

Beauty of Female Voices of the Balkans

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Countries of the Balkans are known for their traditional folk music, which has been most beautifully performed by women through history. This is exactly where representatives of the Regional Cooperation Council recognised a brand of the countries of South East Europe that can be used to improve the regional cooperation.

Biljana Krstic, famous ethno music signer from Serbia was a music editor on a joint CD. She says that she was honoured by the opportunity to work on such project.

“As for my selection of songs, I did not choose all of them, but I chose the performers. In some cases, I influenced selection of a song for the album. All in all, I tried to make a nice arrangement, a mosaic from the Balkans, because the Balkan itself is the most beautiful mosaic, and we simply wanted to show that this music is similar, with common origins from ancient Greece, for instance.”

A well-known performer of the traditional songs (“sevdalinka”) from Sarajevo, Amira Medunjanin was selected to represent Bosnia and Herzegovina. Amira stresses that this project sent a universal message – music does not know any borders:

“For years, there were some bad situations here, and have always been presented in a bad light, by the media as well, unfortunately, and this region always sent out some bad stories. I feel that this is unfair to people here, because we are indeed a talented and smart nation, we have an incredible music treasure and I think that we deserve much more than we currently have. Therefore, I think that this CD will contribute a lot to the promotion of all these countries and of the real value coming from this region.”

One of the well-known traditional music singers from Croatia, Tamara Obrovac, contributed to the CD with a folk song from Istria. Reflecting on her engagement on the project, she said:

“It is high time people heard something nice from this area, and any cooperation in this regard is beautiful, especially among women that are, I would say, more inclined to the cooperation and unity. As I understand, this is the first project of this kind, which brings together women from South East Europe. Of course, it was an honour and pleasure for me to work on the project with my colleagues. I hope that the good we did together will cross the borders of our South East Europe and show that there is cooperation here as well.”

[The Former Yugoslav Republic of] Macedonia, whose traditional music increasingly attracts global interest, was represented by Vera Milosevska-Josifovska, who has been dealing with the

ethno music for full 15 years. The Balkans is abundant with various music genres that should be promoted, Milosevska-Josifovska says:

“For me, such projects are very important, especially because they deal with culture and art, music and singing in particular. Currently, the world is heading towards a form of global equality, thus losing many colours, and in this context the authenticity of singing is becoming more and more rare. Also, not many young people know it or perhaps ever heard it, or feel the need to learn it.“

Singers from 13 member states of the Regional Cooperation Council participate in the project. There is also Esma Redzepova representing the Roma folk music. Jelica Minić, Deputy Secretary General of the Regional Cooperation Council says that the aim of this project was to show that regional cooperation is possible and functions in several areas:

“This is a complete overview of the whole area. It provides a fine, unique image of the region’s cultural wealth, a fine emotion specific for this area, and a special women’s aspect of the whole approach. It also shows that joint branding of the region is possible, which we need very much.“

Apart from the aforementioned countries, representatives of Bulgaria, Romania, Turkey, Greece, Slovenia, Moldova, Albania, Montenegro and Kosovo also participate in the project. The participants wish for a joint concert, as the crown of the entire project.

<http://www.slobodnaevropa.org/content/ljepota-zenskih-glasova-balkana/24759893.html>