Falak is a traditional folklore music genre of the Tajik people. Falak means «heaven, fortune or universe». Falak primarily draws its verses from the oral tradition of folk poetry and stories, and secondarily from classic Tajik-Persian general classical poetry. The structure of falak is most often in one section and can form an interlude within a performance. The quatrains or couplet sung by the falak-singers are emotionally expressive and are rich with the philosophical and expressions of destitution of human life.

When used with the word dashti, as in falaki dashti, it refers to a performance by the voice alone with no instrumental accompaniment. Thus falak is distinguished by its mode of performance.

Instrumental falak, without voice, also exists, which is often performed on the nay, in Badakhshan in funnel-shaped flute nayi Pomiri; or the ghizhak. It can also be performed on one of the lutes of the region - the Pamiri rubab (falaki Badakhshoni is performed with this instrument), or dotar.

Falak is most often performed in Tajik with its dialectological varieties, i.e. dialect is expressed through the quatrains of different regions such as Kulob, Rasht or Badakhshan. In Badakhshan falak singers are often maddahs who incorporate in their singing themes of mystical/Divine love, separation, and reunion. However, falak themes most often relate specifically to human love, pain, suffering, familial separa-
tion and hope of reunion - between a parent and child, or a lover and beloved.

*Falak* as a unique traditional music genre in Tajikistan in the last century has seen significant development. The development of this genre due to the great contribution of the many professional falak-singers such as Bobokhalili Odina, Rajabmadi Vali, Madali Barot, Karimi Shish, Akasharif Juraev, Hoshimi Qosim, Odina Hoshim, Gulchehra Sodiqova, Abdul Nazri, Ibrohim Kobuliev, Musavvar Minakov, Mama dado Tavalloev, Navruzshoh Qurbanhusenov, Mohjon Nazazardova, Nusayri Odinaev, Hakim Mahmudov, Fayzali Hasanov, Davlatmand Kholov, Safarmuhammad Murodov, Dona Bahromov, Asliya Iskanadarova and Panjshanbe Jobubov. These maestros of flak music have also established their own singing schools and have trained many disciples who continue the work of their teachers.

The first professional “Falak” ensemble was established in 1989 under the guidance of Davlatmand Kholov. In 2001 by the decree of the President of Tajikistan the “Falak” ensemble was given state institutional status and since 2007 every year 10th of October is celebrated as Falak Day.

Falak genre is taught formally in the music colleges, including in National Conservatory of Tajikistan named after T. Sattorov and Tajik State Institute of Art and Culture named after M. Tursunzoda.