

## Aliyev, Sargsyan Meet for ‘Constructive’ Talks in Switzerland

GENEVA (RFE/RL) – The presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan reportedly agreed to intensify the protracted search for a peaceful resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and bolster the ceasefire regime in the conflict zone when they met in Geneva on Monday, October 16.

“The meeting took place in a constructive atmosphere,” read a joint statement issued by the Armenian and Azerbaijani foreign ministers as well as the US, Russian and French co-chairs of the [Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe] Minsk Group after the talks.

“The Presidents [Serzh Sargsyan and Ilham Aliyev] agreed to take measures to intensify the negotiation process and to take additional steps to reduce tensions on the Line of Contact,” it said.

“The co-chairs expressed their satisfac-

tion with these direct talks, which took place after a long interval ... As a next step, the Co-Chairs will organize working sessions with the Ministers in the near future,” added the statement.

The talks began at the official residence of Switzerland’s permanent representative to the UN office in Geneva in the presence of the US, Russian and French mediators. They continued in a tete-a-tete format about an hour later.



Presidents Serzh Sargsyan (R) of Armenia and Ilham Aliyev of Azerbaijan in Geneva

Aliyev and Sargsyan then spoke one-on-one for over 45 minutes, according to see TALKS, page 3

## Washington, D.C. Genocide Museum Shame Continues

By Aram Arkun  
Mirror-Spectator Staff

GREAT NECK, N.Y. – Sometimes fairy tales don’t come true. The story of Anoush Mathevosian and the Armenian Genocide museum in Washington, DC is one such case.

Anoush’s grandfather was killed in the Genocide, and her father deported to Persia, where he grew up in an orphanage. Anoush was born in Iran in 1926. She and her sister worked hard after coming to the United States, and eventually did well for themselves financially, but she remained troubled by the effects of the Genocide on her family. She said, “Even today I remember that and I suffer for that...When I was 4 or 5 years of age, I would see my father would read papers with tearful eyes. I would ask my mother, ‘why is he crying?’ My mother would say, ‘I can’t explain to you – you are too young, but when you grow older I will explain.’”

She wanted to do something about it. Mathevosian said, “So I decided from early on that I have to find some means for building an Armenian Genocide museum somewhere. It happened that I trusted the Armenian Assembly [of America] and I talked to them. I said I have a small amount of money and I want to raise funds to build see MUSEUM, page 19



From left, Ragip Zarakolu, Christoph Links, Sabine Kieselbach (moderator), Asli Erdogan and Mehmet Atak

## Writers from the ‘Other’ Turkey Speak Out in Frankfurt

By Muriel Mirak-Weissbach  
Special to the Mirror-Spectator

the title of the Guest of Dishonor. Taking part in the innumerable interviews with authors, round table discussions and special exhibits were leading Turkish personalities from the book world, who presented their recent works and engaged capacity audiences in heated debates about the current, sad state of affairs for intellectuals in their country. These were the voices of the “other” Turkey.

On October 11, the opening day of the world’s largest trade fair for books, which ran to October 15, Turkish investigative journalist Ahmet Sik was given the Raif Badawi Award for Courageous Journalists (granted by the Friedrich Naumann see WRITERS, page 5

FRANKFURT – If France was the Guest of Honor this year at the celebrated Frankfurt Book Fair, then Turkey – that is, the official Turkey – might well earn

## ARMENIAN MIRROR-SPECTATOR 85TH ANNIVERSARY



## Stellar Panel of Journalists at November 2 Mirror-Spectator Symposium

BOSTON – On Thursday, November 2, the Armenian Mirror-Spectator, as part of its two-part 85th anniversary celebration, will sponsor a symposium on the campus of Wellesley College.

The panel will feature journalists Robert Fisk, David Barsamian, Philip Terzian and Amberin Zaman. It is titled “Journalism and ‘Fake News’: Armenian Genocide and Karabakh.”

Aram Arkun, the Tekeyan Cultural Association’s executive director and the *Mirror-Spectator*’s assistant editor, will act as moderator.

Terzian (at right) is a senior editor at *The Weekly Standard*, having served as literary editor

during 2005-2012. A native of the Washington, DC, area and a journalist for more than 40 years, he has been a writer and editor at Reuters, newspapers in Alabama and Kentucky, the *New Republic* and the *Los Angeles Times*, and was editorial page editor of the *Providence Journal*. For 20 years, he wrote a political/foreign affairs column syndicated by the Scripps Howard News Service. In addition, during 1978-79 he was speechwriter for Secretary of State Cyrus Vance.

Terzian has been a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize in commentary, Pulitzer juror, media see PANEL, page 20

Philip Terzian



## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Major Increase in Tourism Reported By Armenian Government

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) – The number of tourists visiting Armenia rose by more than 24 percent in the first half of this year, an Armenian government noted on Friday.

In an extensive report on its one-year activities, the government put their total number at 622,381.

Tourists in the country were up by about 6 percent last year, according to separate government data. It also shows that the number has grown by an average of 9 percent annually from 2012.

The government sought to facilitate the growth of the tourism by liberalizing in 2013 Armenia’s civil aviation sector. The average cost of air travel to and from the country has fallen since then.

Also, Armenian authorities unilaterally scrapped visas for European Union and United States citizens in 2012 and 2014, respectively. An agreement on visa-free travel between Armenia and Iran came into effect in August 2016. The Islamic Republic is a major source of tourism income for Armenia.

Yerevan lifted visa restrictions for citizens of Japan, the United Arab Emirates and Qatar this year. In another effort to boost the influx of tourists, it allowed Russian nationals in March to visit Armenia with Russian domestic passports.

### Armenian MP Urges PACE to Study Azeri Arms Deals to Terrorists

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – A member of the Armenian delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) Naira Zohrabyan has urged the Assembly to study the investigation of the Bulgarian *Trud* newspaper, according to which Baku, using diplomatic flights, has been supplying arms to conflict zones for more than three years.

Zohrabyan spoke at PACE responding to the the comments of representatives of Azerbaijan.

“Dear colleagues, yesterday, when we were discussing the crimes committed by the terrorist ‘Islamic State’ that can be named only ‘genocide,’ I was not allowed to give a speech and speak about the horrors that the Yazidis, Christians and non-Sunni Muslims encounter. But the most ridiculous thing is that the delegate of Azerbaijan speaks about terrorism, whose country acts in the same manner as the ‘Islamic State’ and whose army relies on mercenary murderers. And according to international reputable media outlets, there are also murderers from Daesh among the Azerbaijani mercenaries, who are used to beheading, slaughtering and disrespecting soldiers and civilians – the April war is its evidence,” Zohrabyan said.

## INSIDE

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## ARMENIA

## News From Armenia

## Yerevan Celebrates 2799th Anniversary

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – The city of Yerevan celebrated its 2,799th anniversary on October 14. On that occasion, Prime Minister Karen Karapetyan issued a statement, praising the city and its residents.

He said, “Dear residents of Yerevan, today we mark the 2799th anniversary of our sunny capital. I am sure each of us has his beloved corners in Yerevan with warm and indispensable memories. I heartily congratulate all of us and wish that Yerevan should always live inside us and that we should never doubt that we live in the warmest, most beautiful and unique city with its taste and scent and we can have our practical participation in making our old and new capital better.”

## Yerevan May Scrap Plans For New Nuclear Plant

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) – The Armenian government may abandon its ambitious plans to build a new nuclear power station in place of the aging plant at Metsamor, Justice Minister Davit Harutiunian said on Tuesday, October 17.

President Serzh Sarkisian pledged to replace Metsamor, which generates roughly a third of Armenia’s electricity, by a modern facility meeting safety standards shortly after taking office in 2008. The project never got off the drawing board as his government failed to attract billions of dollars in funding needed for the new plant’s construction. The government decided instead to extend the life of Metsamor’s 420-megawatt reactor by 10 years, until 2027.

“We will have a new nuclear plant if it is cost-effective in terms of [electricity] tariffs,” Harutiunian told reporters. “Just imagine a possibility that it turns out tomorrow that modern technologies can generate the same amount of energy without a nuclear plant and that nuclear energy ... is much more expensive for consumers. Which path should we opt for? Of course, modern technologies.”

As recently as in July, Deputy Prime Minister Vache Gabrielian insisted that the government remains committed to the nuclear project. He said the government has only revised the new plant’s design.

Yerevan will commit to “the safe decommissioning” of Metsamor in an agreement with the European Union which is due to be signed next month.

## Yerevan Jazz Fest 2017 To Bring World Jazz Superstars to Armenia

YEREVAN (Panorama.am) – The Yerevan Jazz Fest 2017 will kick off on October 26 and run through November 3. This year’s festival is dedicated to the founder of the Zildjian Company, Avedis Zildjian.

According to the organizers, this year the four-day festival will bring together the world jazz superstars, including two-time Grammy award winner Marcus Miller and four-time Grammy award winner Gonzalo Rubalcaba, who will share the stage with Armenian jazz musicians.

The opening of the festival will be held at Karen Demirchyan Sports and Concerts Complex on October 26 with a live concert by Miller.

The second concert is scheduled for October 29, at the Aram Khachaturian Concert Hall, with the participation of the Armenian State Jazz Band (Art director Armen Hysnunts), Levon Malkhasyan, Igor Butman, Ani Arzumanyan and Anna Vardazaryan.

The third concert will be held in Gyumri on October 30 and feature performances by Levon Malkhasyan, Alexis Avakian, Miqayel Voskanyan & Friends band, Vazgen Asatryan and Lusine Sargsyan.

Arto Tunçboyacıyan and the Armenian Navy Band, Artak Nersisyan, Marine Hakobyan and Pako Sarr will perform at Khachaturian Concert Hall on November 1.

The closing will be held at Khachaturian Concert Hall on November 3, with a joint concert by Gonzalo Rubalcaba, Vahagn Hayrapetyana and Alexis Avakian.

## USAID Cooperation Celebrated

YEREVAN – Prime Minister Karen Karapetyan and US Ambassador to Armenia Richard M. Mills Jr. attended this week an event dedicated to the 25th anniversary of cooperation between the Republic of Armenia and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

The Prime Minister extended his congratulations on 25-year-long effective cooperation and implementation of numerous programs that have had a positive impact on Armenia’s economic and social development, and strengthened bilateral cultural and direct human ties. In his speech, Karen Karapetyan stated in part, “Since 1992,



Prime Minister Karen Karapetyan with US Ambassador to Armenia Richard M. Mills Jr., third from right

we have had a reliable partner in the face of the US Agency for International Development. Together with the Agency, we have made joint efforts over these years, focusing on emerg-

ing challenges with a special emphasis placed on situational challenges that were most relevant at that particular moment of time.”

He added, “We keep on working with our American partners to foster economic growth, develop democratic institutions and implement a wide range of social and educational programs.

“I also want to mention the fact that the American University of Armenia, which has prepared thousands of highly qualified personnel in Armenia over the past few decades, was established owing to the involvement of the International Development Agency and many philanthropists. The American University of Armenia is one of our premium quality educational institutions. It is gratifying to see it expand year by year and offer even more extensive education to our students.”

Karapetyan stressed that the country is adopting new reforms for stable growth.



Prime Minister Karen Karapetyan

Serj Tankian Attends Rehearsal of His *Orca Symphony* in Armenia

YEREVAN (Panorama.am) – On the sidelines of the fifth Aram Khachaturian International Festival, the State Youth Orchestra of Armenia, headed by conductor Sergey Smbatyan, presented *Orca Symphony No. 1* by Armenian-American rock singer and composer Serj Tankian.

The composition was performed in Armenia for the first time on October 18.

“They are playing very well, correctly. I was very excited. There was a need for a few clarifications, which are always made by composers,” Tankian told the reporters, following the rehearsal.

Earlier the renowned rock singer noted it is an honor for him to have the State Youth Orchestra of Armenia play his *Orca Symphony* at the Khachaturian International Festival.

*Orca Symphony No. 1* was recorded in October 2012, in Linz, Austria. The symphony was released on June 25, 2013 as an album.

The musician said that he had writ-

ten the piece as a way of talking about humanity, by using the orca as a symbol for humanity. The four acts of the composition go through the lifespan of the orca.

sents the life of the killer whale, how it is able to be victorious animal, how it is able to kill and achieve all the things possible in a physical manner on this planet. In the second movement, the



Serj Tankian and conductor Sergey Smbatyan at the rehearsal

“The first movement is called *Victorious Orcinus* and it basically pre-

orca decides to go underwater into the deep state of meditation and self-realization. Between the second and third movements the killer whale realizes that it itself is a dolphin. We call it killer whale but the actual species of the mammal, of the orca is a form of dolphin. I am trying to say that we are both good and bad, that we all have color and darkness within us. And it is a voluntary task to go toward the light and to be hopeful in life.

“The last and final act of *Orca* is called the Lamentation of the Beached. It is when the orca or we could say the humanity realizes that our life on this planet is limited not just by our own age and physical existence, but by the age of the planet itself and what we have done to the planet. It’s a huge self-realization,” Tankian explained.

The Khachaturian Festival continues through November.



Serj Tankian in Yerevan listening to a rehearsal.





## INTERNATIONAL

# Malta Car Bomb Kills Panama Papers Journalist

By Juliette Garside

VALLETTA, Malta (*Guardian*) — Daphne Caruana Galizia died on Monday, October 16, when her car, a Peugeot 108, was destroyed by a powerful explosive device which blew the vehicle into several pieces and threw the debris into a nearby field.

A blogger whose posts often attracted more readers than the combined circulation of the country's newspapers, Caruana Galizia was recently described by the Politico website as a "one-woman WikiLeaks." Her blogs were a thorn in the side of both the establishment and underworld figures that hold sway in Europe's smallest member state.

Her most recent revelations pointed the finger at Malta's prime minister, Joseph Muscat, and two of his closest aides, connecting offshore companies linked to the three men with the sale of Maltese passports and payments from the government of Azerbaijan.

No group or individual has come forward to claim responsibility for the attack.

Malta's president, Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca, called for calm. "In these moments, when the country is shocked by such a vicious attack, I call on everyone to measure their words, to not pass judgment and to show solidarity," she said.

After a fraught general election this summer, commentators had been fearing a return to the political violence that scarred Malta during the 1980s.

In a statement, Muscat condemned the "barbaric attack," saying he had asked police to reach out to other countries' security services for help identifying the perpetrators.

"Everyone knows Ms. Caruana Galizia was a harsh critic of mine," said Muscat at a hastily convened press conference, "both politically and personally, but nobody can justify this barbaric act in any way".

Muscat announced later in parliament that FBI officers were on their way to Malta to assist with the investigation, following his request for outside help from the US government.

The Nationalist party leader, Adrian Delia — himself the subject of negative stories by Caruana Galizia — claimed the killing was linked to her reporting. "A political murder took place today," Delia said in a statement. "What happened today is not an ordinary killing. It is a consequence of the total collapse of the

rule of law which has been going on for the past four years."

According to local media reports, Caruana Galizia filed a police report 15 days ago to say that she had been receiving death threats.

The journalist posted her final blog on her Running Commentary website at 2.35 p.m. on Monday, and the explosion, which occurred near her home, was reported to police just after 3 p.m. According to sources, one of her sons heard the blast from their home and rushed out to the scene.

Caruana Galizia, who claimed to have no political affiliations, set her sights on a wide range of targets, from banks facilitating money laundering to links between Malta's online gaming industry and the Mafia.

believe that she can conduct a magisterial inquiry through the seriousness and impartiality that is needed in the search for truth".

Earlier this year, during Malta's presidency of the European Union, her revelations caused major concern in Brussels.

MEPs openly called for Muscat's departure amid a growing scandal involving his wife, a Panamanian shell company and alleged payments from the president of Azerbaijan's daughter.

Muscat, who has been premier since 2013, went to the polls a year early after his wife was implicated in the scandal. He has always denied any wrongdoing and promised to quit if any evidence emerges of his family having secret offshore bank accounts used to stash kickbacks — as



Daphne Caruana Galizia

Over the last two years, her reporting had largely focused on revelations from the Panama Papers, a cache of 11.5m documents leaked from the internal database of the world's fourth largest offshore law firm, Mossack Fonseca.

The data was obtained by the German newspaper Süddeutsche Zeitung and shared with media partners around the world, including the Guardian, by the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ) in Washington.

Caruana Galizia's son, Matthew Caruana Galizia, is a journalist and programmer who works for the ICIJ.

Her family have filed a court application demanding a change of inquiring magistrate. Investigations into the case are being led by Consuelo Scerri Herrera, the magistrate who was on duty at the time. But Herrera had come under criticism by Galizia in her blog. The family's petition states that they "have no trust" in Scerri Herrera and "do not

Caruana Galizia had alleged.

Responding to news of the attack, the German MEP Sven Giegold, a leading figure in the parliament's Panama Papers inquiry, said he was "shocked and saddened."

"It is too early to know the cause of the explosion but we expect to see a thorough investigation," said Giegold. "Such incidents bring to mind Putin's Russia, not the European Union. There can be absolutely no tolerance for violence against the press and violations of the freedom of expression in the European Union."

Opposition politicians claim rule of law has been under threat since Muscat returned Malta's Labour party to power in 2013 following a long period in opposition. Four police commissioners have resigned under his leadership. The fifth, Lawrence Cutajar, took up his post in August 2016.

Caruana Galizia was 53 and leaves a husband and three sons

## International News

### Iran, Armenia to provide Turkmenistan with Internet Transit

TEHRAN (Public Radio of Armenia) — Iran and Armenia have agreed to provide Turkmenistan with internet transit.

Iran's Minister of Communication and Information Technology Azari Jahormi met with his Armenian counterpart Vahan Martirosyan and discussed cooperation opportunities in the fields of internet bandwidth transit, cybersecurity and postal exchange between the two countries, Mehr news Agency reports.

Referring to relations of the two nations, Iranian official said they emphasized expansion of bilateral trade cooperation.

He pointed to cooperation with Armenia in the area of international transit, adding "in the past two years, Iraq's transit to Europe via Armenia has increased by 10 times. In light of that, we decided to conduct trilateral negotiations in order to pave the way for international transit to Turkmenistan, in the same way."

Jahormi invited Armenia's ICT authorities to participate in Tehran's International Telecom Exhibition, saying that the opportunity could familiarize them with the potentials of Iran's private sector for cooperation purposes.

### New French Ambassador Presents Credentials

YEREVAN (Armenpress) — Foreign Minister Edward Nalbandian received on October 6 the new Ambassador of France to Armenia Jonathan Lacote.

Nalbandian wished him success and hoped that Lacote will contribute to the further development of Armenian-French privileged relations. Thanking for the warm wishes, Lacote assured that he will spare no efforts to further expand and deepen the exceptional relations between Armenia and France.

The two discussed a broad scope of issues of bilateral cooperation, referred to the high level political dialogue between the two states, partnership in the international organizations, active inter-parliamentary interactions, decentralized cooperation, as well as various forms of cultural ties.

The two spoke about the role of French-Armenians in strengthening interstate relations. They also touched upon Armenia-EU cooperation.

### Transparency Int'l Calls On CoE to Tackle Corruption that Led to Resignation of PACE President

STRASBOURG, France (Armenpress) — Transparency International is calling for tough anti-corruption measures, including sanctions on corrupt members, to restore trust in the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) in the face of a series of corruption allegations and the resignation of its president.

Transparency announced it welcomes this week's scheduled vote by PACE to pass a resolution to strengthen its anti-corruption rules but called on the organization to move swiftly on current allegations.

"The Council of Europe's mandate is to uphold and strengthen democracy and human rights across its 47 member states. On September 4, investigations by the Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project and its partners revealed that current and former members of PACE allegedly received payments to launder the image of Azerbaijan abroad," the organization said in a statement, reminding that on October 6, the president of PACE, Pedro Agramunt resigned before facing a motion to remove him.

Patricia Moreira, managing director of Transparency International, said the new president of PACE must act fast against wrongdoing.

Transparency International also called upon the Council of Europe to establish a permanent investigative office as an effective mechanism to uncover future reputational laundering and bribery.

## Aliyev, Sargsyan Meet for 'Constructive' Talks in Switzerland

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Vladimir Hakobian, the Armenian presidential press secretary. In a series of tweets, Hakobian also posted a photograph that showed the two presidents seated around a round table placed in the courtyard of the Swiss diplomatic compound.

After the meeting, Sargsyan met with representatives of the Armenian community in Switzerland.

"We have no concrete agreements on variants of resolving the problem," Sargsyan told them. "But we agreed to take measures to further ease tensions so that we have no casualties on the frontlines. I must say that both the

president of Azerbaijan and I are deeply interested in that."

"God willing, [Aliyev] will always think so," Sargsyan said. "He too realizes the complexity of the problem very well and obviously so do I, but the problem is such that there will never be an easy solution to it."

Sargsyan went on to again rule out any solution that would restore Azerbaijani control over Karabakh. "No Armenian leader will ever take and implement such a decision," he said.

Aliyev and other Azerbaijani officials did not make public statements immediately after the talks.

Neither Sargsyan nor the joint state-

ment by the two foreign ministers specified the agreed upon steps aimed at preventing ceasefire violations along "the line of contact" around Karabakh and the Armenian-Azerbaijani border.

The two presidents had previously met in May and June last year shortly after four-day deadly hostilities around Karabakh that nearly degenerated into an all-out war. The negotiation process again stalled later in 2016. Aliyev and Sargsyan blamed each other for the deadlock when they addressed the UN General Assembly in New York last month.

Foreign Ministers Edward Nalbandian and Elmar Mammadyarov also attended the meeting.





## INTERNATIONAL

# Armenian Artist Presents Global Dialogue on Canvas

NICOSIA (*Cyprus Mail*) – The Pharos Arts Foundation presented the opening of the solo exhibition titled “Globalised” by Armenian artist Vahagn Hamalbashyan on Wednesday, October 18.

Hamalbashyan is inspired by things that weigh on his mind, whether it's his diabetic grandmother or international affairs. He considers himself as much a citizen of the world as of Armenia, and that his art gives him agency to take part in an international dialogue. Locally, he finds himself caught in the middle of the formation of a new Iron Curtain. He uses a brush, acrylic paint and canvas as his main instruments. He also takes advantage of a print-maker, pencils, charcoal, watercolor, spray cans, stencils and Armenian wine.

“When it comes to communicating emotionally with the

world, I don't hold back,” he said. One of his works in progress embodies the complacent attitude towards disaster on the horizon. It depicts a nuclear explosion over a beach where heads levitate and lick ice cream. In another work, “The Visit of Big Brother,” a Russian aircraft carrier dominates a lake, specifically Lake Sevan, while nude people relax while looking at the aircraft but do nothing about the lurking danger. It's not only the contemplation of problems that dominates Hamalbashyan's artistic investment, he also believes in the value of human life and how its beauties radiate into the surrounding environment. He points out how the nude people in his painting impart elation to the scene.

The artist supports free expression and believes that not only does each human being deserve a space to exist and

work, but also every living thing. Water, for instance, plays a significant role in the everyday and thus he gives water a voice when he paints it blue, its portion competing with the other objects in the painting.

Hamalbashyan, from Armenia, studied at the National Centre of Aesthetics, Fine Arts and Decorative Art Studio in Yerevan, and continued at the State Academy of Fine Arts in Yerevan. He has held solo exhibitions at the Armenian Centre for Contemporary Experimental Art, at the Bureaucrat Art Centre in Yerevan, and at the Corridor Gallery in Leeds, UK as well as participating in numerous group exhibitions.

“Globalised” is his first solo exhibition in Cyprus, and it will be on display until November 3 at The Pharos Centre for Contemporary Art in Nicosia.



One of the works by Vahagn Hamalbashyan

## Turkey Spies Betraying Asylum Seekers in German Immigration Offices

BERLIN (DW) – Officials working in Germany's immigration authorities pass on information about Turkish asylum seekers to the Ankara government, according to press reports. Turkish spies may have infiltrated German authorities.

Turkish asylum seekers have accused interpreters, interviewers, and security personnel at Germany's federal immigration authority (BAMF) of passing on their personal data to media outlets friendly to the Turkish government.

A joint investigation by *Der Spiegel* magazine and public broadcaster ARD found several cases where those fleeing political persecution in Turkey had been named and, in some cases, defamed as terrorists in the Turkish media shortly after a hearing at BAMF or an appointment with the office.

In many cases, their locations were also revealed in newspapers and TV reports – information that those affected said could only have come from inside BAMF, since even their families did not know where they were living.

In at least two cases, *Der Spiegel* reported, German domestic intelligence agencies had initiated an investigation. For its part, BAMF said that it had fired 15 freelance interpreters this year for “violations of the duty to neutrality,”

though none of these were circumstances like those reported by *Der Spiegel*.

Hundreds of Turkish officials have sought political asylum in Germany in the face of an increasingly authoritarian crackdown in the country. In response to the report, Green party leader Cem Özdemir called for tighter security checks on interpreters.

In one account reported by *Der Spiegel*, Fuat Balci, a teacher who had been a member of a doctors' association close to Turkey's opposition Gülen movement, described being reduced to tears during a three-hour hearing by a Turkish BAMF official.

Balci said he had fled Turkey after friends had been tortured following last year's coup attempt against the Recep Tayyip Erdogan government, which triggered a large-scale crackdown on opposition activists and a purge in public authorities.

Balci told the magazine that the BAMF hearing had felt like a cross-examination by a Turkish state prosecutor, and he had sought out a lawyer afterwards, who brought a complaint against BAMF. In response, BAMF said that while the official would no longer be deployed for hearings of Turkish citizens, it rejected any suggestion that he had been biased. Balci was eventually granted asylum,

along with his family.

Erkin Erdogan, executive committee member of the German branch of the Peoples' Democratic Congress (HDK), an alliance of liberal Turkish political movements and organizations, said that he knew of “several cases” where translators working for BAMF had made “major changes” to statements made by asylum seekers at their hearings.

“We always had concerns about translators,” he said. “We were always warning people who applied for asylum that they should be very careful about the translators, and if they don't feel comfortable, they should ask to change them.”

To Erkin Erdogan, it's “obvious” that the Turkish government is spying on opposition activists across Europe, and especially in Germany, which has a Turkish community of 3 million people, around half of whom have Turkish citizenship. “I feel like the German authorities are not prepared enough to prevent such incidents,” he said. “This should be a clear warning for Germany. Turkey has a long arm in Germany. It's an extension of the oppression in Turkey.”

He added that, since Turkey and Germany have an intelligence-sharing agreement, German authorities could warn people in

Germany if they become aware that they are being targeted by Turkish agencies.

The HDK is even concerned about potential spies in the German police force, though Erdogan was careful to underline that “only the German authorities” have the means to verify whether individuals are spies. “We can only have a suspicion, if the job they're doing doesn't meet a required standard, and then we can object. It's difficult to estimate the damage they have done.”

In an emailed statement, a BAMF spokesman said that asylum seekers had a right to ask for a different translator, and that a complaint management system had been set up this year. “If a complaint is justified, translators are no longer booked by the federal authority,” he said. He added that BAMF had not received complaints about the cases reported in *Der Spiegel*.

BAMF currently has a pool of 500 freelance Turkish translators, who are obligated to give faithful translations without prejudice or comment. All applicants must provide a good conduct certificate from the police and must undergo a “reliability test” from security forces, which is repeated every two years. On top of this, translators are given a “standard questionnaire” to test their “reliability and integrity” at individual offices.





## INTERNATIONAL

# Writers from the ‘Other’ Turkey Speak Out in Frankfurt

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Foundation for Freedom) – of course, in absentia, since he is currently behind bars in Turkey. Later on the same day, author and Spiegel journalist Hasnaim Kazim presented his book, *Krisenstaat Türkei. Erdogan und das Ende der Demokratie am Bosphorus* (“Turkey a State in Crisis: Erdogan and the End of Democracy on the Bosphorus”). On Friday, Can Dündar, former editor-in-chief of *Cumhuriyet*, presented his book, *Verräter. Von Istanbul nach Berlin. Aufzeichnungen im deutschen Exil* (“Traitor: From Istanbul to Berlin – Notes from German Exile”), in which he poses the question: who is the traitor? At a large gathering convened on Saturday, journalists, authors and political figures conducted readings in solidarity with Deniz Yücel, a German-Turkish writer who has been jailed since February. The following day a round table discussion entitled “Critical Voices from Turkey” organized by the “Initiative Freundeskreis #FreeDeniz” featured writers representing the “other” Turkey. An hour later on a huge stage inside the fair, again leading journalists, both German and Turkish, joined to present “New Journalistic Solutions for a Turkey in Crisis.”

## Books Against Censorship

It was literally impossible to attend all the events, so let me focus on one particularly significant meeting that took place on October 13. Entitled “Books against Censorship,” it brought together two publishers, one author and an actor. Sponsors were the German Publishers and Booksellers Association (Börsenverein) together with Deutsche Welle, Germany’s public international broadcaster. Christopher Links of the Ch. Links publishing company (Berlin) and Ragip Zarakolu of Belge (Istanbul) joined physicist and author Asli Erdogan in a discussion moderated by Sabine Kieselbach, literary correspondent for Deutsche Welle. Actor and director Mehmet Atak also participated.

The mere presence of Asli Erdogan constituted an assertion of the power of resistance against censorship; she had been in prison since August 2016, was released in December and finally allowed to leave the country last month to receive the Remarque Peace Prize in Osnabrück, only as a result of massive international protests against her unlawful incarceration.

She recounted her story simply. In the 1990s, she had written for the newspaper *Radikal*, and was fired in 2001. In 2010 she resumed writing there as a guest columnist. In the climate of post-coup hysteria, on August 17, 2016, police raided the offices of the paper, and then broke into her apartment at night, hauling her off to jail on charges of “terrorist propaganda” (i.e. pro Kurdish, = pro-PKK) and “destruction of national unity,” which can lead to capital punishment. When asked by Kieselbach about her state of health, Erdogan replied that she was “on automatic pilot,” and had not really yet dealt with the trauma, for sure, not yet in writing.

Kieselbach then turned to publisher Ragip Zarakolu, who has been charged with crimes 45 times (!) and now lives in exile in Sweden. The moderator wanted to know why he left the country. Zarakolu explained that he had gone to Sweden as a guest writer, but then after the coup and counter-coup, he could not return to Turkey. The crimes he has been accused of include publishing “works about the Armenian Genocide and the Shoa, about torture in Turkish prisons,” like that which Asli Erdogan had witnessed. The situation, he said, “is worse now, because it is like a military dictatorship

with authoritarian laws;” here he pointed to the arrest of human rights defenders, individuals who should enjoy the protection of the United Nations. His publishing company Belge was founded in 1977 and continued even under the later military regime, issuing works by political prisoners, among others. All sorts of topics became taboo, he said, among them, leftist politics, the Armenian Genocide, the Kurds. In the 1990s when he produced books on these themes, he came under attack, and his publishing house was bombed in 1994. As recently as May 7, 2017, the offices were raided and 2,000 books reportedly seized. As a special treat for the book fair this year, Zarakolu organized and curated an exhibition of “Forbidden Books” which features works from the last 92 years in Turkey.

Christoph Links has partnered with Zarakolu in promoting “forbidden” books. His company published *Jürgen Gottschlich’s book, Beihilfe zum Völkermord. Deutschlands Rolle bei der Vernichtung der Armenier* (“Accessory to Genocide: Germany’s Role in the Armenian Genocide”) in 2015, a volume present at the Istanbul book fair. The partnership between Ch. Links and Belge involves translation projects to make the reality in Turkey known.

## The Power of the Mighty Pen

Speaking from personal experience, Asli Erdogan underlined the special role of political solidarity, especially from outside Turkey. On the night of her arrest, she said, crowds gathered to signal support, there were demonstrations in Cracow, Poland, PEN International organized twice-weekly freedom vigils, not to mention the expressions of support from her readers. “The solidarity from abroad was incredible!” she said. “The government underestimated the power of the literary world.” The pressure from abroad became so great that “it became cheaper to let me out.” It was due to initiatives taken by France, Austria and Germany that she finally got her passport and could travel.

“And inside Turkey?” the moderator asked. Zarakolu confirmed that international pressure was decisive, referring to his own arrest in 2011. As for the domestic situation, he characterized Turkey as “a Republic of Fear.” Arbitrary arrests of intellectuals are intended to have the effect of terrifying everyone, giving the impression that no one who dares to speak out is safe. And at the same time, the ruling elite around Recep Tayyip Erdogan et al are considered “untouchables,” above and beyond the reach of the law. What must change is that they “must become touchable,” he said. For those who are unlawfully prosecuted, international attention can even be life-saving; when Orhan Pamuk got the Nobel Prize, Zarakolu noted, it shifted thinking; “people said they should be proud of him!” That honor was crucial, and “Pamuk survived,” just as others who have received comparable international acclaim have also been saved. “But,” he added with sadness, “we could not save Hrant Dink,” the Armenian.

Links confirmed that the actions of organizations like PEN, with their petitions to governments and to prisons protesting conditions, do have an impact and may alleviate their suffering. That prisoners in Turkey are treated inhumanely was clear in the brief description that Asli Erdogan gave of her incarceration. “I was in solitary confinement for five days,” she said, “and for two days went without water.” Once the international uproar forced the authorities to deal with “writer Asli” and not “PKK Asli,” their behavior improved. When German political figure Martin Schulz

(SPD) called for her liberation on television, the world had to take note and the authorities in Turkey could not ignore it.

## The Ottoman Dream a Nightmare

Despite the reign of fear that Zarakolu described, there is resistance inside the country. Writers, publishers and other intellectuals defend themselves as citizens, he said, and practice civil disobedience by continuing to publish and refusing the censorship. There is “big resistance” in Turkey, he said. It is “a dictatorship, but it is a country that has struggled for freedom. We have a tradition of liberals, of Kurds, we have not accepted being subjects.”

Moderator Kieselbach referred to a July 2017 study of the situation in Turkey that paints a very depressing picture of the situation for publishers and writers. Zarakolu explained it in terms of what he called a process of “Restoration:” the ruling powers want to rebuild Ottoman society in their own fashion. They do not see Armenians, Greeks, Jews and the multiple alphabets, he said; they are “rewriting Ottoman history,” and are doing so with the intention to establish an Islamic Republic by the year 2023, on the centennial of the republic established by Atatürk. As he characterized it, this would be a “Sunni version” of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and they are proceeding step by step, reshaping the education system as well as social customs. Anti-Americanism and anti-imperialism are being used in this process as propaganda tools, and racism, anti-Semitism, is growing. His response is to “publish more,” and he stressed how important Asli’s work on repression is in this context.

Links appealed to German authorities to take note of this active civil society in Turkey, and to support the “intellectual resistance.” “We have dialogue partners with civil society, and German authorities need to provide support,” he said.

## The Search for Unity

Both Asli Erdogan and Mehmet Atak raised the issue of the opposition’s unity, or rather, the lack of it. As Erdogan put it, “We all know what we don’t want but disagree as to what to do.” She identified “fault lines” in the Kurdish issue and in the analysis of Turkey’s past, and lamented the fact that the government had been able to manipulate sentiments, pitting some opposition MPs against others; some would accept the jailing of their Kurdish colleagues but defended the parliamentarians from their own party. Atak took issue with the idea Links had presented of a “big” opposition, saying he thought each group placed its own identity first, discriminating against others. It was in the mobilization around Gezi park, both emphasized, that the opposition had come together and it is that quality of unity that is required.

As an appropriate postscript to this vibrant political dialogue, good news arrived from Spain. Osman Okkan, journalist and filmmaker (who also participated in a round table discussion on Turkey), held up his smart phone and showed me a text announcing that the Spanish authorities had just announced that they had refused the demand by Ankara to extradite author Dogan Akhanli to Turkey. He had been arrested while on vacation in Andalusia, on the basis of an Interpol warrant issued by Turkey. An impressive international mobilization of solidarity had made possible his liberation after a two-month forced stay in Spain. As Akhanli told television reporters later that evening, he was actually thankful to President Erdogan for the involuntary stay, — and might even dedicate the new book he wrote in Spain to the Turkish leader....

# The Great Azerbaijani Land Grab

FRANKFURT – Friday, October 13, started out as a normal day at the Armenia stand at the Frankfurt Book Fair, with little indication of trouble. The books had been carefully arranged on the shelves, the banner was hanging in full view, and two young women were on hand to present new books to visitors

By Muriel Mirak-Weissbach

Special to the Mirror-Spectator

and answer whatever questions they might have about the country and its literature. Then, suddenly without forewarning, out of nowhere appeared two young men who leapt onto the platform and headed straight to a map that was hanging on the wall. Without further introductions or explanations, the duo grabbed the map off the wall and disappeared into the crowds. Gone! Just as swiftly, an Armenian man from the stand made off in the same direction, racing through the throngs of visitors, and reached the stand of Azerbaijan just in time to apprehend the would-be robbers, whisk the map from their hands and return to the stand. The police were duly informed of the attempted land grab.

The map was a page out of a geography book. As the title indicated, it represented the “Republic of Armenia and Republic of Mountainous Karabagh.” When the assailants had ripped it off the wall, they had been overheard saying, “This is not Armenia, this is Azerbaijan!”

A couple of American visitors passing by, apprised of the curious theft, mused, reminiscing of times gone by. “Now, wasn’t that Woodie Guthrie’s song?” asked the man, “that went – ‘This land is your land, this land is my land....’?” “Yes, of course,” said his wife, chuckling in reverie, “Woodie Guthrie, yes, yes, of course, a wonderful song” and taking her husband’s arm affectionately in hers, walked on.



The stolen map of Artsakh



# Community News

## Plastic Surgeons Issue Warnings On Anesthesia Before Age 3

DALLAS – The evidence behind the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) recent drug safety warning regarding prolonged anesthesia in infants and young children is discussed in the October issue of *Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery*, the official medical journal of the American Society of Plastic Surgeons (ASPS).

Pending further research on the possible hazards of anesthesia, elective plastic and reconstructive surgery procedures lasting more than three hours can be delayed until after age 3 if possible, according to the special topic paper by Dr. Christopher Armen Derderian of University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center, Dallas, and colleagues. If surgery can't be delayed, strategies to reduce the child's anesthesia exposure are recommended.

Late last year, the FDA issued a Drug Safety Communication warning that repeated or lengthy use of general anesthetic and sedation drugs during surgeries or procedures in chil-



Dr. Christopher Armen Derderian

ren younger than 3 years or in pregnant women during their third trimester may affect the development of children's brains. This included adding a "black box warning" for several widely used anesthetic and sedative drugs. Derderian and colleagues

provide an introduction to the evidence behind the FDA safety warning, how to discuss the risks with parents and steps to avoid or reduce exposure.

The FDA warning is based largely on studies in rats and other animals suggesting that prolonged exposure to anesthetic drugs in early life can have adverse effects on brain development. These studies raised concerns for possible negative effects of general anesthetics on the developing human brain. The warning focuses on repeated exposure to anesthesia, or exposure lasting longer than three hours. There is special concern about exposure during the first three years of life—a critical time for brain development.

Fortunately, most surgeries in this age group are less than three hours. The safety warning acknowledges that there are many situations where surgery in infants and young children cannot be avoided.

Intensive research is ongoing to clarify the potential harms of anesthesia on the developing brain. Some studies using population databases have linked anesthesia exposure to adverse outcomes such as learning disabilities, attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder and lower performance on standardized tests. Other studies have found no such effects, after accounting for other risk factors.

Formal studies are being performed to clarify the risks of anesthesia exposure during early childhood, but the final results won't be available for several years. Derderian asked, "How do we deal with this potential risk until there is evidence?"

Derderian and colleagues hope their article will help surgeons to understand the potential risks of anesthesia exposure in infants and young children.

Derderian earned his undergraduate and medical degrees at Boston University. He also completed a combined residency in general surgery and plastic surgery at New York University Medical Center in 2010.



Armenian Assembly 2017 summer intern class at Ayrvank

## Armenian Assembly Internship Program in Armenia Concludes Another Successful Summer

WASHINGTON – The Armenian Assembly of America's Summer Internship Program in Armenia concluded in August. The program featured lectures and discussions with a wide range of officials and tours around the homeland. The eight-week internship program in Yerevan was packed with interesting activities including meetings with prominent individuals from civil society and political leaders, aimed at helping the participants better understand the socio-political situation in Armenia and Artsakh.

This year's summer class included Kyra Chamberlain interning at the International Center for Human Development, where she researched the status of Syrian refugees in Armenia; Rachael Minassian interning at the Regional Studies Center, where she examined gender studies in Armenia under the supervision of its founding director, Richard Giragosian; and Satenik Beglaryan interning at ArmComedy, the first satiric political news show in Armenia that just completed a tour in the United States.

"It is my pleasure every year to meet our summer interns and get to know them, especially their passions and ambitions, and watch them grow while par-



Armenian Assembly Regional Director Arpi Vartanian, Kyra Chamberlain, Ambassador Richard Mills Jr., Rachael Minassian, Satenik Beglaryan and Marian Karapetyan

ticipating in the Armenian Assembly's internship program in Armenia. These dedicated students will be leaving their marks on the Armenian community, both in Armenia and in their hometowns," Assembly Regional Director Arpi Vartanian said.

Since its inception in 1999, the summer program in Armenia has introduced college-aged students to life in their ancestral homeland, provided valuable international work experience, and helped participants foster the skills needed to become the next generation of community leaders.

The Assembly interns met with U.S. Ambassador to Armenia Richard Mills, Jr., Founder and Director of the Yerevan-based Regional Studies Center Richard Giragosian, Assembly Turkish Regional Analyst Alin Ozinian, and former

see INTERNS, page 7

## URI Pharmacy Building Dedicated In Honor of Alumnus Paramaz Avedisian '54

PROVIDENCE – The University of Rhode Island community gathered last week to honor the memory of College of Pharmacy alumnus Paramaz Avedisian '54, whose lifetime represented a legacy of professionalism in pharmacy and philanthropy in the community.

University officials joined with members of the Avedisian family to cut a ceremonial ribbon officially rededicating the building on the Kingston campus in front of the building that houses the College of Pharmacy. The building, following legislative approval last summer, is now officially known as Paramaz Avedisian '54 Hall.

The dedication comes after a transformative gift to the College of Pharmacy from the late Paramez Avedisian's brother, Edward Avedisian. A performing symphonic musician, university teacher, noted philanthropist, and 2016 recipient of an Ellis Island Medal of Honor, Edward Avedisian has made a \$5 million gift to support the College. It is his brother's philanthropy, however, that he wants remembered by URI pharmacy students for generations to come.

"Paramaz's philosophy was, 'If you can't be an advocate for the patient, why be a pharmacist?' Ed Avedisian recalled. "It is this spirit of helpfulness that we want this hall to embody. I



The late Paramaz Avedisian

want students who walk through the door to have a direct connection to him."

The building dedication further connects Paramaz Avedisian and his family to the university, according to College of Pharmacy Dean Paul Larrat. The gift from Edward Avedisian will help fund a variety of projects in the College of Pharmacy, all working toward the goal of carrying on Paramez Avedisian's legacy through education and innovation. Part of the gift will go toward a new Paramaz Avedisian Endowed Chair in Medicinal Organic Chemistry.

"We're naming this building after one of our own," Dean Larrat said. "That's important to people; it resonates with folks. We have a long-standing relationship with the family. The Avedisians have been very generous and supportive."

The impact of Edward Avedisian's gift will be felt not only at the College of Pharmacy but also across the University as a whole, noted to URI President David Dooley.

"Edward's gift will have far-reaching effects on our students and faculty," President Dooley said. "We will be better positioned to improve education and research at the College of

see AVEDISIAN, page 9





## COMMUNITY NEWS

# Assembly Internship Program in Armenia Concludes Another Successful Summer

INTERNS, from page 6

Assembly intern Sarkis Balkhian. Balkhian is now the Advocacy Director of the Aleppo Compatriotic Charitable Organization, which supports Syrian refugees in Armenia, and a Middle East and North Africa consultant at Human Rights Watch. Balkhian spoke about his experience participating in the Terjenian-Thomas Assembly Internship Program in Washington, D.C. in 2007 with the Armenian National Institute (ANI) and in Armenia in 2008, where he interned at the Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute and the Middle East Division of the Republic of Armenia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The interns participated in local events around the capital, including "The Local Roots of Global Peace Conference" at Eurasia International University, where they heard presentations from speakers including USAID-Armenia Mission Director Deborah Grieser and Giragosian. They also toured the Armenia Tree Project's Karin Nursery, helped build a home with Fuller Center for Housing in Geghard Village, participated in a local folk dance lesson, and visited historical, religious, and cultural sites throughout Armenia and Artsakh. These sites include Garni Temple, Geghard Monastery, Zvartnots, Khor Virap Monastery, Areni Cave, Noravank, Karahunj archaeological site, Parz Lake, Dilijan, petroglyphs at Sev Sar, and more.

"A large part of discovering my heritage in Armenia has been about this ethereal experience that comes with soaking up the atmosphere at each cultural site, not simply visiting the sites or memorizing facts about the history. It may not happen at first, but it gradually sinks in after a while, and you put together the puzzle pieces of your own identity," Kyra said after visiting Vagharshapat, also

known as Holy Echmiadzin, the spiritual capital of Armenia. She is a student at George Washington University in Washington, DC.

The participants traveled to Artsakh, where they sat down with President Bako Sahakyan and Foreign Minister Karen Mirzoyan. Reflecting on her meetings with Sahakyan and Mirzoyan, Minassian said: "For a political science major, this was a thrilling experience. We were able to ask [President Sahakyan and Foreign Minister Mirzoyan] questions and hear from them firsthand about their positions on different issues pertaining to Artsakh and Armenia. This was probably my favorite part of the trip, and it's something I'll never forget." Minassian is a student at Providence College in Rhode Island.

While in Artsakh, the interns visited the ancient cities of Shushi and Tigranakert, toured Gandzasar Monastery and met with the HALO Trust staff. HALO clears landmines in the area. On their way back to Yerevan, they rode on the 3.6-mile (5,752 meters) Wings of Tatev Aerial Tramway and explored the magnificent Tatev Monastery.



Armenian Assembly Intern Coordinator Mariam Karapetyan, Satenik Beglaryan, Kyra Chamberlain, Rachael Minassian, and Regional Director Arpi Vartanian with Mount Ararat in the background



Armenian Assembly Intern Coordinator Mariam Karapetyan, Regional Director Arpi Vartanian, Artsakh President Sako Bahakyan, Kyra Chamberlain, Satenik Beglaryan and Rachael Minassian



## Executive Director Position Manoogian Manor, Livonia, MI

The Manoogian Manor, founded by Alex and Marie Manoogian, a fully licensed non-profit facility providing assisted living and personal care services for seniors, is currently taking resumes for the position of its Executive Director. A 90-bed premier community that has just gone through a major multi-million dollar renovation is known for its outstanding resident care programs. Potential candidates should have extensive experience in the industry, having run similar or larger programs in the past.

- **Michigan Assisted Living Administrator's License will be required.**
- **A passion for working with seniors**
- **College degree BA/BS, preferably in Business Administration, Hospital Administration, Hospitality, or health-related field.**
- **Must have a minimum of three years of executive managerial experience in senior living, assisted care, nursing home administration or similar.**
- **Must possess excellent written and verbal communication skills.**
- **Must demonstrate a warm, outgoing, and compassionate personality.**
- **Must have demonstrated integrity, maturity and leadership skills.**

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## OBITUARY

## Rose Timourian

### 104 Years of Can-Do Attitude

BARNEGAT, N.J. — Rose Timourian, of Barnegat, died at the age of 104 on Saturday, October 7.

She was the daughter of the late Hripsime and Nerses Karagozian and grew up in New York City.

Her family went to California for a brief stay and returned to New York where she graduated from school and worked as a seamstress in the wedding department of Bergdorf Goodman, the



upscale department store.

She married Krikor Timourian, a skilled embroiderer and businessman, on October 6, 1935. The new family eventually moved from the

Bronx to Ossining, NY, and then to Yorktown Heights, where they lived from 1944 to 1968.

She worked for the US Department of Agriculture, and later for the Yorktown Central School District. She held a variety of other jobs including crafts counsellor at summer camps and had a ribbon printing business. She and her husband were very active in Yorktown community affairs, with Rose serving a stint as the president of the school PTA as well as president of the Grange Fair Association, helping run an American Field Service program for foreign exchange students and other such activities.

Upon retirement in 1968, the couple moved to Loveladies, NJ, on Long Beach Island, where they immediately got involved in local politics and Rose became the Drama Chair of the Island's Woman's Club. In 1975, they left to settle in the warm climate of Port Charlotte, Fla., where they enjoyed boating, fishing, golfing and bridge. Five years after her husband died, on July 2, 1999, she moved to Barnegat, NJ to be closer to family. She fished and crabbed at every opportunity, and was an enthusiastic bridge player.

She was an amazing woman who did not recognize any limits on what she could accomplish. She attributed some of her boundless energy and fearlessness to growing up with four brothers who would insist on her participation when they needed her to make a team.

She was a superb athlete who was at home as a volley partner for tennis professionals in California, eager to take up skiing at 65, ready to climb the 217 steps to the top of Barnegat Lighthouse at 95, climbing over intimidating tourist attractions in the Armenian Republic at



Great-granddaughters, from the left Jasmine Shishmanian, Cerise Baker, Talene Derbabian, Great-grandsons, from the left Gomidas, Whittaker, Duke

the same age, mounting the 230 steps up to the beautiful Sevanavank Monastery or the 572 steps of the Yerevan Cascade, scurrying around her house without a walker at 103, or demonstrating her distaste for the aid when it became almost necessary, by occasionally dragging it behind her as one would pull wheeled carryon luggage.

She brought her "can do" attitude to anything she tackled, from keeping a large vegetable garden, to eking out a profit in managing the Grange farm fair, working to support a political candidate at the local, state or national level, or insisting that going to the clubhouse pool with the ladies meant that she was going to actually do some swimming.

She leaves her children Adrienne Minassian and her husband Serge, son James Timourian,

son Gregory Timourian and his wife Rita; niece Margaret Matero and her husband Jim; grandchildren Yvonne and her husband Paul Fereshetian, Corinne and her husband Steven Kachigian, Serge Minassian and his wife Tanya, Mara Timourian and Ian Timourian; great-grandchildren Damon, Cerise, Jasmine, Maxine, Raquel, Talene, Arianna and Sophia. In addition she leaves great-great-granddaughter Madeline and great-great-grandsons Duke, Whittaker and Gomidas.

Her funeral was held on Wednesday, October 11 at the Barnegat Funeral Home in Barnegat, with services conducted by Fr. Daniel Karadjian of St. Stepanos Armenian Church, and she was buried the following day at Cedar Grove Cemetery in Flushing, NY.

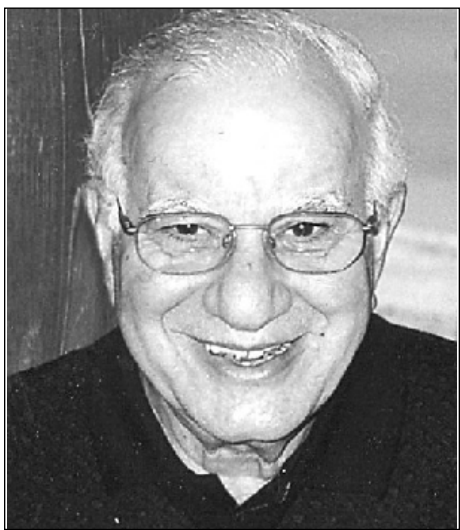
## Arthur Simonian

### Longtime Connecticut Resident, Devoted to Family

NEW BRITAIN, Conn. — Arthur Simonian, 87, of New Britain, died peacefully at home on Tuesday, September 26.

He was born in Bronx, N.Y., January 25, 1930, (as he liked saying, across from "Yankee Stadium"). He was the son of Karekin and Aghavne (Kaprielian) Simonian, both Armenian Genocide survivors, and was married for 67 years to Lucy R. (Yessian) in New Britain.

He and his wife had four sons, Mark of New Britain, Guy (Darlene) of West Hartford, Arthur G. (Sylvia) of Farmington, and beloved deceased son, Craig; four grandchildren, Sara of San Diego, Calif., Douglas of Rockville Centre, Long Island, Megan and Lauren of Farmington,



Conn.; brother, George Simonian of Cliffside Park, N.J., several nieces and nephews, and a special niece, Lee Abrahamian of New York City; cousin, Mary Omartian and family of Springfield, Mass. He had a close relationship with his extended families: Abrahamian, Maljanian and Manusak Terdjianian.

He was educated at George Washington High School, Washington Heights, NY, and later attended the City College of New York and later

the Central Connecticut State University of New Britain. He received his master's degree from the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in, Troy, NY, in management engineering.

In his senior year of high school he was appointed by the late Sen. Jacob Javits to attend Annapolis Academy, but declined. Prior to moving to New Britain, he worked at the New York Stock Exchange, Wall Street, as a specialty clerk for the firm of Spear Leeds and Kellogg. He was employed by Pratt & Whitney, East Hartford, Conn., as director of information systems for 40 years.

Simonian was a regular member of Shuttle Meadow Country Club where he especially enjoyed the company of his Wednesday golf buddies. Among his interests were Casino poker, Sunday night Setback with family members, reading the Wall Street Journal and the Armenian Mirror-Spectator and watching the Fox TV channel. He was an avid fan of the New York Yankees and Giants. He and his wife enjoyed traveling, especially their trip to historic Armenia.

Among his other activities and accomplishments were teaching "Operations Research" at the RPI Graduate Center when it first opened, delegate for the Armenian Diocesan Assembly, Financial Chairman of the Armenian Church of the Holy Resurrection Building Committee, member of the New Britain City Planning Commission, Chairman of the Regional Planning Commission, Board of Directors for the Mattabassett District and Advisor to New Britain General Hospital on their computerization upgrade. Prior to his retirement, he developed and established the U.T.C. Corporate Center on Fenn Road in Newington, Conn.

The family thank his parish priest, Father Kapriel Mouradjian, for his comforting visits, and his caregivers Eva, Ray, and Nurse Eugene for their exceptional care throughout his illness.

Funeral services were held Friday, September 29, at the Armenian Church of the Holy Resurrection. Burial was in Fairview Cemetery.

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## Donation

Lucy R. Simonian donated \$100 to the **Armenian Mirror-Spectator** in memory of her late husband, Arthur Simonian, of New Britain, Conn.

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## COMMUNITY NEWS

# Barsamian: Streetside Project Celebrates Shopping, Art and Community

By Tom Eastman

CONWAY, N.H. (*Conway Daily Sun*) – “As we’ve always said from Day One, we’re here to stay, and we want to add to what already exists here in the valley and not to take anything away.”

So said Robert Barsamian, president of OVP Management Inc., at a ribbon-cutting ceremony held Tuesday, October 10, to mark the completion of construction at the new Settlers Green Streetside retail center, celebrating more than 50,000 square feet of retail and dining space.

Six of the nine new stores and restaurant are now open.

Cutting the ribbon was Barsamian’s sister, Lisa Green, co-principal of OVP Management Inc., joined by OVP General Manager Dot Seybold and several longtime staffers.

Located at 1699 White Mountain Highway in North Conway, construction on the \$15-million expansion for Settlers Green began last November.

“We’re proud of our community, contractors and our staff. It takes a team effort,” Barsamian told a crowd of about 60 people including town and state officials and tourism leaders.

The Settlers Green brand, he said, complements the valley’s renown as a tourism resort.

He said his company spends \$1.5 million annually, working with state and local tourism officials to market the region’s allure as a shopping and recreation center.

“As we talk to tenants from around the United States, we sell the valley and the beauty of the place we all share,” Barsamian said.

He said Settlers’ mission is “very simple: We need people a reason to come back. Every time



Lisa Green, watched by brother Rob Barsamian to her left, cuts the ribbon for the grand opening of Streetside in North Conway Tuesday. Joining the ribbon cutting from left are Joanne Purnell, Julie George, Roger Williams, Dot Seybold, Laura Tuveson and Maddie Costello.

they return we give them something to talk about.”

He said the new complex and its interconnection with existing Settlers Green properties does just that.

In an interview prior to the ceremonies, Seybold echoed those comments, noting, “Adding these new stores and this new center at Streetside has really triggered some real dynamic energy for us as some of the brands we

have been trying to bring here such as Polo and the Loft have taken notice.

At the ribbon-cutting, Barsamian thanked longtime OVP project manager Roger Williams for overseeing the construction, noting that Williams worked with the team of local contractors led by general contractor Gordon T. Burke and Sons of North Conway.

Tourism and business leaders on hand included Janice Crawford of the Mt. Washington Valley Chamber of Commerce, Conway Planning Director Tom Irving and Chuck Henderson of Conway, representing U.S. Sen. Jeanne Shaheen (D-N.H.).

Reading from a letter, Henderson said the senator salutes the vision shown by Barsamian and Green for “creating pedestrian friendly shopping with new architecture that is dazzling and new, but which ties into our New England architectural heritage.”

The senator also praised OVP Management Inc. and Seybold in particular for Settlers Green’s longtime support for the community and the arts.

Also on hand were Nancy Devine and George Wiese of Mountain Top Music, who praised OVP for supporting the ongoing effort to restore the Majestic Theatre in Conway Village through a \$15,000 matching grant announced this summer toward Mountain Top’s ongoing \$2.6 million campaign.

“I can’t thank Dot and everyone enough for their support,” said Devine, noting prior to her remarks that the Majestic’s campaign is on the home stretch.

“Mountain Top believes in building the community through music ... We are thrilled that Settlers Green is supporting the arts to bring the community together,” added Wiese, saying that shoppers could visit Settlers and then come to a concert in the future as the Majestic project comes to fruition.

Seybold said Settlers Green is also fostering support of the arts through a Settlers Green Streetside Art Project.

As part of that effort, Seybold said OVP sought entries from artists to decorate the new center. Thirty entries were received from throughout New England and were narrowed to six.

Chosen were works by local painters Rebecca Klementovich and Kristen Pobatschnig now on display, along with completed and on display sculptures by Dale Rogers and Michael Alfano, both of Massachusetts. Scheduled to come in summer 2018 are works by Vermont sculptor Melanie Zibit and Maine granite sculptor Antoinette Prien Schultze.

The ribbon cutting was part of the weeklong “Dancing in the Street” grand opening promotion.

## URI Pharmacy Building Dedicated in Honor of Alumnus Paramaz Avedisian

AVEDISIAN, from page 6

Pharmacy for generations of students, all while keeping the memory of Paramaz – his scholarship and humanitarianism – at the forefront of our minds.”

Paramaz Avedisian was known not only for his advocacy for patients but also for his charity, born in the help he himself received to continue his studies at URI in the 1950s. His father passed away while he was in college, leaving Paramaz unable to pay for his studies. On the verge of dropping out, Paramaz received a gift he would never forget from Tom Simpson, then owner of Simpson’s Pharmacy in Pawtucket, where Paramaz worked at the time. Simpson took Avedisian under his wing, and paid for the remainder of his tuition.

Paramaz Avedisian wasted no time paying that gift forward, regularly tutoring a legally deaf classmate who was having difficulty in class. Avedisian would go on to great professional success as owner of Wheaton Pharmacy in Washington, DC, for 30 years, and help countless other people – routinely disregarding a patient’s inability to pay, and, in the spirit of Tom Simpson, once paying for a man’s medications so his son could continue college. He always considered one of his greatest achievements to be helping his deaf classmate graduate.

His legacy of helping the University continues with his brother’s gift to URI, which follows previous gifts to the University, including one that established the Paramaz Avedisian Pharmacy Scholarship.

Lil Breul O’Rourke, president of the URI Foundation, said, “Edward’s generosity in honoring his brother will make it possible for students and faculty to carry on Paramaz’s distinguished legacy through innovation and teach-

ing. We are grateful for his support of the University and proud of the impact Paramaz made, as a URI alumnus, in the pharmaceutical industry and his community. His legacy will live on at URI for generations to come.”

The newly named pharmacy building on the Kingston campus opened in 2012. The voter-supported \$75-million center for pharmaceutical



Edward Avedisian

cal teaching and research consists of 144,000 square-feet of classroom, research, lecture, common and administrative space on five floors, which serves as home to the nearly 1,000 undergraduate, graduate and Pharm. D. students that make up the College of Pharmacy.

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## COMMUNITY NEWS

## AMAA Helps Care for the Families of Martyred Soldiers

PARAMUS, N.J. — On April 1, 2016, Azerbaijan unleashed an assault on the Artsakh-Azerbaijan border using a vast array of military destructive machinery. As always, our brave soldiers and volunteers, fiercely defended the front fending the enemy away, proving once again that the Armenian spirit is difficult to overcome and as a nation we are ready to protect our homeland, homes and children, women and the elderly. However, the price paid was quite high with more than 90 martyrs.

The Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) commanded the heroism of the soldiers and in collaboration with the Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Armenia embarked in the partial and in some cases the total renovation of the homes of the families of 19 martyred soldiers in the regions of Aragatsotn, Syunik, Gegharkunik, Tavush and Lori as well as in Yerevan. Roofs, doors, windows and toilets were replaced, tiling work was carried out, heating systems were installed and construction materials were provided for auxiliary structures, such as barns and hen-houses.

By caring for the families of the martyred soldiers, the AMAA reverses the devotion and honors the sacrifice for a Homeland we have all dreamt about.

“Our outreach to the families of the Artsakh martyrs is the core of our Christian ministry and national duty” said Zaven Khanjian, Executive Director/CEO of AMAA. “The nation is ever indebted to those who sacrifice their lives to secure the freedom and independence of the Homeland.”



## TCA/ADL Helps Out Church Bazaar

SOUTHFIELD, Mich. — On October 14, the Armenian Democratic Liberal party and Tekeyan Cultural Association youth, under the guidance of Hagop Alexanian, helped with St. John's Armenian Church's annual bazaar, helping grill the shish-kebab. They cooked for more than 800 people as the turn-out was a huge success. Above, the helpers with Alexanian, in the center.



## Royce, Schiff Support ANCA Goal Of Securing MCC STEM Education Grant for Armenia

PASADENA, Calif. — House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Ed Royce (R-CA) and House Intelligence Committee Ranking Democrat Adam Schiff (D-CA) are backing an Armenian National Committee of America (ANCA) initiative to establish a new US Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) grant that could turn Armenia into the “Silicon Valley” of the region. Their support for this bilateral accord was shared at the ANCA Western Region Grassroots Conference panel, titled “Politics in Action: Congress on our Side,” moderated by Politico Senior Politics Editor Charlie Mahtesian.

“We welcome the leadership of Chairman Royce and Representative Schiff in helping to realize the transformative potential of a \$100 million MCC Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics grant for Armenia,” said ANCA Chairman Raffi Hamparian. “Securing this major investment in Armenia’s educational system represents a core ANCA advocacy priority, a key element of our 360-degree advocacy program to strengthen Armenia economically, grow U.S.-Armenia relations, defend Artsakh’s security, and end US complicity in Ankara’s obstruction of justice for the Armenian Genocide.”



Rep. Ed Royce



Rep. Adam Schiff





## COMMUNITY NEWS

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## COMMUNITY NEWS

# US Congressional Delegation Visits Armenia and Artsakh

WASHINGTON — Congressional Caucus on Armenian Issues Co-Chairs Representatives Frank Pallone, Jr. (D-NJ), David Valadao (R-CA), and Jackie Speier (D-CA), along with Rep. Anna Eshoo (D-CA), Rep. Jim Sensenbrenner, Jr. (R-WI), and Rep. Tulsi Gabbard (D-HI) returned from Armenia with a better understanding of the challenges facing the region. Representatives Valadao, Pallone and Gabbard also visited Artsakh.

Reflecting on his past trips to Armenia and Artsakh, Pallone stated: “The progress of the country economically and politically is immediately evident. I visited Armenia several times in the 1990s and early 2000s. Great strides have been made in terms of economic development and improvements in the political system since then.” He continued: “Overall, this trip was a great opportunity for Armenia Caucus members to learn what we need to follow-up on when we’re back in Congress to improve US-Armenian relations with regards to trade, military cooperation, and many other areas.”

The four-day trip, from September 18-21, allowed for several face-to-face meetings with high-level government officials. The delegation met with Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan, who acknowledged the Congressional Delegation’s visit as a crucial step towards strengthening Armenia’s relations with the United States, and expressed his gratitude for



Rep. Frank Pallone, Jr. (D-NJ), Rep. Jackie Speier (D-CA), Rep. Anna Eshoo (D-CA), Rep. Jim Sensenbrenner, Jr. (R-WI), and Rep. Tulsi Gabbard (D-HI) join US Ambassador to Armenia Richard Mills, Jr. and Armenian Ambassador to the US Grigor Hovhannissian in a meeting with Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan

their efforts towards deepening bilateral relations in all areas.

They also met Prime Minister Karen Karapetyan, National Assembly Speaker Ara Babloyan, Foreign Minister Edward Nalbandian, Deputy Foreign Minister Ashot Hovakimian, and Karekin II, the Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians at Holy Echmiadzin.

Armenian Caucus Co-Chair Valadao said: “Living in the Central Valley, I have heard many stories and descriptions of Armenia from my neighbors and friends. Having the opportunity to experience the country they love firsthand was an unforgettable and enlightening experience. In addition to visiting historic landmarks and learning more about the Armenian culture, I met Armenian business leaders and government officials, examining the positive impact of the strong bond between our two nations.”

In addition to official meetings with the leadership of Armenia and Artsakh, the delegation met with Syrian

refugees who found shelter in Armenia, the business community, and beneficiaries of US-funded projects. They also went on special tours and visited American University of Armenia, Impact Hub Yerevan, Megerian Carpet Museum, and Armenia Fund’s rehabilitated music school.

“I saw first-hand the enormous contributions that the diaspora has made to build a bright future for Armenia. The hospitalities extended were second to none, whether it was a visit to the American University of Armenia, to wine-makers or music students, Armenia is on the move with a deep determination to continue building a just and democratic society. I left the country with a great sense of gratitude and pride,” Eshoo stated. “My recent visit to Armenia as it celebrated its 25th year of independence, was an extraordinary experience for me personally and as a Member of Congress. I believe the trip strengthened the relationship between the United States and Armenia, and it also deepened my understanding of the challenges the country has and how the United States can be a helpful partner,” she continued.

Sensenbrenner previously visited Armenia in 1991 and had the opportunity to observe the Armenian referendum, during which 95% of the population voted for independence from the Soviet Union. He witnessed the country during a crucial transition period as it took its first steps towards democracy, and was able to return many years later to see how the nation developed. The Congressional Delegation’s visit coincided with Armenia’s Independence Day on September 21.

“The need for cooperation between our two countries is ongoing, and this diplomatic mission was important to strengthen relationships and continue to keep lines of communication open. US support has helped bolster Armenian democratic institutions and civil society, and our two countries must continue to work together to advance these interests. The US and Armenia share strong bonds, as America is one of the largest destinations for the Armenian diaspora,” Sensenbrenner said. “These Armenians have gone on to contribute greatly to their new homes, as well as being influential in the continued struggle for recognition of the Armenian Genocide.”

At the Armenian Genocide Memorial Complex and Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute, the US legislators laid flowers at the eternal fire of the Armenian Genocide Monument and observed a moment of silence in tribute to the victims.

Gabbard noted: “One major issue that continues to be unresolved, is global recognition and condemnation of the Armenian Genocide. It is unconscionable that the United States government still has not formally recognized and condemned the Armenian Genocide. I stand with Armenians in America and around the world in condemning the Armenian Genocide, and I call on my colleagues to adopt House Resolution 220 so we never forget, or repeat, the suffering endured by the Armenian people.”

Armenian American Rep. Eshoo added: “Despite efforts beginning in 1975 to formally recognize the Armenian Genocide, Congress has yet to acknowledge what took place 102 years ago. The deliberate annihilation of 1.5 million Armenians, Assyrians, Greeks and other

minorities by the Ottoman Empire is a fact that must be acknowledged by the United States. Likewise, the issue of Nagorno-Karabakh must be resolved and the Minsk Group is important to this effort.”

Members of the delegation met with Artsakh President Bako Sahakyan and National Assembly Speaker Ashot Ghoulyan. During these meetings, they discussed the latest developments in the Artsakh peace process, the role of international organizations in preventing border incidents, as well as the efforts of the Armenian Caucus in strengthening US relations with Armenia and Artsakh. President Sahakyan honored Reps. Pallone, Speier, and Eshoo with Medals of Gratitude for their long-time and substantial contribution to the recognition of the Republic of Artsakh.

Ghoulyan emphasized the importance of US humanitarian assistance to Artsakh, and acknowledged the latest amendment introduced by Valadao to ensure continued US support to the de-mining process in Artsakh. Last month, Valadao spearheaded a bipartisan amendment along with House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Rep. Ed Royce (R-CA), House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence and Armenian Caucus Vice-Chair Adam Schiff (D-CA), Rep. Pallone, and Rep. Speier to ensure continued funding for de-mining projects in Artsakh.

Representatives Pallone and Gabbard traveled to Artsakh by helicopter with Assembly Co-Chair Anthony Barsamian, Artsakh Foreign Minister Karen Mirzoyan, Artsakh Representative to the US Robert Avetisyan, and Armenia Fund, Inc. President Maria Mehranian. The US Representatives addressed the Artsakh Republic National Assembly during one of its sessions. Pallone described Artsakh as a state with a legitimate government, which declared independence consistent with international law, and has built an effective political structure. Gabbard emphasized the importance of the United States’ active involvement in the peace process and expressed support for the legitimate right of the people of Artsakh to self-determination.

“The resilience and courage I witnessed in the people of the Nagorno-Karabakh region who remain in an ongoing conflict over their independence, further demonstrates our shared values of freedom, democracy, and self-determination. We must support a diplomatic resolution to this ongoing conflict, such as what has been proposed by the Minsk Group (made up of the United States, France, and Russia), to allow for the people of Nagorno-Karabakh to exercise their freedom and independence,” Gabbard said in a statement.

Valadao also traveled to Artsakh and met with The HALO Trust to learn more about mine clearance along the borders. Following his visit, he stated: “Families in Nagorno Karabakh live under the constant threat of landmine accidents and I am grateful for the efforts of The HALO Trust to make Nagorno Karabakh a more safe and secure region.” Rep. Valadao continued, “While their work is renown worldwide, I appreciated witnessing their work and learning more about their efforts and dedication firsthand.”

The six Members of Congress are part of an exchange with Armenian Members of Parliament who are expected in Washington, DC in the coming months.



Rep. Anna Eshoo (D-CA), Rep. Frank Pallone, Jr. (D-NJ), Rep. Jackie Speier (D-CA), Karekin II, Rep. Jim Sensenbrenner, Jr. (R-WI), and Rep. Tulsi Gabbard (D-HI)

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# Arts & Living

## Atom Egoyan Drawn to 'Hard Opera' Jenufa

By Mike Devlin

VICTORIA, Canada (*Times Colonist*) – Timothy Vernon is feeling especially anxious as Pacific Opera Victoria – the company he founded in 1979 – heads into its season-opening weekend.

"There's always fresh reason to be scared to death," he says with a chuckle.

In this case, it's the première for one of the company's most ambitious projects: "Jenufa," a somewhat harrowing opera by Czech composer Leos Janáček that is based on a century-old play, "Její Pastorkyna" (Her Stepdaughter), by Czech playwright Gabriela Preissová.

Though the challenging but celebrated opera (pronounced Yen-afa) is presented with English surtitles, the opera is sung entirely in Czech, with a speech rhythm practically unique to Janáček.

Vernon describes "Jenufa" as overwhelming, unusual and extremely intense. "This was a successful but controversial play in its day," Vernon said. "Janáček seized on it and decided to turn it into an opera. He didn't ask for a rhyming libretto or anything; he just took the dialogue. It's natural speech, which gives it a different flavor, as well. It's not rhyming couplets."

Vernon called upon a longtime friend to assist with the production – two-time Academy Award nominee, Atom Egoyan. The Victoria-raised director and screenwriter had wanted to collaborate with Pacific Opera for many years, but it wasn't until Vernon floated the idea of Egoyan directing the Janáček classic that he cleared his schedule to do so.

"Jenufa" marks the first time in 40 years that Egoyan has been involved with a theatrical production on his home turf. "I thought he would have much more important things to do," Vernon said with a laugh. "But he was always so strong and positive about the company, so I finally said: 'Look, Atom, what can we think of together that you might be interested in?' The minute I mentioned 'Jenufa,' he lit up."

The director, who earned two Academy Award nominations for his 1997 film "The Sweet Hereafter," arrived in Victoria three weeks ago to begin rehearsals. He has seen several Pacific Opera shows over the years, and is a big fan of Vernon, so he knew he would be in good hands when he arrived. "Everything is at a really high level," Egoyan said, from a rehearsal space in Victoria's Baumann Centre for Opera. "It's great to see the company thriving at a time when a lot of opera companies are not."

Egoyan's version of the 113-year-old opera is set in the present day. It was an easy switch to make, he said, as the deceptively simple plot remains relevant. "It's the examination of a relationship that is embedded with the ghosts of so many other relationships," Egoyan said. "But what has gone on behind the plot, why these characters are there, what their lives have been, who they have had kids with – the train wreck of their previous lives – comes back to haunt them in a really particular way. And it results in extreme action. At the time [of its release in 1904], it was controversial. And it remains so."

Pacific Opera Victoria staged another Janáček opera, "Cunning Little Vixen," seven years ago, with positive results, according to Vernon. Jenufa presents a far greater challenge, however.

"It's not something where we can expect the public to go: 'Oh, Jenufa! I've got to go.' But I'm hoping people respond to the work. It's very challenging – it's a hard opera. And it's hard for the singers, who had to learn Czech

see EGOYAN, page 16



A scene from "The Dentist – Again!"

## Yerevan Audiences See a New, Sensuous 'Dentist'

YEREVAN – On October 14, while the entire city of Yerevan was celebrating its 2799th anniversary, a festive program was offered to delighted theatre fans held at the intimate and convivial environment of the Henrik Malyan Theatre.

A standing ovation was given to a thoroughly enjoyable performance of a new version of Hagop Baronian's comedy, "The Eastern Dentist," renamed "The Dentist – Again!" edited and staged by Gerald Papasian, performed with verve and unerring timing by a brilliant young cast, and with a particularly ingenious addition at the end (devised by Papasian).

By Haig Utidjian

Papasian's new dramaturgical version, which had been tested several times in his career, especially in French to Parisian audiences, is even more daring, more physical and highly charged with sexual electricity, thanks to the new, young and stunning generation of actors in Armenia.

Papasian was invited by Narine Malyan, the theater's artistic director, who wished to add a play in Western Armenian (Baronian's original language) to her repertory.

As a dramaturg, Papasian manages to retain some 90 percent of Baronian's original dialogue, but the discreet editing and the substantial additions all work seamlessly, and not one moment is superfluous.

Under his guidance, the play becomes an outrageously naughty slapstick farce, a timeless classic, with no particular pretensions of serious social commentary. However, there is one instructional element which is the impeccable West-

see DENTIST, page 14



Actors training with G. Papasian

## Armenian Literature in Translation Promoted in Frankfurt

By Muriel Mirak-Weissbach

Special to the Mirror-Spectator

FRANKFURT – "World poetry is world reconciliation."

This line is from a poem by the German poet and philologist Friedrich Rückert (1788-1866), whose greatest gift to future generations was his immense translation work. By the end of his life, he knew 42 languages, and had dedicated many years to translating works of poetry and prose, especially from the Orient, into German.

Thanks to his efforts, the German literary public gained access to the treasures of the literature and philosophy of ancient China and India, the poetry in Arabic, Farsi and Turkish, to mention just a few. It was Rückert's deepest conviction that poetry – in the widest sense, literature – was the language through which peoples from vastly distant lands and civilizations could come to understand one another, and discover common beliefs, common sentiments and values, and share common aspirations.

Armenia has a proud and ancient tradition of translation. Thanks to the breakthrough achieved by Mesrob Mashtots (362-440), who invented the Armenian alphabet, the way was paved very early for a written literary culture in the native language. Beginning with Mesrob's own first translations of the holy scriptures, Armenians developed a rich culture of translations, from the classical world continuing into the modern era. Testifying to the importance Armenians place on translation, there is even a holiday dedicated to their art.



Deputy Minister of Culture Nerses Ter-Vardanyan presents the "Armenian Literature in Translation" Project at the Frankfurt Book Fair.

Therefore, when Deputy Minister of Culture Nerses Ter-Vardanyan presented the government's project "Armenian Literature in Translation" at the Frankfurt Book Fair on October 13, he was essentially announcing the intention to build on this cultural heritage.

In 2015, the year of the centennial of the Armenian Genocide, the ministry had launched such a program, which aimed in particular at promoting translations of works dealing with the subject of the Genocide. Now, as Ter-Vardanyan explained, the aim is broader; the idea is to support translations of works by Armenian authors into other languages, to make Armenian literature available to an international readership. Works of poetry and prose, as well as non-fiction studies dealing with topics related to Armenian history, politics and culture, works by Armenian authors both in Armenia and in the diaspora – all are candidates for support by the government program, whether they write in Armenian or Russian or any other language.

"The main aim," Ter-Vardanyan summed it up, "is to spread Armenian culture abroad, to acquaint an international reading public with our literary culture."





## ARTS &amp; LIVING

# Yerevan Audiences See a New, Sensuous ‘Dentist’

DENTIST, from page 13

ern Armenian efficiently mastered by the Eastern Armenian-speaking actors of the

*jashag*” (Class and good taste)!

If you happen to be in Yerevan, do not miss it. The theatre is located across the well-known

Vernissage open air shopping area. It will be next performed on November 7 and 9.

Papasian has been recently appointed as personal counselor for stage direction to the artistic director, Constantine Orbelian, at the State National Academic Opera Theatre of Yerevan, Armenia.

*(Haig Utidjian is a professional orchestral and opera conductor and choirmaster and musicologist in Prague. He maintains a busy schedule of concert engagements as well as lecturing interna-*

*tionally at conferences and as external pedagogue.)*



Anna Zaqaryan and Samvel Topalyan

Malyan theatre. For once, the language is not caricatured to the extent of being unrecognizable, as Baronian’s plays used to be played (and still are, alas!) on Armenia’s stages.

The minimalistic sets (only cushions), almost like a Japanese scenery, are designed by Viktoria Riedo Hovhannisyann (Switzerland/ Armenia), who is at her third collaboration with Papasian (Guitry’s “Let us dream” at the Sos Sargsyan state theatre and the showcase of Tchouhadjian’s operetta “Gariné” at the National Opera House of Yerevan prior to the new Baronian play), and wonderful, sensual costumes are created by Maro Parian, who has collaborated with Papasian in Los Angeles, especially on the famous “Sojourn at Ararat” (performed by Papasian and Nora Armani) for which, beside the actors, she also won a Drama-Logue award for best costumes.

Papasian’s musical selection is based on compositions by Charles Chaplin, with one exception: a lively drinking song by Robert Amirkhanyan.

One more thing that needs to be mentioned is the unexpected “false start” at the beginning of the show, with Mozart’s Don Giovanni overture during which the actors, in classical costumes, recite tragic verses and are interrupted by no less than Baronian himself, who asks them to forget high drama and play one of his comedies instead. This is an idea Papasian openly borrows from the late Varoujan Khedeshian’s 1974 Beirut production of “The Dentist.” He dedicates his performance to the late Lebanese-Armenian stage director’s memory in the program notes.

The cast includes such well-known film and theatre stars as Samvel Topalyan, brilliant and breathtakingly dazzling in the role of Taparnigos, the Dentist and Georgi Hovakimyan who offers us his old-timer’s comedic experience, as Thomas the cuckolded husband.

Other actors from the wonderful Malyan theatre company members include Vahagn Gasparyan, hilarious as a dexterous servant Nigo; Astghik Abajyan, horribly unattractive at the first then stunningly beautiful as the dentist’s wife, Martha; Levon Ghazaryan, crushed then dangerously fuming as Margos the patient; Alla Sahakyan (from the Hamazkain Sos Sargsyan State Theatre) gorgeous yet extremely funny as Margos’s wife, Anoush.

Exciting and very promising newcomers include Anna Zaqaryan, combining spicy feminine appeal with excellent comedic talent as the dentist’s mistress Sophy; Valentina Julhakyan, adorable child-woman and a true acrobat as the dentist’s daughter Yeranyag and Poghos Guyumjyan as Levon, a cherubic-looking and most awkward lover.

The production is positively effervescent with wit and replete with color. I was most impressed by concept and by execution alike. Above all, it was good fun! Very highly recommended... and to quote from one of the characters: the production is indeed redolent of “*tasagark yev*



## Erevan Choral Society Seeks Singers

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. – The Erevan Choral Society of the Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Cambridge (seen above) is welcoming voices in all sections in preparation for its Annual Christmas Holiday Concert on Sunday, December 10, in the Sanctuary of the Church. Rehearsals are held on Tuesday and Thursday evenings, 7:30 – 9:30 p.m. in Talanian Hall of the church under the direction of Konstantin Petrossian. If you would like to join this group, and for more information, contact Aida Diloyan at [adiloyan@verizon.net](mailto:adiloyan@verizon.net).



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## ARTS &amp; LIVING

# Tickets on Sale For 9th Annual AGBU Performing Artists in Concert

NEW YORK — AGBU New York Special Events Committee (NYSEC) presents the ninth annual AGBU Performing Artists in Concert which will take place on Friday, November 3 at 8 p.m. at the Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall

in New York. The concert traditionally benefits AGBU performing arts initiatives worldwide.

Dedicated to the 85th anniversary of the Union of Composers of Armenia, this year's concert showcases the talents of musicians

from Armenia, France, Lebanon, Switzerland and the United States. Along with young artists, the event will feature well-known musicians, tenor Berj Karazian, an Honored Artist of Armenia and a soloist of the Yerevan State

Opera Theater, and conductor and pianist Vahan Mardirossian, who will serve as the artistic director of the evening.

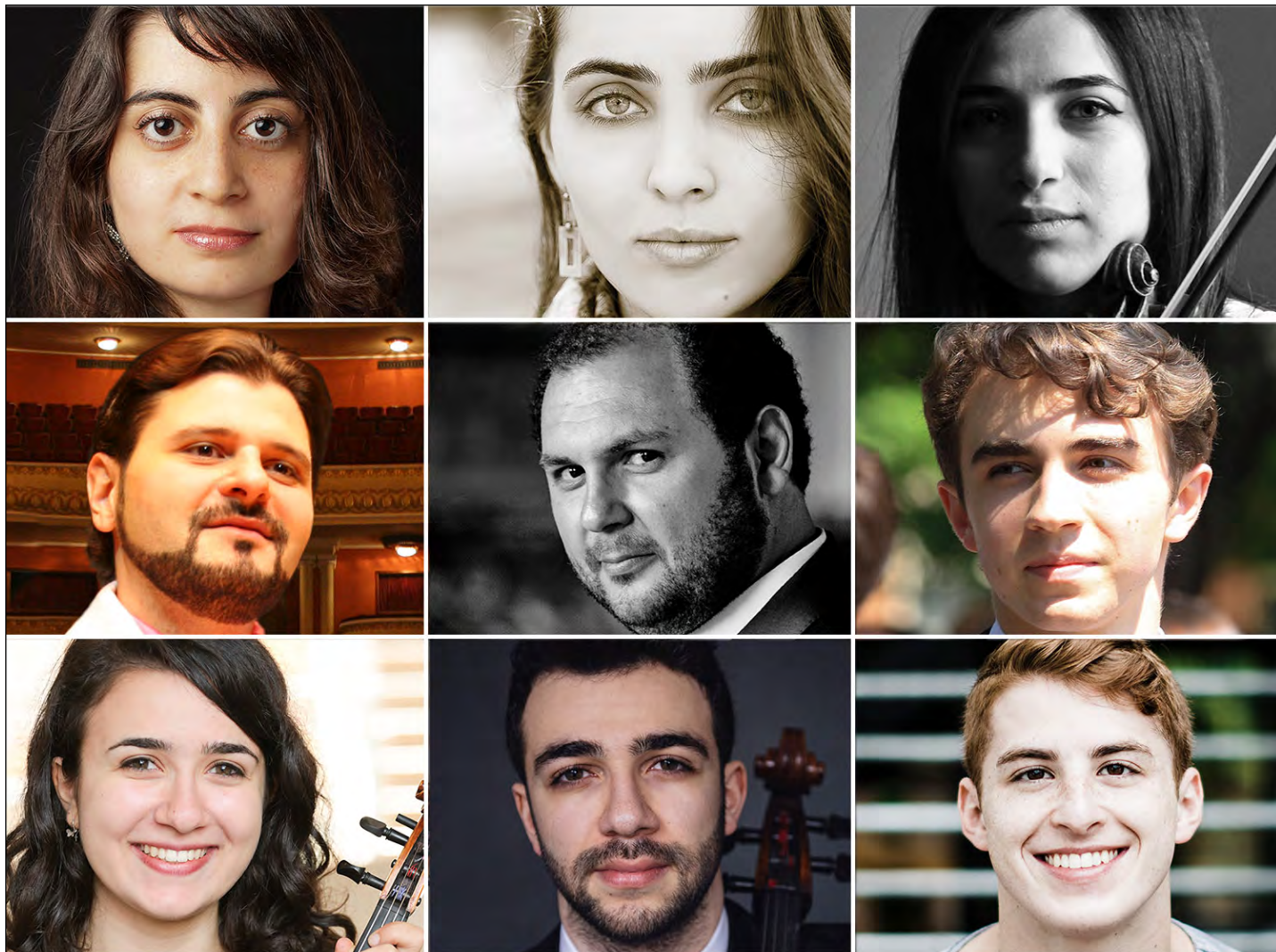
"I debuted at Carnegie Hall 12 years ago as a young pianist. I remember the simultaneous feelings of excitement and pride. I know very well the feelings of these young musicians before their debut in this iconic venue, which has become the beginning of amazing artistic adventures for many great musicians," said Mardirossian, the principal conductor of the Caen Symphony Orchestra (France) and music director of the National Chamber Orchestra of Armenia.

This year's ensemble is composed of AGBU Performing Arts Scholarship recipients, including Albert Newberry (piano); Tamar Eskenian (shvi/flute); Lucine Harutyunyan (violin); Ani Karapetyan (violin); Cara Pogossian (viola); Edvard Pogossian (cello) and Matthew Taylor (dancer). They are students or graduates of well-known educational institutions, such as Haute École de Musique in Lausanne, the Yerevan State Conservatory, London's Royal Academy of Music, Mannes School of Music in New York, the Curtis Institute of Music, the Juilliard School and the New York University Tisch School of the Arts. Throughout years, the AGBU Performing Arts Scholarship has supported training of many gifted Armenian artists at renown universities and conservatories.

The concert will include favorites of Western classical and Armenian music. Along with well-known compositions by Beethoven, Chopin, Dvorák, Schuman Tigranyan and Mirzoyan, guests will be treated to works by young Armenian composers and Waltz by Aram Satyan, president of the Union of Composers of Armenia, specially arranged for the chamber ensemble of the evening.

Tickets for the benefit concert are on sale now. To purchase tickets, visit [www.carnegiehall.org](http://www.carnegiehall.org).

To contribute to AGBU NYSEC initiatives, visit <https://donate.agbu.org/agbu-nysec-initiatives>.



Tamar Eskenian (shvi/flute); Lucine Harutyunyan (violin); Ani Karapetyan (violin); Berj Karazian (Tenor); Vartan Mardirossian (piano); Albert Newberry (piano); Cara Pogossian (viola); Edvard Pogossian (cello) and Matthew Taylor (dancer).



## Robert Fisk

Journalist, Middle East Correspondent for *The Independent* Seven-Time Recipient of British Press Awards' Reporter of the Year



## David Barsamian

Writer, Founder and Director of Alternative Radio



## Philip Terzian

Senior Editor at *The Weekly Standard* and Pulitzer Prize finalist



# The Armenian Mirror-Spectator

## SYMPOSIUM ON ARMENIAN ISSUES IN THE INTERNATIONAL PRESS

### Journalism and "Fake News": Armenian Genocide and Karabakh

Aram Arkun, Moderator

Journalism is changing at a rapid pace, including how the news is produced, distributed and consumed. Join *The Armenian Mirror-Spectator* along with a panel of internationally acclaimed journalists to discuss the issues facing journalism today and their impact on the Armenian case.

Thursday

# November 2, 2017

Wellesley College, Alumnae Hall Ballroom

106 Central St, Wellesley, MA

Doors Open at 6:00 P.M. • Program: 7:00 P.M.

Reception to Follow • Free Admission

## Amberin Zaman

Columnist for *Diken* and *Al Monitor*, former Turkey Correspondent for *The Economist*







## ARTS &amp; LIVING

# Atom Egoyan Drawn to 'Hard Opera' Jenufa

EGOYAN, from page 13

more or less by rote – nobody in the cast speaks it.”

“The Barber of Seville” this is not, but that is exactly what drew Egoyan to the project. As a filmmaker, he prefers to zero in on relationships, to shine a light on the minutiae of human interaction. Jenufa – so rich in its emotional to-and-fro that The Guardian news-

requires a significant amount of planning to avoid conflicts. It’s an approach that served him well with “Jenufa.”

“So much of my job as a director, in film or theatre, is to pre-visualize. I need to work with the designer a year in advance to have an idea and to present that and to work on it. I have to feel confident that when I come into rehearsals, that design is going to hold.

ADRIAN LAM, TIMES COLONIST PHOTO



Jenufa director Atom Egoyan stands in front of the costume designs for the opera at the Baumann Centre in Victoria. Egoyan is back in his hometown to direct Leos Janáček’s masterpiece for Pacific Opera Victoria.

paper called it a “bomb-proof” production – gives Egoyan plenty of opportunity.

The character of Kostelnicka, an influential member of the church and one of two strong female leads in the opera, represents a stern moral authority, but with a dark side that is revealed in the opera’s second act. The complex relationship between Kostelnicka and her step-daughter Jenufa is at the core of the piece, Egoyan said.

“There is something that happens in this opera that is so extreme. If I can make that character empathetic, and make you understand something about her, and the nature of that act, it’s powerful.”

The last time Egoyan was involved with a theatrical production in Victoria was in 1977, while he was a student at Mount Douglas Secondary. The student production of The End of Solomon Grundy for the Greater Victoria Drama Festival was a proud moment for Egoyan, who still has a plaque from the festival. (Egoyan said he also kept a “very nice” rejection letter from the Belfry Theatre, which turned down the opportunity to produce one of his first plays in the early 1980s.)

Egoyan screened his first short film as a director, Lust of a Eunuch, at the Greater Victoria Art Gallery in the summer of 1978. But theatre was his first love. “When I left Mount Doug, I thought that’s what I wanted to do – be a playwright. I wasn’t really educated in film.”

Success as a filmmaker would come first for Egoyan, but he slowly returned to theatre and opera. In 1996, he directed a Toronto production of the Canadian Opera Company’s Salome, which led to a succession of operatic projects, from Wagner’s “Die Walküre” to productions for South Carolina’s Spoleto Festival, one of the most enduring and acclaimed performing arts festivals in the world.

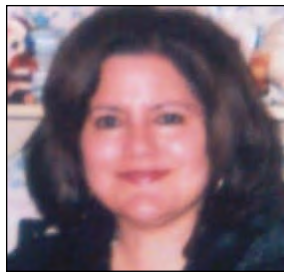
In 2013, Egoyan’s two worlds – the stage and the screen – accidentally collided. He was at the Spoleto Festival in 2013 showcasing his opera Feng Yi Ting when the shooting schedule for his film “Devil’s Knot” was unexpectedly moved up to accommodate the pregnancy of its star, Reese Witherspoon. Egoyan spent weeks commuting between South Carolina and Atlanta to see both projects through, an experience he isn’t eager to repeat.

“It just knocked me out. I thought: ‘This can’t happen again.’”

Egoyan’s schedule isn’t as tight now, but he always has several projects on the go, which

“I’m coming from a very low-budget tradition. If I don’t have a plan, I’m sunk.”

“Jenufa” runs through October 22 at the Royal Theatre.



## Recipe Corner

by Christine Vartanian

### Rice Pudding

#### INGREDIENTS

Rice Pudding  
1 quart whole milk  
1/2 cup white rice, rinsed  
1/2 cup sugar  
1/2 teaspoon vanilla  
Dash of sea or Kosher salt  
Cinnamon, ground ginger, lemon zest  
Fresh whipped cream, slivered almonds

#### PREPARATION:

Place the milk, rice, sugar, vanilla and salt in a large pan, stir, and bring to a slow boil. Lower heat and cook for 25-30 minutes, stirring until the rice is cooked and pudding thickens.

Remove pan from the heat and cool slightly. Transfer to a serving bowl and serve warm or cold sprinkled with cinnamon, ground ginger, or fresh lemon zest. Garnish with fresh whipped cream and slivered almonds, if desired.

Serves 6.

\*Christine's recipes have been published in the *Fresno Bee* newspaper, *Sunset* magazine, *Cooking Light* magazine, and at <http://www.thearmeniankitchen.com/>



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TCA MHER MEGERDCHIAN THEATRICAL GROUP

# THE UNEXPECTED GUEST

by Agatha Christie

- SAVE THE DATE -  
OCTOBER 28 & 29





## ARTS &amp; LIVING

## C A L E N D A R

## CALIFORNIA

**NOVEMBER 14 — Tuesday, Forced into Genocide, Memoirs of an Armenian Soldier in the Ottoman Turkish Army** by Yervant Alexanian, presented by his daughter, Adrienne G. Alexanian. She has spent years preparing her father's manuscript for publication. She is an educator and recipient of the Ellis Island Medal of Honor. Introduction by Sergio La Porta, Foreword by Israel W. Charny. Presented by the Armenian Studies Program, Fresno State, AGBU Greater Fresno Area and the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research. Books will be available for purchase. Book signing during reception. 7:30 p.m., Fresno State University Business Center, Room 191, 5245 N. Backer Ave., Fresno.

**NOVEMBER 15 — A presentation of Forced into Genocide, Memoirs of an Armenian Soldier** in the Ottoman Turkish Army by Yervant Alexanian, presented by his daughter, Adrienne G. Alexanian. She has spent years preparing her father's manuscript for publication. She is an educator and recipient of the Ellis Island Medal of Honor. Introduction by Sergio La Porta, Foreword by Israel W. Charny. Wednesday, St. Leon Armenian Cathedral, 3325 North Glenoaks Blvd, Burbank. Presented by the Ladies Auxiliary of the Western Diocese. AGBU, Armenian International Women's Association, Ararat-Eskijian Museum, National Association for Armenian Studies and Research, Knights of Vartan. Book signing during reception. 7:30 p.m. RSVP (310)277-4490.

**NOVEMBER 18 — Join the Armenian EyeCare Project for its 25th Anniversary Gala** at 6:30pm at the Balboa Bay Club in Newport Beach. The organization will honor Founder Dr. Roger Ohanesian for 25 years of dedicated service to Armenia in the field of eye care. The fun-filled evening includes an authentic Armenian dinner, roving entertainers, a silent & live auction, Tom Bozgian & his band and Artur's Armenian Dance Troupe. To RSVP or for more information, call 949-933-4069, email [leslie@eyecare-project.com](mailto:leslie@eyecare-project.com) or visit [eyecareproject.com/25th-anniversary-gala/](http://eyecareproject.com/25th-anniversary-gala/)

## MASSACHUSETTS

**OCTOBER 22 — Annual Banquet Celebrating the 56th Anniversary of Holy Trinity Armenian Church** of Greater Boston and Honoring Aram Hintlian, as Parishioner of the Year, Sunday, 12:15 p.m., Charles and Nevart Talanian Cultural Hall, 145 Brattle Street, Cambridge. During the Banquet, recognition will also be given to outgoing Parish Council member Jack Ekchian. Dinner donation is \$40; children under 12, \$20. Seating is by advance paid reservation only with a RSVP deadline of October 18. For further information, call the Holy Trinity Church Office, 617.354.0632, or log onto <http://www.htaac.org/calendar/event/464/>

**OCTOBER 26 — Annual Fall Dinner and Drawing sponsored by the Friends of Holy Trinity 1000 Club**, 6:30 p.m., Charles and Nevart Talanian Cultural Hall, Holy Trinity Armenian Church, 145 Brattle St., Cambridge. All are invited, and you don't have to be a member of the 1000 Club to join us for a delicious losh kebab and pilaf dinner; \$9.99 per person; tickets on sale at the door. Regular monthly raffle drawing at 8 p.m., plus five \$25 door prizes. "One-time" numbers will be sold on the night of dinner; special offer: purchase five "one-time" numbers for \$20, save \$5. For further info, contact the Holy Trinity Church office, 617.354.0632, or email [office@htaac.org](mailto:office@htaac.org).

**NOVEMBER 2 — Thursday: Symposium on Armenian Issues in the International Press. "Journalism and "Fake News": The Armenian Genocide and Karabakh.** Journalism is changing at a rapid pace. Join the *Armenian Mirror-Spectator* along with Robert Fisk from Beirut, Lebanon, David Barsamian, Philip Terzian and Amberin Zaman to discuss the issues facing journalism today and their impact on the Armenian Case. Wellesley College, Alumnae Hall Ballroom, 106 Central Street, Wellesley. Doors open at 6:00 pm, Program starts 7:00 pm. Reception to follow, free admission.

**NOVEMBER 3 - 85th Anniversary Benefit Gala of the Armenian Mirror-Spectator**, the first English-language Armenian newspaper in the United States. Boston Marriott Hotel, 2345 Commonwealth Ave. Newton, MA. Reception, Meet the Awardees 6:30 PM; Dinner and Program, 7:30 PM. 2017 Lifetime Achievement Award to Robert Fisk, Journalist, Middle East correspondent for *The Independent* of London based in Beirut, seven time recipient of British Press Awards' Reporter of the Year; 2017 Excellence Awards to David Barsamian, founder and director of Alternative



**On November 2, the Armenian Mirror-Spectator will present a symposium titled "Journalism and 'Fake News': The Armenian Genocide and Karabakh," featuring Robert Fisk, David Barsamian, Amberin Zaman and Philip Terzian, at 7 p.m., Wellesley College Alumnae Hall Ballroom, 106 Central St., Wellesley. A reception will follow the program. Free and open to the public.**

Radio, and Amberin Zaman, columnist for Diken and Al Monitor, former Turkey correspondent for *The Economist*. Mistress of Ceremonies Anaide Nahikian, Leader, Advanced Training Program at Harvard Humanitarian Initiative, Entertainment, 12 Musicians of Black Sea Salsa. For Reservations please call Aram Arkun (917) 743-9005 (cell), Email: [tcadirector@aol.com](mailto:tcadirector@aol.com).

**NOVEMBER 3-4 — 61st annual St. Stephen's Armenian Apostolic Church Bazaar.** Friday and Saturday. Come with family and friends for delicious chicken, beef and losh kebab, kuftah and kheyima dinners, pastries and specialty gourmet items. Handmade arts and crafts, White Elephant table and ever popular silent and live auction items. Visit the church's website, [www.soorstepanors.org](http://www.soorstepanors.org) for menus, pastry and gourmet items. Armenian Cultural and Educational Center, 47 Nichols Ave., Watertown. Admission is free.

**NOVEMBER 3 and 4 — Annual Autumnfest Bazaar sponsored by the Armenian Church at Hye Pointe**, at our new location 1280 Boston Road, (Rte 125) Bradford MA, Friday 12 — 7 pm and Saturday 12 — 7 pm. Lamb, Losh, Chicken Kebab and Kheyima. Dinners served all day. Pastry table, Armenian cuisine, gift baskets, raffles for cash and prizes. For more info, visit [www.hypointearmenianchurch.org](http://www.hypointearmenianchurch.org) or call (978) 372-9227.

**NOVEMBER 10 — Benefit dinner for Armenia Tree Project's 100th anniversary living memorial** to General Dro and the Battle of Bash Aparan, Friday, presented by ATP and the Kanayan Family. Armenian American Social Club, Watertown. 7:30 p.m. \$75 per person. Call (617) 926-8733 or [info@armeniatree.org](mailto:info@armeniatree.org) to reserve your seat.

**NOVEMBER 12 — From Armenia to Boston for the first time. Beloved singer RUBEN SASUNCI**, live in concert with the Sayat Nova Dance Company of Boston (SNDC). Sunday, at 4 p.m. at Shaw Auditorium - Watertown High School, 50 Columbia St. Tickets: \$45 and \$35 to be reserved from front to back, in the order calls are received. For tickets and info, please call Mike Demirchian (617) 240-8266 or Vrej Ashjian at (339) 222-3429.

**NOVEMBER 18 — The Armenian Women's Welfare Association's 41st Annual Luncheon/Auction** will be held at the Oakley Country Club, 410 Belmont Street, Watertown on Saturday, at 11 a.m. Ticket price is \$75. Proceeds to benefit the mission of the AWWA, which include the Armenian Nursing & Rehabilitation Center in Jamaica Plain and the Hanganak NGO Clinic in Stepanakert, N-K, Armenia. For more information about this event, please call Stephanie Ciccolo at 617-522-2600.

**NOVEMBER 19 — The Westin Waltham Boston Hotel, Project SAVE will celebrate** with a Thanks Giving brunch event to honor Founder Ruth Thomasian's vision and 42 years of service and to acknowledge the many volunteers, photo donors and supporters who have contributed to Project SAVE. An event for the community to

come together and celebrate as we look ahead to the future. For more information call 617-923-4542 or email: [archives@projectsave.org](mailto:archives@projectsave.org).

**DECEMBER 17 — Candlelit Labyrinth Peace Walk, Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway**, Boston, 4:30 — 6 pm. Quiet holiday reflection and celebration. Tie a ribbon with your wish on the Wishing Tree. Hot Chocolate & Cookies, hosted by The Bostonian Hotel Boston All are invited. RSVP appreciated, please email [hello@ArmenianHeritagePark.org](mailto:hello@ArmenianHeritagePark.org)

## MICHIGAN

**DECEMBER 2 — Nor Keghi Kef Time III Pagharch Dinner and Dance Fundraiser for Nor Keghi School in Armenia**, 6:30 p.m. St. John Armenian Church Hall, Southfield. Continuous music by an assembly of Detroit's All-Star Armenian Musicians will again entertain attendees to the third "Pagharch" feast that residents of the historic Armenian district dined on for centuries at the start of the winter season in mountainous Keghi district. The government of Armenia on Feb. 1962 renamed the region of Ashdarag to Nor Keghi to honor the history of Kaghizees of historic Western Armenia. Funds raised will help in development of the school's multi-purpose auditorium.

## NEW JERSEY

**NOVEMBER 18 — Save the date. Gala banquet celebrating the 70th anniversary of the Tekeyan Cultural Association.** At the Terrace at Biagios. 299 Paramus Road, Paramus. Featuring Elie Berberian and his band from Montreal.

## NEW YORK

**NOVEMBER 16 — Join Armenia Tree Project and Paros Foundation** for a fundraiser to support kitchen renovations, beautification and environmental education at the school in Rind, Vayots Dzor. Featuring live performance by singer/songwriter Hooshere and silent auction featuring fine art and luxury gift items. Almayass Restaurant, 24 E 21st Street, New York. 7:00 pm to 10:00 pm. Donation: \$100 in advance, \$125 at door. For more information, [info@armeniatree.org](mailto:info@armeniatree.org).

## NEVADA

**NOVEMBER 10-12 — Association of Armenian Church Choirs**, 2017 Convention & Assembly, Las Vegas. Saint Geragos Armenian Apostolic Church, Contact: website: [www.aaccwd.com](http://www.aaccwd.com) • email: [events@aaccwd.com](mailto:events@aaccwd.com). The AACCWD is an organization of the Western Diocese of the Armenian Church of North America.

## RHODE ISLAND

**SEPTEMBER 13, 2017-MARCH 14, 2018 — Armenian Film Festival "The Nation's Past & Present"** Sponsored by Cultural Committee of the Sts. Sahag & Mesrob Armenian Church, in Hanoian Hall, 70 Jefferson Street, Providence. Wednesday, October 11, , at 7 pm, "Garni, Geghard" Wednesday, November 15, 2017, at 7 pm, "Armenia" (Yerevan, Echmiadzin, Khor Virap, Zvartnots, Sevan, Dilijan, Lori) Wednesday, January, 24, at 7 pm "Country of Armenian Kings - 2" (Ani, Kars, Edesia, Musaler) Wednesday, February, 21, at 7 pm, "Country of Armenian Kings - 3" (Cilicia, Kharbert, Adana, Zeytoun) Wednesday, March, 14, 2018, at 7 pm. All presented in English, donation of \$10.

**OCTOBER 22 — The Cultural Committee of Sts. Sahag and Mesrob Armenian Church & The Rhode Island Orthodox Clergy Fellowship** presents - Spiritual Music Festival, 6:00 p.m., Sanctuary of Sts. Sahag & Mesrob Armenian Church, 70 Jefferson Street, Providence.

**NOVEMBER 4, 5 — Sts. Sahag & Mesrob Armenian Church, Annual Food Fair & Bazaar. Saturday**, 11:30 a.m.-10 p.m., Sunday, noon — 6 p.m. Shish Kebab, Kufta, Kheyima, Choreg, Yalanchi, Losh Kebab, Armenian Pastries, midia, Vosbov Kheyima, etc. Daily Raffle, Silent Auction Kids activities & Balloon Man, and much more. Cash, Check, Visa & Mastercard accepted. Call 401-272-7712 for further info.

*Calendar items are free. Entries should not be longer than 5 lines. Listings should include contact information. Items will be edited to fit the space, if need be. A photo may be sent with the listing. Items should be sent no later than Mondays at noon.*





## COMMENTARY

## COMMENTARY

# Armenia's Dilemmas and Opportunities

By Edmond Y. Azadian

Armenia once again is caught in a tug-of-war between East and West. In 2013, after long negotiations with the European Union, Armenia's President Serzh Sargsyan abruptly interrupted the talks with the EU and made an about face to sign an agreement with the Moscow-led Eurasian Economic Union.

To this day, there has not been an official explanation why the president took the personal decision to lead the country in another direction. But the reasons are obvious: arm twisting from Moscow.

The EU did not take any retaliatory actions and instead continued its support for Armenia and its efforts to woo Armenia and other countries in the Russian sphere of influence. Moscow carried away with its regional and global interests, did not necessarily tend to Armenia's economic needs, leaving the door open for an opportunity to once again take its chances with the West.

The Eurasia.net blog notes: "To counter disenchantment with the pact, Russian media has added its voice to the Kremlin's efforts. Moscow state-financed Sputnik news service this week described the EEU as a chance, courtesy of Russia, for Armenia to restore Soviet-era prosperity."

This initiative comes on the eve of Armenia's rapprochement with the West. Indeed, next month President Sargsyan will attend an EU summit in Brussels, joined by Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine.

This is part of the comprehensive global plan by the West to isolate Russia. Moscow may bite the bullet and refrain from punishing Armenia which is not the only "culprit" in its temptation to embrace the West.

response to a question about whether it is possible for Azerbaijan to join the EEU, Sergey Glazyev, President Putin's advisor on Eurasian integration affairs, said, that the final decision to integrate Azerbaijan in the union is open to all participants but in this case the decision depends on Armenia, which can use its right to veto."

Moscow believes that Azerbaijan's participation in the EEU will contribute to regional stability and economic progress. Of course, Armenia will be one of the beneficiaries of the region's economic development but what will be the price for its abstention from using its veto? Moscow's drive to integrate Azerbaijan into the EEU has resonated positively in the Armenian parliament, when the ruling Republican Party members argued that "If Azerbaijan becomes a member of EEU, the possibility of resumption of hostilities will be limited."

President Ilham Aliyev of Azerbaijan has long abandoned hope that the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe framework may deliver the settlement of the Karabakh conflict and may find a new opportunity to join the EU. But from all indications, there is no rush on the part of Baku to make the move. Indeed, the summit between the presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan last Monday, October 16, in Geneva, has not yielded many results. The joint communique issued by the foreign ministers of the two countries states that "The meeting took place in a constructive atmosphere. The co-chairs expressed their satisfaction with these direct talks, which took place after a long interval. ... As a next step, the co-chairs will organize working sessions with the ministers in the near future."

Only President Sargsyan made a brief and cautious statement, while the Azeri side has kept silent. Of course, for Azerbaijan, it makes strategic sense to continue its war of attrition, to wait out Armenia's depopulation rather than engage in a costly war.

One other element which contributes to Armenia's assertive



A draft resolution in Armenia's Parliament to dissociate the country from the EEU failed in its early stages, most probably out of fear of reprisal from Russia.

This time around, Armenia's association with the EU has a compromise clause, which may calm worries in the Kremlin, in the meantime offering Armenia to play a meaningful role between the two blocs. The agreement, which is euphemistically called an "association agreement light," contains the original tenets on political reform and is meant to make sure EU and Armenia share democratic values, if not an economy. A special provision allows Armenia to cooperate with the EU, while EEU rules for Armenia will still apply.

Thus, Russia has loosened Armenia's leash while making sure it does not stray too far. Armenia's cautious assertiveness has yielded other dividends as well, with Moscow loaning an additional \$100 million for buying modern military hardware.

In addition to its membership in the EEU, Armenia is also a partner with Russia in the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) military pact, where other members, particularly Belarus and Kazakhstan, trample on Armenia's interests with impunity. Armenia's Parliament Vice Speaker Eduard Sharmazanov finally took a stand by admonishing his Belarussian counterpart, Boleslav Pirshtuk, by stating during an Interparliamentary Cooperation Commission: "Representatives of the CSTO member states should support each other in the international platforms and not make statements that do not emanate from the CSTO's official position."

While Russia will not tolerate its strategic allies stray far, in the meantime, it will try to entice another former Soviet republic to join the EEU in a major regional strategy, which will also requires Azerbaijan's integration into that union. Recently, in

stand is the Chinese factor. China has been very generous toward Armenia, despite its miniscule size. People may wonder the reason behind this largess. But viewed through the prism of China's global ambitions, the relationship may make more sense.

It is not only the West which has been applying a containment policy towards Russia. China is equally weary of Russia's future course, although today their votes may coincide at the UN Security Council sessions. Beijing has been engaged in an ambitious global economic development plan to revive the ancient Silk Road, where Armenia has been featured since days of Xenophon. China's Silk Road bypasses Russian territory to go through Central Asian republics, all the way to Europe. Beijing claims the plan is based on a win-win principle and has been implementing it without political dogmatism, as the former Soviet Union and the US have been doing.

While China is basing its plans on economic development, Turkey has a counter claim and expansion designs on the same territories. Turkey's pan-Turkic plan includes the Koran, madrasas, Islamic extremism and linguistic unity against China's economic offerings and those two currants will be on a collision course. Armenia is one of the beneficiaries of these counter currents.

Turkey also irks China by fanning the flames of irredentism among the restive Uyghur population in the Xinjiang Province. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has also accused China's leaders of committing "genocide" against the Uyghurs in the region.

Thus, economic and military competition between the West and Russia as well as China's rise as a modern-day superpower are colliding in the Caucasus region, allowing some space for Armenia to maneuver its foreign policy.

# Mirror Spectator



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## COMMENTARY



## My Turn

By Harut Sassounian

## Unique High School Teacher Who Changed My Life

I would like to dedicate this article to the sad occasion of the passing last month of my dear high school teacher, Olivia Balian, who changed my life with a noble gesture.

The year was 1968. I was a student at the Sophia Hagopian Armenian High School in Beirut, Lebanon.

When the time came to register as a 10th-grade student, I went to the principal's office and told the staff that my parents could not pay the tuition. Although I was the top student in my class, I was sent home due to lack of money. This was a heart-breaking experience for a young man, as I loved being in school and desperately wanted to continue my education.

I went home and spent my day at the tire repair shop of my father who could barely earn enough to pay the tuition of my two other siblings. A very old man and respected member of the Ramgavar Party saw me in the shop and wondered why I was not in school. I told him I was sent home due to lack of funding. He offered to help by calling the Principal of the AGBU Hovaguimian-Manougian High School and asking him to register me tuition free. Even though the school was far away from my home, I could not pass the opportunity to continue my education. I took a city bus to downtown Beirut and went to the principal's office. Being embarrassed to tell

him that I was supposed to get free tuition, I told the principal that arrangements were made for me to study at a discounted tuition. I was stunned when the principal screamed at me that there was no such thing as a discounted tuition. I immediately turned around and rushed back to my father's tire shop.

On the third day, one of my classmates from Sophia Hagopian High School came to my father's shop to inform me that the principal had sent him to tell me that I should come back to school and register. When I arrived at my school, I told the registrar that I could not pay the tuition. She informed me that my tuition was fully paid and to go and join my classmates. I asked the registrar to tell me who paid for my tuition so I can thank that wonderful individual. I was told that the benefactor wanted to remain anonymous.

So I went to my classroom, but kept wondering who was the person or organization that gave me the golden opportunity to continue my education. I went back to the principal's office after classes and begged the registrar to disclose the name of the benefactor. Upon my insistence, she reluctantly informed me that the benefactor was none other than my English teacher, Olivia Balian, on condition that I do not go and thank her and risk the registrar getting fired for breaking her confidentiality. I promised that I would not talk to her. The registrar also told me that when the school year started and she noticed that my classroom desk was unoccupied, she inquired why I was not in school. She was told that my parents could not pay the tuition. She then told the Principal to deduct my tuition from her salary.

The whole year I sat in Ms. Balian's class, thinking about her magnanimous gesture, but unable to express my appreciation to her. A year later, I came to the United States and eventually received two master's degrees, one from Columbia University in New York in international affairs and the second an MBA from Pepperdine University in Los Angeles.

But I never forgot the kindness and generosity of Ms.

Balian, who paid for my tuition from her meager salary. Almost 40 years later, I returned to Beirut for the first time, to donate a total of \$4.5 million from Kirk Kerkorian's Lincy Foundation to all 28 Armenian schools in the country. Among the schools I visited was my former High School. While handing the principal the donation of several hundred thousand dollars, I advised him never to keep any student away from the school for lack of money, because one never knows what that student will become in the future if he had continued his education. He could be a brilliant doctor, a good diplomat, the principal of a school, a church leader or someone who ends up working for a billionaire benefactor who would make a major donation to the school.

While in Lebanon, I very much wanted to see Ms. Balian and thank her for her generosity so many years later. She had retired from teaching long ago and lived in an apartment by herself outside Beirut. I arranged for my former classmates and the Archbishop of Lebanon to take me to her place. She was so thrilled to see me as I was. We had a very warm visit. Sitting next to her, I was finally able to thank her, but she did not want to hear about it and humbly changed the subject. I offered to assist her anyway possible, including financial help or special recognition by the community for her many decades of service to the education of young Armenians. She declined all offers.

I left her apartment with much contentment because I was able to finally acknowledge her generosity after all these years.

While this column is about Ms. Olivia Balian, it is also a testimony that one person can make a great difference in the lives of others. Without her timely assistance, giving me the unique opportunity to study English, I probably would have never come to the United States and would not have ended up as the publisher of an English-language newspaper, the California Courier. I probably would have spent the rest of my life repairing tires at my father's shop in Beirut.

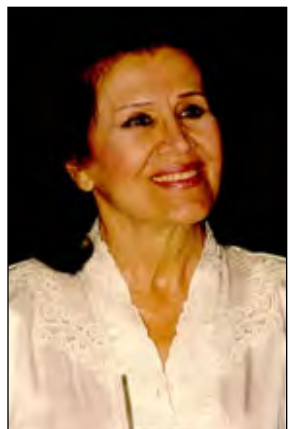
# Washington Genocide Museum Shame Continues

MUSEUM, from page 1

an Armenian Genocide museum." She made a pledge of three million dollars in 1996, inspired by Armenian Assembly cofounder and longtime chairman of its board of trustees Hrair Hovnanian. Hovnanian had donated approximately 1.6 million dollars in April 1996 to establish the Armenian National Institute.

Then, Anoush said, "From 1996 to 2000, I was going to Washington DC every month, sometimes twice a month, in search of the proper building." By late 1999, the Assembly had identified the National Bank of Washington as a possible museum site. It was in the vicinity of the White House. When she saw it in 2000, Anoush recalled, "I was very impressed. I said I have a small amount I will bring to you, and I expect you to raise funds. But it did not happen that way."

She increased her pledge to 3.5 million dollars to buy this property, the cost of which was 7.25 million dollars, but did not have the funds right away. The remaining money, along with a temporary loan for Mathevosian's share, was provided by Gerald L. Cafesjian and his foundation.



Anoush Mathevosian

Cafesjian independently had become interested in a memorial to the Genocide, and joined the Assembly as a trustee in 1998. After the closing, on February 28, 2000, Anoush Mathevosian wrote a letter to the Assembly restating the purpose of her pledge, which, she wrote "is to foster the development of an Armenian Genocide Museum." She added, "To be certain that future generations remain true to the intent of our donations, it should be clear that no changes will be made to the purpose and usage of the Museum; that no mortgages are taken against the property and that the Museum's perpetuation is not jeopardized as such or encumbered in any way; and that there will be no subsequent changes to the name of the museum." She concluded, "I am making this donation in

memory of my parents and would like the Armenian Genocide Museum to be dedicated likewise."

Trusting Hovnanian and the Assembly, Mathevosian did not initially get any legally binding agreement in writing concerning her donation. This was the finding of the US District Court for the District of Columbia on January 26, 2011 (Memorandum Opinion, Civil Action Nos. 07-1259, 08-255, 08-1254 (CKK)).

Meanwhile, to create the museum, a new body, called the Armenian Genocide Museum and Memorial, Inc. (AGMM), was formed in October 2003 with Anoush as one of the four trustees. As part of its creation, a transfer agreement required all assets connected to the future museum to be transferred by the Assembly to AGMM, and a grant agreement was signed on November 1, 2003 by Cafesjian, Hovnanian and Peter Vosbikian (then chairman of the Assembly's board of directors). It insured Mathevosian had at least one vote on the new AGMM board of directors. However, the grant agreement also included a reversion clause added by Cafesjian. It stated that the bank, with 4 adjacent properties obtained and donated by Cafesjian by 2003 and held by AGMM for the museum, would be given to the Cafesjian Family Foundation (CFF) if the museum had not been built by December 31, 2010. This was to become the legal means for the museum property to be diverted from its initial purported purpose.

She endured serious health difficulties from 2003 to 2005, including a stroke, heart attack, and a collapsed lung, and therefore she was unable to directly participate in AGMM board meetings. She did appoint a representative.

Ostensibly, increasingly bitter disputes between the Armenian Assembly led by Hovnanian, and Cafesjian and CFF, hindered collaborative work in AGMM toward the creation of a museum, until the parties ended up in a whirlwind of suits and countersuits. This and lack of finances meant no museum was created by the December 31, 2010 deadline, so that Cafesjian and CFF legally were able to regain control of the properties.

There is quite a bit of speculation on the causes of this situation, starting from personality differences and different approaches to the scale and contents of the museum, and even extending so far as claims that interested outside parties (i.e. Turkey and the US government) worked to make the museum fail. There is no formal evidence publicly presented concerning the latter.

An Assembly representative declared for the record the following: "Cafesjian saw the price of the real estate went up a lot. He moved from efforts to complete the museum to efforts to stall completion, so that the reversionary interest would kick in. After his death, the properties



The National Bank of Washington, which had been purchased as the site of an Armenian Genocide museum in Washington DC, but was sold for commercial use in April 2017

were sold for an enormous profit." Several attempts by the *Mirror* to contact the Cafesjian Family Foundation via email and telephone about the museum were unsuccessful.

Whatever the causes, the result was clear. Cafesjian and CFF legally won the right to sell the bank and adjacent properties, and indeed they sold the bank and three of the adjacent parcels for \$57 million on April 4, 2017, thus making it impossible to use the site for a museum. In her January 26, 2011 Memorandum Opinion, District Court Judge Colleen Kollar-Kotelly said, "While the Court hopes that the Properties can be used for that purpose [an Armenian Genocide museum], the Court recognizes that CFF is not legally obligated to use the Properties to build a museum..."

US Court of Appeals District of Columbia Circuit Judge Wilkins in July 2014, after affirming

the District Court's decision, concluded, "More than seven years and millions of dollars of legal fees later, much of the parties' work to achieve their dream of a museum appears to have been for naught, which is regrettable." The Court of Appeals rejected the argument that the District Court wrongfully hid the joint donation of a Stanislav Libensky glass art piece to the Metropolitan Museum of Art by the judge and Cafesjian instead of the judge recusing herself for conflict of interest. Mathevosian declared that this is indication of corruption.

The Cafesjian heirs and CFF have not issued any statement since the sale of the bank and adjacent properties concerning the use of the profit. There appears to be no indication that they will pursue the cause of building a Genocide museum with the profits from property initially purchased for that purpose.

The Armenian Assembly declares that it is still pursuing that goal, despite the setbacks of the lawsuits and large legal expenditures against Cafesjian. The Assembly, with the Armenian National Institute and AGMM, has created an online museum, and according to a spokesman, "is searching for real estate now and actively intends to create a museum." Furthermore, Hrair Hovnanian and his family foundation have the resources to one day fund such a museum.

Anoush Mathevosian spent all of her money on Armenian causes. In 1997, she funded Camp Siranoush in Armenia for children whose parents died in the Karabakh war. In 2002, she built the Mathevosian School in Vanadzor. She started the Mathevosian Scholarship through the Fund for Armenian Relief (FAR), and has supported FAR in many ways, as in Gyumri. She also donated to the Armenian-American Cultural Association and its project in Armenia, the Armenian American Wellness Center. She said, "I neglected myself but got the pleasure of helping people."

Thus, at her advanced age, she has no money left to directly donate for her dream of a museum, which at the moment is far from realization. Theoretically, she still is entitled to sue the Cafesjian Foundation in court for legal redress for her share paid to purchase the bank property, but either a donor would have to support such a suit, or a law firm would have to do it pro bono. She said, "I want to make sure that the Genocide not be forgotten." If a lawyer sues on her behalf, she promises to give all the proceeds to build a museum. However, so far, no suitable lawyer has offered his services.





# Stellar Panel of Journalists at November 2 *Mirror-Spectator* Symposium

PANEL, from page 1

fellow at the Hoover Institution at Stanford, traveling fellow of the American Journalism Foundation, and is a member of the American Council on Germany. He is a contributor to the *Wall Street Journal*, *Commentary*, the *New Criterion*, the *Times Literary Supplement*, *Sewanee Review* and other publications.

He has appeared on CNN, Fox News, and C-SPAN. He is the author of *Architects of Power: Roosevelt, Eisenhower and the American Century* (2010), and is married and the father of two children.

Zaman is a columnist for Al-Monitor's Turkey Pulse and has covered Turkey, the Kurds and Armenia for the *Washington Post*, the *Daily Telegraph*, the *Los Angeles Times* and the Voice of America. She served as *The Economist's* Turkey correspondent between 1999 and 2016. She was a columnist for the liberal daily *Taraf* and the mainstream daily *Haberturk* before switching to the independent Turkish online news portal Diken in 2015.

Zaman is the daughter of a former Bangladeshi ambassador. Her mother is Turkish, from Istanbul.

She was born in New York City.

Zaman has been a supporter of minority rights in Turkey. She is a proponent of normalization of Turkish-Armenian relations and regularly discusses the Armenian Genocide in her columns. In 2014, she participated in a confer-

ence by the Hrant Dink Foundation that was dedicated to Armenian-Turkish reconciliation. Zaman, who recognizes the Armenian Genocide as fact, believes that the Turkish government must reconcile with its history concerning the Armenians.

Zaman states that she has been a target of a vilification campaign by pro-government media. In 2013, Zaman was sacked as a journalist for *Haberturk* because of columns that were considered unacceptable by the government.

Zaman was attacked on Twitter for reporting the Gezi Park protests.

In 2014, the Prime Minister of Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, called Zaman "A militant in the guise of a journalist, a shameless woman..."



Amberin Zaman

Know your place!" at two successive election rallies. Zaman wrote a column in the newspaper *Taraf* entitled "First be a human!"

Barsamian is the award-winning founder and director of Alternative Radio, the independent weekly audio series based in Boulder, Colo., airing on more than 250 stations. One of America's most wide-ranging and respected independent journalists, Barsamian has altered the media landscape with his radio programs and books with Noam Chomsky, Tariq Ali, Howard Zinn, Egbal Ahmad, Edward Said and Arundhati Roy.

He is the winner of the Media Education Award, the ACLU's Upton Sinclair Award for independent journalism, and the Cultural Freedom Fellowship from the Lannan Foundation. The Institute for Alternative Journalism named him one of its Top Ten Media Heroes.

He is the recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Rocky Mountain Peace and Justice Center. In 2017, the South Asian Network for Secularism and Democracy presented him with their Lifetime Achievement



David Barsamian

Award. He has collaborated with the world-renowned Kronos Quartet in events in New York, London, Vienna and elsewhere.

Barsamian was deported from India due to his work on Kashmir and other revolts. He is still barred from traveling to "the world's largest democracy."

His latest book, *Global Discontents: Conversations on the Rising Threats to Democracy* (American Empire Project), co-authored with Noam Chomsky, will be out on December 5.

From escalating climate change to the devastation in Syria, pandemic state surveillance to looming nuclear war, Noam Chomsky takes stock of the world today. Over the course of ten conversations with long-time collaborator David Barsamian, spanning 2013-2016, Chomsky argues in favor of radical changes to a system that cannot possibly cope with what awaits tomorrow.

Interwoven with personal reflections spanning from childhood to his eighth decade of life, *Global Discontents* also marks out Chomsky's own intellectual journey, mapping his progress to revolutionary ideas and global prominence.

The fourth panelist, Fisk, is the Middle East correspondent for *The Independent* newspaper and a seven-time recipient of the British Press Awards' Reporter of the Year, has already been the subject of a feature.

The event will take place at the Alumnae Hall Ballroom, campus of Wellesley College, 106 Central St., Wellesley. Doors will open at 6 p.m. and the program will start at 7 p.m. A reception will follow. Admission is free.

For more information, visit [www.mirrorspectator.com](http://www.mirrorspectator.com) or the Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/MirrorSpectator/>

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## Canadian Ambassador To Armenia Ready to Contribute to Closer Ties

YEREVAN (Armenpress) — Vice Speaker of the Armenian Parliament Arpine Hovhannisyan on October 17 met with Ambassador of Canada to Armenia John Ronald Kerr, the press service of the Parliament reported.

Hovhannisyan said Armenian-Canadian relations are developing and that the two countries have the best traditions of friendship and cooperation. In this context, she highlighted the importance of developing inter-parliamentary ties, as well as the active mutual partnership of friendship groups. Kerr expressed readiness his to contribute to further deepening the Armenian-Canadian parliamentary ties and intensifying mutual visits.

According to him this year is unique since it marks the 25th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic ties between the two countries. The meeting also touched upon the upcoming Francophonie summit to be held in Armenia in 2018.