

# Support Vacha Temirchanov's Dance Academy



**Czech NGO Berkat is calling for urgent aid: Help Chechen families!**

*To mark the first anniversary of the youth-dance group Marsho's tour of the Czech Republic, Berkat is calling for donations to keep Vacha's Dance Academy for Children in Grozny alive.*



Vacha Temirchanov founded Marsho in 1999, in the Sputnik refugee camp where hundreds of families uprooted by the war in Chechnya had fled. For the children living in the camp, these dance lessons were practically their only chance to, at least momentarily, forget about the hardships wrought by war. They practiced their dancing every day.

Berkat wanted to help Marsho in its aims and organized 2 two-month tours around the Czech Republic on the group's behalf. The tours took place in 2003 and then again in 2006. For all involved – the Czech audiences as much as for the Chechen children – it was an unforgettable experience. In Chechnya, dance is not just one of life's most fundamental pleasures, but a necessity, as it maintains Chechens' dignity, energy and integrity. Through dance, the unwritten history of this mountainous nation has been preserved.

Berkat's activities, which are founded upon transparent, friend-to-friend, aid, stretch back to the year 2000. Vacha Temirchanov is one of a small group of Chechens who has captured the value of helping to improve the lives of others. On these two visits to the Czech Republic, he made new friends and gained valuable information as to the way people interact in an open civic society. But such dedication doesn't come without a price – Vacha is still living and working in a refugee camp in Ingushetia – he has not yet had the money or time to organize a visit home to Chechnya, to see his family and his dance troupe. What's more, as relations in the region become increasingly strained, it gets more and more difficult for him to return home.



In the meantime, children from the worst-off families continue to attend dance classes in the Grozny community center that Berkat funded. For them - as it is for Marsho's grown-up members as well - dance is a form of therapy, and an important part of their lives. Vacha's Dance Academy provides a link to the past, and a link to all that which we hope still to achieve. It is essential, therefore, that it survives.

**The monthly sum required to pay for Vacha's visits to Grozny, plus a small salary for the group's accordionist and drummer, comes to 13,000 roubles (500 USD). This means that per year, around 6000 USD are required.**



For those wishing to donate, the account number is 911676001/2400  
Const. symbol: 558, Var. symbol: 1155 (e-Banka)

For more information, call **Jana Hradilkova** on +420 608 829 535, or email [kristanka@nebesa.cz](mailto:kristanka@nebesa.cz)

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