

Georgian narrative non-fiction

# My Song

**Narrative non-fiction.** Bakur Sulakauri Publishing. Tbilisi 2023. 206 pages

«My Song» is a “romance”, an ode to the sacred relationship between an artist and a listener. And to Music itself — the sole form of art that gives meaning to our Life, and more importantly, to our Death as Burchuladze puts it.

He explores his personal relationship with Keith Jarrett’s music. This text speaks of the power of music, that could forever change the perspective of a 10-year-old boy growing up behind the Iron Curtain of the Soviet Union. Overhearing Keith Jarrett’s piece on his father’s record player would become his gateway to creativity, defining his perception of this world, and his longing for cognition.

Burchuladze does not invent anything in this book, but he does not write a biography of Keith Jarrett either. He explores the recordings – well known and unknown ones – track by track, to the exact date and sometimes to the minute, and links them to his personal listening time. So he lets the music take him back to historical moments and down into his own life:

Giving away his only Keith Jarrett pirated copy to someone he loves as a token and the girl disappears with it forever. Being kidnapped by a Chechen drug smuggler at the customs station who does no harm and instead leaves a walkman with the Cologne Concert behind. A police checkpoint wants to be bribed, hears My Song from Burchuladze’s car audio player and gives free travel.

The book is filled with the sound of music. The act of reading is like listening “novelized music” switching on the famous soundtracks in our own memory. This book is the search for peace and a piece of homeland that can never be taken away from you.

“This is a divine book about divine music..”

LEVAN BERDZENISHVILI (writer, literary critic, literature professor)

“Many Eastern Europeans today have to flee to the West again out of fear, into exile. One of these refugees is Zaza Burchuladze... The country that you bring with you into exile is only as big as the soles of your feet and the sadness in your head. And only the homesickness we brought with us is as big as the country on the map.”

HERTA MÜLLER

Zaza Burchuladze was born in Tbilisi in 1973. He started writing after graduating from the National Academy of Arts in Tbilisi and has since published novels, short prose and screenplays. He translates Russian authors, including Dostoevsky, Khams, Sorokin and Bitov, into Georgian. He played the leading role in the film version of one of Dzhavakhsishvili’s novels, a Georgian literature classic. Burchuladze is considered one of the most important writers of post-Soviet Georgian literature. As an underground writer he initially provoked outrage within Georgian society with his scandal topics and language experiments and was long ignored by critics. Since the appearance of his novels he has become a leading intellectual and one of the most promising authors, and is beginning to achieve fame beyond the borders of Georgia. After aggressive press, a severe insult on the radio by former president Saakashvili, physical attacks on the street of Tbilisi and ultraorthodox publicly burning his books, he had to flee to Germany with his family. He has received several awards for his novels, including the Friedrich Naumann Foundation Prize and the Brücke Award. Today he lives and works in Berlin.



## THE AUTHOR

**translations**  
8 languages

## awards

SABA Best Georgian Novel 2022  
Bruecke Berlin Preis 2018  
Best Georgian Novel 2011  
Ilia State University Award 2011

## samples available

english, german

## other works

Adibas  
Mineral Jazz  
The Inflatable Angel  
Zoorama

# Zaza Burchuladze