

# QURSHA, MY QURSHA

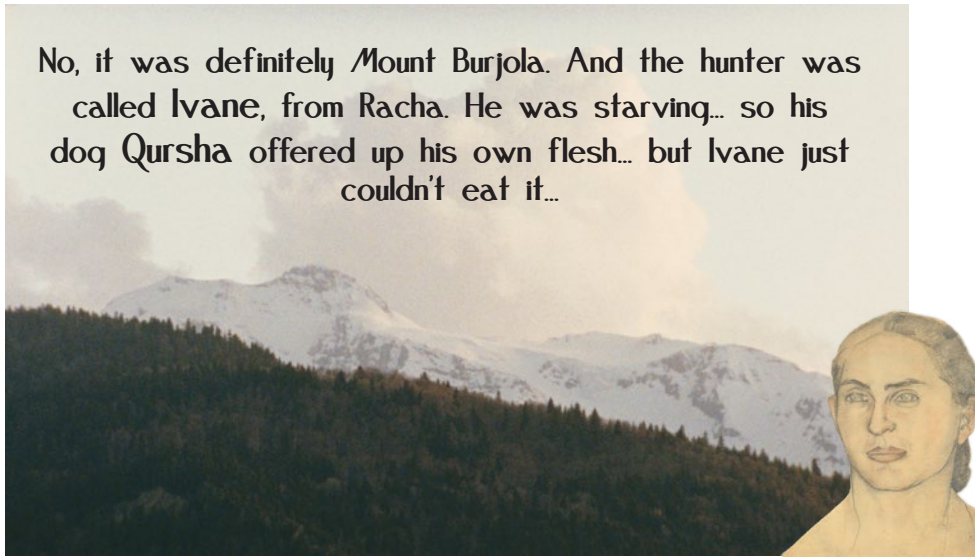
## Traces of an Oral Folk Tale

Format: 16mm and 35mm film Projected running time: 70 to 90 minutes  
Projected release date: Autumn 2024 Director: Dan Shutt, hello@danshutt.co.uk

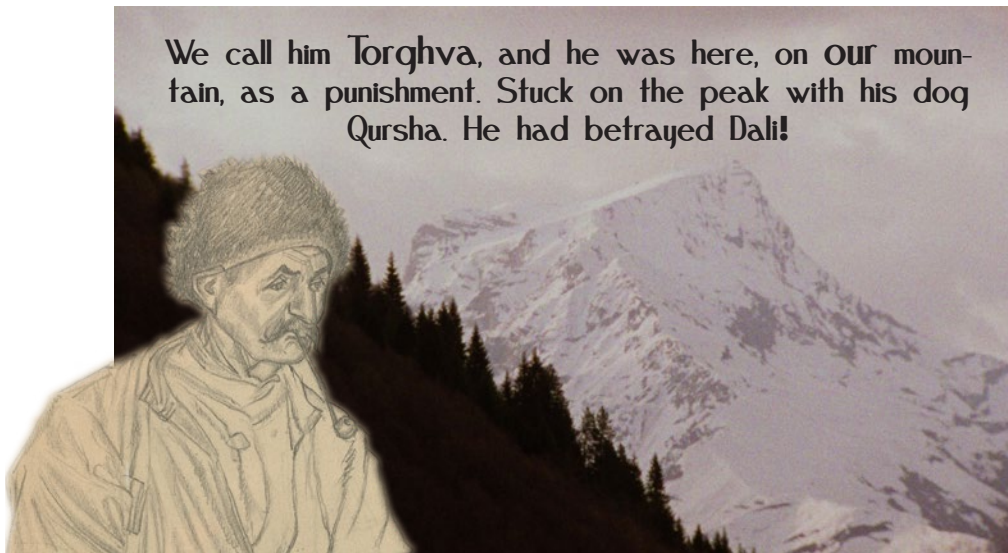
Here in Svaneti, we tell how the famous hunter *Betkil* was stuck on *Mount Tetnuldi*. His magical dog *Qursha* ran for help!



No, it was definitely *Mount Burjola*. And the hunter was called *Ivane*, from *Racha*. He was starving... so his dog *Qursha* offered up his own flesh... but *Ivane* just couldn't eat it...



We call him *Torghva*, and he was here, on *OUR* mountain, as a punishment. Stuck on the peak with his dog *Qursha*. He had betrayed *Dali*!



# “WHAT HAS BEEN LOST IN THE VALLEYS IN THE MOUNTAINS CAN BE FOUND”

ELENE VIRSALADZE



The same story of a brave hunter, his loyal dog and the vindictive goddess Dali is told all over the mountainous country of GEORGIA but its details vary between regions. Starting with the polished songs of the capital city, I will trace the various threads of the tale up through the valleys to their individual sources. The stories of villagers will be dramatized and songs and dances at key locations will tie the film together. The villagers themselves will co-direct their own version of the story. This film is inspired by

the pioneering work of 1960s folk music researcher Elene Virsaladze.



Dogs are very visible throughout Georgia; many have no human ‘owner’, but share space with people. As is clear in the ancient myths, dogs and mankind in this area have always had a close relationship. This film will examine the role of the magical dog QURSHA in an ancient folk tale, and how he stood alongside the mythical hunter (Betkil, Ivane or Torghva, depending on location) in challenging Dali.

# SELECTED CAST



The IALONI choir are an award-winning ensemble from Georgia's capital city, Tbilisi. Led by NINO NANEISHVILI, the group will perform urbanised versions of the ancient songs we have already recorded in the remote mountain regions. Georgian polyphonic singing is known all around the world, and IALONI are among the most sophisticated of all its performers.

The VILLAGERS OF LAKHUSHDI, known throughout Georgia as 'The Singing Village', still perform the ancient songs and round-dances of their ancestors on festival days throughout the year. They are an incredible memory bank of folk stories and music. In their songs, you can hear the origins of popular modern hits from the city.



MADONA CHANGELIANI is a world-class touring musician who lives high up in the Caucasus mountains. She researched the figure of the pagan hunting goddess Dali at the Tbilisi State Conservatoire and will co-direct the dramatizations of her version of the story, which her family has passed down for hundreds of years. She is an expert in the mythology of dogs in the Caucasus region and a compelling protagonist in our story.

The GOGOCHURI SISTERS are celebrated musicians from the isolated region of Khevsureti. Their traditional dress is unique. MARIAM GOGOCHURI is a textile artist and conservator of folk songs, weaving styles and traditional embroidery. Their version of the story of the hunter is very different to the others, but a strong thread ties them all together. Khevsur landscapes take the breath away.



## CREW

**Dan Shutt** is a British-German filmmaker whose first feature documentary **Washed By The Moon** (2018) was shown at festivals across Europe and led to coverage in *The Wire* and *Artforum* and a sold-out UK tour for the musicians it featured. In 2022 he published a multimedia report on the protection of Europe's last wild river. His work can be seen at [danchfilm.com](http://danchfilm.com).

**Isaac Eastgate** is a British cinematographer whose work includes music videos for Drake and Bring Me The Horizon, documentaries such as Joshua Gordon's *KRAHANG*, and commercial work for Vans and Nike, clocking up a total of almost one billion views. Isaac also shot *Washed By the Moon* with Dan Shutt. His work can be seen at [isaaceastgate.com](http://isaaceastgate.com).



# PRODUCTION SCHEDULE

## PHASE ONE, PREPARATION: COMPLETE



Initial research: COMPLETE  
Scout locations: COMPLETE  
Secure production company: COMPLETE  
Secure translator: COMPLETE  
Secure musicians: COMPLETE  
Learn beginner-level Georgian (director): COMPLETE  
Collect source material, songs, stories: COMPLETE  
Film scanning and development: COMPLETE  
Duration: 14 days

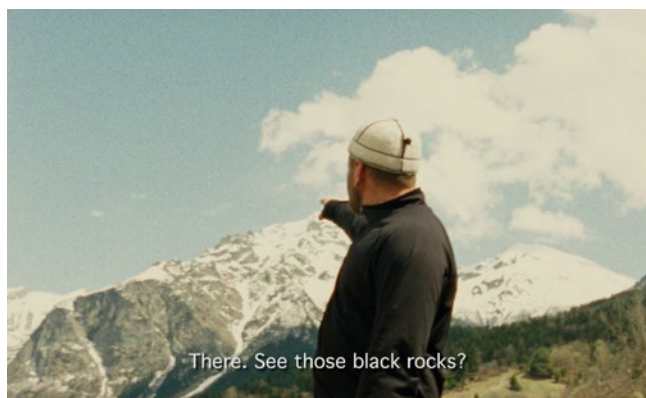
## PHASE TWO, PRODUCTION: Winter 2022/Spring 2023 (tbc)

- Dramatize the various versions of the story
  - Record audio of oral testimony of villagers
  - Make a street-photography-style portrait of dogs in modern Georgia
  - Trace the journey from city to mountains via long landscape shots
- Duration: 3 months preparation (over winter), 30 days shoot (spring)

## PHASE THREE, POSTPRODUCTION and MARKETING: (tbc)

- Film scanning and development
    - Editing (by the director)
    - Colour grading
    - Audio mixing
  - Preparation of marketing materials
  - Festival submissions and participation
  - UK performances for musicians from film
- Duration: for release in 2024

# PRODUCTION BUDGET



ITEM	COST £	QUANTITY	TOTAL £
Film, Kodak Vision3, 35mm, 400ft	194.00	25	4850.00
Scanning and development, Cinelab/Kodak London, per roll	180.00	25	4500.00
Return flights	700.00	2	1400.00
Accommodation, night	50.00	30	1500.00
Car hire, day	100.00	30	3000.00
Fuel, day	50.00	30	1500.00
Food, day	50.00	30	1500.00
Translator fee	1500.00	1	1500.00
Performer fee	500.00	4	2000.00
Georgian production company fee	2000.00	1	2000.00
Equipment hire, Georgia	1000.00	1	1000.00
Flights, within Georgia	500.00	1	500.00
Cinematographer, fee, per day	200.00	30	6000.00
Director, fee, per day	100.00	30	3000.00

**34,250.00**

*Note: Georgia is an extraordinary and relatively cheap country in which to make a film*

I am looking for a UK PRODUCTION PARTNER to help me secure funding; achieve the best rates for development & scanning and equipment hire; with festival submission and marketing.

The illustrations in this document are from Nino Brailashvili, 'Georgia As I Saw It: Ethnographic Sketches', Khelovneba Publishers, Tbilisi, 1990. The rest is © Dan Shutt, 2022. Contact [hello@danshutt.co.uk](mailto:hello@danshutt.co.uk) or see [danchfilm.com](http://danchfilm.com) for more information.