



## **Shashmaqom is Intangible Heritage of Uzbekistan**

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**Abstract:** *This article mainly covers the main concepts of Shashmaqom's place in the development of the music culture of Uzbekistan, its history, characteristics, and the role of musical instruments in the performance of Shashmaqom.*

**Keywords:** *classical music, Central Asia, tanbur, nay, doira, rubab, heritage, music style, challenges, rhythmic patterns.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Shashmaqom music is a traditional style of classical music that originated in Central Asia, specifically in the region of Samarkand in Uzbekistan. The name "Shashmaqom" means "six maqams," which refers to the six musical modes that the music is based on. The music is performed by a small ensemble of musicians playing instruments such as the dutar (a two-stringed lute), the tanbur (a long-necked lute), the sato (a small, round drum), and the nay (a flute).

Shashmaqom music is considered an important part of Uzbek cultural heritage and is recognized as such by UNESCO, which has designated it as a Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity. This recognition is based on the fact that Shashmaqom music is not just a form of entertainment, but an important aspect of Uzbek identity and a means of cultural expression.

One of the unique features of Shashmaqom music is the way it combines elements of both improvisation and composition. While the basic structure and themes of the music are predetermined, the musicians are free to improvise and embellish their parts. This allows for a great deal of creativity and spontaneity in the performance, and each rendition of a piece of Shashmaqom music is unique.

Shashmaqom music is also notable for its use of poetry in its lyrics. The texts are usually written in Persian or Uzbek and often address themes of love, nature, and spirituality. The combination of music and poetry creates a powerful emotional impact that is difficult to replicate in other art forms.

### **Challenges.**

Despite its long history and cultural significance, Shashmaqom music is facing a number of challenges in the modern world. One of the biggest issues is the declining number of musicians who are trained in the art form. As younger generations turn to more modern forms of music, there are fewer and fewer opportunities for traditional musicians to pass on their skills and knowledge to the next generation.

Another challenge is the lack of financial support for Shashmaqom music. Many of the traditional instruments used in the music are handmade and require a great deal of skill to produce. As a result,

they can be expensive to acquire and maintain. Additionally, the costs associated with training and performing can be prohibitive for many musicians, particularly those living in rural areas.

Despite these challenges, there are efforts being made to preserve and promote Shashmaqom music. Uzbekistan has established several institutions devoted to the training and performance of traditional music, and there are also international organizations working to support the preservation of intangible cultural heritage. By raising awareness of the importance of Shashmaqom music and providing support to musicians and organizations dedicated to its preservation, it is possible to ensure that this important cultural tradition continues to thrive for generations to come.

### **History.**

Shashmaqom has a long and rich history that can be traced back to the courts of the Timurid dynasty, which ruled over much of Central Asia during the 15th century. During this time, the courts were known for their patronage of the arts, and musicians were highly valued for their ability to entertain and impress the ruling elite. Over time, Shashmaqom developed into a highly refined and sophisticated musical style that was performed by professional musicians known as "shashmaqomiy." These musicians were highly skilled in their craft, and they were often considered to be among the most important and respected members of society.

### **Characteristics.**

One of the defining characteristics of Shashmaqom is its use of complex musical modes or maqams. These maqams are based on a system of intervals that are unique to each mode, and they provide the foundation for the melody of the music. In addition, Shashmaqom also incorporates a variety of rhythmic patterns, which are often quite intricate and challenging to perform.

Another important aspect of Shashmaqom is its use of poetry. Many of the songs in this style are based on traditional Uzbek poetry, which is known for its rich and expressive language. The lyrics often tell stories or convey emotions, and they are an important part of the overall artistic experience of the music.

### **Instruments.**

Shashmaqom is typically performed by a small ensemble of musicians, who play a variety of instruments. Some of the most commonly used instruments in this style of music include the following:

- Doira: a type of frame drum that is played with the hands.
- Rubab: a short-necked lute that is plucked with a plectrum.
- Nay: a type of flute that is made from reeds.
- Tanbur: a long-necked lute that is plucked with the fingers.

In addition to these instruments, Shashmaqom ensembles may also incorporate other instruments such as the dutar (a two-stringed lute) and the ghijak (a bowed string instrument).

Today, Shashmaqom is recognized as an important part of Uzbek cultural heritage, and it continues to be performed and enjoyed by people all over Central Asia. In fact, in 2003, UNESCO recognized Shashmaqom as a "Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity," in recognition of its cultural significance and artistic value.

Despite its long history and cultural importance, Shashmaqom is facing some challenges in the modern world. One of the biggest issues is the lack of funding and support for traditional arts in many parts of Central Asia. As a result, many musicians who specialize in Shashmaqom are struggling to make a living, and there are concerns about the long-term viability of this art form.

Conclusion, Shashmaqom is a unique and fascinating musical style that has a long and rich history in Central Asia. With its complex musical modes, expressive poetry, and skilled musicianship, it is an important part of Uzbek cultural heritage. While it faces some challenges in the modern world, there

is no doubt that Shashmaqom will continue to be appreciated and enjoyed by people who value its. As mentioned before Shashmaqom is a highly sophisticated and complex musical style that originated in Central Asia, specifically in Uzbekistan. It incorporates elements of Persian, Arabic, and Central Asian music and is based on a system of six maqams, or musical modes. Shashmaqom has a long and rich history that can be traced back to the courts of the Timurid dynasty, and it continues to be recognized as an important part of Uzbek cultural heritage. Despite facing challenges in the modern world, Shashmaqom remains an expressive and valued art form that is enjoyed by people all over Central Asia.

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