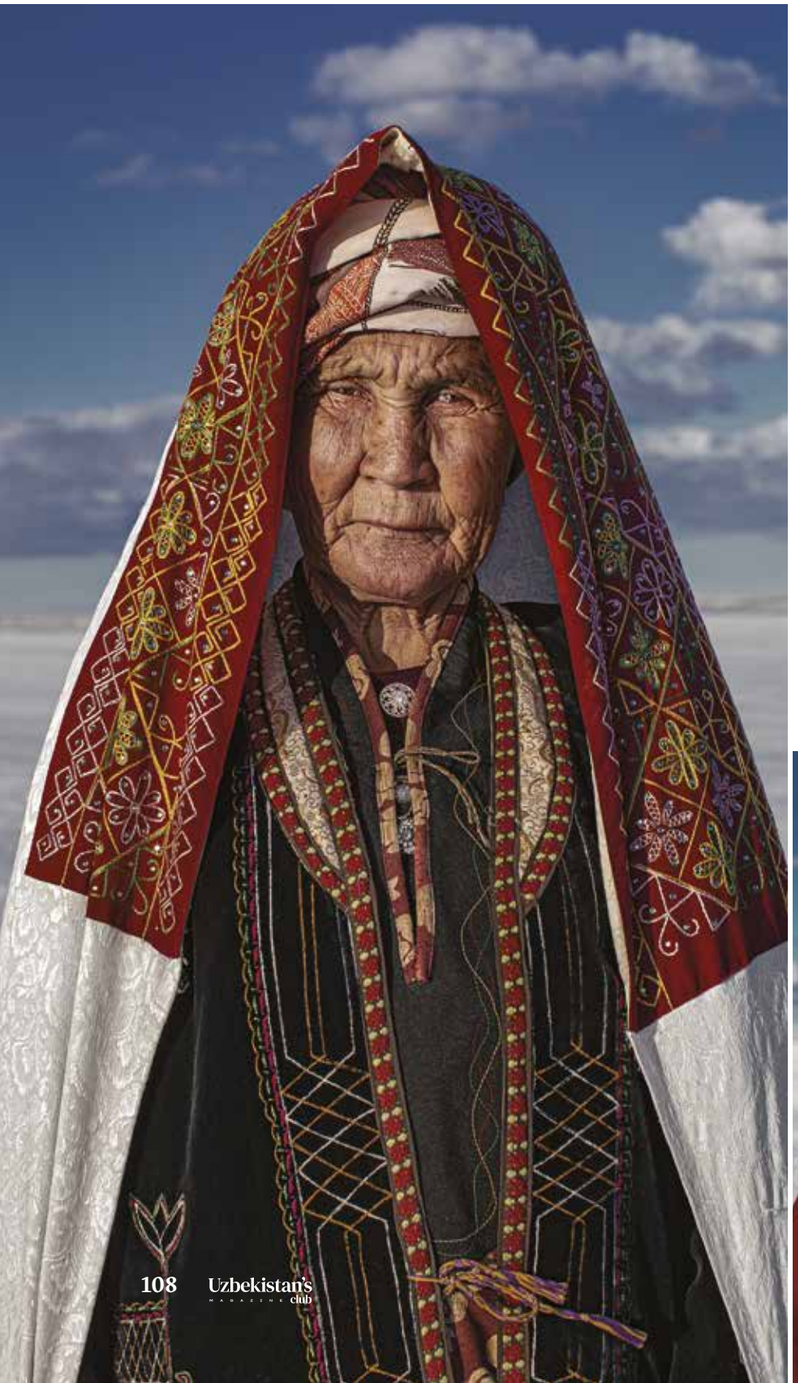




These painful sentences come from a female protagonist in the finale of the newly shot short film Salty Lives by the Uzbek director Rustam Meliev. He is renowned for the motion picture Maqsad and the TV series Officer 55. The short Salty Lives was presented at the O'zbekistonlik forum in Paris in April 2023, and afterwards got its way to the official programs of Krakow and Los Angeles film festivals. The film has come be part of a big art project, a triptych, by Orol Orzusi (Aral Dream), an international non-profit non-governmental organization, in cooperation with Jokorgi Kenges (Supreme Council) of the Republic of Karakalpakstan. You can watch it on araldream.com



OROLORZUSI



Its artistic content was supplemented by a photo exhibition in tribute to the women of Karakalpakstan. You can see it right now on the pages of the magazine. Photographs were created under the artistic direction of Mukhlisa Azizova. The expo demonstrates portraits of ordinary women living in the salt marshes of Barsakelmes. The purpose sought was to show this remote corner to the entire world and draw its attention to it.

Women of Karakalpakstan. Strong and beautiful. Leaders from birth. We take pride in them and admire their resolve. They take care of crops, run companies, work in public services and bring up the new generation. They make wonderful families. And they do all this in harsh climatic conditions. The Republic of Karakalpakstan has suffered much more from the effects of climate change than other regions of our planet.







ARAL DREAM

The photo exposition demonstrated portraits of ordinary women living in the salt marshes of Barsakelmes. It sought to show this remote corner to the entire world and draw its attention to it.

araldream

Unfortunate as it is, the health of local women and children is in dire straits as a result of climate change and past human errors in environmental protection. Is it fair? After all, the inhabitants of this wonderful corner of the planet are hardly those to point fingers for the fact that for more than 60 years the leading industrial countries have failed to agree on and halt global warming. The authors of the project believe that industrialized countries should pay more attention to people facing the negative effects of global climate change.

The leading fashion designers of Uzbekistan gathered in the third part of triptych. They created a collection of dresses inspired by the Aral Sea.

Dilnoza Umurzakova's Anor, Lali Fozilova's Lali, Zuhra Inat's MoelBosh, Nilufar Abduvalieva's Mursak, Sarvinoz Anvarova's Art Ansar fashion houses, as well as designers Nigora Khoshimova and Zulfiya Sultan contributed to that collection.

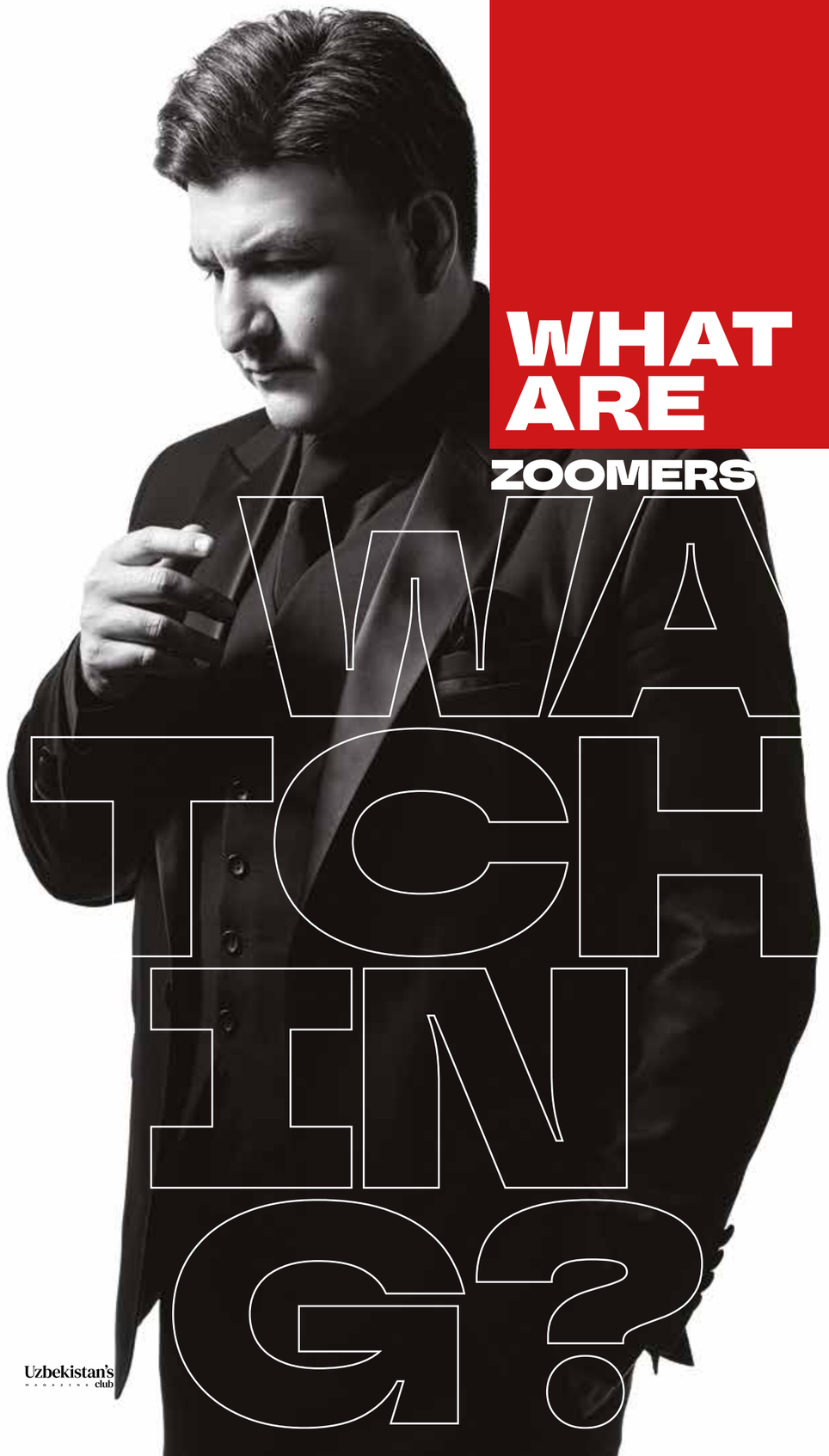
In Paris, the collection was presented in a special installation created with salt brought to the French capital city from the salty land of Barsakelmes. The installation was authored by Saidazim Fozilov. The models were also successfully presented at the Uzbekistan Fashion Week that took place in Tashkent in May 2023, and its presentation was the final and most impressive part of the gala show.

Aral Dream, an international non-profit non-governmental organization, was established in June 2023 by professionals of the Uzbek creative industry. The organization's offices are located in the cities of Nukus and Tashkent. Also planned to be opened in Europe and the U.S. The organization is managed by the Council consisting of prominent public figures of Karakalpakstan and Uzbekistan. Aral Dream is designed to attract the attention of the world community to the ecological disaster of the Aral Sea, the Aral region and the people of Karakalpakstan.

The Aral Dream founders insist that today, the world has forgotten about this tragedy, and they are selflessly working to have the Aral topic included in the agenda of the global mass media and mass culture. Another important goal of the organization is the development of human potential in the region, primarily in the creative industry.

You can learn more about the organization's projects and team at araldream.com.





WHAT ARE ZOOMERS WATCHING?



Judging from scientific hypotheses on the emergence of first images, fine arts have a history of at least 40 thousand years. The period of filmmaking, which does not even reach 150 years, seems very brief in this context. But motion pictures has scarcely stopped for a moment within the past 1.5 centuries. It is still moving today. At what stage is it in this continuum of dynamics? Which way is it going? That greatly interests art critics, filmmakers, spectators, historians, ideologists, businesspeople, and politicians.

We turned these vital questions to **Rustam Meliev, a talented young film director and director of photography**, author of such masterpieces as Maqsad, Officer 55, as well as the Salty Lives, a prize-winning project at the Los Angeles Documentary Films Festival, along with **a gifted and renowned actress Rano Shodiyeva**, an honored artist of Uzbekistan, who won the love of several generations of moviegoers with her admirably performed roles.

RUSTAM MELIEV:



The cinematography has been moving so fast and intense that you have to run with all your might to stay in touch. The industry is moving forward in terms of both genres and topics, dramaturgy, and the opportunities and risks created by modern technology. This requires artists to do a lot of research and keep abreast of novelties.

STAGE ART: CIRCULAR, NOT LINEAR STRUCTURE

Zoomers get familiar with different plots for hours every day. Yes, they may not read books, but their favorite bloggers' live stories, Vines, catchy dialogue, and a minute-long reveal of a big topic through various allusions, dynamic video-assembling, and effects are their daily media diet.

Therefore, naturally, their demand for the plot, the development of events, and their disclosure will only grow. In order to impress and keep viewers in front of the screen, creators need to get rid of conventional thinking and use modern approaches.

If you're looking for the drama of classic motion in cutting-edge cinema, you're bound to be disappointed. Screenwriters like Dan Harmon explain that when stories are told in movies, they progress clockwise along a 'plot circle' rather than in a cardiogram-like line from point A to point B. This method was developed only in the 2010s and is used by screenwriters.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE: BLESSING OR CURSE?

When any technology appears, there is a layer of population that is afraid of it and opposes it. That is the case unless humanity learns to adapt to that innovation and deal with it rationally and with reason.

Artificial intelligence not only helps in various stages of post-production with special effects, graphics, color correction, or selection of necessary frames but also it can be handy in that images and locations can be created from scratch.

The biggest threat to the movie industry may be a film created by artificial intelligence. Imagine that the neural network creates a human character that looks like an ideal actor. Leave the make-up artist and costume designer alone. There will be no need for the actor and the director who assigns them tasks.

HOLLYWOOD LABOR STRIKES

Since July 2023, SAG-AFTRA, the major actors' guild in the United States, has been holding a strike in Los Angeles. At the London premiere of Oppenheimer's film, in solidarity with these protests, the cast left the theater after the red carpet events. This is not yet another union action, a protest to ask for higher wages and salaries.

Filmmakers want to receive not a one-time payment for their contribution to the movies and series created for streaming services but a percentage of the products as long as they are consumed by the audience and viewed millions of times.

Second, one of the important issues in violating the rights of creators is the non-payment of copyright royalties for images created with the help of artificial intelligence.

COMPETING FOR ATTENTION

50 years ago, motion pictures competed with other productions, say, plays in theater-loving cities. Today, every movie needs to successfully contend with a great diversity of video products, entertainment, acting shows, talk shows, news events, and technological surprises.

What does it mean? That means top-notch marketing communications, fan engagement, and movie sales.

Have you ever Googled the movie Barbie? You'll feel like you're in Barbie land. In general, isn't it a great marketing move to make a movie about this doll, which representatives of several generations love to play with, and to bring out the most relevant topics of today's society?

What does Generation Z live with, what interests them, and what attracts their attention? Strong marketers and communicators are always looking for answers to such questions. I think that at such a time, cinema as art can promote feelings of kindness, responsibility, and compassion and establish new trends, which surely requires a lot of talent and hard work.

FOR CINEMATOGRAPHERS, TO EARN THE ATTENTION OF VIEWER HAS NEVER BEEN SO DIFFICULT THAN IT IS TODAY

RANO SHODIYEVA:

TODAY'S YOUNG SPECTATOR NEEDS REAL HEROES LIKE INFLUENCERS

In order to understand the development and evolution of cinema, it is crucial that we analyze this form of art in line with the worldview of fans, their needs, and interests. Because, in the end, who is a movie made for? For the audience. On the one hand, motion picture always comes from the demand of the consumer in front of the screen. On the other hand, if necessary, it sets completely new trends, educates the taste and way of thinking of movie lovers, and brings new ideas to the field.

EVERY GENERATION HAS A STORY OF ITS OWN. EVERY PERIOD HAS A HERO OF ITS OWN

Our fellow planet-mates who have lived in modern history are figuratively divided into the lost generation (1883-1900), the great generation (1901-1927), the silent generation (1927-1940), the baby boomers (1945-1962), and those who lived an average of 16 years apart, namely, the X, Y, Z generations. Sociological researchers have dubbed those born in the early 2010s the alpha generation in accordance with the Greek alphabet because the letters of the Latin alphabet have ended. Look at the fact that the history of cinema coincides with the end of the 19th century when the world's population began to be divided into such generations.

Natural as it is, just like generations and times differ, so do the films across time, that is, those first created by the French Lumiere brothers and the films of today, and the movies between the two.

Let us have a historical tour from when cinema took bold steps towards the peak of its development and the films that our parents and grandparents watched to today's trends. Let's look at the complex era that has included hundreds of topics, genres, and approaches through the prism of the most watched movies and the most beloved characters.

According to media analysts, it was considered a tragedy when a character died in motion pictures of the 1960s. The deceased person used to be interpreted as a hero, while the murderer was a fierce antagonist. In the movies of the Western genre, rich in armed conflicts and fights, *The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly and Once Upon a Time in the West, or To Kill a Mockingbird*, which refers to an execution, no more than three characters are killed in the frame. It should be noted that during this period, Soviet cinema mainly turned to comedies, cartoons, and historical and romantic genres: Prisoner of the Caucasus, Operation Y, and Three Plus Two, to name but a few released during those years.

Since the late 1980s, dozens of characters played by Arnold Schwarzenegger and Jean-Claude Van Damme have committed not one but several murders. Still, they appear as positive characters, not anti-heroes.

In line with a trend that started in the 2000s, the most interesting characters for the audience are fictional heroes and saviors, from Spider-Man, Iron Man, and Captain America to Avatar. These years are the era of superpowers, science fiction, cyborgs, and robots. Perhaps many people reading this article are members of Generation Y who grew up watching these movies.

REAL AND REALISTIC CHARACTERS

Well, what characters are interesting for the next generation, today's youth, who have been called new millennials, post-millennials, generation Z, digital natives, zoomers in 2023, for example, for those who are going to university or have just graduated from school?

Influencers! Today, there is a lot of information around the world. Concepts such as beauty, power, and success are idealized through social networks, and if you look at the Instagram feed, everyone seems to be happy, handsome, in love, and living right. This can cause dissatisfaction and an inferiority complex in millions of young people. At such a time, they need ideological leaders and celebrities who can be role models.

Look, this need exists not only in life but also in the world of cinema. One of the most interesting genres today is movies based on real events. Next are realism products, reality shows, and documentaries that address critical topics on the Internet. Celebrated characters are the participants of the 1968 Chicago 7 trial, the women who assassinated Kim Jong-un, Borat from Kazakhstan who returned to America during the spread of the coronavirus, and, sure, the real historical figure Oppenheimer.

MOVIE THEATERS COMPETING WITH STREAMING SERVICES

In the pre-pandemic world, we saw hundreds of films later turned into epics, series with sequels and prequels, and television shows. Analysts predict soap operas will be developed first and then made into films. In general, now is the period when the competition of serials with cinema or, let's say, the big screen is at its peak.

Movie theaters were the most suitable places for lovers to meet at a time when there were relatively few premises for entertainment. Immerse yourself in a story together, sit side by side and observe the developments and the formation of characters, eat popcorn, and talk about your impressions of the film. All of this was an ideal romantic getaway for several generations.

Growth in the variety of entertainment activities, on the other hand, 'home' cinemas, large TV screens, as well as 'stay-at-home' habits, strongly encouraged during the COVID-19 pandemic, hit the industry of dating culture in part related to the cinema.

Yes, to be sure, video streaming services such as Netflix, HBO, Disney+, Amazon Prime, Hulu, and YouTube have thrown television out of the game, and have given a new color and shape to public movie screenings.

Interview by Saidaziz Azamov



ABOUT US

Uzbekistan's club is a global network for successful Uzbekistanis who have achieved great accomplishments worldwide. We produce exclusive, high-quality, and impactful content to inspire young people. We undertake large-scale, multi-faceted projects to guide the next generation in their journeys toward becoming world-class professionals. Our goal is to turn our international nonprofit into a hub for the intellectual potential of Uzbekistanis.

There is such an important idea in the nexus of our values. As an independent country on the world map, Uzbekistan should be associated with not only handicrafts, national arts, and cuisine, but with its great wealth, which is its intelligent and hardworking people. We ought to be known as a land of talent.

We have all the capacities needed to further this goal, and the gifted Uzbekistanis, very manifestations of this trend, can be found in large technological giants of the FAANG category, in Big Four companies, in the world-famed global corporations, and among professors of top universities. In addition, thousands of businesspeople born and raised in Uzbekistan offer competitive products and services on the world market.

Uzbekistan's club

ABOUT US







Our team has worked on creating impact content about such compatriots who would afford pride and inspiration to the unique demographic dividend, Uzbekistan's youth – school graduates, university students, and young professionals in our urban and rural areas. Uzbekistani, a documentary about outstanding expats around the world, premiered in the spring of 2022.









ABOUT US





The film was watched over one hundred thousand times within one day and had heartfelt comments from young people and their parents. Some felt pride for the new heroes, imbued with motivation, while others were even about to "immediately set big goals and change their lives."







The work received appreciation and gratitude from young people, the general public, politicians, journalists and bloggers, and the intellectual elite. After all, the project brought out the topics of human capital, language learning, going abroad for knowledge and experience, and contributing to changes in Uzbekistan. It raised hopes for being a bridge between representatives of our global diaspora and Uzbekistan.









ABOUT US





































Bright representatives of creative industries in the country, influencers in the media space, and leaders of thought joined our club as media residents.

ABOUT US

YOSHLAR ISHLARI AGENTLIGI

TASHQI ISHLAR VAZIRLIGI

UZBEKISTAN airways

Ucell

TURIN POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY IN TASHKENT

MY 5

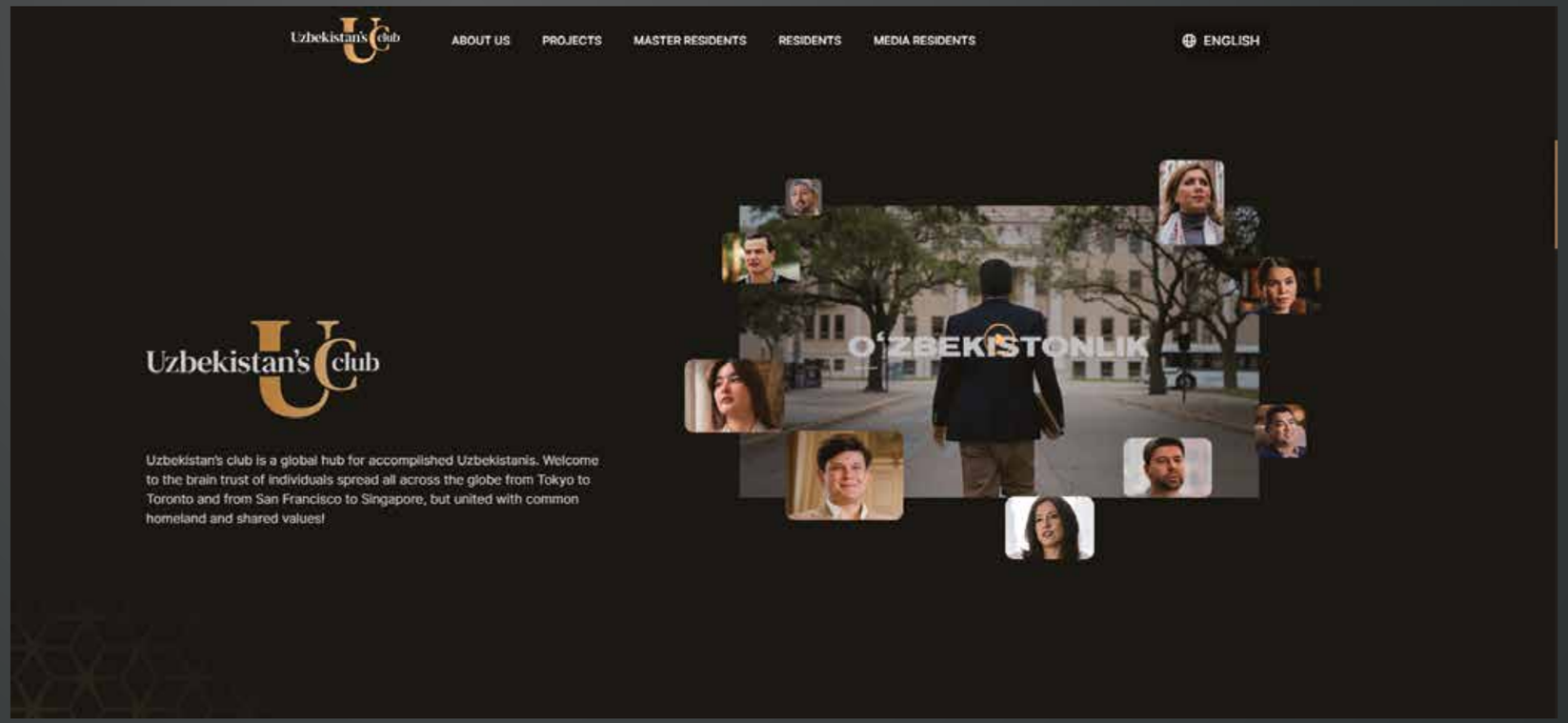
legalmax

Initially supported by the Uzbekistan Youth Affairs Agency, our efforts eventually received financial and organizational support from Orient Group, Pepsi, Anorbank, Ucell, Uzbekistan Airways, and the like.

Over the past year and a half, our projects mentioned above have earned the attention and affection of hundreds of expats abroad and millions of our compatriots inside the country. In July 2023, Uzbekistan's club was registered as the only international non-profit organization in its sphere of interest.

Uzbekistan's club! Welcome to a brain trust of individuals from from Tokyo to Toronto, San Francisco to Singapore united with a common homeland and shared values.







Uzbekistan's club organizes international forums called "O'zbekistonlik" (Uzbekistani) in world capitals to fold together our global diaspora, share key news from the club, swap views on a common topic for Uzbekistanis – the development of Uzbekistan, get to know each other, and devise new projects and initiatives.

BERLIN













Germany's capital city played host to the first of such forums on 1 October 2022. The setting served as a tribute to the centenary of an important event in the history of Uzbekistan, namely, arrival of the first group of students from our country in Germany in 1922.

The forum also featured the presentation of the 2nd episode of the documentary series *O'zbekistonlik* that was filmed in Europe. The platform gathered more than 400 successful Uzbekistanis from across the globe working in diverse fields. Organized with support from our embassy in Berlin, the event was also attended by the diplomatic corps in the German capital along with experts interested in Uzbekistan and the region.



PARIS



As part of the series, “O‘zbekistonlik. Generating Ideas” forum took place in the French capital city on April 23, 2023. A grand hall for 400 seats was filled with Uzbekistanis who have settled in France and other countries of Europe, with their professional activities or studying at universities. The forum served as a stage for them to chat and exchange views with Uzbekistan’s club media residents – prominent figures of the Uzbek media space, influencers and bloggers.

















SALTY LIVES

The participants were presented – as an artistic part of the forum – Salty Lives, a triptych project by Uzbekistan's club and the non-profit organization Aral Dream in cooperation with Jokargy Kenges (Supreme Council) of the Republic of Karakalpakstan. It was followed by a photo exposition of portraits of Karakalpak women through the artistic leadership of Mukhlisa Azizova and Rustam Meliev's behind-the-camera creative labor, as well as a new short film by the same director Meliev and an installation of fashion models created by leading designers from Uzbekistan inspired by the Aral Sea.

The exhibits of the photo show were decorated in fishing net-like frames, reflecting the experiences of women in the Aral region enduring grief under the influence of the environmental tragedy the area has faced.

Home to the global agreement on climate change, Paris was a symbolic choice for a creative project on such a topic.

The inventive approach of Aral Dream projects received appreciation of the forum participants.







Presentation of video by KONSTA

The young talented rapper KONSTA was among the influencers and pop stars attending the international forum "O'zbekistonlik. Generating Ideas". The event participants happened to be lucky enough to be presented the official soundtrack of the film "O'zbekistonlik" by KONSTA's live performance. At the time the event itself was still not over, the music video made over 250 thousand views on YouTube.

Generating Ideas

Another integral part of the forum was the discussion panel. It allowed the panelists from among media residents of Uzbekistan's club and master residents to speak on the following topics and ideas related to the development of Uzbekistan:

1. Human Capital
2. Advanced Technologies
3. Creative Industries
4. Aral Region and Green Economy

Speakers ranging from business-people and investment bankers through to idea shapers and scientists and engineers stirred stimulating questions and answers.

Uzbekistan's club
MAGAZINE

TO BUILD A NATION OF TALENTS



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