

“Khari Bulbul” Festival

After the liberation of the city of Shusha from the Armenian occupation (08.10.2020) and the victory in the Second Karabakh War (27.09.2020-10.10.2020), the tradition of holding the international folklore festival “Khari Bulbul” in Shusha was resumed. In total, the festival was held five times.

The festival was named in honor of “Khari Bulbul” (*Ophrys caucasica*) flower, which is considered a folk symbol of Shusha. The “Khari Bulbul” festival (which is held once a year, in May) was established on the initiative of the Ambassador of Azerbaijan to Russia, former Minister of Culture of the Azerbaijan SSR Polad Bulbuloghlu.

[\[Ch.Kajar. Old Shusha. 2007, p. 89\]](#)

[\[“Kommunist” newspaper, №92 16.05. 1991, p. 4\]](#)

Polad Bulbuloghlu expressed his opinion about the festival as follows: “This international folk music forum, held for the first time within 70 years in Azerbaijan, can be safely called the renaissance of our art. It serves as a living bridge between the cultures of Azerbaijan and the peoples of the world. We are proud to say that now we have real friends everywhere. And this is a huge merit of “Khari Bulbul”.

[\[“Kultura” newspaper №20. 24.05.1991, p. 3\]](#)

The first festival was called the “All-Union Festival of Folk Art on Monody Singing” and was held on May 19-May 24, 1989 on the plain of Jidir Duzu in Shusha. It was dedicated to the 100th anniversary of Azerbaijani khanende (singer) Seyid Shushinski. The opening ceremony of the festival took place in the city of Aghdam. Delegations from the Uzbekistan SSR, Tajikistan SSR, Kyrgyzstan SSR and Bashkiria ASSR participated in it.

[\[“Bakinskiy Rabochiy” newspaper №118 \(21543\) 21.05.1989, p. 1\]](#)

[\[“Sovetskaya kultura” newspaper №23 \(6747\) 9.06.1990, p. 2\]](#)

[\[Ch.Kajar. Old Shusha. 2007, p. 283\]](#)

In 1990, the festival received international status. Folklore groups from the USA, Israel, Turkey, Mexico, Belarus, Georgia, the Netherlands, Lithuania and Daghestan came to **the second** festival. The festival was attended by guests from 11 countries, a total of 250 people.

[\["Sovetskaya kultura" newspaper № 23 \(6747\) 9.06.1990, p. 2\]](#)

[\["Vyshka" newspaper №113 \(18091\) 24.05.1990, p. 4\]](#)

[\["Kommunist" newspaper, №92 16.05. 1991, p. 4\]](#)

The largest was **the third** festival (May 18-25, 1991), which was attended by representatives from 16-17 republics and autonomous regions of the USSR. The festival was also attended by guests from Austria, Germany, Italy, Spain, Afghanistan, China, Japan, USA, Moldova and Israel. In addition to folklore groups, singers of rock and pop music genres participated in it. Concerts of this festival were held at stadiums. Its opening ceremony took place in the city of Mingachevir, and the final concert was held in Baku, in the Heydar Aliyev Palace (the former palace of V.I.Lenin). The heads of all folklore groups were awarded the diplomas "For the preservation of the national culture of the people and workmanship".

[\["Kultura" newspaper No. 21. 1.06.1991, p. 1-3\]](#)

[\["Kultura" newspaper No. 20. 24.05.1991, p. 1-3\]](#)

[\["Kommunist" newspaper, No 92 16.05. 1991, p. 4\]](#)

[\["Bakinskiy Rabochiy" newspaper No.190 \(22125\) 28.05.1991, p. 3\]](#)



In 1992, the next festival was canceled due to the Karabakh war and the occupation of Shusha by Armenian armed formations.

On May 12-13, 2021, after a long break of 30 years, **the fourth** international festival "Khari Bulbul" took place in Shusha. For the entire history of the festival, the head of state, President of Azerbaijan – Ilham Aliyev, as a guest, took part in the opening and closing ceremonies. For the first time, the festival was broadcast live on Azerbaijani state television. The festival was attended by musical groups of various peoples of Azerbaijan, as well as prominent Azerbaijani singers and musicians.

The fifth festival was held on May 12-14, 2022. In addition to local performers, representatives of culture and the leadership of Azerbaijan, musical groups from Mali, Tunisia,

Egypt, Pakistan, Bulgaria, Turkey, Uzbekistan and Georgia participated in it.