



Annual Meeting of UNESCO Goodwill Ambassadors  
UNESCO Headquarters, 26-27 February 2004

## Proclamation of Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity proposed for sponsorship by Goodwill Ambassadors

### Presentation

<b>EUROPE and EASTERN EUROPE</b>		<b>3</b>
1. Azerbaijan	Azerbaijani Mugham	
2. Estonia	The Kinhu Cultural Space	
3. Lithuania	Cross Crafting and Its Symbolism	
<b>LATIN AMERICA</b>		<b>4</b>
4. Bolivia	The Andean Cosmivision of the Kallawaya	
5. Brazil	The Oral and Graphic Expressions of the Wajapi	
6. Ecuador and Peru*	The Oral Heritage and Cultural manifestations of the Zápara People	
7. Jamaica	<i>The Maroon Heritage of Moore Town</i>	
<b>ASIA PACIFIC</b>		<b>4</b>
8. India*	Kutiyattam Sanskrit Theatre	
9. Kyrgyzstan	Akyns, Kyrgyz Epic Tellers	
10. Uzbekistan*	The Cultural Space of the Boysun District	
11. Vanuatu	Vanuatu Sand Drawings	
<b>ARAB STATES</b>		<b>3</b>
12. Egypt	The Al-Sirah Al-Hilaliyya Epic	
13. Iraq	Iraqi Maqam	
14. Yemen	Songs of Sanaa	

15. Côte d'Ivoire \* The Gbofe of Afounkaha : the Music of the Transverse trumpets of the Tagbana Community
16. Guinea\* The Cultural Space of Sosso-Bala in Nyagassola
17. Madagascar Woodcraft Knowledge of the Zafimaniry
18. Centralafrican Republic The Oral Traditions of the Aka Pygmies

## 1. AZERBAIJAN *Azerbaijani Mugham*

The traditional musical form known in Azerbaijan as Mugham is a highly structured musical system that lends itself to a great degree of improvisation of “recomposition” during performance. Unlike European classical music, Mugham cannot be written down in a definitive form; instead, multiple versions are transmitted by masters who personally train students in the fine art of improvisation. Contemporary versions of this music form reflect different periods of Azerbaijan’s complex history and particularly contacts with Persians, Armenians, Georgians and other Turkic peoples over the centuries.

**Action Plan: The action plan makes provision for studies on the composition of Mugham, support to research and publication, conservation and restoration of voice archives and particularly ancient recordings, accessibility of this documentation to the public at large or the organization of international festivals and contests.**

## 2. ESTONIA *The Kinhu Cultural Space*

Lying off the Estonian coast, the small Baltic island of Kinhu and Manija are home to a community of 600 people, mainly fishermen. Due to the islands’ geographical isolation from the Estonian mainland, traditional ways of life have been preserved over centuries. When the men of the community would takeo the sea, the women remained on the island preserving seasonal customs, traditional music, games, various handicrafts, dances, wedding ceremonies etc. These cultural practises and traditional knowledge have been passed on orally.

**Action Plan: The Action Plan for the safeguarding of the Kinhu Cultural Space foresees the teaching of the dialect spoken on the island as well as the artisanal know-how to the youngsters in local schools and summer camps. The establishment of a multifunctional center would have for mission the collection, documentation and presentation of the islands’s trangible and intangible cultural heritage. The legal protection of the Kinhu community would be also reinforced in order to protect it from uncontrolled tourism and promote ecological and sustainable development.**

## 3. LITHUANIA *Cross Crafting and Its Symbolism*

For all Lithuanians, cross crafting evokes the tradition of the making of crosses and altars, which is common to the whole country, as well as the consecration of these crosses and the rituals associated with them. The crosses are often adorned with a small roof and floral or

geometric decorations and are of exceptional quality and are at heart of various religious festivities.

**Action Plan: The action plan makes provision for supporting seminars, production workshops and conferences organized by the Lithuanian Centre for Popular Culture in conjunction with local authorities. The crosses are inscribed in the register of cultural assets protected by the State. The register is to be completed as part of the action plan. An exhaustive inventory and an iconographic catalogue are also planned.**

#### **4. BOLIVIA**      *The Andean Cosmvision of the Kallawayaya*

The Andean cosmvision of the Kallawayaya culture is a coherent body of beliefs, myths, rituals, values and artistic that proposes a distinctive world view manifested through traditional medicine and botanics, whose virtues are widely recognized not only in Bolivia but in the many South American countries where Kallawayaya priest doctors practice. This healing art involves an exceptionally deep understanding of animal, mineral and botanical pharmacopoeia and a corpus of ritual knowledge intimately linked to religious beliefs. Traditionally this unique know how is transmitted orally from father to son. However in recent times, the Kallawayaya traditional way of life has been under threat from acculturation that may lead to the disappearance of this extraordinary body of medical knowledge. More specifically, the tradition is adversely affected by internal problems such as poverty, the lack of sufficient legal protection for indigenous peoples, and the rural exodus of young people in search of lucrative activities in addition to the threat posed by major pharmaceutical companies.

**Action Plan: The action plan makes provision for the creation of legal mechanisms for the protection of the botanical pharmacopoeia. It also includes aspects of the Kallawayaya culture in socio-economic development projects. Training in modern researcher as well as the realization of cultural projects (museums, handicraft) will allow the enhancement of awareness and their participation in the safeguarding of their culture.**

#### **5. BRAZIL**      *The Oral and Graphic Expressions of the Wajapi*

The indigenous population of Wajapi, inhabiting the northeastern Brazilian state of Amapá, situated in the northern Amazonian region, has a long history of using vegetable dyes to adorn their bodies and various objects with predominantly geometric motifs. Over the centuries, the Wajapi have developed a unique language – a rich blend of graphic and verbal components – that reflects their particular world view and enables them to hand down essential knowledge.

**Action Plan: The action plan foresees the inclusion of Wajapi population in various activities aiming the safeguarding of their heritage. To this end, they will receive training in order to empower them to create and collect oral and iconographic archives in addition to creating a database of models and kusiwa motives. Information campaigns will take place aiming the sensibilization of the importance of Wajapi cultural traditions at the local and national level.**

#### **6. ECUADOR and PERU**      *The Oral Heritage and Cultural Manifestations of the Zápara People*

Today, only five persons speak the language of the Zápara people. The language is in fact depository of the myths and legends, which recount the history of the Amazonian communities. The Zapara, living in a part of the Amazon jungle which straddles Ecuador and Peru, have developed an oral culture that is especially rich as regards their understanding of

the natural environment manifested both by the abundance of their vocabulary for the flora and fauna and by their medical practices and knowledge of medicinal plants of the forest.

**Action Plan :** In the face of the threat of the imminent loss of this unique cultural heritage, the action plan proposed by Ecuador and Peru focuses on reviving the Zápara language. Assistance is planned for the last remaining guardians of this language, so that the language and culture of the Záparas can be passed on to the new generations. Likewise, the drafting of documentation on the medical applications of shamanist knowledge will guarantee its transmission. The plan also aims to organize meetings and develop links between the Zápara communities in Ecuador and Peru and to adopt legal measures to protect them.

## **7. JAMAICA**     *The Maroon Heritage of Moore Town*

Hailing from West and Central African regions with diverse languages and cultural practices, the Maroons, former slaves who settled in Moore Town, elaborated new collective religious ceremonies that incorporated various spiritual traditions known by the name of *Kromanti Play*. At Kromanti ceremonies feature an African-derived esoteric language and rare medicinal preparations as well as dances, songs and certain drumming styles are performed when attempting to invoke ancestral spirits.

**Action Plan:** Several decades of missionary work by competing evangelical churches vehemently opposed to Kromanti Play have driven this tradition into partial clandestinity and have led to serious cleavages within the communities. Moreover, deteriorating economic conditions have forced many young and middle-aged Maroons to immigrate to other parts of Jamaica and abroad. Owing to the inherent secrecy surrounding many Maroon practices such as spiritual ceremonies and the Kromanti language, certain aspects of their heritage will require special legal protection. The proposed inventory will concentrate on more visible aspects of the Maroon heritage and include primarily musical expressions. In order to generate interest in this heritage among young people, Maroon songs and music will also be integrated into school curricula.

## **8. INDIA**     *Kutiyattam Sanskrit Theatre*

The Kutiyattam, Sanskrit theatre from the province of Kerala, is the oldest living theatrical tradition in India. Traditionally performed in the Kuttampalams, theatres located in Hindu temples, facial expression (especially of the eyes), movement and gesture form a very precisely codified language. The presence of an oil lamp on stage symbolizes divine presence during the performance as well as the actor's role retains a sacred dimension, with prior purification rituals indicate its sacred origins.

**Action Plan:** There are five institutions responsible for handing down the tradition, including the Margi Centre, which is the coordinator of the network and has set up a training programme. An archive is planned in order to preserve the actors' manuals and audiovisual documents of the performances will be put together with a series of documentary films on the masters of this theatre form. The institute is also seeking to attract new pupils and to make a wider public aware of the Kutiyattam codes. Greater access to the theatre is planned an increase in the number of performances. Workshops and the organization of an international festival in Bombay will raise consciousness among a wider public. Research will be also encouraged by the organization of colloquia and by publications.

## 9. KYRGYZSTAN *The Art of Akyns, Kyrgyz Epic Tellers*

Akyns are narrators and singers of epic poems that have been transmitted orally over the centuries in Kyrgyzstan. As the preferred form of cultural expression of the nomadic Kyrgyz people, the akyn's storytelling art combines singing and performing, improvising and musical composing. These epics are performed at religious and private festivities, seasonal ceremonies and national holidays. They represent veritable oral encyclopaedia of Kyrgyz social values, cultural knowledge and collective memory.

**Action Plan: The action plan foresees schools for young akyns to be established in seven cities and various regions. A concise synopsis of the *Manas*, the famous Kyrgyz epic dating thousand years ago, will be published in Kyrgyz and translated into Russian. To encourage exchanges among performers and to ensure public recognition, epic-telling contests will be held on the regional and national level.**

## 10. UZBEKISTAN *The Cultural Space of the Boysun District*

The cultural space of the Boysun District, presented by Uzbekistan, is one of the oldest inhabited sites in the world, with preserved vestiges of an archaic culture and traces of numerous religions, which have also influenced traditional Uzbek chants. A crossroad, this region has preserved traces of Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, Islam as well as ancient beliefs such as shamanism and totemism.

**Action Plan: Today there is a clear need for financial assistance to provide the communities with technical equipment (recording equipment) and musical instruments. There are plans to hire folklore specialists, musicologists and ethnologists to compile information about the cultural acts that are under threat. It is also planned to publish the music and lyrics of the songs and to organize concerts and festivals.**

## 11. VANUATU *Vanuatu Sand Drawings*

The Vanuatu Sand Drawings, nominated by Vanuatu, represent a multi-functional "writing". This rich and dynamic graphic tradition has emerged as a means of communication among the members of different language groups inhabiting the central and northern islands of Vanuatu. The drawings also function as mnemonic devices to record and transmit rituals, mythological lore and a wealth of oral information about local histories, indigenous cosmologies, kinship systems, scientific phenomena, song cycles, farming techniques, architectural and craft design, and choreographic patterns.

**Action Plan: The transmission of the skills of expert sand drawers will be encouraged through public events such as performances and exhibitions. Drawings that contribute to specific fields of learning (e.g. history, geography) will be integrated in existing school curricula and will be used in visual and performing arts courses. The action plan also calls for the establishment of regulations concerning the commercial use of sand drawings.**

## 12. EGYPT *The Al-Sirah Al-Hilaliyya Epic*

The Al-Sirah Al-Hilaliyya Epic, presented by Egypt, represents an exceptional blend of arabic popular traditions, history and beliefs. The epic recounts the saga of the Bani Hilal tribe and its legendary migration from the Arabian peninsula across North Africa in the tenth century AD. Traditionally, performances take place at weddings, circumcision ceremonies and private gatherings and can last several days. Once widespread throughout the Arab Middle East, this tradition has survived to the present day in only one country, Egypt.

**Action Plan: Parallel to the edition of the existing wording of the epic, the various ways of storytelling, musical and theatrical accompaniment will be documented. The traditional method of oral transmission shall be secured by funding a programme where master practitioners teach the recitation of the epic to a few pupils every year. A lectures programme in schools will be initiated to raise public interest and knowledge of the epic.**

## 13. IRAQ *Iraqi Maqam*

Widely recognized as Iraq's predominant "classical" music tradition, the Maqam encompasses a vast repertory, which is rooted in classical or colloquial Arabic poetry and distinctive vocal and instrumental timbres. This popular genre provides a wealth of information on the musical history and inter-Arab influences that have held sway over the centuries. While many Arab musical styles in the region have either disappeared or become drastically Westernized, the Iraqi Maqam has remained largely intact, retaining in particular its highly ornate vocal technique and improvisational character.

**Action Plan: The action plan recommends that live Maqam performances be held more regularly in order to reach a broader public. The plan also calls for the creation of a co-ordinated network of institutions dedicated to the performance, recording, broadcasting, documentation and training of musicians and singers. Existing music schools will offer formal curricula for students wishing to pursue the Maqam on a professional level.**

## 14. YEMEN *Songs of Sanaa*

Songs of Sanaa, nominated by Yemen, designates a group of songs that belongs to a rich musical tradition. The poetic repertory, written in both Yemeni dialect and classic Arabic, abounds in elegant wordplay and is renowned for its highly charged emotional content. The texts of the songs constitute the most revered and frequently quoted body of poems in Yemen. The songs are interpreted by a solo singer accompanied by two ancient instruments: the *qanbus* (the Saudi lute, which is rarely performed outside of Yemen nowadays), and the traditional Yeminite *sahn nuhasi*, a copper tray, which is balanced upon the player's thumbs and lightly struck with the other eight fingers.

**The action plan calls for the recording of living masters and the organizing of activities and encounters focusing on Song of Sanaa with a view to building awareness among the general public. Other plans include encouraging research and publications, establishing workshops for teaching instrument-making techniques, and reinforcing legal protection for artists.**

## 15. Côte d'Ivoire *The Gbofe of Afounkaha : the Music of the Transverse trumpets of the Tagbana Community*

The *Gbofe of Afounkaha* : the Music of the Transverse trumpets of the Tagbana Community, was nominated by the Côte d'Ivoire. The trumpettes are made of roots covered in cowhide.

They produce a range of sounds capable of reproducing the words of the Tagbana language. It plays an important social role by conferring respect and fame on the holders of this traditional know-how, and by promoting the integration of the individual in society.

**Action Plan: It is essential to make the population and the new generations aware of the importance of the Gbofe by including it in the school curricula or by providing training scholarships for young musicians. The action plan also makes provision for supporting research and the study of the practise of the Gbofe and for a series of promotional activities such as the organization of competitions and festivals. Finally, the trees which are used to make the instruments will need to be preserved as will the musical works which come out of the Gbofe.**

## **16. GUINEA** *The Cultural Space of Sosso-Bala in Nyagassola*

The cultural space of the practise of Sosso-Bala coincides with the area occupied by the Dokala family in the village of Nyagassola in Guinea. The Sosso-Bala is a sacred instrument. It is a type of balafon, 1.24 metres long, made of 20 slats carefully cut into unequal length and under each of which is a sound resonator. It is a symbol of liberty and cohesion of the Mandingue community. The Balatigui or patriarch of the Dokala family, the guardian of the instrument, can only play the Sosso-Bala on certain occasions, such as the festival of the Muslim New Year and in certain burials.

**Action Plan: The proposal is to revive the practise of the instrument, the song and the dance, to train young people in the making of the balafon, and to organize festivals, especially a two-yearly festival of the balafon. The first festival is planned for 11 April 2001. In addition, it is hoped to build a museum of the Sosso-Bala and a library at Nyagassola to hold all he productions and information that has been collected on the subject of the sacred balafon (audio and video recordings, photos and relevant objects, interviews, transcriptions of songs, publications etc.). A school of oral traditions would also need to be set up, where the Balatigui and his brothers could pass on their traditional knowledge, and a Research Institute for the Oral Tradition of the Manden, which would facilitate the organization of conferences and meetings. Finally, the reforestation of the area around Nyagassola us planned in order to protect the ecosystem and to limit the spread of the desert;**

## **17. MADAGASCAR** *Woodcraft Knowledge of the Zafimaniry*

Inhabiting a remote area in the highlands of Fianarantsoa province in southeast Madagascar, the Zafimaniry community is the sole remaining repository of a unique woodcraft culture previously widespread on the island. The attractive geometric patterns adorning most Zafimaniry wooden objects such as walls, window frames, posts, beams, stools, chests, tools are highly codified and reflect not only the community's Indonesian origins but also the Arab influences in Malagasy culture.

**Action Plan: In order to preserve its authenticity, the Zafimaniry's woodcrafting know-how must be officially recognized as an important cultural expression and legally protected. The community's natural environment must also be preserved through reforestation programmes. Workshops focusing on teaching and transmitting traditional techniques will be organized along with training in production and commercialization methods.**

## 18. Central African Republic

### *The Oral Traditions of the Aka Pygmies*

The Aka Pygmies living in the southwest region of the Central African Republic have safeguarded an extremely complex vocal musical tradition that differs radically from those of neighbouring ethnic groups and can be found nowhere else on the African continent. Music and dance have long been inextricably linked to all socio-cultural events within the Aka community. They form an integral part of Aka rituals including ceremonies related to hunting, territorial camp assemblies, the inauguration of new encampments and funerals. The songs perpetuate knowledge considered essential for the cohesion of the group and the preservation of community values.

**Action Plan: The lifestyle of the Aka Pygmies has been drastically disrupted owing to the numerous changes currently taking place in the Central African Republic. The scarcity of game resulting from deforestation, the rural exodus and the folklorization of their heritage for the tourist industry are the principal factors contributing to the gradual disappearance of many of their traditional customs, rituals and skills. The planned Centre for the Conservation and Promotion of the Heritage of the Aka Pygmies, dedicated largely to oral traditions, will support research, collect information and material, encourage exchanges and train specialists. Festivals focusing on the Pygmies' oral traditions will be organized, and these traditions will be listed on the national heritage register.**