

YOUTH LENS

on the Silk  Roads



2nd Edition

Best photos from the
International Silk Roads
Photo Contest



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



The Silk Roads
Dialogue, Diversity
and Development

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Foreword



Audrey Azoulay
Director General of UNESCO

According to Chinese legend, Emperor Shennong discovered tea by chance one afternoon, when leaves from the tree he was sitting under blew into the pot of water he was boiling. He took a sip of the fragrant brew and found it both refreshing and stimulating.

As Shennong’s discovery gained in popularity, tea houses sprung up where people could drink the beverage in company with others. Tea began to be used in religious ceremonies, and played a key role in hospitality and business dealings. Thanks to the Silk Roads, it became a sought-after commodity and a cultural marker, both in China and in countries throughout the Middle East and Europe.

The Silk Roads are complex networks of overland and maritime routes, which have facilitated the movement of people, goods and ideas across different regions for more than two thousand years. Like the Routes of Santiago de Compostela in Europe, and the *Qhapaq Ñan* or the Royal Road in the Andes, these roads support the exchanges of cultures, traditions, knowledge and beliefs – interweaving cultural, natural and intangible heritage.

The UNESCO Silk Roads Programme aims to promote this unique history of mutual exchange, and it is particularly relevant in the context of the current COVID-19 pandemic. In times of crisis, faced with the challenges of protectionism, isolationism, misinformation and discrimination, we must learn from the exchanges that took place along the Silk Roads. These exchanges weaved connections between peoples and cultures across Asia and Europe – with this in mind, we can work to foster much needed dialogue and mutual respect going forward.

As part of this programme, UNESCO organizes the annual ‘**Youth Eyes on the Silk Roads**’ international photo contest to raise awareness among young people of the importance of this shared legacy. The first competition, held in 2018, invited young men and women to photograph elements of the shared heritage of the Silk Roads, focusing on four main themes: ‘Culture’, ‘People’, ‘Heritage’ and ‘Landscape’.

In this year’s competition, participants were asked to capture aspects of their daily lives, including ‘Music and Dance’, ‘Traditional Sports and Games’ and ‘Gastronomy and Food Production’. This album titled ***Youth Lens on the Silk Roads*** features the best photos submitted, along with the photographers’ reflections on this shared heritage.

The contest reflects UNESCO’s goal to nurture a culture of peace and tolerance in line with the objectives of the 2030 Agenda. I hope both the photo contest and this album will continue to inspire an awareness of the shared heritage of the Silk Roads, from tea to ideas, and encourage dialogue, exchange and cooperation for generations to come.

Audrey Azoulay

Preface



Dr Ruohong Li
President of the China World
Peace Foundation

This photo album is the result of an ongoing project of landmark significance in peace-making, youth participation, and cooperation between UNESCO and the China World Peace Foundation, that reflects the CWPF’s commitment to Youth’s active involvement in global affairs, through its “Peace +1” initiative.

During the Peace Festival held in Beijing on September 21, 2018, delegates from more than 100 countries witnessed the award ceremony of the first edition of the ‘**Youth Eyes on the Silk Roads**’ international photo contest. The ceremony highlighted the emotive power of photography and served as an important reminder to all participants that not only are youth our future, but they are also important actors for peace in our globalizing world. This ceremony was also an opportunity for young photographers to see their work presented and celebrated at the international level, with their award-winning and outstanding images going on to be displayed all over the world as part of a travelling exhibition.

The themes of the second edition of the ‘**Youth Eyes on the Silk Roads**’ international photo contest are distinctive, highlighting the cultural diversity and beauty of the shared heritage of the Silk Roads. The evocative works contained within this album not only reveal the Silk Roads’ fine gastronomy and culinary arts, music and dance, and traditional sports and games, but also reflect the landscape of the cultural ecosystem encompassed by these routes.

Under the ever-changing circumstances of the 21st century, with increased challenges to international peace and stability, encouraging peaceful dialogue amongst youth is our vital responsibility. I hope that the artistic achievements contained within this album will persuade readers of the great potential of the cultural heritage of the Silk Roads as a tool for the promotion of peace.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to UNESCO for its dedication to this initiative.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Li Ruohong', with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

UNESCO's Engagement for Promoting the Silk Roads Heritage

Over the last thirty years, UNESCO has undertaken many initiatives to better understand this shared heritage and highlight its significance for mutual understanding amongst diverse peoples. In 1988, the Organization launched a flagship project entitled, 'Integral Study of the Silk Roads, Roads of Dialogue', to encourage a more profound comprehension regarding intercultural dialogue and cultural interactions. Those inhabiting Eurasian and Far Eastern regions, as well as those living in the Middle East, Africa, and around the Indian Ocean, all benefited from this innovative initiative. Completed in 2002, the project resulted in the creation of documentary evidence and audio-visual materials, which emphasized the dynamic processes involved in the building of shared heritage and common values along the historic Silk Routes.

As a result of the interest generated, UNESCO began the second phase of the Silk Roads programme in 2013. This programme is implemented within UNESCO's mandate for promoting Intercultural Dialogue and a Culture of Sustainable Peace, as well as being in line with its Strategy and Action Plan of the Management of Social Transformation programme. This programme aims to identify and promote elements of the shared heritage of the Silk Roads as a basis for reinforcing mutual trust and respect between people of different cultures at the regional and international level, as well as enhancing social cohesion within plural and multicultural modern societies. In the current era of globalization, this programme seeks, especially, to promote cooperation and exchanges among people of different cultures, to reduce mistrust and conflicts – a goal that is incredibly important today in light of new and emerging waves of nationalism, protectionism and ignorance of others.

Over the past few decades, UNESCO and its partners have continued to develop the Silk Roads programme, highlighting current activities and events that have been undertaken by countries along the Silk Roads and beyond. This includes information on scientific research and studies regarding various aspects of this heritage, including historical sites, cultural expression, museum collections, traditional craftsmanship, intangible heritage, artistic creations, scientific thought and religious beliefs.

The international photo contest, '**Youth Eyes on the Silk Roads**', is one of the most recent initiatives organized by UNESCO within the Silk Roads programme. Using photography as a preferred tool of communication, this initiative encourages young people to reflect on, and capture, the elements of shared heritage and values of the Silk Roads in their surrounding communities and their daily lives.

The first edition of the photo contest mobilized more than 6,600 young men and women from 100 countries to capture elements of the shared heritage of the Silk Roads through the four major themes of 'Culture', 'People', 'Heritage' and 'Landscape'. With this second edition, participants were tasked with revealing this shared heritage through one or more aspects of our daily lives, including 'Music and Dance', 'Gastronomy and Food Production', and 'Traditional Sports and Games'.

This album ***Youth Lens on the Silk Roads*** showcases the best of the photos submitted to the second edition of the contest, along with each photographers' unique reflections on this shared heritage.

Travelling and Shaping the World

History teaches us that one can neither flourish nor survive without cultural interactions with others. By linking different regions throughout Asia and the Pacific, Europe and Africa, the Silk Roads have played a key role in connecting cultures beyond borders. These routes have been essential for the exchange of innovative ideas, knowledge, beliefs and savoir-faire.

In addition to commercial motives, travellers have explored the expansive Silk Roads region to partake in both the intellectual and scientific exchanges that took place within cities along these routes. Scientific knowledge relating to medicine, mathematics and chemistry was shared amongst individuals along the Silk Roads. Moreover, arts, literature and craftsmanship added to these exchanges, thus contributing to the advancement of humanity.

Spiritual enlightenment, as well as an understanding of religions, also provided inspiration for travel along these routes. For example, Buddhism spread from India to China, Japan, the Korean Peninsula and Southeast Asia. In addition, Christianity, Islam and various other religious ideologies, including Zoroastrianism, Manicheism, and Nestorianism became more pervasive as they expanded from their points of origin across the Silk Roads. Numerous historical sites, buildings and monuments, that still exist today, are a testament to the innovation and creativity of those who reaped the benefits of these historical routes.

What is known in contemporary society as the Silk Roads, is in reality an expansive network of various trade routes, methods of exchange and channels of communication. These also include the Spice Routes, the Incense Routes and the Pilgrimage Routes that have connected vast regions, stretching from Asia to the Arabian Peninsula, and through Africa and Europe, for thousands of years. To a certain extent, today's globalized world is the result of the transnational fluidity of ideas, goods and technology along the Silk Roads.

85 countries
Over 3,500 submissions

2 age categories:
from 14 to 17 years old
from 18 to 25 years old

3 themes:
Gastronomy and Food Production
Music and Dance
Traditional Sports and Games

List of the participating countries

- AFGHANISTAN
- ALGERIA
- AUSTRALIA
- AZERBAIJAN
- BANGLADESH
- BENIN
- BHUTAN
- BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA
- BOTSWANA
- CANADA
- PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA
- CYPRUS
- DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

- EGYPT
- ETHIOPIA
- FRANCE
- GEORGIA
- GERMANY
- GHANA
- GREECE
- GUATEMALA
- GUYANA
- HAITI
- ICELAND
- INDIA
- INDONESIA
- IRAN (ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF)
- IRAQ

- ISRAEL
- ITALY
- JORDAN
- KAZAKHSTAN
- KENYA
- KYRGYZSTAN
- LEBANON
- LESOTHO
- LIBYA
- MADAGASCAR
- MALAYSIA
- MAURITIUS
- MEXICO
- MONGOLIA
- MOROCCO
- MYANMAR

- NEPAL
- NIGERIA
- NORTH MACEDONIA
- OMAN
- PAKISTAN
- PALESTINE
- PHILIPPINES
- POLAND
- QATAR
- REPUBLIC OF KOREA
- REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA
- ROMANIA
- RUSSIAN FEDERATION

- RWANDA
- SAUDI ARABIA
- SENEGAL
- SIERRA LEONE
- SLOVENIA
- SOMALIA
- SOUTH AFRICA
- SPAIN
- SRI LANKA
- SUDAN
- SWEDEN
- SWITZERLAND
- SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC
- TAJIKISTAN
- THAILAND

- TUNISIA
- TURKEY
- TURKMENISTAN
- UGANDA
- UKRAINE
- UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
- UNITED KINGDOM
- UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA
- UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
- UZBEKISTAN
- VIET NAM
- YEMEN
- ZIMBABWE

The Silk Roads

The Silk Roads are part of a vast region comprised of a network of maritime and land routes. They pass through South Asia and Southeast Asia, crossing the Central Asian subcontinent, the Russian steppes, the Iranian and Anatolian plateaus, and the Arabian Peninsula. They stretch across North Africa and North East Africa, from Tanzania to Morocco. Moreover, they extend through Eastern and Southern Europe, before linking France and Spain.

- Silk Roads
- Maritime Silk Roads (Spice Routes)
- Eurasian Steppe Routes
- Incense Roads
- Other Trade and Connecting Routes
- Secondary Trading Routes



Selection Committee



GMB Akash | Photographer

Bangladesh

GMB Akash is an award-winning Bangladeshi photographer whose work has been featured in over 100 major publications including *Vogue*, *The Economist*, *Amnesty Journal* and *The Fader*. His photographs have been exhibited all over the world with solo exhibitions in Bangladesh, Germany, Portugal, and the USA. In 2002, he became the first Bangladeshi photographer to be selected for the World Press Photo Joop Swart Masterclass in the Netherlands. In 2004, he received the "Young Reporters Award" from the Scope Photo Festival and, in 2009, he was awarded the international "Travel Photographer of the Year" title. In 2012, he presented the results of his 10 year project "Survivors", with proceeds from the resulting publication going towards helping the subjects of the book establish their own small businesses. In 2013, he founded the GMB Akash Institute of Photography in Bangladesh, teaching students from all over the world. The proceeds from his photography workshops go towards the provision of basic education for street children, underprivileged talented students, and child labourers. GMB Akash has previously served as a jury member of other international photo contests including the Friends of the Earth International Photo Competition (The Netherlands) and the Worldwide Photography Gala Award (United Kingdom). In December 2017, he participated in the National Geographic Exodus Fest in Aveiro, Portugal, where he exhibited, spoke, and gave a master class.



Coşkun Aral | Photojournalist

Turkey

Coşkun Aral was born in Siirt, Turkey. He began his career in photojournalism in 1974, at the newspapers *Günaydın* and *Gün*. He gained recognition from the international press with the distribution of his photos by the French photo agency Sipa Press, as well as with publication in the news magazines *Time* and *Newsweek*. From 1980, Aral was assigned by Sipa Press to cover various parts of the world including Lebanon, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Afghanistan, Northern Ireland, Chad, and the Far East. His career continued with the weeklies *Time*, *Newsweek*, *Paris Match*, *Stern* and *Época*.

Aral produces and directs the news show *Haberci* ("The Reporter"), which is broadcast on Turkish international television channels, and is the co-founder and director general of Turkey's first documentary and travel channel İZ TV.

His works have been exhibited all over the world.



Sylvie Brieu | Journalist, Author and Lecturer

France

Sylvie Brieu is a journalist, author, and educator, who graduated from the Sorbonne and UC Berkeley. Brieu is a founding member of *National Geographic France* and a former board member of *National Geographic Society's* "All Roads Film Project". This program provided an international platform for ethnic and cultural minority photographers and directors from around the world.

Brieu is the author of numerous articles which predominantly address cultural diversity and women's issues. Her books focus on Indigenous peoples who are working for social change and environmental justice.

In addition, she lectures and organizes workshops in schools, universities, at UNESCO, and at the *National Geographic Society* and the *Women's Forum for the Economy and Society*.



Song Gangming | Photographer

People's Republic of China

With a focus on humanistic photography, Song Gangming's award winning career has spanned 43 years. In 2004, his work "Blessing" won the 27th outstanding works award of the International Photographic Black and White Biennale. In 2005, "Dawn" won the gold medal at the 14th Hasselblad Exhibition in Austria. His work "Hui Ju Reflection" won the first prize of the United Nations Human Contribution Award in 2000, the Silver Award of the 27th national film exhibition of China, and the seventh Chinese Gold Award of Art Photography. In 2006, he won the special contribution award for the 50th anniversary of the China photographers association. In 2013, "The Long March", which was shot during a solo journey of 1,290 km, and its accompanying exhibition "The Long March of One Man", won the social record category award of the 2016 PingYao International Photography Exhibition.

In 2018, he was a judge for the 12th China Photography Academy Awards.

WINNERS of the photo contest



Neo Ntsoma | Independent Photojournalist

South Africa

Neo Ntsoma is an award winning South African photographer, educator, and consultant, whose photographs have appeared in major international newspapers, magazines, and books, as well as exhibitions worldwide. In 2004, Ntsoma became the first female recipient of the Mohamed Amin Award, the CNN African Journalist of the Year Photography Prize. With the understanding of the importance of mentorship, she lectures frequently, both within and outside of South Africa. She has served as a judge on numerous photographic competitions, ranging from regional and national, to international contests.

Furthermore, Ntsoma co-authored the book, *Women by Women*, which is a celebration of the 50th anniversary of the 1956 Women's March. The largest demonstrations staged in South African history, in which 20,000 women of all races marched against legislation aimed at tightening the apartheid government's control over the movement of black women in urban areas. In 2006, she was named one of the '100 Most Influential Women' in a list published by *Media24*, Africa's largest media group.



Osama Silwadi | Photojournalist

Palestine

Osama Silwadi is a Palestinian photojournalist, visual storyteller, and folklorist. He began his career in 1991 documenting ongoing conflict. At the age of nineteen, Silwadi worked as a freelance Photojournalist for various local newspapers. Later he worked for Agence France-Presse (AFP) and Reuters. Moreover, he was a permanent correspondent in Palestine for the GAMMA photo agency.

Silwadi believes in using photography as a vehicle with which to archive Palestinian visual history. Furthermore, he prioritizes photography's broader importance by documenting significant events. Osama Silwadi has published 11 photo books documenting Palestinian daily life and heritage. For his work documenting Palestinian heritage Silwadi has garnered the titles "*The Eye of Palestine*" and the "*Palestinian Heritage documenter*".

Category one 14-17 years old



1ST PRIZE

Patria Prasasya
17 years old, Indonesia

3RD PRIZE

Rama Kaushalyan
17 years old, India



2ND PRIZE

Fenghao Yu
15 years old, People's Republic of China



Category two 18-25 years old

1ST PRIZE

Aung Chan Thar
22 years old, Myanmar



2ND PRIZE

John Leonardo Rosales Dimain IV
25 years old, Philippines



3RD PRIZE

Sharad Iragonda Patil
23 years old, India

WINNER 1ST PRIZE | 14-17 YEARS OLD

Patria Prasasya

17 years old, Indonesia



Transaction at Lok Baintan Floating Market

Trading at Lok Baintan floating market on the Martapura river in Banjar District, South Kalimantan Province, Indonesia, takes place between 5:30 and 8:00 in the morning. This market is unique in that the transactions take place on the river and are not always carried out with cash, but can be undertaken via the barter of fresh fruit and vegetables. Markets occupied a crucial role on the Silk Roads, acting as sites of exchange. Not only of goods, but also of knowledge, ideas, culture and beliefs.





WINNER 2ND PRIZE | 14-17 YEARS OLD

Fenghao Yu

15 years old, People's Republic of China



The Wonderful Time

A scene from daily life on Huangjueping Street in Chongqing, China. Jiaotong Teahouse is the oldest and most traditional tea house in Chongqing. Tea was one of many important gastronomic elements transmitted across the Silk Roads, which today plays a crucial social role in many cultures around the world.

WINNER 3RD PRIZE | 14-17 YEARS OLD

Rama Kaushalyan

17 years old, India



Traditional Spirituality Dance

In Kulasekharapatnam, a small town in Tamil Nadu, India, a man dresses up as a woman Goddess and carries a hot pot with bare hands while devotees play drums. Dancing to the beat of the drums whilst holding the hot pot brings strength and spirituality. Every year on the day of *Dussehra* (or *Vijayadashami*) thousands of people gather to celebrate this ritual.





WINNER 1ST PRIZE | 18-25 YEARS OLD

Aung Chan Thar
22 years old, Myanmar



Fishermen's Daily Catch

Inle lake in Myanmar is home to people who build their houses on the water. The lake sustains their livelihoods, which are based around fishing, and provides both food and shelter. Myanmar's waterways, particularly its rivers and coastline, helped forge connections with other regions along the Silk Roads, creating a vibrant hub of cultural exchange.

WINNER 2ND PRIZE | 18-25 YEARS OLD

John Leonardo Rosales Dimain IV
25 years old, Philippines



The Art of *Arnis*

Arnis is the national sport of the Philippines. It was devised by native Filipinos who used rattans, daggers, swords and other weapons for combat and self-defence. *Arnis* was employed by the first Filipino hero Datu Lapu-Lapu.





3RD PRIZE | 18-25 YEARS OLD

Sharad Iragonda Patil
23 years old, India



Music and Dance Provides the Freedom to Express

Wari is the most famous festival in Maharashtra, India. During this festival 500,000 to 600,000 people walk together and dance to musical instruments like the *Taal*.



HONORABLE MENTION | 14-17 YEARS OLD

Matin Ghezelbash

17 years old, Iran (Islamic Republic of)



Dancing Forms

Dancers in Zanjan, Iran. The spirit of our times is glorified in the traditions and rituals that have been part of our ancient civilization. Happiness and goodwill flow from their dancing, bringing us closer together.

HONORABLE MENTION | 14-17 YEARS OLD

Arda Taş

15 years old, Turkey



Sheep Festival

The Aşağıseyit village Sheep Water Jumping Race and Nomad Festival has been taking place annually on the last Saturday and Sunday of August for around 850 years. The race and festival portray the nomad way of life. According to tradition, the shepherd leads the sheep to the stream, which they then must cross without stopping. The aim is to guide the sheep across the river without stopping to drink the water. Once the shepherd goes into the water, the sheep follow.





HONORABLE MENTION | 18-25 YEARS OLD

Hoàng Đức Nguyễn
24 years old, Viet Nam



The Epic Fight

Two fighters compete in a mudball wrestling game to earn the kick-off for their team. The mudball wrestling festival *Lễ hội Vật Cầu Bùn* is one of many fascinating festivals that have taken place across Viet Nam for hundreds of years. This three-day festival is known as *Khanh Ha*. The event celebrates Trieu Quang Phuc victory over black demons. Historically, the village has faced serious flooding so the act of fighting for the ball is symbolic of local people trying to bring back the sunshine and end the flooding. It is believed that the more times the wrestlers "steal" the ball back from one another, the more prosperous the next harvest will be.



HONORABLE MENTION | 18-25 YEARS OLD

Hasan Uçar
24 years old, Turkey



Woman Collecting Olives

A woman collecting olives in Derik, in Mardin Province, in the South East Anatolian Region. Olive cultivation is an important source of income for the local people in Derik district and olive oil culture, which is part of the Mediterranean diet as inscribed on the list of Intangible Cultural Heritage, has an important place among Turkish people.

BEST OF **the photo** **contest**

Tynystan Temirzhan Uulu
22 years old, Kyrgyzstan



Traditional Kyrgyz game – *Salburun*

A game of *Salburun* consists of hunting with a golden eagle. One of the ancient hunters, the golden eagle can catch prey two or three times larger than itself, including foxes, wolves, hare and roe deer.

Javad Rezaei Salanghouch
23 years old, Iran (Islamic Republic of)

Look

The mother of this family from the Kurdistan region, Iran, cleans saffron flowers for their landlord, preparing them for export to other countries. This family has three children, one of whom is playing in the yard, with her sister watching from behind the window.



Michael Theodric
18 years old, Indonesia

Chasing Ducks

Chasing ducks is one of the games played during *Peh Cun* Festival, in Indonesia. The more ducks you manage to catch, the more prizes you are awarded.



Alland Dharmawan
25 years old, Indonesia

Colourful Badung Market

At Badung traditional market in Bali, Indonesia, a variety of products are sold, from fruit and vegetables to Balinese cultural clothes. In the modern era, the number of traditional markets is decreasing as they are replaced with supermarkets and convenience stores. Traditional markets play an important part in culture. The Silk Roads era began with markets and trading, where people from the East travelled to the West and vice versa, carrying their local products to sell. It is important that Badung market and other traditional markets are preserved as heritage for future generations.





Nilofar Niekpor
25 years old, Afghanistan

Sama Girls

The first *Sama* dance performed
by Afghan girls in Kabul, Afghanistan.

Emran Hossain
17 years old, Bangladesh

A Catch of Hilsa

At the beginning of peak season, a huge catch of large hilsa (a type of tropical fish) brings a smile to fishermen who will take the fish to the nearest market. The demand for hilsa is high and it is popular among the people of South Asia and the Middle East. Bengali fish curry, known as *Shorshe Ilish*, is a popular dish made with hilsa and mustard oil or seed. Hilsa is also exported globally, contributing significantly to the GDP of Bangladesh.





Anna Oliwia Wierzbicka
23 years old, Poland

Mountain of Swords of the Miao People

At this Chinese Cultural Park in Beijing, visitors can learn about the history of China, its diversity, culture, and ways of life across the country. The Mountain of Swords is a traditional sport of the Miao People. The iron column is 12 metres high, with 36 pairs of steel knives. Barefoot performers climb up it, performing breathtaking movements to the sound of drums. The art of this sport is a part of wider a Chinese culture of acrobatics and of the Silk Roads, which is handed down from generation to generation.



Yara Zreiqat
25 years old, Jordan

Stomp, March, Spring to the Rhythm of the Land

Dance and storytelling are important aspects of culture across the globe. The *Dabke* recounts, the experiences of its authors through the synchronized stomping of the feet of its narrators. These narrators locked hand to form a human chain, and mended the cracks in the floor of their homes by stomping on them. This dance reflects the unity of man and nature, as all dancers in the line face the same direction, with no centre to walk around. This performance aims to include more women, as nowadays they feel freer to express themselves through dance and to lead the line of dancers.

Mohammed Nahid Aziz
23 years old, Bangladesh



When the Street is a Playground

Street children play with tyres on the streets of Sylhet town, Bangladesh. Here, unplanned urbanization has left children with insufficient playgrounds, but they continue to find creative ways to play.

Zakarya Ghazizadeh
17 years old, Iran (Islamic Republic of)

The Festival of Pir Shalyar

The Pir Shalyar Ceremony in the Hawraman village of the Kurdistan region, Iran, is held every year over three days in mid-winter, and celebrates a figure of the same name.

Pir Shalyar is believed to have cured and married a Princess from Bukhara (in modern Uzbekistan), a city along the Silk Roads. And this ceremony commemorates Pir Shalyar's wedding anniversary.

The ceremony includes various rituals and cultural activities such as sacrificing sheep, playing music (using the *daf* instrument), eating a local soup (*ash*), gathering overnight, praying and singing spiritual hymns and songs (*zehr*).





Aeron Macintosh Sayno
18 years old, Philippines

Speed and Agility of Filipino Warriors

Arnis, a well-known martial art that has a long history along the Silk Roads, has been the main martial art in the Philippines, garnering praise worldwide. Combined with the use of various bladed weapons, *Arnis* involves using sticks to strike, block, or even disarm. This martial art requires an unwavering focus and an ability to fight with the use of a stick.



Fatima Shbair
22 years old, Palestine

The Palestinian Breakfast

A family having their breakfast, the most important meal of the day. There are different styles of Palestinian breakfast. This one includes *manakish* with thyme, boiled eggs, white cheese, *labneh* (yogurt), cucumber, tomatoes, oil, olives, strawberry jam, black grapes, *Saj* bread and, of course, tea.

Murtaza Sarwari
24 years old, Afghanistan

Buzkashi

A Buzkashi game is played in the city of Behsud, in Maidan Wardak Province, Afghanistan. Buzkashi is a popular sport in Afghanistan, played to mark various occasions across the country, including festivals and celebrations. Buzkashi has been played in Afghanistan since ancient times and expresses the culture of the Afghan people. It also shares common features with other regions and cultures across the Silk Roads.





Mardin Ahmadi
18 years old, Iran (Islamic Republic of)

Nowruz Celebrations

Iranian Kurdish people are celebrating new year in Satiari Village, Kermanshah Province in the west of Iran. In this ceremony, people sing, dance and build a fire. Kurdish dances reflect samples of Kurdish life over thousands of years. The 'Nowruz fire' is the traditional ritual of Kurdish people during Nowruz. A rite dating back to at least the sixth century BCE, Nowruz is celebrated in many countries along the Silk Roads. There are many regional variations on this celebration of new year and the spring, which has been inscribed on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

Mirkan Tunç
24 years old, Turkey

Girls

Harran in Urfa Province, in the Southeast of Turkey takes its name from the word *harranu* which means “road” in the Akkadian language. Harran has been an important centre of commercial activities for thousands of years. In the Middle Ages, it was located at the intersection of the Silk Roads. The remains of this city, which was once at the heart of commerce, are now a playground for children, seen here dancing among the ruins. Young people are vital guardians of our heritage who will share it with future generations.



Shahriar Amin Fahim
21 years old, Bangladesh

Traditional Boat race

A traditional boat race takes place on Rupsha River, one of the most famous rivers in Bangladesh.



Majda Al Mahrooqi
21 years old, Oman

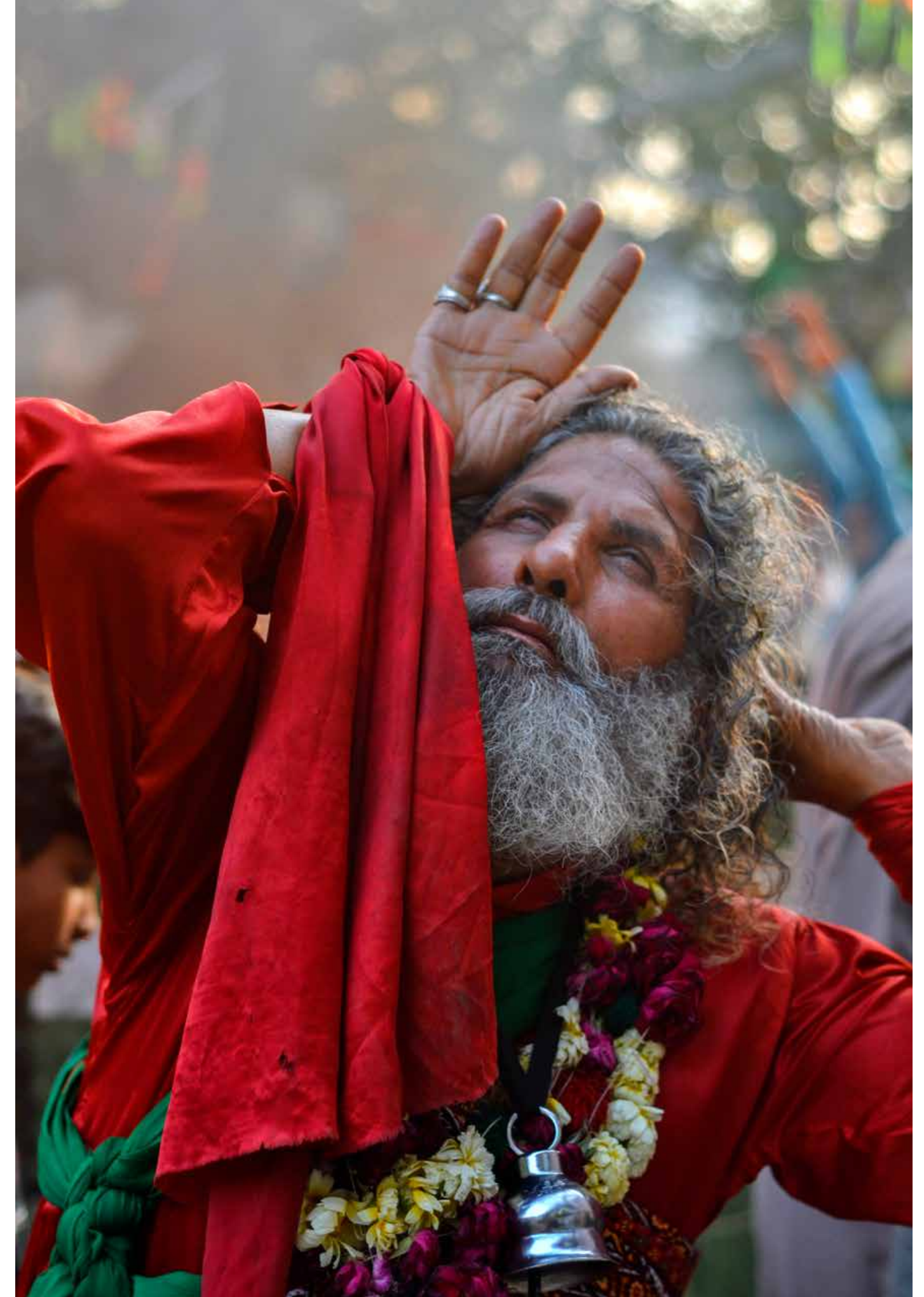
Saloom Baloom

For this traditional game, participants sit on the floor in a circle while one individual walks around the circle tapping each person on the head as they sing a song. With the end of the song, this child would stop and stand still. The last child tapped would then chase them while they try to take their seat.



Dancing Towards the Sky

Sufi dervishes sing and dance to the poetry of Shah Hussain during the *Mela Chiraghan* Festival of Lights, a three-day annual festival marking the anniversary of the death (*Urs*) of the Punjabi poet and Sufi saint Shah Hussain (1538-1599). This traditional *Dhamaal* dance is accompanied by the beat of a *Dhol* drum. Traditional festivals such as this are part of Pakistan's history and culture. All along the Silk Roads, festivals are important cultural markers that bring people together. The various traditions of Sufism make up an important shared spiritual heritage that spread along the Silk Roads from Asia to Africa.





Zakaria Selmani
25 years old, Algeria

Traditional Algerian Drummer

A traditional Algerian drummer
in the House of Culture, in Khenchela, Algeria.

Muhammad Amdad Hossain
20 years old, Bangladesh

Tea Leaf Garden Workers

Surma Begum works from a small tea leaf garden, making a living collecting tea leaves from morning to evening at a tea plantation in Chittagong City, Bangladesh. Tea has historically played an important social role in many regions along the Silk Roads and beyond, and today it remains an important gastronomic element linked to hospitality and homeliness.



Mohsin Nasser Abdullah Al Balushi
16 years old, Oman

Omani Rose Water

Rose water distillation, which is carried out across Al Jabal Al Akhdar, lends a distinctive fragrance to the mountains of Oman. Rose water has traditionally had many uses in regions along the Silk Roads, including as a perfume and food flavouring.



Chenwei Zheng
14 years old, People's Republic of China

Misua

Puxian misua, a thin salted noodle made from wheat flour, is an important part of the local gastronomic traditions of Fujian province. A bowl of *mazu misua* or *ping an misua* represents safety, health and longevity, and is often made to mark a festive season, a festive day, a birthday celebration, or to welcome guests. During the Ming Dynasty, the pure hand-pulled *misua* and sun-dried *puxian misua* was spread by Zheng Chenggong's voyage to the Nanyang area. So today, when people from Nanyang who live elsewhere return to their hometown, they order a bowl of *mazu misua* or *ping an misua*, made with these noodles.





Aung Kaung Myat
23 years old, Myanmar

Playing a Traditional Game (*Iwanswalpwal*)

Some people in Myanmar believe that the game of "tug of war" can bring rain. This traditional sport, played as a pastime here in the town of Shwebo, provides a welcome temporary distraction from the heat.

Kelvin Kariithi
24 years old, Kenya

Ada, a Traditional Coffee Seller

Madam Ada, a traditional coffee seller from Eritrea, sells coffee to the public during Christmas celebrations on 25 December in Mombasa, Kenya. Her aim is to make people meet one another as they enjoy her speciality coffee.



Diana Danoyan
25 years old, Germany

Traditional *Lavash*

In the village of Karaberd in Northern Armenia, two women are preparing and rolling dough. In this traditional handmade baking technique, dough is attached to the *tondir* walls until the bread is golden brown, then the freshly baked *Lavash* bread is removed with a stick. *Lavash* is a traditional bread shared by people along the Silk Roads in Afghanistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Iran, Pakistan, Turkey and Uzbekistan. *Lavash* and other similar flat breads, as well as the act of making and sharing them, have been inscribed on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.





Yam G Jun
25 years old, Malaysia

Lepyoshka Bread

A Kyrgyz woman prepares dough to make the Central Asian flatbread *Lepyoshka* (or *Tandyr nan*) in Batken, Kyrgyzstan. *Lepyoshka* is commonly found in households in Kyrgyzstan.



Fardin Oyan
17 years old, Bangladesh

Devi Manasha

A male performer plays *Devi Manasha* in *Behula Nachuri* a folk stage musical invoking *Devi Manasha* the snake deity of Hindu mythology. *Behula Nachuri* is an energetic, vivid, exaggerated form of theatre that is more commonly known as *Yatrapala* in the Indian subcontinent. Combining both music and performance art, it remains a precious element of Bangladesh's folklore. The performance details the myth of the *Devi Manasha*, the goddess of snakes, who is predominantly worshiped in the region of Bengal, as well as other parts of Northern India.



Hao Jie
22 years old, People's Republic of China

Celebrating Spring Festival

Linqian Village, in Zhangzhou, Fujian, China, holds this intangible cultural heritage event annually, praying for good weather in the coming year. With this practice the local people place their trust in a better life.

The Little Krishna

In West Bengal, India, there is a special community who dress up as Hindu Gods and deities and perform all over rural Bengal. This practice risks becoming a lost piece of culture as those in the profession are currently facing financial difficulties.



Hani Alsuleimani
25 years old, Oman



The Art of *Maghayiz*

At this annual festival held in Muscat, Oman, many traditional arts such as folk dances are showcased. The different traditional arts displayed still distinguish the provinces of the Sultanate from one another. *Maghayiz* is a Bedouin tradition of singing at weddings to congratulate the bride. The performance involves exchanging words of praise for the bride and the wearing of traditional dress.



Muhammad Qasim
23 years old, Pakistan

***Kushti* (Wrestling)**

Traditional Pakistani wrestlers or *Pehalwans* busy practicing at an *Akhara*, or wrestling school. *Kushti*, a traditional form of wrestling, is one of the most popular games in Pakistan. Across the Silk Roads people practice a wide range of traditional wrestling types, many of which were historically carried to new regions along with the people who travelled these routes. This brought novel influences and styles to pre-existing traditional sports and games.



Hossein Rezaei
22 years old, Iran (Islamic Republic of)

Chokhe

Wrestling is the most popular sport in Iran, with many local variations and styles. *Ba chokhe* or *Cuxe* is one of the oldest and most common of these wrestling variants. As a cherished local tradition, this ancient sport is often performed during festivals, holidays and wedding parties. As an opportunity to bring people together, traditional sports such as wrestling have long been important for strengthening social cohesion and encouraging mutual respect and cooperation along the Silk Roads.

Zuka Kotrikadze
21 years old, Georgia

Transfiguration of Jesus

Bakhmaro is a small seasonal resort in the Western Guria region of western Georgia. Every year, during the holiday of the Transfiguration of Jesus in August, indoor and outdoor activities including concerts, exhibitions and performances, are arranged. The main event is horse racing, a tradition dating back centuries. Every year people gather in order to celebrate this religious holiday by watching performances.



Bahram Bayat
23 years old, Iran (Islamic Republic of)



Ashigh Fattah

Zanjan, a city in Iran and on the Silk Roads, is home to many handicrafts and rituals. One of these many arts is *Ashighi* music. An *Ashiq* was traditionally a singer whose song – be it a *dastan* (traditional epic story) or a shorter original composition – was accompanied by a *baglama* (a long-necked lute). Mr Fattah is an Ashigh street performer of Azeri music. Every day he travels to downtown Zanjan from a village 70 kilometres away to make a living.

Quyet Thang Dau
25 years old, Viet Nam

The Old Farmers Plough the Fields

An elderly couple on the outskirts of Hoi An, Quang Nam, Viet Nam, are ploughing their fields to prepare for a new crop of rice. Hoi An used to be an important trading port on the maritime Silk Roads, a route through which silk from Dang Trong reached China, Japan and Europe. Today much of the farm work is mechanized and it is rare to see buffaloes being used to plough fields.



Mohamed Elsheikh
21 years old, Egypt

Man Cleaning Wheat

A man sifts wheat in a crop field in Egypt.



Omar Jihad Elsayed
21 years old, Egypt

Composition

Two riders competing together display their skills during a *Mermah*, a series of games played on horseback, in Upper Egypt. At this event, associated with joy and happy births, both the skill of the rider and the speed of the horse are on display. Today, *Mermah* rituals fuse religious and cultural heritage and have gained international recognition.



Baset Mahmoodi
21 years old, Iran (Islamic Republic of)



Pir Shalyar Ceremony

Dancers performed during the Pir Shalyar festival to show their culture and traditions to the world. The festival of Pir Shalyar is a traditional ceremony in the Kurdistan region in Iran, held on the fortieth day of winter.

Farah ElShamy
22 years old, Egypt

Mazaher

Mazaher is an ensemble in which women play a leading role. The musicians of *Mazaher*, Umm Sameh, Umm Hassan and Nour el Sabah, are among the last remaining practitioners of *Zār*, the practice of exorcising spirits from a possessed individual.



Abdur Rahman Abdullah
16 years old, Qatar

Life of a Golden Age

An old man shows his beautiful falcon to an audience at Dhow Festival, at Katara Cultural Village in Doha, Qatar. At this festival dedicated to celebrating Qatar's maritime heritage, important traditions such as falconry are kept alive and shared with younger generations as a valuable asset. Falconry has been recognized as part of the outstanding intangible heritage of humanity. Over time the practice has evolved to become associated with the conservation of nature, cultural heritage, and social engagement within and amongst communities along the Silk Roads in East, Central and West Asia, the Arabian Peninsula, Africa and Europe.





Arlette Rhusimane Bashizi
20 years old, Democratic Republic of the Congo

Checkers

Two young people are having fun playing checkers during a public holiday in the city of Goma, Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Quiet Deliberation

Outside Singapore's Buddha Tooth Relic Temple, a group of men strategize intently over a game of *Xiangqi*, or traditional Chinese chess. *Xiangqi* is emblematic of Silk Roads cultural interactions. It accompanied the contrasting chess-like game of *Chaturanga* from India, *Janggi* from the Korean Peninsula, and *Shogi* from Japan. As it moved along the Silk Roads and across Asia, chess developed distinct regional characteristics while retaining unifying fundamentals.



Behzod Boltaev
23 years old, Uzbekistan

***Doira* Performance**

Musicians at the Silk and Spices Festival in Bukhara play the *Doira*, one of the most famous and popular instruments in Uzbekistan.





Yann Lenzen
24 years old, Canada

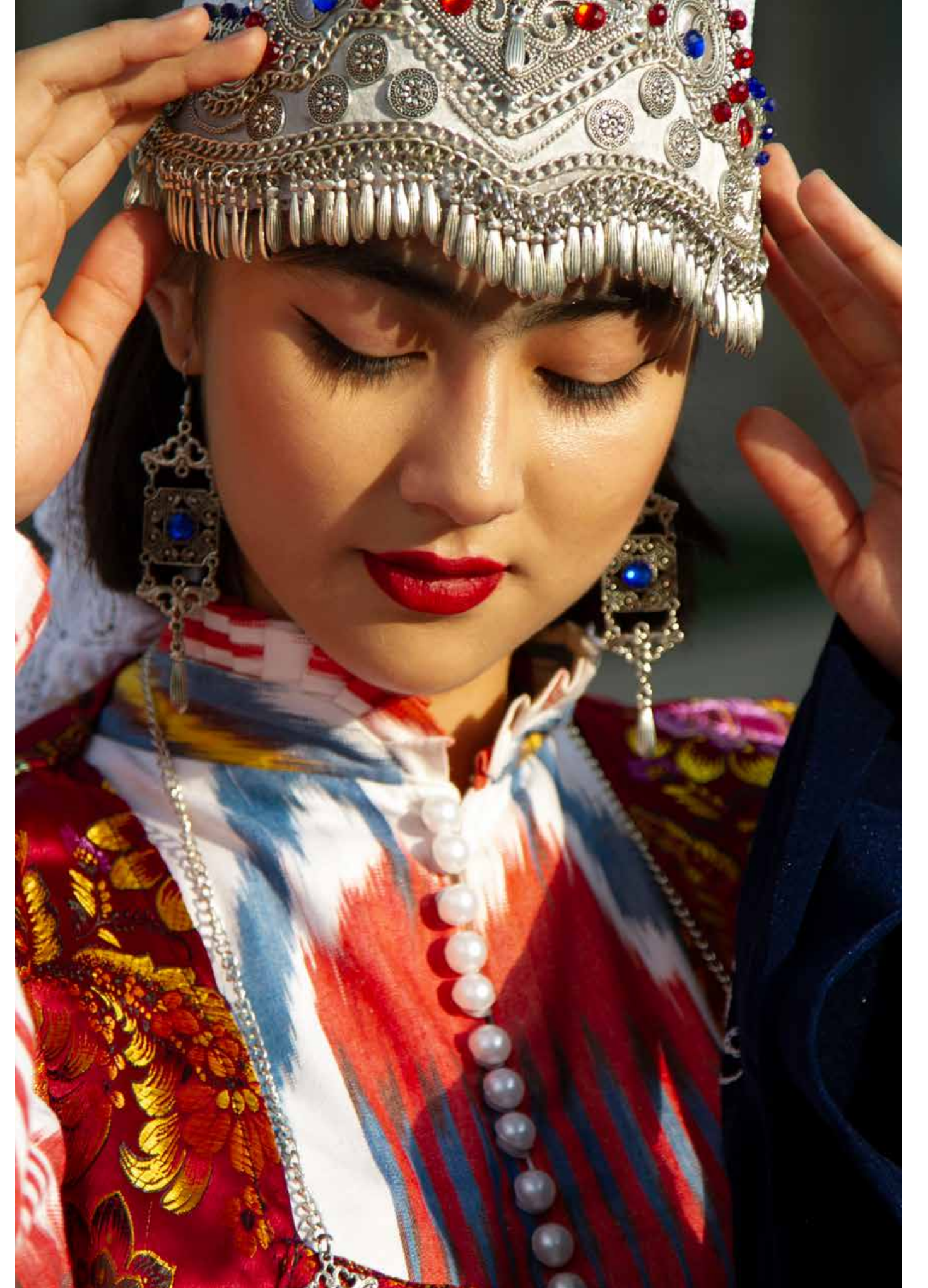
Mongolia's Nomads

A Mongolian man named Lamzav is burning dried excrement inside his family yurt. Nomads use this combustible material, amongst others, to smoke sheep meat.

Kamila Yadgarova
22 years old, Uzbekistan

Jasmine

Time is changing, constantly, rapidly. Trends that were once popular are now gone. But there are some things that connect us to our ancestors and culture: traditions that are passed down through generations; stories that are told by our grandparents; lessons that are learned from previous generations. Traditional dance unites everything that the culture has gone through and tells a story that cannot be expressed with words.



Adnan Al Mujaini
16 years old, Oman

Al-Tabseel

Al-Tabseel is a method of cooking unripe dates during the harvesting season, which usually begins in late June or early July.



Suvajit Mukherjee
24 years old, India

Dancing mood of *Durga Puja*

During *Durga Puja*, the biggest festival of West Bengal, India, Durga idols are immersed while Kolkata perform dances. This dance encapsulates the culture and tradition of the West Bengal region.





Ritagnik Bhattacharya
19 years old, India

Joyous Celebration

People in Nepal gather to celebrate their new year crops with dancing and orange powder, looking forward to a prosperous year ahead. Along the Silk Roads, coloured powders like this are also used in other celebrations and festivals, such as *Holi*, the ancient festival of spring celebrated in India and many other parts of South Asia.



Batyr Berdiyev
25 years old, Turkmenistan

Red Swans

Dancers of the State Circus of Turkmenistan perform during a weekly show in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan.

Pooja Rijal
24 years old, Nepal

Mani Rhimdu Festival in Solukhumbu District, Nepal

At this colourful festival in Solukhumbu District, Nepal, monks carry their traditional musical instruments. They are chanting holy mantras against the demons to bring peace.



Boburkhon Alimkhodjaev
25 years old, Uzbekistan

Young Musicians

Young boys in Margilan, Uzbekistan, play a musical instrument called a *Doira*, medium-sized frame drum used to accompany both popular and classical music in Uzbekistan. It is also used to perform folklore music for events. This simple drum is formed by attaching a skin cover onto a wooden ring with glue and cloth ties.



Khadidja Zouaoui
22 years old, Algeria

Ahellil

Performed during collective ceremonies, *Ahellil* – inscribed on UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity – is a genre of music and poetry emblematic of the Zenete population of the Gourara region of Algeria. Here, in the middle of the desert, in memory of a wise marabout woman named Ma Mliha, people dance to celebrate unity, gratitude and peace.



Piercing through Dust

A bullock cart pierces through the dust during a cart race in Jaffna, Sri Lanka. This community of people are facing the aftermath of three decades of civil war during which this social practice could not be carried out. However, today these types of traditional sports are being reintroduced into the lives of people, combining community interaction with nature. Traditional games are not solely about the aim of winning, but about collective participation and the preservation of unique cultural elements in the modern world.



Umedzhon Mardonov
23 years old, Tajikistan

Tajik National Wedding

In the Shahrtuz district, Khatlon province, Tajikistan, a groom comes to pick up the bride. In the foreground a *doirachi*, a man who plays *Doira*, sets the rhythm of the celebration. A *Doira* is one of the main musical instruments used in *Shashmaqom* music, which has been inscribed on UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. The instrument's rhythmic sounds attract dance and fun, and can often be heard at traditional weddings.



Cloé Ando
24 years old, France

Young Child Playing a Traditional Indian Drum

In a remote village in the North Eastern state of Meghalaya, India, a young boy demonstrates how to play this traditional drum. For the Khasi tribe, music is fundamental to their culture, accompanying rituals, celebrations and daily life.



Takhmina Gabdilova
16 years old, Kazakhstan

***Kokpar* in Action**

A *Kokpar* game at a local national sports club in Oral (or Uralsk), West Kazakhstan. *Kokpar* is a national Kazakh game played in two teams where each competes to pick up an animal carcass from the ground. Here, one player attempts to pick up the carcass while the other riders try to intercept it. Sports played on horseback have a long and rich history along the Silk Roads, with lots of regional and local variations of similar games.





Galina Tarakanova
17 years old, Russian Federation

Nomad's Soul

A Khakas girl is playing the traditional instrument *timir-khomys* with the wind in the steppe. The Khakas people are from the Republic of Khakassia, in the Russian Federation. Khakassia is most famous for its steppes, which are said to be the homeland of the wind. For Khakas people, a musical instrument is an indispensable companion for life part of the person themselves. The *timir-khomys* (from the words: “*timir*” – “iron” and “*hamys*” – “utensils”) is a traditional Khakas instrument. It has numerous "relatives" in other regions along the Silk Roads. Playing it is a search for overtones, its sound regulated by changes in the shape and volume of the resonating oral cavity while the instrument is clamped in the teeth.

Marsha Jean Lui
22 years old, Australia

A Game of Buzkashi on the Roof of the World

The traditional horseback sport of Buzkashi in the Wakhan Corridor of Afghanistan.





Mehrdad Fathi
25 years old, Iran (Islamic Republic of)

Tug of war

This is the village of Qara Oghlanlou, in Zanzan province. Every year there is a festival to showcase the village's old culture and traditions, such as the tug of war match. These exciting matches are very popular in the village.

Said Hmat
18 years old, Morocco

***Ahwash*, the Culture of the Amazigh people**

Ahwash is a type of popular traditional Amazigh dance, which is still practiced today. Here, in Ait Ahmed, a small Amazigh village in Souss-Massa, Morocco, men and women dance together accompanied by traditional musical instruments.



Nicole Szczech
22 years old, United States of America

The Perseverance of a Culture

A Khamseh woman making *kashk*, a thick white liquid like whey, in the Fars Province of southwestern Iran. The tribe still lives a nomadic existence in the mountains near the Bavanat County, and are skilled in animal husbandry and craft production.





Salih Basheer
25 years old, Sudan

A World through my Window

Children look out of their window at the celebration of *al-Sayyida Nafisa* beside their room in old Cairo, Egypt.

Ehab Elsofy
25 years old, Egypt

Singing and Dancing with Sticks

A band from the south of Egypt sing popular songs inspired by ancient heritage, accompanied by drums and flutes. Dancing with these sticks is an important element in religious ceremonies in Egypt, especially in the South.



***Er Enish* – Horseback Wrestling**

Er Enish is a form of traditional Kyrgyz horseback wrestling with a distinctive warrior-like character, where the sole aim is to defeat the opponent by removing them from their horse. *Er Enish* requires strength and dexterity from both the horse and the rider. The horse must be very strong and hardy, endure a lot, be even-tempered and manoeuvrable. Nowadays, *Er Enish* competitions are held in a flat, circular arena. The two wrestlers are naked to the waist, wear boots and pants made of a strong material, have belts (called *kushak*) tied around their waists and wear scarves tied around their heads. The winner is the wrestler who pulls his opponent from his horse so that any part of his body touches the ground.



Shǎo shī – The Young Lion

The Lion Dance – *wǔshī* – is a form of traditional dance in Chinese culture and other Asian countries, in which performers wear a lion costume and mimic the animal's movements in order to bring good luck and fortune. The lion dance is usually performed during the Chinese New Year and other Chinese traditional, cultural and religious festivals. The fundamental movements of the dance can be found in Chinese martial arts. This is the very traditional and rare *Shǎo shī*, a one-person lion mascot at Dongshan Temple, Xiangzhou County, in the Guangxi Zhuang region. Nowadays, it is more common to see larger lion mascots manipulated by two dancers. The lion consists of a head that is traditionally constructed using papier-mâché over a bamboo frame covered with gauze, then painted and decorated with fur, and a body made of durable layered cloth, trimmed with more fur.





Tandin Norbu
21 years old, Bhutan

Atsara

In Lhuntse District, Bhutan, an *Atsara* clown dances to entertain an audience. An *Atsara* is an integral part of traditional Bhutanese festivals, particularly of those known as *Tshechu*. Even disguised as a clown, an *Atsara* is considered to be an enlightened being who sacrifices himself to make others happy. An *Atsara* signifies happiness, responsibility and simplicity. He has no greed for wealth and power but has the important responsibility of bringing happiness to those around him.

Best of the photographs of the contest

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Photographs: Photographs submitted
to the international photo contest
‘Youth Eyes on the Silk Roads, 2019-2020’

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This photo album, ***Youth Lens on the Silk Roads***, is the outcome of the second edition of the international photo contest 'Youth Eyes on the Silk Roads', organized by UNESCO within the framework of its Silk Roads, and Management of Social Transformation (MOST) programmes. This ongoing initiative provides an excellent opportunity for young men and women from all over the world to visually capture their understanding and impressions of the shared heritage of the Silk Roads through the lens of their camera.

The historic Silk Roads comprises an expansive network of maritime and land routes across which the movement of people and goods facilitated enriching exchanges between people and cultures that ultimately resulted in the development of shared heritage and plural identities. These form the basis for mutual respect and trust between people of different cultures and contribute to social cohesion within the diverse societies of the modern world. Taking this heritage and identity as inspiration, the 'Youth Eyes on the Silk Roads' photo contest uses photography as a means of identifying the different elements of the shared heritage.

For this second edition, participants were invited to submit photographs that best capture the elements of the shared heritage of the Silk Roads through one or more of the three themes of 'Gastronomy and Food Production', 'Music and Dance' and 'Traditional Sports and Games'. The Selection Committee, composed of renowned international photographers, examined these submissions, selecting winners and runners-up from each of the age categories.

The resulting photo album gathers 76 outstanding photos that best encapsulate the spirit of the contest and showcase the diversity of young people's perceptions of the Silk Roads shared heritage.

Through this collection of images, one can travel the lengths of the Silk Roads, discover their rich and vibrant legacy, and gain a better understanding of their importance to daily life in the contemporary world.