



RICHARD K. WOLF

Richard K. Wolf, Professor of Music and South Asian Studies at Harvard University, is an ethnomusicologist, filmmaker, and photographer who has conducted research in South and Central Asia. Author of two monographs and editor of three collections, Wolf has written on social-cultural “style” in South Indian music, music and space-time in Kota tribal society, and music in Islamic contexts in India and Pakistan.

DATE:

February 27, 2023

TIME:

5:00 p.m.

LOCATION:

The Jeanine Basinger Center for Film Studies, Room 112
301 Washington Terrace

MUSIC DEPARTMENT COLLOQUIUM

RICHARD K. WOLF

Wakhi Poetic Imagination in Tajikistan and Afghanistan

March 1, 2023 | 4:30 p.m. | Zoom

wesleyan.edu/cfa/music-colloquium-register

TWO POETS AND A RIVER

A film by Richard Wolf

Using the Oxus river as a topos, this film explores themes of love and loss through the lives and musical poetry of two Wakhi musicians, Qurbonsho in Tajikistan and Daulatsho in Afghanistan. These two poet-singers share a common language and culture and yet remain separated by vicissitudes of the 19th c. Great Game in Central Asia. In this struggle for strategic control, the Wakhan homeland of the Wakhi people became a buffer zone between Czarist Russia and the British Empire, and the river Oxus, which became the border, ran right through its center. After the modern nation states of the USSR and Afghanistan shored up their boundaries circa 1930, the communities living along one side of the river were severed from their counterparts on the other side. The condition of being separated by a river in the region has been the basis for poetry about the feeling of separation (Persian *firāq*) and grounds the poets’ discussions of love and loss in their own lives as well as in their musical arts. Richard Wolf shot and produced the film over two and a half years (2012–2020) with the editorial collaboration of Qurbonsho and Daulatsho. Wakhi, Tajik and Dari with English subtitles.