



## **BSEC MONTH OF CULTURE 2017**

**PRESS RELEASE**

**Friday 16 June 2017**

## Albania

### Albanian Folk Polyphonic music

Traditional Albanian polyphonic music can be divided into two major stylistic groups as performed by the Ghegs of northern Albania and the Tosks and Labs living in the southern part of the country. The drone is performed in two ways: among the Tosks, it is always continuous and sung on the syllable 'e', using staggered breathing, while among the Labs, the drone is sometimes sung as a rhythmic tone, performed to the text of the song. Rendered mainly by male singers, the music traditionally accompanies a wide range of social events, such as weddings, funerals, harvest feasts, religious celebrations and festivals. Albanian iso-polyphony is characterized by songs consisting of two solo parts, a melody and a countermelody with a choral drone. The structure of the solo parts varies according to the different ways of performing the drone, which has a great variety of structures, especially in the popular style adopted by all groups performing this music.

**BSEC25 #CultureBSEC #Music #Albania**



## Ukraine

### **Odessa International Film Festival**

Odessa International Film Festival is the festival which has one of the largest audiences in Eastern Europe. It is an annual film festival held in cinema capital of Ukraine – Odessa. It was founded in 2010 in order to popularize films among Ukrainian viewers and also to support the development of cinema inside the country and on international stage. Festival became the brightest summer film event of the country. Exclusive film premieres, workshops of leading world filmmakers and unique festive atmosphere. This year the festival will take place in Odessa from 14 to 22 July 2017.

**#BSEC25 #CultureBSEC #Cinema #Ukraine**



## Armenia

**Did you know that the preparation and the appearance of Lavash are recognized by UNESCO?**

### **Lavash**

Lavash is traditional thin bread that forms an integral part of Armenian cuisine. A simple dough made of wheat flour and water is kneaded and formed into balls, which are then rolled into thin layers and stretched over a special oval cushion that is then slapped against the wall of a traditional conical clay oven. It is recognized as Intangible Cultural Heritage by UNESCO.

**#BSEC25 #CultureBSEC #Gastronomy #Armenia**



## Turkey

### Saz

The saz is the most well-known Turkish plucked instrument. It comes in several different sizes: the small cura, the baglama, the bigger divan saz and the biggest : the meydan saz. Nowadays you can also find an electric saz. The body of the saz is traditionally carved from a block of wood, hollowed out with a round soundhole on the bottom side. However nowadays the body is often made from separate ribs glued together. It has a thin wooden soundboard, with usually several strips of different coloured wood on both sides. It has 8 strings in 3 courses of (steel) strings. Most sizes of the saz can have either a long or a short neck. The short neck requires a different playing style as the lower notes are on the other strings.

**#BSEC25 #CultureBSEC #Music #Turkey**



*Interested in learning more about the fascinating culture of the BSEC Member States?*

**Join the BSEC Month of Culture, organised by the ICBSS from 1-30 June 2017 and learn about the remarkable and rich cultural heritage of the BSEC region.**

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***About the BSEC Month of Culture:***

On the occasion of the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the BSEC Organisation, the ICBSS is launching a new initiative, the **“BSEC Month of Culture”**, a **month long programme of cultural highlights from the 12 BSEC Member States** (Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Moldova, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Turkey, Ukraine).

Being aware of the rich, diverse cultural heritage of the BSEC region, **the ICBSS will launch the “BSEC Month of Culture”**, from **1<sup>st</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2017**, with the aim to promote the cultural identity of the region and enhance its visibility to the wider public.

The programme will feature online tributes on **literature, music, cinema, archaeological sites and gastronomy**, including short videos and photos.

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**About the ICBSS:** The International Centre for Black Sea Studies (ICBSS) was founded in 1998 as a non-profit organisation. It has since fulfilled a dual function. On the one hand, it is an independent research and training institution focusing on the wider Black Sea region. On the other hand, it is a related body of the Organisation of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) and serves as its acknowledged think-tank. Thus, the ICBSS pursues applied, policy-oriented research, promotes knowledge on the Black Sea region both within and outside its boundaries, and offers policy advice with the aim to foster multilateral cooperation among the BSEC member states as well as with their international partners.

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