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Musician Alan Semerdjian

Alan Semerdjian: Exploring Universal Truths through Art

By **Gabriella Gage**
Mirror-Spectator Staff

NEW YORK – Musician Alan Semerdjian, who recently released his album, “Quiet Songs for Loud Times,” presents a fresh, personal take on the challenges that affect society as a whole, but the music can also

be viewed as a return to basics for the singer who has spent the last 20 years dedicated to creative expression through music, writing and art.

From an early age, Semerdjian exhibited the qualities of a writer, composing poems and lyrics. Semerdjian was born in Woodside, Queens and grew up in Melville, Long Island. His musical journey began in high school, when he was asked to fill in for a lead singer in a local alternative rock band who had taken ill. Semerdjian continued writing lyrics and composing songs for the band, named Surreal. “I suppose the passion to make something as ethereal and as haunting as the Armenian church music I heard my grandfather play on Sundays throughout our house was present as a child, but the impetus to seriously consider making music came a bit later,” said Semerdjian.

see SEMERDJIAN, page 16

Benefactor Gerard Cafesjian Dies

ST. PAUL (Combined Sources) – Prominent Armenian benefactor Gerard Cafesjian died at the age of 88 on September 15.

Cafesjian was a businessman and philanthropist who founded the Cafesjian Family Foundation (CFF), the Cafesjian Museum Foundation (CMF) and the Cafesjian Center for the Arts.

He was born April 26, 1925 in the Bensonhurst neighborhood of Brooklyn, New York. His parents had come to the



Gerard Cafesjian

United States preceding the Armenian Genocide of 1915.

After amphibious training, he served in the United States Navy in WWII aboard JP Morgan’s yacht, the Corsair III. The ship did extensive survey work in and around Guadalcanal and other Solomon Islands. He also served aboard the USS Andres (DE45), a destroyer escort for convoys from the United States to North Africa.

When he returned after the war he see CAFESJIAN, page 16

Dink Murder Trial Restarts, Arrest Warrant For Ex-informant Issued

ISTANBUL (PanArmenian.net) – The trial for the murder of Armenian-Turkish journalist, *Agos* weekly editor-in-chief Hrant Dink restarted on September 17, following an overturn of the first verdict due to the victim’s family protest of the trial.

“As the Dink family, we will no longer be tools to the state mechanisms that have been mocking us and we will not attend the hearings of the retrial,” the Dink family said in a statement issued before the trial. “The crime coalition that is called ‘the state’ re-committed the murder in every hearing, every day while it showed itself as if seeking for justice. That coalition is the crime gang itself that planned the murder and then covered it up,” the family’s letter said.

In today’s hearing, the court issued an arrest warrant for Erhan Tuncel, a former police informant and suspect in the murder case who was released after the first verdict.

Tuncel is seen as a key in linking the murder to the state institutions as members of the Police Department in the Black Sea province of Trabzon, the suspects’ hometown, have been accused of failing to relay intelligence provided by Tuncel to the Trabzon Gendarmerie Command in a report prepared by Turkey’s State Supervisory Council (DDK).

Dink was shot in front of his office on January 19, 2007.

The triggerman, Ogün Samast, a 17-year-old at the time of the murder, and Yasin see DINK, page 3



Lebanon ADL District Committee, Tekeyan Founders Meet

BEIRUT – ADL Lebanon’s District Committee initiated a meeting with Lebanon’s Tekeyan Founders’ Committee on Monday, September 16.

Both committees were represented by former deputy Hagop Kassardjian, chairman of ADL Lebanon’s District Committee Harout Yerganian, and members Michael Vayedjian, Eddy Bahadourian, Nar Khatchadourian, Dr. Avedis Dakesian, Ardavazt Melkissetian, Hovsep Emirian, Ohan Bodrumian and Sarkis Seferian.

The meeting was held at the Tekeyan Cultural Association Center in Beirut. Also attending the meeting was Hagop Vartivarian, a member of the ADL District Committee of the US and Canada, who was in Beirut for this occasion.

In the meeting issues about Lebanon’s District Committee and about the Armenian Democratic Liberal Party worldwide were discussed.

As the meeting progressed smoothly and collaboratively, the committees decided to have more such exchanges regularly.

– Armenian Democratic Liberal Party
Lebanon District Committee

NEWS IN BRIEF

Armenian Schools in Aleppo Reopened

ALEPPO (Armenpress) – Armenian schools in Aleppo have reopened after summer holidays on September 17 and received local Armenian pupils, a source in Aleppo reported. “Today is the first day of opening the schools. Children attend schools. Life goes on in a normal way,” he said.

He also spoke about inflation, suggesting prices had not changed much from the previous week. “Sometimes prices for goods are very high but now food and bread are available. Compared with the previous week when it was difficult to find, bread now it can be found but it is expensive. There is no fuel at all,” he added, noting that the blockade of the city continues. “At the end of last week three Armenian young men were kidnapped and there is not any information from them,” he said.

Hovannisian Slams CU Decision

YEREVAN (PanARMENIAN.Net) – Heritage opposition party leader, former presidential candidate Raffi Hovannisian slammed President Serge Sargisian’s decision to join the Russian-led Customs Union (CU), comparing the move to the 1921 deal between the Turks and Bolsheviks.

According to Hovannisian, the country’s accession to the CU limits its sovereignty.

Armenia’s ties with the European Union (EU) have cooled following Sargisian’s declaration of intention to join the Customs Union, with further plans to be involved in formation of Eurasian Economic Union.

However, the European Commission said the Association Agreement with Armenia can be compatible with economic cooperation with the members of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

Soldier Fired Because Of Armenian Origin

VAN, Turkey – After serving in the Turkish army in Edirne, Seifetin Bozan began working as a specialist sergeant in the army, but was fired in 1994 because of his Armenian origin.

Reporter Naif Karabatak of *Radikal* newspaper recently wrote about the case. After his firing, the sergeant began to work in a Van military unit.

Bozan grew up in a Muslim family and practiced Islam. His Armenian grandparents had their children taken from them and raised in Muslim homes, so he had little exposure to his Armenian ancestry.

After working 10 months in the army, a flag of “insubordinate” was placed in his work file and he only later realized that this was because of his Armenian heritage.

After keeping silent for 20 years, Seifetin is now trying to reinstate his right to serve and receive benefits, but thus far, no success.

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News From Armenia

FM Hosts Delegation of British Parliamentarians

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – Foreign Minister Eduard Nalbandian on September 17 hosted the delegation of members of United Kingdom House of Commons, headed by vice chairman of Armenian-British parliamentary friendship group, John Whittingdale.

Nalbandian at the meeting praised the closer Armenian-British cooperation, giving credit to the two nations' parliaments. Nalbandian said parliamentary diplomacy is an important additional stimulus for developing mutual understanding between two countries and strengthening the relations. Minister Nalbandian mentioned that remembers with warmth his visit to the UK in May.

Thanking him for their reception, the British parliamentarians highlighted that they will continue efforts to further strengthen and expand friendly relations between the two countries.

Nalbandian spoke about the efforts made by Armenia and the international community aimed at the settlement of Nagorno-Karabagh conflict.

Karekin II Receives Pilgrims from Austria

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – On September 15, Karekin II, Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians, received a group of pilgrims from Austria at the Mother See of Holy Echmiadzin. They were led by Prof. Heinz Nussbaumer, founder and editor of the Christian weekly paper, Die Furche.

The press office reported that during the course of the meeting the Catholicos of All Armenians extended his blessings and appreciation to the pilgrims, noting that such pilgrimages are a magnificent opportunity to learn about other Christian countries and Churches, as well as reinforce Christian fraternal relations and cooperation.

He also touched on the history of the Armenian Church and its centuries old spirituality, and reflected on the current educational, social and lecture projects of the Mother See. The Catholicos of All Armenians also spoke about the present-day challenges that the Armenian Church faces.

Armenian Church Celebrates Exaltation of Holy Cross Feast

YEREVAN – The global Armenian Church celebrated the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross on September 15.

The Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross is the last one of the five major feasts of the Armenian Apostolic Church. According to the church, it is the most important feast among the feasts dedicated to the Holy Cross, as it is dedicated to the history of the return of the Holy Cross from imprisonment, its elevation and glorification. In the Armenian Apostolic Church the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross is celebrated on Sunday each year during the week of September 11-17.

In 610 AD, the Persian King Khosrov with a large army attacked the Byzantine Empire. Enthusiastic about the initial victory, in 614 AD the Persian army entered Jerusalem. Many people were killed and many more imprisoned. Pontiff Zakaria, the Patriarch of Jerusalem, was imprisoned, too. However, the Persians were not satisfied and entered the Church of Holy Sepulcher and took the "Holy Cross" kept in the Church. The cross had been found and installed in the church for the Christians to worship by Haghineh, the mother of the King Costandianos, in the beginning of the fourth century.

In 628 AD, the Byzantine army led by the King Herakles fought against the Persians to return the cross. The Armenian army regiment, led by Mzhez Gnonnie, supported the Persian army. The Byzantine army won the battle.

The cross was solemnly brought to the Armenian town Karin, from there it was carried to Constantinople, and then – to Jerusalem. On the way the cross was raised for the people to see and

Armenian Assembly Representative Participates In NKR Independence Celebrations

STEPANAKERT – On September 1, a solemn awards ceremony was held in connection with the 22nd anniversary of the Nagorno Karabakh Republic's (NKR/Artsakh) proclamation of independence at the residence of the Artsakh President Bako Sahakyan.

In his speech, Sahakyan ranked the declaration of Artsakh's independent statehood as the country's most important achievement, calling it one of the brightest pages in modern Armenian history.

Among the awardees was Armenian Assembly of America Country Director Armina Darbinian. Sahakyan expressed his appreciation to the decades-long activities of the Armenian Assembly, while also emphasizing the personal contribution of Darbinian to the prosperity of Artsakh.

The president congratulated everyone on their state awards and expressed confidence that together, with the Armenia-Artsakh-Diaspora's unshak-

able unity, Artsakh would achieve the realization of its national goals.

Primate of the Artsakh Diocese of the Armenian Apostolic Church Archbishop Pargev Martirosyan, speaker of the NKR National Assembly Ashot Ghouluyan, and other officials participated in the event.



From left, Artsakh President Bako Sahakyan presents award to Armenian Assembly of America Country Director Armina Darbinian.

US Stepping up Efforts on Karabagh As Armenia Opts for Integration with Russia

By Naira Hayrumyan

YEREVAN (ArmeniaNow) – The new American co-chair of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Minsk Group James Warlick alone, without his Russian and French colleagues, has visited the region of the conflict where he has already met with the leadership of Azerbaijan in Baku, the Armenian foreign minister in Yerevan and intends to participate in a line-of-contact monitoring in Karabagh.

The fact that the negotiator came alone is explained by his recent appointment (only about a month ago) and desire to see the situation on the ground. However, there are also opinions that after the sharp turn by Armenia towards Russia, Washington has decided to redouble its efforts in the region, at least in order to avoid preventive steps from Russia. If Russia has given certain guarantees on the matter of Karabagh's security, soon these guarantees must somehow be manifested. This was stated a few days ago by Deputy Prime Minister of the NKR, former Deputy Defense Minister of Armenia Artur Aghabekyan. He did not specify what kind of guarantees those were, but information has already appeared in the press about the operation of the Stepanakert airport (for both civilian and military purposes), as well as deployment of a peacekeeping contingent of Russia or the Russia-led Collective Security Treaty Organization in Karabagh. The United States would be concerned about such a prospect, and it is not by accident that Warlick gave Ilham Aliyev a letter from President Obama that reads: "I support your efforts to take advantage of opportunities for direct dialogue with Armenia in the months ahead, and to avail yourself of the co-chairs' time and expertise to move beyond the current impasse in negotiations. With the outlines of a compromise already well established, now is the time for a renewed effort to bring peace to the region." Aliyev has only a few months to go before his second consecutive term in office ends and now he is seeking a third term in office in next month's elections. Obama, apparently, has hinted to Aliyev that he will have to find some sort of solution during his next term and that solution, as he made it clear in the message, should be based on a compromise.

Since the declaration by President Serge Sargisyan of Armenia's willingness to join the Russia-led Customs Union, Moscow has not yet made any statements on Karabagh. Armenian Minister of Foreign Affairs Eduard Nalbandian said during his meeting in parliament on Tuesday that Karabagh will not suffer because of Armenia's accession to the Customs Union.

Fuele Says EU Not Abandoning Armenia

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) – European Union (EU) Enlargement Commissioner Stefan Fuele says Brussels is still eager to pursue deeper ties with Yerevan even if Armenia goes ahead with plans to join a Russian-led Customs Union.

In an exclusive interview, Fuele restated the EU position that Armenia could not sign association and free-trade agreements with the European Union while also belonging to the Customs Union.

He was speaking on September 13 in Yerevan after an informal meeting of the foreign ministers of the EU's Eastern Partnership member states.

"The Association Treaty is no longer on the table because of Armenia's decision. So let's talk about their ambitions, and their vision for another way to put the relationship higher, including a new legal framework for our relationship," Fuele said.

Expectations had originally been high that Armenia would move ahead with the EU trade agreements at the Eastern Partnership summit in Vilnius in November.

But those hopes were dashed when Armenian President Serge Sargisyan, in a surprise move, announced last week that he wanted his country to join the Russia-led Customs Union, which currently includes Belarus and Kazakhstan.

Fuele confirmed that no deals will now be signed with Armenia in Vilnius. But he said Brussels was not abandoning Armenia, including civil society there.

"I talked today also with civil society groups, the National Platform, and I

made it very clear that, the fact that Armenia is turning from the Association Agreement to the Customs Union does not mean that the European agenda, European values, and European principles, will disappear. It does not mean that, what the civil society has achieved to promote the European agenda, and fundamental rights, that that will disappear. We will be strongly represented here in Armenia and supporting civil society," Fuele said.

Fuele also said Russia had nothing to fear from the EU's Eastern Partnership program.

"I am saying very clearly that association agreements are good for our partners, and are good for the neighbors of our partners. I'm saying clearly that association agreements are substantive, and a very clear contribution of the European Union member states to the creation in the future, of a free trade union from Lisbon to Vladivostok," Fuele stated.

But Fuele also warned Russia against pressuring other Eastern Partnership members into joining the Customs Union or the proposed Eurasian Union rather than sign agreements with the EU.

"The partners, we assured that if they become the subject of undue pressure because of their exercising the free choice, they can count on the solidarity [of the EU]. Solidarity is not an empty word in the European Union," Fuele said.

The six member states of the EU's Eastern Partnership are Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine.



INTERNATIONAL

Turkey's Saturday Mothers Receives Hrant Dink Foundation Award

ISTANBUL (Dogan News Agency) – Hanim Tosun, Ikbal Eren and Emine Ocak, pioneers of the Saturday Mothers demonstrations received a Hrant Dink Foundation award during the ceremony on behalf of the group on September 15.

Turkey's "Saturday mothers," women who have gathered every Saturday in Istanbul for nearly 15 years to draw attention to their missing family members, received the fifth International Hrant Dink Award, which is named in honor of assassinated Turkish-Armenian journalist Hrant Dink.

Serbian human rights activist Natasa Kandic, known for her documentation of her country's war crimes, was also awarded by this year's jury.

The Saturday Mothers have become familiar faces to those passing down Istiklal Avenue on Saturday mornings, as they have gathered for more than 400 consecutive weeks at Galatasaray Square with pictures of family members who went missing after being detained by security forces or who died in unsolved murders, especially during the "dark days" of the 1990s.

Every week, two or three relatives read a message or a poem for their

loved ones, while anyone who wishes can take part in the demonstrations by holding a picture of one of the missing.

Tosun, Eren and Ocak received the prize during the ceremony on behalf

peace, with our past and with others. The only condition of peace is empathy," she said.

This year's jury included past laureates such as sociologist Ismail Besikci and Mexican journalist Lydia Cacho,



The Saturday Mothers receive the fifth International Hrant Dink Awards.

of all Saturday Mothers. The three expressed hope that similar deaths or disappearances will not occur again.

For her part, Kandic said she was proud to receive such a meaningful prize in the memory of Dink. "Without empathy, there can be no

as well as British historian Timothy Garton Ash.

Costa-Gavras, a French filmmaker of Greek origin who came last year to support demonstrations against the demolition of the iconic Emek Movie Theater, was also part of this year's jury.

Baku 'Clamps Down' on Dissent Before Elections

BAKU (*Turkish Daily News*) – Human Rights Watch warned that the Azerbaijani government had ramped up attempts to stifle dissent in anticipation of the presidential election in October. "Prosecuting people who criticize the authorities is cynical," the report said.

Authorities have arrested dozens on trumped-up charges, dispersed anti-government rallies and adopted laws curbing freedom of speech and assembly in the past 18 months, the organization said in a report.

Azeri authorities could not be immediately reached for comment, but Baku has repeatedly denied abusing human rights in the past. "Prosecuting people who criticize the authorities and report on issues of public interest is a cynical and transparent attempt to stifle government critics," Human Rights Watch (HRW) administrator Giorgi Gogia said.

The European Union and other bodies in June accused the ex-Soviet state of tightening curbs on free expression by making defamation over the Internet a criminal offence punishable by imprisonment.

HRW said authorities had in particular targeted youth activists critical of the authorities on social networks. Several members of opposition youth movement NIDA were arrested earlier this year accused of plans to instigate violence during protests, and a number of journalists and rights workers were detained on fake charges, it said.

"The authorities have used a range of trumped-up criminal charges, including narcotics and weapons possession, hooliganism, incitement and treason to lock up these critics."

According to the report, Azeri authorities have also increased fines for unsanctioned protests by a 100 percent and expanded from 15 to 60 years the maximum prison term for public order misdemeanors often used to jail protesters.

Western powers are generally critical of Azeri human rights violations, the report said, but the reported abuse has not had a major impact on their rela-

tions with Baku. "That is perhaps due to Azerbaijan's geostrategic importance and hydrocarbon resources," HRW said.

The country has been courted by Western powers because of its role as an alternative to Russia in supplying oil and gas to Europe.

Aliyev, 51, is almost certain to win the upcoming October polls in a tightly controlled political system, despite mounting opposition from Azeris tired of his rule. Vote monitoring groups have previously criticized the democratic credential of ballots in the country over the past decade.

Authorities blocked last week the country's main opposition candidate

from challenging strongman Aliyev in October elections. The election commission said Oscar-winning screenwriter Rustam Ibragimbekov had been barred from standing in the autumn polls because of his dual Russian-Azerbaijani citizenship.

Ibragimbekov, who co-authored the Oscar-winning 1994 film "Burnt by the Sun" with Russian director Nikita Mikhalkov, had been put forward as a united candidate by a coalition of Azerbaijan's main opposition parties. The coalition had picked Jamil Hasanli, a former lawmaker and historian, as a back-up candidate should Ibragimbekov be refused permission to run.

Dink Murder Trial Restarts, Arrest Warrant for Ex-informant Issued

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Hayal, who was charged of being the instigator of the assassination, were convicted of the murder. However, a high criminal court dismissed charges related to "armed terrorist organization." The Supreme Court of Appeals verdict defined the acts of all suspects in the case under "an organization formed to commit crime" according to Turkish Penal Code Article 220.

Earlier this month, lawyer Cem Halavurt said they would demand that the "real web of connections" be brought to light.

"The local court ruled there was no criminal organization involved, but the Supreme Court said there was a criminal organization. We have been saying all along that there was an armed terror organization behind this assassination," Halavurt said.

"The court said the suspects committed an act of punishment against Dink as a person, not against the state or the public order. That was why it was not considered a terrorist act. We will try to prove that it was the work of a terror organization."

According to Today's Zaman, Fethiye Çetin, the chief lawyer on the case, said last week at a press conference that the new process is most likely to put the case at a worse standpoint than before because the initial trial had been launched on the premise of a terrorist organization, but the high court decision says it is an armed organization formed to commit a specific crime.

Çetin explained that according to the decision of the high court, the criminal organization involved was established in 2004 by Hayal with political motivations and consisted of only a few other people, including Tuncel, who were ultranationalists angry with Dink for "insulting Turkishness," as he had been charged with, so they wanted to punish him.

Earlier this month, Çetin published a book titled *Utanch Duyuyorum: Hrant Dink Cinayetinin Yargisi* (I Feel Ashamed: The Judgment of the Hrant Dink Murder), explaining that the high court had defined the motivations of the organization as being "political" rather than "terrorist" in its verdict that led to the review of the case.

International News

Hrant Dink Is Turkey's Martin Luther King: Taner Akçam

ISTANBUL (Armenpress) – Hrant Dink was Turkey's Martin Luther King who struggled against discrimination for equality and national unity, said Turkish historian Prof. Taner Akçam, in *Taraf* newspaper. He suggested declaring every second or third Monday of September of each year Hrant Dink Day as the third Monday of January is the Martin Luther King holiday in the US.

He said, "Now we live in a period of passing from totalitarian regime to more democratic society. We have reached the end of war between Turks and Kurds. In past symbols keeping Turkey belonged to only a part of population. Now those symbols do not exist. Hrant is the symbol of this new nation," wrote Akçam.

Speaking about Armenians gathering each year on the day when Dink was killed, Akçam said this is the first time in Turkish history such a thing has happened. "His name hurts our heart; his murder touched our humanity," wrote Akçam mentioning that it was the most planned crime in Turkish Republican history and all state bodies took part in it.

"The year has 365 days. Let the 364 be yours and give the other one to Hrant," summarized Akçam.

Lausanne-Orthodox Initiative Conference Held in Albania

TIRANA, Albania – From September 2 through 6, the annual conference of the Lausanne-Orthodox Initiative was convened at the St. Vlasius Monastery in Durres. Attending the conference were representatives of Orthodox and Protestant churches from more than 20 countries. With blessings from Karekin II, Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians, Rev. Tiran Petrosyan, Pontifical Legate for Central Europe and Scandinavia; represented the Armenian Church during the conference.

Anastasios, Archbishop of Tirana, Durres and All Albania, extended his blessings to the participants of the conference, wishing productive work and new achievements to all those present.

The Lausanne-Orthodox Initiative was started several years ago, and its main goal is the productive reflection of the history of the relations formed between the Orthodox and Protestant Churches.

During the conference they discussed historical and theological issues related to Evangelization, as well as practical and pastoral, religious, legal, social and other matters.

Car Bomb Explodes near Syrian-Turkish Border

ALEPPO (PanARMENIAN.Net) – A car bomb exploded on the Syrian side of the main Bab al-Hawa crossing with Turkey on Tuesday, September 17, and at least a dozen people were taken to nearby hospitals, Syrian opposition activists on the border said, according to Reuters.

The explosion occurred at a roadblock manned by Islamist brigades at the entrance of the rebel-held crossing, several hundred meters from the Turkish side, they added.

Pictures taken by activists on the scene showed several burnt and mangled cars and an engine block that apparently flew to the side of the road from the vehicle.

"The objective is to destabilize security at the crossing. The casualties are all civilians, from the people queuing to cross," said Omar Aref, one of the activists.

The explosion came a day after Turkey shot down a Syrian helicopter that had entered Turkish airspace.

The Syrian army said the shooting was "hasty" and accused the Turkish government, which backs the uprising against President Bashar al-Assad, of trying to escalate tensions along the border.

On May 11, 2013, two car bombs exploded in the town of Reyhanli, in Hatay Province of Turkey, killing 51 people and injuring 140.



Turkey's 'Second Silent Revolution'

ISTANBUL (*Deutsche Welle*) – Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan's democratic reform package for Turkey has raised the hopes of supporters and even opponents. Some feel the plan is meant only to elicit EU approval. That could still be a good thing.

The pro-government Yeni Safak and Sabah newspapers have already dubbed the reform program as Turkey's "Second Silent Revolution." The government's plan aims to broaden religious freedoms, expand freedom of expression and strengthen the rights of Kurds, Alevis and non-Muslim minorities.

"Our comprehensive work will be the continuation of our major democratic reforms in the last decade," said Turkish Deputy Prime Minister Besir Atalay.

The phrase "Second Silent Revolution" is a reference to a book called "Silent Revolution" recently published by the Undersecretariat of Public Order and Security, a department within the Ministry of the Interior. In it, Atalay's conservative-Islamic Justice and Development Party (AKP) dubbed the political transformation of Turkey – under AKP rule since 2002 – a "silent revolution."

The new democratic reforms package will include major steps toward ending nearly three decades of internal Turkish-Kurdish conflicts that have claimed some 40,000 lives, a softening of anti-terrorism laws, the legalization of the public use of Kurdish words and names as well as the offering of public services in Kurdish.

Despite the AKP government's reform plans, Kurdish deputies like Hasip Kaplan of the pro-Kurdish Peace and Democracy Party (BDP) are skeptical.

"Our party has submitted a 25-point plan for a solution," Kaplan posted to Twitter on Sunday. "But so far we have not seen a reliable, promising approach from the AKP government.... There is nothing addressing the Gezi protests [or] measures against disproportionate use of force by the police."

Election thresholds also remain contentious. The government is not planning to change the 10-percent threshold for political parties hoping to enter Turkish parliament. The AKP largely benefits from the current threshold system, with Kurdish candidates only entering parliament as independents. The BDP wants the election threshold to be decreased to three percent.

"Apparently this reform package only aims at softening the European Union's criticism of Turkey in its Progress Report 2013," Kaplan said, referring to a key report by the European Commission to be published on October 23.

That report will determine whether or not EU member states will reopen discussions on Turkey's troubled EU accession attempts.

Still, some see good reason to feel optimistic about the package.

"It will be progress for Turkey, toward a better democracy," said Dr. Bahadır Kaleagasi, the Brussels-based international coordinator of the influential Turkish Industrialists' and Businessmen's Association (TUSIAD). Still, Kaleagasi says, the reform package should be comprehensive and inclusive.

"All the citizens and segments of Turkish society should feel that, with this democratization package, they will have more freedom, democracy – a much better Turkey," he said.

Removing restrictions on the wearing of Islamic headscarves by women in public services is another long-awaited change that will come as part of the reforms – one which is likely to appease the conservative electorate ahead of local and presidential elections next year. Boosting the rights of the Alevi citizens is another part of the plan, with Cemevi - a place of worship - to be given legal status. The reopening of the Halki Greek Orthodox seminary on an island near Istanbul is among the other key reforms mentioned in the reports.

The EU expects the Turkish government to make progress in four areas in particular, Kaleagasi says: Independence and impartiality of the judiciary, basic rights and freedoms, Kurdish issues and media freedom.

While Kaleagasi said that the Turkish government is showing less interest in reforms since the country's EU membership process entered a stalemate in 2007, the EU, he feels, can still play a more constructive role in improving democratic standards in Turkey.

"It is in EU's best interest to have a Turkey with advanced democracy," he said. "It is in European citizens' best interest."

Diocesan Meeting Held in Georgia

TSEROVANI, Georgia – On August 30, the joint meeting of the clergy and the officials of the Diocese of the Armenian Apostolic Church in Georgia was held. The meeting started with the prayer and blessing from the Primate of the Diocese of the Armenian Apostolic Church in Georgia, Bishop Vazgen Mirzakhanyan and after the adoption of the agenda the chairmanship was transferred to Vicar-General of Javakhk Supreme Archimandrite Babken Salbiyan.

Mirzakhanyan delivered a speech; the agenda of the meeting included: the identical performance of sacraments, church rituals and ceremonies, pastoral work and position of the clergy. He spoke about 47 churches, operating in the diocese, about works, conducted by 13 priests and celibate priests, and gave his assessments and

appropriate instructions.

The Primate presented the new structure of the Diocesan administration and the heads of seven departments. Leaders of the Department of Legal Affairs, the Relationship with the State, Inter-religious Cooperation included Levon Isakhanyan, Educational Department; Eugenia Markosyan, Press and Media Department; Susanna Khachaturyan, Department of Culture; the coordinator of the "Hayartun" Center and Director Levon Chidilyan; spiritual supervisor of the "Hayartun" Center Deacon Gevorg Antonyan; Margarita Kirakosyan, Financial Department and Karen Yeritsyan, Administrative and Economic Department.

After that the officials delivered speeches, they talked about upcoming projects and answered the questions of the clergy,

offering their support and collaboration in some places, as well as the expansion of cooperation between the public and one-day schools.

The leaders of the creative unions, functioning under the auspices of the Diocese of the Armenian Apostolic Church in Georgia: President of the "Vernatun" Union of Armenian Writers of Georgia Zhora Snkhchyan, Acting Chairman of the Union of Armenian Intellectuals of Georgia Yenok Tadevosyan, Chairman of the Union of Armenian Painters of Georgia Meruzhan Shahumyan, Chairman of the Union of Armenian Women in Georgia "Shushanik" Susanna Khachaturyan and Chairman of the Armenian Musician's Union of Georgia Artem Kirakozov presented the main objectives and directions of their activities.

Armenian Church in Moscow Will Strengthen Spiritual Ties between Two Nations, Russian Patriarch Says

MOSCOW (Armenpress) – Patriarch of Moscow and all Russia Kirill was present at the consecration and opening of the new Armenian Church in Moscow last week, at which time he congratulated the Armenian community of Russia.

He mentioned in his speech that in the past Armenians and representatives of other Christian communities have been under pressure in Russia. "Armenian churches built in the territory of Russia were often destroyed and now I want to congratulate the Russian-Armenian community on the occasion of this historic event and thank them for the creation of this complex which will give an opportuni-

ty to Moscow Armenians to gather and pray," he noted.

He also mentioned that churches are not built for only as a beautiful monument. "Building a church is a step aimed at the future of humanity. A church is built in order people gather there and pray. Praying is a way of developing the spiritual inner world. If it were not so, possibly nothing would remain from the Christian civilization. Praying brings us closer to God," he said.

He also highlighted that Armenia and Russia are wonderful examples showing that religious values are not eliminated but strengthened in life. He expressed assur-

ance that building of Armenian Church in Moscow will deepen spiritual ties between the two nations. "The Armenian Apostolic Church and the Russian Orthodox Church have cooperated closely for hundreds of years and I am sure that the building of Armenian church in Moscow will make closer the cooperation," he added.

Armenia's President Serge Sargsian and his wife, Rita, took part in the consecration ceremony. Catholics of All Armenians Karekin II and officials from Armenia, Artsakh and Russia, the Armenian Apostolic Church and numerous representatives of the Russian-Armenian community took part in the event.

Brazilian Diocese Celebrates 50th Anniversary of Primate

RIO DE JANEIRO – On Sunday, August 18, on the Feast of the Assumption, the Diocesan Council celebrated the 50th anniversary of the ordination into the priesthood of Archbishop Datev Karibian, Primate, Diocese of the Armenian Church of Brazil.

The day began with the celebration of the Divine Liturgy. Karibian was the celebrant. He was assisted by Rev. Dr. Nareg Berberian and Rev. Yeznig Guzelian. Rev. Boghos Baronian was the liturgical coordinator. The following dignitaries were present: Honorary Consul of the Republic of Armenia Hilda Dirouhi Bourmayan, members of the Diocesan Council, members of Representative Council and various local organizations.

Prior to the sermon, Karibian officially presented Berberian to the members of the community as an assistant to the Primate,

wishing him much success in his ministry.

The Primate welcomed religious members of sister denominations, namely; the Primate of the Antiochian Orthodox Church Archbishop Tamaskinos Mansuri and Rev. Timitrios Attarian.

At the end of the Divine Liturgy, Surpazan Hayr presided over the Blessing of Grapes. Fr. Yeznig Guzelian invited Antranig and his wife, Irene Manisajian, the chairman of the Diocesan Council to the chancel. Manisajian presented him with an episcopal panagia on their behalf as a gift. Hayr blessed the panagia and thanked both of them for their thoughtfulness. He invited Tamaskinos to place it around his

neck. Mansuri praised the accomplishments of Surpazan and wished him much success in his ministry as well as good health. On behalf of the Antiochian Orthodox Church, Tamaskinos presented a handmade Armenian hand cross with gems on it, made in Aleppo, Syria. Surpazan extended his appreciation to him and thanked him for his friendship.

In a procession, the clergy, choir members and the deacons guided hundreds of people towards the Diocesan Center for a reception which was prepared by the Diocesan Council. People extended their congratulations to Surpazan and received his blessings.

Armenia Wins Third Gold Medal in Francophone Games

NICE, France (Armenpress) – Wrestler Victor Kazishvili (96 kg) representing Armenia won a golden medal at the seventh Francophonie Games held here.

Kazishvili is the third freestyle wrestler introducing Armenia in seventh Francophonie Games, who wins champion's title. Previously Armenian freestyle wrestlers Ohan Gikinyan (55 kg) and Narek Sirunyan (66 kg) had won gold medals in Francophone Games 2013.

The Francophone Games are a combination of artistic and sporting events for the Francophonie, mostly French speaking nations, held every four years since 1989, partly as a counterweight to the Commonwealth Games.

Armenian and Bulgarian PMs Meet, Stress Need for Stronger Ties

BEIJING (Armenpress) – A delegation led by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia Tigran Sargsian paid a working visit to the People's Republic of China, where Sargsian had a meeting with Bulgarian Prime Minister Plamen Oresharski.

Upon the request of his Bulgarian counterpart, Sargsian introduced the general economic state of Armenia and stated that the government of Armenia managed to reach about 7 percent economic growth.

In turn, the Bulgarian Prime Minister Plamen Oresharski emphasized that Armenia recorded a quite impressive rate, as even a row of European countries did not manage to register such achievement. At the course of the meeting both sides laid a heavy emphasis on the necessity of strengthening business ties, which can become a serious

incentive for the development of the Armenian-Bulgarian economic relations. Among other things the interlocutors discussed a number of other issues of mutual interest as well.

The delegation led by Sargsian paid a working visit to the People's Republic of China starting on September 9. It is considered that within the framework of his visit he would have a meeting with the Premier of the People's Republic of China Li Keqiang and participate in the World Economic Forum. Among other things it is considered to sign bilateral documents; in particular an agreement on economic cooperation and a memorandum of mutual understanding in the sphere of emergency situations administration. Also, there will be a number of meetings with the representatives of various IT companies.

Community News

Farmers Share Raisins for Church Fundraiser

By Ron Orozco

FOWLER, Calif. (*Fresno Bee*) – St. Gregory The Illuminator Armenian Apostolic Church is nestled in a part of Fresno County that is known as raisin capital of the world.

Nearly half of St. Gregory's 150 dues-paying members are raisin growers or have farming roots in their family history.

Raisins are like gold. So when it comes to fundraisers, the church, consecrated on April 11, 1910, is tapping into what is in its neighborhood.

For the third season now, church officials are asking parishioners who are raisin growers to donate bins of raisins – rather than cash – to the church's fundraiser, known as the Raisin Roundup.

Letters were sent in August to more than 300 people on the church mailing list. The plan is simple. Growers sign up to donate a bin or two. Then, members of St. Gregory's parish council pick up the bins and deliver them to local packers, where the church is paid the going rate per ton. It takes about two bins to reach a ton. In recent years, the rate has ranged between \$1,700 and \$2,000 a ton.

In 2011, the Raisin Roundup's first campaign, 24 bins were donated. They weighed about 12 tons. The going rate was \$1,700, so St. Gregory's made about \$20,000.

Last year, 18 bins weighed nearly nine tons and raised about \$14,000.

The money each year goes into the church's general fund, which is used for the church's annual budget. This year, St. Gregory's budget is \$250,000.

The Rev. Yeghia Hairabedian, pastor of St. Gregory, said parishioners have been giving crops to their churches for a long time.

"Traditionally, the church would receive animals or food crops to support the church and clergy," he says. "It goes back to centuries-old customs."

Hairabedian believes the Raisin Roundup is a creative way for parishioners to give as well as think about how God has blessed them.

"This is a very active way of encouraging people to give from the abundance that God grants to them," he said.

"In the case of grapes, this is especially significant because every August on the Feast of see RAISINS, page 7



At St. Gregory The Illuminator Armenian Apostolic Church in Fowler, a ceremonial silver plate of donated raisins



Coach Jerry Tarkanian in Springfield, Mass. soaks in awaited Hall of Fame induction

Former Fresno State and UNLV Coach Jerry Tarkanian Inducted Into Basketball Hall of Fame

SPRINGFIELD, Mass. (*Fresno Bee*) – Basketball coach Jerry Tarkanian, who won 784 games during his storied career at Fresno State, University of Nevada at Las Vegas (UNLV) and Long Beach State, was part of a 12-member class inducted Sunday into the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame.

Tarkanian, who had heart surgery less than two months ago, came on stage with a walker and smiled when he received a standing ovation.

Tarkanian, 83, coached the Bulldogs from 1995-2002 and had six straight 20-win seasons and NCAA Tournament appearances in 2000 and 2001. He won the 1990 national championship while at UNLV.

On Sunday night, Nevada Gov. Brian Sandoval praised Tarkanian for his induction, saying it's a "well-deserved honor."

One of the other headliners at Sunday's induction was current Louisville coach Rick Pitino, fresh off of winning this year's national championship in April.

Pitino still remembers the training meals at the pizza place where his Boston University teams ate more than 30 years ago.

Even Hall of Famers have to start somewhere. That obscure beginning provided a foundation for a coaching career that took him to two NBA teams and three other colleges, all reaching the Final Four and two winning NCAA championships.

"Coaches don't get in the Hall of Fame," Pitino said Sunday. "Players put them in the Hall of Fame, and I've had a great journey along the way."

It started for him as a head coach in 1978 just 90 miles east of Springfield Symphony Hall, where the ceremony was held for him and the 11 other honorees.

He had to "learn the trade from the bottom" at Boston University, Pitino said. There were those "training meals," he said, and the time when champagne was served at Midnight Madness.

"Nine drunks showed up," he said, "and no one else." He spent five years with the Terriers, then two as an assistant with the New York Knicks before spending the next two as head coach at Providence, leading the Friars to a surprising berth in the Final Four. He kept moving – two years as head coach with the Knicks, eight with Kentucky, four with the Boston Celtics and the past 12 with Louisville.

Also inducted Sunday into the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame were Gary Payton, the only NBA player with 20,000 points, 8,000 assists, 5,000 rebounds and 2,000 steals; Bernard King, who averaged 22.5 points in 15 NBA seasons with five teams; Guy Lewis, 91, who took Houston to five Final Fours; North Carolina women's coach Sylvia Hatchell; five-time WNBA All-Star Dawn Staley; former Knicks guard Richie Guerin; former NBA deputy commissioner Russ Granik; and Oscar Schmidt, who played in five Olympics for Brazil.

Sosé & Allen's Legacy Foundation and ATP Announce Campaign to Plant Memorial Forest In Armenia

WATERTOWN – Sosé & Allen's Legacy Foundation and Armenia Tree Project (ATP) have announced the establishment of a memorial forest in Armenia in honor of Sosé Thomassian and Allen Yekikian. The young couple, who had strong ties in Armenia as well as throughout the diaspora, lost their lives as a result of a car accident four months ago.

Vaché Thomassian, Sosé's brother, and several close friends, launched the Legacy Foundation to support the couple's core values: education, repatriation, volunteerism and democratic development. "The Forest will serve as a living, breathing memorial to Sosé and Allen, and will have a positive effect on Armenia's environment," said Vaché Thomassian.

For every new "Like" on ATP's Facebook page, five trees will be planted in the memorial forest: www.Facebook.com/ArmeniaTree

"This is a collaborative and interactive campaign, highlighting the great work Armenia Tree Project does, and we're asking the public to spread the word to grow the forest. The social media aspect emphasizes Sosé and Allen's focus on utilizing technology and encouraging direct participation," he continued.

The campaign was launched on September 10, Sosé's birthday and will conclude on Allen's birthday on March 10, 2014. The organizations hope that the effort will attract at least 10,000 "Likes" in order to plant 50,000 trees, covering 45 acres, and raise awareness of ATP's mission in Armenia. Site selection will begin immediately, and planti-



Sosé & Allen's Legacy Foundation and ATP recently initiated a social media campaign to support a memorial forest in honor of Sosé Thomassian and Allen Yekikian.

ng will commence in the spring of 2014.

Tax-deductible contributions to support the memorial forest may be made to Armenia Tree Project via ATP's website www.ArmeniaTree.org, or by mail payable to Armenia Tree Project, 65 Main St., Watertown, MA 02472. Donors are asked to indicate that the gifts are "In memory of Sosé and Allen" online or on the memo line of their checks.

Sosé & Allen's Legacy Foundation (www.SoseandAllen.com) works to continue their vision by establishing programs and supporting existing programs aimed at bridging the gap between Armenia and its Diaspora, through an emphasis on education, repatriation, and volunteerism.



COMMUNITY NEWS

Schindler, Lemkin and Goeth: Forever Linked in History

ORANGE, Calif. – Prof. David Crowe, in a groundbreaking lecture on Tuesday, October 1, will explore the intersection among Oskar Schindler, a Nazi Party member who became a rescuer; Raphael Lemkin, a Jewish émigré lawyer from Poland who worked tirelessly to promote the concept of genocide, and Amon Goeth, the sadistic Nazi SS officer who implemented genocide.

The lecture will take place at the Wallace All Faiths Chapel at Chapman University.

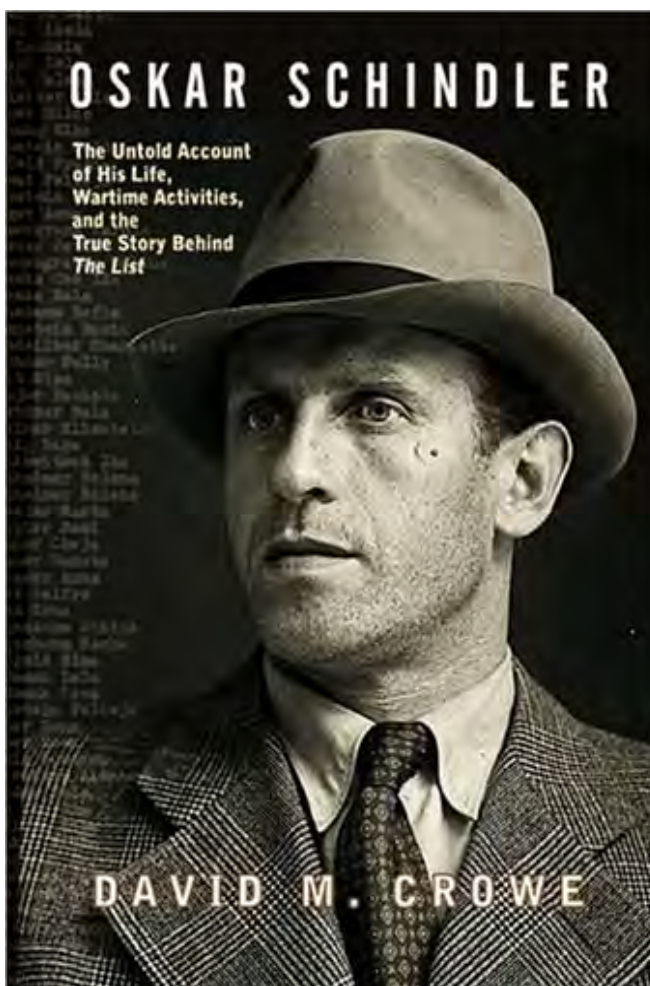
The Plaszów concentration and forced labor camp in Poland is forever linked to the name of its brutal commandant, Goeth. In March 1943, Schindler persuaded Goeth to allow him to build his own sub-camp near his Emalia factory so that his Jewish workers would not be subjected to Goeth's unpredictable brutality and random executions.

By doing so, he saved the lives of more than 1,100 Jews. After the war, Goeth was the first person charged, tried, and convicted for the crime of genocide – two years before the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide was approved by the United Nations.

Crowe is professor of history at Elon University and professor of legal history at Elon University School of Law in Greensboro, NC. He is president emeritus of the Association for the Study of Nationalities at Columbia University and was a member of the Education Committee of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum from 1990-2004. His many books include *Crimes of State, Past and Present: Government Sponsored Atrocities and International Legal Responses* (2010); *A History of the Gypsies of Eastern Europe and Russia* (2nd ed., 2007), and *The Holocaust: Roots, History, and Aftermath* (2008).

Crowe's most recent book, *War Crimes, Genocide, and Justice: A Global History*, will be published by Palgrave Macmillan this year.

Crowe has testified before the United States Congress' Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe and the New York City Council's Subcommittee on Immigration. He has also appeared on CNN International, BBC radio, and numerous television and radio programs throughout North America, Europe, and Israel. Dr. Crowe has served as an expert witness in scores of court cases in the United States and Canada involving the Roma, Russians and other ethnic groups.



There will also be comments by Dr. Richard Hovannisian, Emeritus Professor of Armenian and Near Eastern History, University of California, Los Angeles, Chancellor Fellow, Chapman University.

Barlow Der Mugrdechian To Speak on Armenian Cilicia at Fresno State

FRESNO – Armenian Studies Program Director Barlow Der Mugrdechian, will give an illustrated presentation on "Historic Armenia II-Armenian Cilicia" at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, September 27, in the University Business Center, Alice Peters Auditorium, Room 191, on the Fresno State campus.

The lecture is part of the Armenian Studies Program Spring Lecture Series and is co-sponsored by the Armenian Students Organization at Fresno State and is supported by the Leon S. Peters Foundation.

Der Mugrdechian traveled to historic Armenia for the first time in summer 2012. This summer he visited Armenian Cilicia, and will present his impressions on the Armenian churches and sites in the area. He also visited the two functioning churches in Vakif (Musa Dagh) and in Iskenderun and will discuss the Armenian communities there.

Der Mugrdechian will also present information about some of the remaining Armenian fortresses of Armenian Cilicia, such as at Sis and at Anavarza, as well as the monastic complex at Hromkla.

Der Mugrdechian has been teaching for 29 years in the Armenian Studies Program at Fresno State. He has been a frequent traveler to Armenia, leading student study groups. He teaches Armenian language, history, art, and culture courses at Fresno State.

The lecture is free and open to the public.



Barlow Der Mugrdechian

Forum on Armenia's Economy to Feature Daron Acemoglu, David Grigorian

BELMONT, Mass. – Dr. Daron Acemoglu, the Elizabeth and James Killian Professor of Economics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and Dr. David A. Grigorian, co-founder of Policy Forum Armenia, will present "Armenia's Economic Development: Prospects for Growth and Risks of Failure," on Wednesday, October 9, at 7:30 p.m. at the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR), 395 Concord Ave.

In this special forum, Acemoglu will discuss his acclaimed book, *Why Nations Fail: The Origins of Power, Prosperity, and Poverty* (2012, co-authored by James A. Robinson). *Why Nations Fail* addresses a question that has stumped the experts for centuries: Why are some nations rich and others poor, divided by wealth and poverty, health and sickness, food and famine?

Economic analyst Grigorian will address the specific case of Armenia today – drawing on Acemoglu's general model and his own experience with the particularities of Armenia and the economic challenges it faces.

Acemoglu received a PhD in economics from the London School of Economics in 1992 and in 2005 he received the John Bates Clark Medal awarded to economists under age 40 judged to have made the most significant contribution to economic thought and knowledge. His books include *Economic Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy* (with James A. Robinson), which was awarded the Woodrow Wilson and the William Riker prizes, *Introduction to Modern Economic Growth* and *Why Nations Fail*.

Grigorian is a senior economist at the International Monetary Fund's Monetary and Capital Markets Department in Washington, DC. He holds a PhD in economics from the University of Maryland at College Park (2001). In his current position, he deals with a wide array of emerging market economies covering issues such as sovereign debt restructuring, public debt management strategy, and capital market development. He is a co-founder of Policy Forum Armenia (www.pf-armenia.org), a



Daron Acemoglu and David Grigorian

501(c)3 non-profit think tank aimed at strengthening discourse on Armenia's economic development and national security.

The NAASR bookstore will open at 7 p.m. the night of the lecture. The program is free and open to the general public.

More information about this program may be had by e-mailing hq@naasr.org.

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COMMUNITY NEWS

Sheehan: These People Made Las Vegas Great

By Jack Sheehan

LAS VEGAS (*Las Vegas Review-Journal*) – Seeing as most Las Vegans have lived here less than 15 years, it's time to conduct a history tutorial. One way of doing this is to compile a top-10 list of the most important people over the past 50 or so years.

I'm not going back to the founders of our city, men such as Raphael Rivera and Antonio Armijo and John C. Fremont, although they would have made the list 100 years ago. I'll stick with those who had the most impact on the city's post-World War II growth and reputation.

I believe the 10 names should be broken down into two fives: undisputed and debatable, meaning that after the first five (in no particular order), you could make a case for about 12 others who deserve to be in the second five.

The Undisputed

Howard Hughes: His mere presence here for four years in the late 1960s did more to legitimize Las Vegas than any other single event. His advisers helped him purchase half a dozen hotels out of the hands of organized crime, and while the public at the time had no idea how debilitated Hughes was during those years, the very idea that the iconic billionaire would choose Las Vegas as a base of operation elevated the perception of Las Vegas a thousand percent at a critical time in our history.

Kirk Kerkorian: Still going strong at 96, Kerkorian on three occasions built the largest hotel in the world in Las Vegas, and he has quietly contributed hundreds of millions of dollars to local charities. MGM Resorts International boss Jim Murren credits Kerkorian's unwavering support for CityCenter becoming a reality. Steve Wynn has called Las Vegas "Kirkville." Enough said.

Parry Thomas: As the president of Bank of Las Vegas, which became Valley

Bank, Thomas was The Money for any gaming operation that wanted to expand from the middle 1950s to the late 1980s. Without Parry's vision, neither the Strip nor UNLV would have reached anything close to their current potential. With his unfailing belief that Las Vegas could be a great American city, he was the valley's key figure for more than 30 years. He's still in good health at 92.

Steve Wynn: Even Las Vegans who arrived a year ago know that Wynn, more than anyone, created the look of the Strip we see today. From his remodel of the Golden Nugget in the early 1980s to the opening of The Mirage in 1989 to the majestic Bellagio in 1998 and his twin properties Wynn and Encore today, when it comes to elegance, ambience, entertainment offerings and more, he set a high bar for all other major developers. Oh, and don't forget Shadow Creek golf course.

Elvis/Frank: It's hard to separate these two when it comes to their importance. Both Presley and Sinatra packed their respective showrooms every night, year after year, but just as important, they filled the seats with high rollers. The fact that two such iconic performers would forever be associated with Las Vegas gives our city an aura of cool that it never would have attained without them.

The debatables

Moe Dalitz: It would be hard to dispute that Moe took his early marching orders from cities such as Miami and Chicago, but he was an outstanding businessman in his own right. He turned the Desert Inn into the hotel on the Strip before selling to Howard Hughes, he ran other properties with great acumen, and he gave generously to the community. In partnership with Irwin Molasky and others, he built Sunrise Hospital, The Boulevard mall and numerous housing developments.

Ralph Lamb: He combined two separate and competitive law enforcement bodies to create the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department – no

easy feat. Ralph was a tough sheriff, but one who knew how to solve problems quickly and efficiently, if not always with political correctness. Lamb mentored several generations of policemen, and he continues to lend advice to all who seek his counsel. Having Dennis Quaid portray him in a prime-time CBS TV series is also pretty tall cotton.

Jerry Tarkanian: Perfectly fitting the Rebel image of his basketball program, the recently inducted Hall of Famer united the town when he took his UNLV hoopsters to four NCAA Final Fours. The blowout national championship win over Duke in 1990 brought Las Vegas together like no event before or since.

Bill Bennett: He made millions in the furniture business in Arizona, went bankrupt and made a remarkable comeback. With his partner Bill Pennington, Bennett took the underdog Circus Circus out of troubled ownership and turned it into a public company in the 1970s and '80s, then made the Forbes 400 with his personal wealth. He understood better than his competition how to bring the Wal-Mart and McDonald's crowd to Las Vegas on a modest budget.

Hank Greenspun: The *Las Vegas Sun* publisher and community booster was in the eye of the hurricane for more than 40 years in Las Vegas. He had thousands of good friends, probably an equal number of enemies, but there is no question he kept locals on their toes from decade to decade. He ran guns to Israel and shouted down red-baiting US Sen. Joe McCarthy, and if you ever crossed him, he'd bash you over the head with his daily column. Hank was harder to ignore than the Stardust sign on the Strip.

Let the debate begin.

(Longtime Las Vegas resident and author Jack Sheehan writes a monthly column for the *Review-Journal*. He says he loves the city, with all its wonder and weirdness, and thinks it offers the richest menu of writing material on the planet. Email him at jshee32110@aol.com)

Armenian Evangelical Church of New York Welcomes Pastor

NEW YORK – On September 1, Haig Kherlopian, delivered his first sermon as the newly elected pastor of the Armenian Evangelical Church. Kherlopian's delivered his opening sermon with a message about building the church on the teachings of Christ.

A graduate of the Princeton seminary, Kherlopian had served as a youth leader in the Armenian Evangelical Church in Havertown during his studies. He also did his internship under the supervision of Rev. Nshan Bakalian in Havertown.

Rev. Levon Filian, the executive director of the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA), was asked to share his thoughts on the occasion and how the AMAA is helping Armenians in Syria.

Filian congratulated Kherlopian and the congregation. He challenged them to work as a team, quoting *Ecclesiastes* 4:12, "a cord of three strands is not quickly broken." According to Filian, the strands should consist of God, the pastor and the congregation. He asked the elders of the church to lift their pastor's hands and support him in all that he does.

Filian praised the Armenian pastors and the teachers in Syria who continue to serve their brethren by risking their lives. He challenged the members of the congregation to pray diligently for peace in Syria, for all people and especially for the Armenians, and asked them to provide financial assistance to Syria funds.

After the church services, the members of the community congregated in the church hall for coffee and dessert.



Rev. Haig Kherlopian and Rev. Levon Filian

Farmers Share Raisins for Church Fundraiser

RAISINS, from page 5

the Virgin Mary – mother of God – we celebrate her honor with the blessing of grapes on the holy altar, and grapes celebrate our thanksgiving offering to God."

David Shapazian was chairman of St. Gregory's parish council in 2011, when the church first discussed asking raisin growers in the congregation to give part of their crop – and others to come on board.

"We are based in Selma and Fowler, the raisin capital of the world," he said. "Why not ask someone to donate a bin of raisins instead of a cash donation?"

"It has been a real eye-opener; a success. We are pretty happy with it," he added.

So far this year, the Raisin Roundup has signed up promises from growers to donate 10 bins. The campaign runs through the end of September when prices will be determined.

Shapazian has stayed closely involved in the campaigns.

"I am willing to get every bin," he said. "I say, 'Have a bin? Where is it? I'll go get it.'"

Growers receive a tax write-off for their donations, but the growers who have donated to the Raisin Roundup say their reasons for giving are more than for tax deductions.

"There are quite a bit of farmers at our church," said Dennis Peters, a St. Gregory parishioner for nearly 40 years. He farms about 300 acres, with grapes, peaches, plums and tangerines, between Fowler and American avenues.

"Armenians, when they came here to the Valley, went into farming and a lot of them still pass on their farms to family. Others pursue other careers, but they have kept the farm and farm on the side."

"It is just a nice way to give some money to the church, by giving a little bit of your crops," he said.

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COMMUNITY NEWS

Artists Dazzle at Detroit TCA Soiree Musicale

BIRMINGHAM, Mich. — Metro Detroiters were treated to an evening of dazzling music at an elegant concert by two internationally-acclaimed musicians from Armenia, at the local Unitarian Church's sanctuary, under the aegis of the Tekeyan Cultural Association's Detroit Chapter. The concert was dedicated to the memory of the late Dr. Garabed Belian, a supporter of the arts in the community. Edmond Azadian served as master of ceremonies.

Each performed solo as well as in a duet. Their musical sounds complemented each other's instruments to perfection.

Violinist Henrik Karapetyan earned his doctorate in violin performance from the University of Michigan. He has won many awards and competitions and has performed at Carnegie Hall, Kennedy Center, Armenian Philharmonic Hall and Komitas Chamber Music Hall, to name a few. He is currently with the Michigan Opera Orchestra and performs close to 200 concerts annually and appears frequently as a concertmaster in the Detroit metropolitan area.

Pianist Karen Hakobyan has emerged as a versatile force on the local music scene. Recently, he appeared in three special concerts at Carnegie Hall and appeared as a soloist across the world, from the US, Japan, Argentina, Mexico, to Puerto Rico and Mongolia. He has won many prestigious competitions and his performances have been broadcast on stations from WQXR New York's Classical radio station, Argentine National Radio, Mexico Op. 102 Radio Station and on Armenian National Radio.

The concert began with Karapetyan playing on "Dr. Belian's own violin," as he said, accompanied by Hakobyan. The melodic *Meditation of Thais* by Massenet, a favorite piece of the late Belian, was also performed.

The young artists showed their high standards by providing a sensitive romanticism, which gave an emotional and nostalgic moment as a start of the concert.

The first half of the Soiree Musicale featured Brahms' *Scherzo from the FAE Sonata*, again a piece requiring high technical ability. Next, they delved into selections from Bach (*Allemande from Partita No. 2 BWV 1004*) per-



Karen Hakobyan performs.



Henrik Karapetyan and Karen Hakobyan during the concert

by the title with a capricious, rhythmic, breath-taking technique.

Then, the audience heard the Michigan premiere of Hakobyan's own composition, *Elegia* (Yeghererg) for violin and orchestra. One could feel the energy of a youthful romanticism emanating from the pure Armenian sensuality. He had composed the piece in 1999, at the age of 14.

In Babadjanian's *Sonata for Violin and*



From left, Karen Hakobyan, MC Edmond Y. Azadian, violinist Henrik Karapetyan, and Hagop Alexanyan in the background



Afterglow panorama



The two performers with the TCA organizing committee, with Nora Azadian, TCA Chairperson, in the middle



MC Edmond Y. Azadian

formed by Karapetyan, Beethoven's *Appassionata* performed with elegance and passion by Hakobyan and Grieg's *Sonata for Violin and Piano No. 1 Op. 8*, performed by both. The highly-technical piece was brilliantly interpreted.

After the intermission, the program was dedicated as the artists named it, to the Jewels of the Armenian classical traditions. Hakobyan played Arno Babadjanian's *Capriccio*, inspired

Piano in B-flat minor, the performers threw themselves in the pure musicality of the Armenian character. Then Karapetyan explained the symbolism of the *Kroonk* (Crane), which flies from the motherland and might bring some news to the expatriates from home.

The program concluded with Edward Bagdassarian's *Armenian Rhapsody*.

A particular Armenian nostalgia comes through and the audience gave them a standing ovation.

After a standing ovation and encore, the audience participated in an afterglow with wine and hors d'oeuvres. Members of the audience had a chance to meet the young musicians and buy copies of their CDs.

The TCA chapter, under the chairmanship of Nora Azadian, planned this musical evening. Leslie Bush Balian was the concert chairperson and Hagop Alexanian was the moving force in every aspect of the affair.



At the reception


New York
METRO

Professor Balakian Meets with Columbia Students

By Taleen Babayan

NEW YORK – More than 20 students gathered at Columbia University over Labor Day weekend to meet Prof. Peter Balakian and learn more about his course this fall as well as upcoming Armenian Studies programming on campus.

Students of all grade levels and fields of study – representing Columbia College, Teachers College and the School of International and Public Affairs among others, met in Lerner Hall on August 31 and listened as Balakian, who is the Ordjanian Visiting Professor in the Department of Middle East, South Asian and African Studies at Columbia University, introduced himself and his fall semester course “Armenian Genocide and the Holocaust: Memory and Representation.”

Balakian, the Rebar Professor of the Humanities in the department of English at Colgate University, is a poet, memoirist and scholar and the author of several prize-winning books about the Armenian Genocide. He has been at the helm of developments relating to historical trauma, genocide, human rights and ethics in American academia over the last 35 years.

“The issues of genocide, trauma, memory and imagination weren’t part of the curriculum 40 years ago. They emerged in scholarly discourse more fully in the 1980s and ’90s. And then the growth was impressive. By the ’90s, genocide studies became a part of the curriculum in cut-



Peter Balakian and students at the Columbia gathering.

ting edge and interdisciplinary ways.” Balakian noted that the curriculum in the US has been very receptive to genocide studies.

“What’s impressive in the US is that our curriculum has been embracing of a human discourse in an interdisciplinary way,” said Balakian. “This has been important for the Armenian history of the Armenian Genocide and for the broader Armenian voice and narrative in the 20th century.”

Expanding on the foundations of his course, Balakian spoke about the interdisciplinary aspect of it, giving students the opportunity to focus their assignments in their respective fields

of study.

Balakian said he finds the comparative part of the course important because the Armenian Genocide and Holocaust have “interesting intersections and historical connections.”

After discussing the premise of the course and Armenian studies-related programming for the fall, which includes a talk by Balakian on September 25 titled, “Terror and Taboo: Going to Turkey,” hosted by the University Seminar on Cultural Memory, Balakian opened the floor to students to express their thoughts and to answer any of their questions.

Students, many of whom are members of the

Armenian Society at Columbia University, appreciated the opportunity to spend an evening with Balakian and have an open forum to learn more about his work and courses and to ask any relevant questions about Armenian studies in university curriculum today.

“It’s always great to see bright young Armenian minds from different backgrounds come together for the benefit of Armenia and our communities,” said Vaché Thomassian, who is studying Economic and Political Development at Columbia’s School of International and Public Affairs. “We also look forward to having Dr. Balakian’s guidance and input in our work with the Armenian Society this year.”

Lucine Kinoian, who is president of the Armenian Society at Columbia University, was inspired by the enthusiasm the group expressed towards Balakian.

“The students demonstrated just how much potential the Armenian Society has,” said Kinoian, who is a graduate student at Teachers College. “I look forward to hosting more events for our group this year that will allow us to further our knowledge and passions in Armenian history and culture.”

Chris Edling, who spent the past three years as a Peace Corps volunteer in Syunik, Armenia, and who is now a student in Columbia’s School of the Arts, enjoyed the event. He said, “To have such a prominent scholar set aside an evening for students is rare and it is truly a credit to the character of both Professor Balakian and the Armenian Society at Columbia.”

AGBU’s Virtual College Introduces Free Chess Course for Fall

NEW YORK – The AGBU Armenian Virtual College (AVC) announces the launch of its newest program, a free chess course developed in collaboration with the Armenian Chess Federation. Designed by world-famous chess players for students of all levels and ages, the class is the latest addition to AVC’s diverse course catalogue.

The chess course improves students’ concen-

tration, creativity, and strategic thinking by relying on the latest technologies and e-learning practices. Describing the program, AVC founder and AGBU Central Board member Dr. Yervant Zorian stated, “AVC’s online experience in multimedia techniques has been utilized to make the classes visually attractive, grab participants’ attention, and make the learning process fun and enjoyable.” Lessons incorpo-

rate the expertise of award-winning Armenian chess champions, with step-by-step instruction offered by chess grandmasters at each of the courses’ basic, intermediate and advanced levels.

AVC’s latest addition has been met with praise by international chess professionals. During the World Chess Federation’s Presidential Board meeting, which was hosted in Armenia in January, Armenian Chess Federation Vice President Smbat Lputyan applauded the AVC model. “To achieve greater results, jointly with AGBU, we started developing online chess courses,” he remarked. “Leveraging the online teaching experience of the Armenian Virtual College, we recorded admirable achievements by targeting different age groups, from children to adults, using varying teaching methods”

The course will also help advance Armenia’s Ministry of Education’s mission to promote chess among public school students. In 2011, the ministry mandated chess in schools’ curriculum to help the country maintain its status as home of the world’s top-ranking players. At the January meeting, World Chess Federation President Kirsan Ilyumzhinov emphasized the important place that Armenia holds in the global chess scene, crediting its educational initiatives. The AVC chess program is open to all students in Armenia and internationally.

The AVC fall term will run from October 7 to December 10. To register, email enrollment@avc-agbu.org.

AGBU’s Armenian Virtual College (AVC) is the world’s first accredited distance learning program that aims to facilitate Armenian studies through new technologies. Courses in Armenian language, history, and culture, are offered in seven languages of instruction: Western and Eastern Armenian, English, French, Russian, Spanish, and Turkish. Launched in 2009, AVC classes are open to anyone who is interested in Armenian studies, delivering a virtual classroom to students who do not have access to traditional, face-to-face Armenian educational programs, while supplementing the curriculum of those who do. Lessons are tailored to each student’s individual needs – regardless of their age, country of residence or knowledge level – to ensure that all can benefit from this unique resource. To date, more than 2,700 students have enrolled from more than 60 countries.

Columbia University to Host Balakian’s Talk on Traveling to Turkey

NEW YORK – Prof. Peter Balakian will deliver a talk titled, “Terror and Taboo: Going to Turkey,” on Wednesday, September 25, 6-9 p.m. at Columbia University’s Faculty House.

Hosted by the University Seminar on Cultural Memory, Balakian, who is the Rebar professor of humanities at Colgate University and the visiting Ordjanian professor of Armenian Studies at Columbia University, will discuss the complications and difficulties of returning to the place of his father’s birth and his family origin, Istanbul, which was Constantinople when his family left as refugees of the Armenian Genocide in 1922.

“In my family, the Armenian past in Turkey was a fraught and repressed issue,” said Balakian, the author of *Black Dog of Fate* and *The Burning Tigris: The Armenian Genocide and America’s Response*. He added, “The word Turkey evoked a haunted place. How does one approach this lost place with this weight of history?”

In the decades following the Armenian Genocide, where 1.5 million Armenians perished at the hands of the Young Turk government of the Ottoman Empire, the Turkish government has actively pursued a worldwide campaign to deny the massacres of 1915. As a poet, memoirist and scholar, Balakian’s work has immersed him in the history of the Genocide and its aftermath.

“Peter Balakian is one of the foremost writers on the memory and transmission of the Armenian genocide to younger generations,” said Marianne Hirsch, co-director of the University Seminar on Cultural Memory, which hosts discussions of return and discovery of memory on sites of past atrocity. “We are eager to hear how his first visit to Turkey and his confrontation with the history of his ancestors has inflected his inherited memories of the Armenian Genocide.”

The Faculty House is located at 64 Morningside Drive. This event is free and open to the public.

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Arts & Living

Special Award to Go to Sid Haig, Matthew Van Dyke and Sev Ohanian At Arpa Film Festival

LOS ANGELES – The 16th Annual Arpa International Film Festival (September 26 -29, Egyptian Theatre, Hollywood) this week announced the members of the 2013 jury, along with the nominations for the nine awards they will grant. Festival Director Alex Kalognomos also announced this year's Special Awards recipients, Actor Sid Haig and Producers Matthew Van Dyke ("Not Anymore: A Story of Revolution") and Sev Ohanian ("Fruitvale Station"). The honorees will be feted at the festival's Closing Night Gala on Sunday, September 29 at 7:30 p.m. with red carpet and screening of the film, "Masque," directed by Robert Hatch. The closing night gala will include a dinner reception.

Arpa founder and head, Sylvia Minassian, noted that, "The 2013 nominees and Special Awards recipients Matthew Van Dyke and Sev Ohanian truly reflect the festival's core philosophy, which is to cultivate cultural understanding and global empathy. These are films which shed light on people and places that Los Angeles audiences might only know from the news. Matthew's film follows two people on the front lines of the conflict in Syria, while Sev's



Sid Haig

film shows the tragic effects of cultural divide here in the United States."

Minassian continued, "Our Lifetime Achievement Award goes to Sid Haig in recognition of a remarkable and ongoing career in which he has and will continue create memorable characters. We are honored to applaud him for his contributions to the cinematic community"

Van Dyke is the recipient of this year's Armin T. Wegner Humanitarian Award – named after the German author and human rights activist who documented the Armenian Genocide through photographs – for the documentary short "Not Anymore: A Story of Revolution." The film follows two young Syrians, Mowya, a 32-year-old rebel commander and 24-year-old female journalist, Nour, in Aleppo, Syria. Both have had their lives torn apart by the war.

Producer and Arpa alumni Sev Ohanian, whose film, "My Big Fat Armenian Family," entertained audiences at the 2008 Arpa festival, will receive the 2013 Breakthrough Filmmaker Award for his award-winning "Fruitvale Station." The film, which was the winner of both the Grand Jury Prize for dramatic feature and the Audience Award for US dramatic film at the 2013 Sundance Film Festival, and, a Best First Feature for Director Ryan Coogler at the Cannes Film Festival in May, tells the story of Oscar Grant whose fateful encounter at the Fruitvale subway stop on New Year's Day 2009 rocked the nation to its very core.

see ARPA, page 12



Vigen Chaldranian

Chaldranian's 'Silence' Thrills Audience

ARLINGTON, Mass. – Something extraordinary happened on Wednesday, August 28, at the Arlington Regent Theatre, which will be long remembered and cherished by every person who attended the showing of Vigen Chaldranian's, "Voice Of Silence," a movie, filled with wisdom and surprises.

An international award-winning producer/director, artist and filmmaker from Armenia, Chaldranian thrilled the audience ranging in age from 12 to 90, with his masterful artistry and richly endowed philosophical storyline, which wove carefully through a troubled world corrupted with greed, selfishness and hypocrisy.

The story is told through the voice of Mariam Davtyan, who plays the role of Jiji, a young woman who endured domestic violence, other extreme difficulties and survived, living hidden in a sandpit dump with broken down cars and stray dogs. She is discovered by John, a visitor from California who is entranced by her ability to overcome severe obstacles in her life with brief breakthroughs into what a delightful, fun-loving, intelligent young woman she must have been.

Chaldranian brilliantly directed Davtyan, to be able to reach into the depth of her soul to passionately convey Jiji's tragic life through Chaldranian's philosophical analysis. Her dramatic dialogue with John, acted by Chaldranian, touched a nerve when she asked why there had to be so much indifference in the world with its great pain



Vigen Chaldranian, right, with Eva Medzorian and translator Aram, on left

and suffering, which followed by her carefree, eccentric dancing with wild abandon on the roof of an old broken down truck, to John, who was banging rhythmically on the empty, discarded oil drum. It showed humanity's good and evil sides. Jiji found joy and fulfillment in the very simple things of life, always on the search for tranquility and peace of mind.

see CHALDRANIAN, page 11

Revisiting Krikor Zohrab's Istanbul Home

By Garen Kazanc

ISTANBUL – As I approached the Cerle d'Orient amidst the hustle and bustle of the Beyoglu district of today's Istanbul, I could not help but remind myself what happened there the night of May 21, 1915. It was in this building where Krikor Zohrab was playing cards with Talaat Pasha while bargaining the latter to set free those Armenian notables who were apprehended just a month ago and sent to unknown destinations in Anatolia.

That night, Zohrab came to the table with his own cards to play. A skilled negotiator, he sincerely believed that he could haggle his way with Talaat and save as many lives as he could, even if that meant his own. After all, there appeared to be a glimmer of hope. Just a week before, Komitas and others were set free and returned to Constantinople. Zohrab felt that this was a giant breakthrough which he could take advantage of.

After the tense atmosphere subsided, the card session ended unusually early that night. Upon saying their farewells, Talaat stood up and unhesitatingly gave Zohrab a kiss on the cheek. "Why such affection?" Zohrab asked. "Oh," Talaat responded with a smile, "I just felt like doing it."

I started the walk from Cerle d'Orient down Rue de Pera (now Istiklal Avenue) to Zohrab's residence, the same walk he took home that night. I walked slower than usual. My feet were becoming weary and shaking, as though they were feeling his pain in some strange way. I thought about what Zohrab was thinking while walking back home that night, through these streets alone, with the burden of millions of people on his shoulders. Was he confident? Was he confused? No one will ever know. But we know of one thing, the walk home that night, was to be his last.

After walking down the winding road that leads up to the Zohrab family residence, I had a sensation of just running away. I knew that in front of this elegant building, built by an Italian architect commissioned by Zohrab himself, were guards waiting to arrest him. I had the pleasant opportunity of entering the house. Zohrab, on the other hand, did not.

I took the long flight of stairs leading to the top floor of the building, and to my see ZOHHRAB, page 12



Outside his former house



ARTS & LIVING

Worcester Armenian Chorale Presents 13th Concert

By Charles Der Kazarian

WORCESTER, Mass. — The Greater Worcester Armenian Chorale presented its 13th Annual Gala Concert and Dinner on Sunday, September 8, in the Cultural Center of the Armenian Church Of Our Saviour. The Chorale is under the direction of Konstantin Petrossian, Artistic Director and Conductor.

Following dinner and words of welcome from Edward Atamian, chairman of the Armenian Church Of Our Saviour Parish Council, and Richard Greenhalge, chairman of the Holy Trinity Armenian Apostolic Church Board Of Trustees, Father Henry Donoghue, a longtime supporter of the Chorale, delivered the Benediction.

City Proclamations were then presented by Worcester Mayor Joseph Petty, declaring “Greater Worcester Armenian Chorale Day” in honor of the occasion, to Petrossian, Reverend Aved Terzian of the Armenian Church of Our Saviour, and Rev. Dr. Khatachadour Boghossian of Holy Trinity Armenian Apostolic Church. Both churches have co-sponsored the event since its start in 2000.

The concert featured the Arevig Children’s Dance Group with choreography by Ani Yaghmourian who also performed a special dance. The guest soloist was soprano Narine Ojakhyan of New York City. Karine Avanesov accompanied on the piano with Mark Donabedian on the dumbeg.



Soprano Narine Ojakhyan

The Chorale’s selections were in a lighter vein this year, including two songs from the opera “Anoush,” *AmpeeTakits* and *Hambatsoom Yayla*. A highlight was a rousing rendition of *Vara-Vara* led by Tenor Vasken Yaghmourian, who brought much enthusiasm and joy to the piece.

Ojakhyan received her bachelor’s degree and

post-graduate diploma at Komitas State Conservatoire, attended the Royal Academy of Music in London and earned her master’s degree in opera performance, receiving the Royal Academy Honorary Diploma. She has participated in numerous prestigious festivals, is a winner of several competitions, and performs regularly in New York City.

Ojakhyan performed both Armenian songs and operatic arias, exhibiting a clear and powerful voice, yet filled with delicate shadings and vibrant emotion. She enchanted the audience with her wonderful performances, filling the hall with eloquent articulation and expressive passion. She received a standing ovation at the end of her final number and responded with an encore that was a total delight.

Boghossian gave the benediction and praised and thanked Petrossian, the Chorale and the children of Arevig. He also thanked the Worcester-Armenian Community for its support and affection during his nine years as Pastor of Holy Trinity Armenian Apostolic Church. It was a bittersweet moment as he and his wife, Yeretzgin Marie, are returning to France on September 16 for permanent residence.

The Greater Worcester Armenian

Chorale is looking forward to the 14th Anniversary Concert next year and continuing, as stated in Mayor Petty’s Proclamation, its dedication “...to the preservation and promotion of the rich musical heritage of the Armenian people.”

For more information on the Chorale, visit its website at www.armenianchorale.com.



The Worcester Armenian Chorale, led by conductor Konstantin Petrossian

Vigen Chaldranian Thrills Audience

CHALDRANIAN, from page 10

The movie was full of contrast and ran like a rollercoaster ride.

Davtyan won the best actress award in a competition in Armenia.

The Armenian International Women’s Association (AIWA) presented this program where a portion of the proceeds will benefit the “Women’s Support Center in Yerevan.”

Directly following the movie, Chaldranian thanked AIWA for sponsoring the movie and all those who were responsible for its success which included, Eva Medzorian, Chair; Suzanna Soukiasian, Paul Boghossian, Arlette



Vigen Chaldranian, flanked by Suzanna Soukiasian, left, and Eva Medzorian

Yegoumians and Tatoul Badalian. Special thanks were given to translator, Arman.

Chaldranian said, “My films are created not so much using my conscience as much as my heart, since one’s conscience can be heartless, but the heart conveys soul conscience.”

A lively question-and-answer period followed. In appreciation, Chaldranian was given a standing ovation by an enthusiastic audience.

In 2001 he won the Movses Khorenatsi Medal from the President of the Republic of Armenia; 2006 Anahit Award from the Republic of Armenia Union of Cinematographers for his monumental input into the Armenian Film Industry; 2007 Title of Honorary Worker of Art for the Republic of Armenia; 2008 Western European Academy of Sciences and Arts awarded him the Prof. Sofi Takhalova’s Golden Star Award in the Netherlands, among his many awards.

“Voice” also won several prizes in Armenia and international festivals.

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ARTS & LIVING

Pianist Sahan Arzruni to Perform in NY

By Florence Avakian

NEW YORK – On Sunday, October 20, at 2 p.m., pianist, ethnomusicologist, writer and lecturer Sahan Arzruni will perform at the Armenian Evangelical Church in a special program of Armenian and traditional compositions.

The artist, who has previously appeared at the Armenian Evangelical Church, said in a recent conversation, “Although I am usually identified with Armenian piano music, on this occasion I will be performing Chopin, Beethoven and Schubert, in addition to Komitas, Khachaturian, Babadjanian and Alan Hovhanness.”

His new CD featuring Arzruni playing the complete piano works of Komitas, will also be available for purchase.

Very Different Animals

“People often ask the difference between live and recorded performances,” said Arzruni. “They are two different animals. A live performance is like a piece of theatre; each performance is different. A recorded performance on the other hand, is like a piece of cinema, with each viewing being the same. As such, the two – a live performance versus a recorded performance – should be deemed as two separate art forms,” he explained. “Two different yardsticks should be used in evaluating them. In a live per-

formance, the player has a single chance whereas in a recorded performance, several takes are recorded and passages from various takes are put together for the best version. The recording process is more complex than playing live concerts,” he added.

“Many people imagine that a composer writes a piece of music, and the performer simply plays the notes on the instrument...voila,” he continued. “Not so. What is written on the printed page is only a minuscule portion of the music. A diagram, if you will. The role of the interpreter is to re-create what is on the page. Most of what I do when I perform comes out of my own personal experiences – my life, my musical background, my past exposures. Each artist has a point of view so that his interpretation is unique, different and enriching,” he said.

Shine a New Light with Different Shadows

Arzruni, who has performed at the White House and around the world, commented that “if one is an artist of significance, then he or she brings a new perspective, and is able to radiate a new light.” He went on to say, “The professional should be able to shine a spotlight. The angle of the spotlight may change from performance to performance, but the shine is always there, albeit with different shadows. An artist is always aspiring to achieve that special moment when the shadows are just right.”

With a career spanning several decades, Arzruni is now in the process of “looking back at what I have done, a denouement (a culmi-

nation), a gathering of things, and a pulling together of loose ends.” At present, he is digitizing and re-mastering two dozen commercial LPs. Among them, a set of three LPs, “An Anthology of Armenian Piano Music” was released in the early 1980’s, underwritten by the Alex Manoogian Foundation and put out by the Musical Heritage Society. “There is so much great music and good playing in the collection,

material that should be re-introduced and re-visited. It is endlessly fascinating.”

A Fountainhead of Armenian Music

Born in Istanbul, Sahan Arzruni came to this country at an early age, and went on to graduate from the esteemed Juilliard School. He has organized symposia and given lectures at Harvard and Columbia Universities, the University of Michigan and the US Library of Congress. He has performed with Victor Borge as the “straight man” for several years, and has been featured on national and European television and radio broadcasts. In 2008, he was awarded an “Honorary Professorship” from Yerevan’s Komitas State Conservatory.

A well-known Komitas specialist, he was introduced at a young age to the music of the great master. At age 19, Arzruni was asked to be the organist of the Armenian church choir located in the Istanbul district of Kurucesme, where for two and a half years he played the Komitas Badarak. He called Komitas, “the fountainhead of Armenian music. If not for him, we would have a completely different profile today.”

It was Arzruni who was largely responsible in re-introducing the music of Komitas to the Turks. Just a month ago, in his recital program at Anadolu University in Eskisehir – the world’s second largest university with a student population of 1.9 million – Arzruni included a large chunk of Komitas’ compositions. A Turkish delegation from Kutahya where Komitas was born, was present at the concert, “because they are planning to convert the home where Komitas was born into a museum. They now consider Komitas to be an Armenian composer of Turkish origin. Previously, his contribution was not even talked about,” he explained.

The Armenian Evangelical Church is located at 152 East 34th Street. For more information or ticket prices, contact info@AECNYC.org. The concert is co-chaired by Louise Tezel and Hilda Melconian.



Sahan Arzruni

Revisiting Krikor Zohrab’s Istanbul Home

ZOHRAB, from page 10

surprise, it has now become a hotel. “How may I help you?” asked the receptionist upon seeing me. “I came to see this building,” I responded hesitantly. “It used to be a residence owned by a distant relative of mine.”

Almost instantaneously, the entire staff turned their heads towards me and listened to every word I had to say. Like some sort of magician, I felt as though I was going to unravel a show. I was to talk about a past, much more distant than it actually seemed.

A member of the staff broke the ice. “Let us show you around and please, tell us more about your relative,” he said out of sincere curiosity. “Please,” I said, “just take me to the balcony.”

This was the balcony where Zohrab wrote much of his writings. Here, Zohrab would return from his tumultuous daily activities and concentrate on what he loved most: writing. The Bosphorus, with all its beauty, spooled out in front of him, encouraging him, inspiring him.

It was this very balcony, which his daughter Dolores yearned for so much, as she wrote in her memoirs, thousands of miles away in exile.

With her father killed and her entire family exiled, she wanted nothing else in this world, but to sit on this balcony, next to her father, while he wrote his next short story, and as she enjoys the scenic view.

“Who was he? What’s his name?”

“His name was Krikor Zohrab,” I responded, while gazing fixedly at the scenery.

“What did he do?”

Turning towards him I replied, “He was an engineer, lawyer, professor, journalist, politician, short story writer, philanthropist, husband, and a father of four.”

After much silence, the man appeared to think I was exaggerating. “That’s impressive,” he simply remarked.

“You’re not here to reclaim this property are you?” he asked in a rather serious tone.

Amused by his question, I assured him, “No, heavens, no. This was private property that was sold right before the family fled to Europe.”

“Fled?” he asked cautiously.

“Yes,” I responded briskly, not being in the mood to explain.

The balcony used to be one long stretch, but

it is now divided into separate rooms, each having their own piece of the magnificent view. The designers of the hotel did a remarkable job of keeping the original framework of the structure intact. Much of the additions to the building can be easily removed since they aren’t fixated on the walls. Their intentions were to retain as much of the original structural characteristics as possible. I especially thanked them for their attentive efforts.

After taking a few photographs of the view and the balcony, the man invited me to have a cup of tea. I agreed. The rest of the staff also arrived. It happened to be their tea break.

I showed pictures of Krikor Zohrab on my phone and answered their questions about his life and works. Then they asked, “When did he die?”

“1915,” I responded.

They stood silent, almost ashamed.

I began to wonder, was this the first time that the dreadful year of 1915 was uttered in this building since that very year? I felt like this was an interrogation of some sort. A scene of a murder, where in some odd twist of fate, the murderers were interviewing me.

But no, that was not the case. These were human beings, much like myself, who were curious – curious the same way I was when I first started reading and learning about Zohrab myself. After much discussion, it was time for me to go. I thanked all those that gave me the wonderful tour and provided their delightful hospitality. As I was leaving, I was still awe-inspired by the magnificence of the structure, with its scenic views and elegant design.

Right when I was about to step out of the building, an older man abruptly came over to see me. He was the owner of the hotel, who just so happened to overhear the conversation of the tea session. He looked straight into my eyes, with his hand on my shoulder and said, “I will hang his portrait in the entrance of the hotel with a brief biography.”

When I heard this, I was in complete shock as it was entirely unexpected. Almost automatically I begged, “No, no, you don’t need to.”

“Please,” he responded, “it really is the least I can do.”

I stood there, with tears in my eyes, and said, “Thank you” and left.

Have they put the portrait up? I don’t know,



Krikor Zohrab

and quite frankly, I don’t care. Another visitor of the hotel can provide those updates. But this personal experience was neither about the portrait, nor the scenic views. This was about a man, whose influence and power still resonates with us today.

He was a man full of wonder, to say the least, who saw the world not only as a writer, but as a lawyer, politician, professor, and more. I happened to live just one day of his life, but it felt like a lifetime, which reminded me that he is someone we can still learn from, whose skills and talents still amaze us until this day.

Today, his bones remain lost and yet to be found: unfitting for a man of such stature. But that should not matter. He is so awe-inspiring that his influence will be everlasting, much like his short stories, speeches, and residence, with all of its magnificence and splendor as well.

(Born in Paris to Armenians from Turkey, Garen Kazanc moved at a young age to Los Angeles, where he attended and graduated from the Armenian Mesrobian School in 2006 and received a BS in sociology from Cal State Los Angeles. He was also an active member of Hamazkayin and is part of the Armenian Poetry Project.)

Special Award to Go to Sid Haig, Matthew Van Dyke and Sev Ohanian at Arpa Film Festival

ARPA, from page 10

This year’s special awards include Lifetime Achievement Award recipient, Sid Haig, whose 50-year acting career includes more than 80 films and 350 television series. Haig’s performances include such films as “Hatchet 3,” “The Devil’s Rejects,” “Jackie Brown,” “Kill Bill: Volume 2” and “The House of 1,000 Corpses” earned him an induction into the Horror Hall of Fame along with the cache of being one of the major horror icons of the 21st century.

This year’s jury includes actor, producer and writer Charles Agron (“Haunted”), actor James Duke Mason (“What Happens Next”), producer and 2013 Breakthrough Filmmaker Award recipient Sev Ohanian (“Fruitvale Station”), award-winning actor/playwright Felix Pire (“12 Monkeys”), award-winning producer Howard Rosenman (“Common Threads: Stories from the Quilt”) and British writer/filmmaker Sebastian Siegel (“Love Sex God. Part 1, Awakening World.”).



Sev Ohanian



ARTS & LIVING

CALENDAR

FLORIDA

OCTOBER 26-27 – St. Mary Armenian Church Armenian Food & Music Fest 2013, Saturday, 11 a.m.-10 p.m. and Sunday, 12 noon- 7 p.m. Armenian food and pastries including Mediterranean specialties, arts & crafts vendors, live music and children's area; 4050 NW 100 Ave., Cooper City. For info, call (954)-450-5578 or email: stmaryfl@aol.com

MASSACHUSETTS

SEPTEMBER 21 – Armenian Independent Broadcasting of Boston presents Avik Deirmenjian's newly published book of poems, *Khachardzan*, 5 p.m. MC Dr. Ara Ghazarian, book presentation by Khajag Mkrtychian, cultural program and reception to follow; free admission; Armenian Cultural Foundation, 441 Mystic St., Arlington.

SEPTEMBER 22 – Norton Dodge Collection Exhibit Opening: Armenian Art from the Post-Soviet Period, including art by Vartan Gabrielian and Ashot Kazarian; 5 p.m., Guest Nancy Dodge; reception to follow; ALMA's second floor, 65 Main St., Watertown.

SEPTEMBER 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. Join us for a delicious losh kebab and kheyra dinner, \$7.99 per person; tickets on sale at the door. Regular monthly raffle drawing at 8 p.m. "One-time" numbers will be sold on the night of dinner; special offer: purchase five "one-time" numbers for \$20, saving \$5. First time ever – chance to win a One-Year Club Membership for those attending the dinner. For further info, contact the church office, 617.354.0632.

SEPTEMBER 28 – Story SLAM workshop with Nora Dooley of Massmouth. 4-6 p.m. at ALMA, 65 Main St., Watertown. Learn to tell a story! Topic will be objects that have special meaning in our lives, so bring an object or heirloom to discuss. \$5 donation appreciated.

SEPTEMBER 28 – Smithsonian Magazine's Annual Museum Day: Free Admission to ALMA. Admission tickets available for download on the Museum Day Live! Website. One ticket admits one person, plus a guest; 65 Main St., Watertown.

SEPTEMBER 28 – Annual "Walk of Life" Walk-a-thon, New England Chapter of the Armenian Bone Marrow Donor Registry (ABMDR), in Watertown. To register or donate, visit <http://www.abmdr.am>.

OCTOBER 5 – Fall Reunion Dance hosted by the St. James ACYOA Seniors, Watertown, St. James Armenian Church, 465 Mount Auburn St., Charles Mosesian Cultural and Youth Center, Keljik Hall, Featuring Markos and the Hayasa Band! All ages welcome. Mezze will be served. Tickets: \$35 in advance/\$40 at the door, \$20 Children 12 and under. Tables of 10 may be reserved with advance payment. Tickets: Aaron Derderian amderderian@gmail.com 781-264-8680

OCTOBER 5 – "Inheriting the Light:" In Conversation with Diana Der Hovanesian and Nancy Kricorian, 5-7 p.m., ALMA, 65 Main St., Watertown. Poet Der Hovanesian and novelist Kricorian will engage in a dialogue about how family and communal history have inspired and shaped their writings. \$5 donation appreciated.

OCTOBER 13 – Sts. Vartanantz Armenian Church in Chelmsford will celebrate the 35th anniversary of its consecration. His Eminence Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate of the Diocese of the Armenian



On October 24, 7 p.m., the K. George and Carolann S. Najarian MD Lecture on Human Rights will feature keynote speaker Siddharth Kara at Faneuil Hall in Boston, Mass. Kara is a fellow at the Carr Center Program on Human Trafficking & Modern Slavery at the Harvard Kennedy School of Government and will lecture on the topic, "In Our Midst: Slavery Unmasked." For more information, contact Barbara Tellalian at (617) 332-1880.

Church of America (Eastern) will preside. Following divine liturgy, ordination of sub-deacons and acolytes will be conducted. Fellowship reception at 1 p.m., followed by dinner at 1:30 p.m. Donation \$35. At the banquet the Primate will present the St. Vartan Award to Patricia Amboian and George Simonian, for their years of dedicated service to the church. Advance reservations requested by September 25. Contact Rose Amboian at (978) 256-3430 or Patty Kayajanian at (978) 937-9379.

OCTOBER 18 and 19 – St. James Annual Bazaar! Delicious shish, losh, kheyra and more! Fabulous pastries, manti, kufte and toorshi! Children's activities, vendors galore, farmer's market. Fun! Friends! Family! 11 a.m. to 9 p.m., daily, at the church hall, 465 Mount Auburn St., Watertown.

OCTOBER 19 – Hye Kef 5, featuring Leon Janikian, Joe Kouyoumjian, Greg Takvorian, Ken Kalajian, Bob Raphaelian and Jay Baronian, Haverhill, 7:30 pm., Michael's Function Hall, 12 Alpha St. Tickets \$40, students \$30. Includes individually-served mezza platters. Proceeds to benefit all Armenian churches in Merrimack Valley and New Hampshire. Call either John Arzigian, 6-03-560-3826, Sandy Boroyan, 978-251-8687, Scott Sahagian, 617-699-3581, or Peter Gulezian, 978-375-1616. No tickets will be sold at the door. For advance tickets, please call a committee member. Organized by Armenian Friends of America.

OCTOBER 24 – K. George and Carolann S. Najarian MD Lecture on Human Rights: In Our Midst: Slavery Unmasked; 7 p.m., Faneuil Hall, Boston, with keynote speaker Siddharth Kara, fellow at the Carr Center Program on Human Trafficking & Modern Slavery, Harvard Kennedy School of Government. Contact Barbara Tellalian for more info: 617-332-1880.

OCTOBER 26 – Fall Harvest Bazaar, First Armenian Church, 380 Concord Ave., Belmont. Noon – 8 p.m. Armenian delicacies - manti, choreg, kufte and more. Enjoy kebab dinners (lamb, beef or chicken with pilaf and salad,) losh, boreg, paklava, pastries and more in our festive hall or takeout. 617-484-4779, or www.firstarmenianchurch.org. Handicapped and MBTA accessible.

NOVEMBER 16 – Second annual Mer Doon Benefit Dance, 7:30 p.m. to 1 a.m., Charles Mosesian Cultural and Youth Center, 465 Mount Auburn Street, Watertown. Featuring John Berberian, Bob Mougamian, Mal Barsamian. For tickets and table reservations, please call Mark at 61-256-5358.

NOVEMBER 16 – Armenian Women's Welfare Association (AWWA) 38th Annual Luncheon/Auction, 11 a.m. at the Burlington Marriot, 1 Burlington Mall Road. Event kicks off with a silent auction and bidding; Visa and MasterCard accepted, tickets \$60. For reservations, contact awwaauction@gmail.com.

DECEMBER 6 AND 7 – Trinity Christmas Bazaar, Friday, 3-9 p.m., Saturday, 10 a.m. to 7 p.m., Holy Trinity Armenian Church, 145 Brattle St., Cambridge.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

SEPTEMBER 28 – Shish Kebab Supper at the Ararat Armenian Congregational Church, 4:30-7:30 p.m; tickets at the door; 2 Salem St., Salem.

NOVEMBER 3 – Ararat Armenian Congregational Church Celebrates 100 Years: 1913-2013. Join the historic Armenian American community of Southern NH for a celebration lunch at Tuscan Kitchen restaurant, 67 Main St., Salem; 1 p.m. For tickets and sponsorship opportunities, contact janigian@comcast.net.

NEW JERSEY

SEPTEMBER 22 – The Armenian Relief Society of Eastern United States, Agnoui, Pergen, Shake and Spitak Chapters, presents Poet and author Vahan Zanoian, as he launches a tour of the US and Canada for his new book, *A Place Far Away*, 2 p.m., Sts. Vartanantz Church, 461 Bergen Blvd., Ridgfield. Refreshments will be served.

NEW YORK

SEPTEMBER 26 – Vahan Zanoian will speak and sign copies of his new book, *A Place Far Away*, his new novel on human trafficking in Armenia, 7 p.m., at the Haik and Alice Kavookjian Auditorium, 630 Second Ave. Jointly sponsored by the Armenian Studies program of the Department of Youth and Education, the Krikor and Clara Zohrab Information Center of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern) and the Fund for Armenian Relief. All Proceeds from the book are being donated to organizations devoted to protecting children.

NOVEMBER 23-24 – TCA Mher Megerdchian Theatrical Group celebrates 15th Anniversary with production of Hagop Baronian's "The Perils of Politeness" (Kaghakavaroutyan Vnasneruh) directed by Gagik Karapetyan from Armenia; Dwight Englewood High School, 315 E. Palisade Ave., Englewood, NJ. Nov. 23, Saturday at 8 p.m. and Nov. 24, Sunday at 4 p.m. For tickets; \$50, \$35, \$25; call Marie Zokian (201)745-8850 or Missak Boghosian at (212)819-0097 or (347)365-6985.

Every Object Has a Story: Story Slam with Norah Dooley at ALMA

WATERTOWN – Award-winning author and storyteller Norah Dooley leads an exciting workshop at ALMA on Saturday, September 28 from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. This workshop is open to all and funded in part by the Watertown Community Foundation and by Judith Saryan.

Participants will be coached by workshop leader Dooley in learning the art of storytelling. The session combines entertainment, listening to others tell their stories and learning to tell one's own story so that others will listen. The topic will be objects that have special meaning

in individual's lives. Participants all bring their own object – an ordinary household item or a special heirloom – all are important.

One's own material possessions may not have as many centuries of stories as those in the Armenian Library and Museum of America (ALMA) but they are important. Such an object could be a piece of jewelry, a gift received, or something found that developed into a personal treasure. It could also be a favorite article of clothing, a picture, a photo, or a much used tool or pen. All of these tell a story about us, our

times and who we are.

The workshop begins with a short concert of stories by winners of massmouth story slams. After a short break for refreshments, all participants join in games and exercises designed to turn personal experiences into a story. The next step is optional, turning a story into a performance. Finally, names are drawn at random for people to tell a 3-4 minute story, an exciting storyslam competition with everyone a winner.

Dooley is "an entrancing storyteller" (*Boston Globe*), teacher/coach, frequent keynote speak-

er and featured participant in the Christmas and Spring Revels and other festivals. Co-founder of massmouth (www.massmouth.ning.com) and project director of StoriesLive, a curriculum-based, high school storytelling initiative, she is also an author and has created spoken word CDs.

The event is open to the public. A donation of \$5 is appreciated. Refreshments will follow the program.

For further information contact ALMA at info@almainc.org



COMMENTARY

THE ARMENIAN Mirror Spectator

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COMMENTARY

Independence at What Price?

By Edmond Azadian

It is a delightful autumn night in Yerevan. Streets are bustling with people. Families are strolling along boulevards and the city lights create an idyllic atmosphere. The illuminated city floats like a love boat in the ocean of the balmy night. My friends from Poland admire the kindness of the people around. They observe the authentic Armenian character of the buildings around and even in the modern stores. One particular liquor store sparks their interest – the Noah's Ark House on Amirian Street. As we enter, the haul of Noah's Ark, the host greets the visitor. Spirits distilled in Armenia and around the world line up in elegant bottles. Perhaps Noah himself never visualized that his ark would float over such a vast sea of light and opulence.

The illuminations at Republic Square, at the Opera House and the Cascade reminds us of the Renaissance Italian city of Vicenza, with the modern descendant of the Italian architect Andrea Palladio, Alexander Tamanyan's monument commanding the city from the foot of the Cascade.

However, I am reluctant to point to my foreign friends the discrepancy between the capital and the rural areas 20 miles outside the city, where people live in medieval conditions. I allow them the illusion of a prosperous and happy country as I myself also delve into that illusion for a moment until I remember the 22nd anniversary of independence which is around the corner. And I begin to ask myself, how long will this illusion last with the current rate of demographic hemorrhage? The question gnaws away at my heart as I begin to think of the dangers facing Armenia.

After six centuries of foreign domination, independence came to Armenia in 1918. That did not last long as Armenia was absorbed in 1920 into the Soviet Empire with a semi-independent status. When Armenia became independent in the 20th century for a second time, the two-and-a-half year experience of earlier independence became a psychological barrier which we crossed unscathed and now the 22nd year of independence sounds very natural.

In both cases, independence was thrust upon the Armenian people. Our patriotism behooves us to believe and profess that we indeed fought for our independence and that victory at Sardarabad against the General Karabekir's forces gave us the foundations of nation-building. But, in reality, the collapse of the Czarist Empire created a political vacuum in the Caucasus region, which led to the formation of a confederation called Sayme by Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan, which did not last very long and each constituent group was forced to declare its independence as all three nationalities had internal conflicts and territorial claims from each other. Armenia was the last one to declare independence on May 28, 1918, yet the newly-created state apparatus, called the National Council (Azkayin Khorhourt) continued functioning in Tbilisi, until the Georgians politely invited Armenia's political structure out of their country.

After two-and-a-half years of independence, Armenia lost its sovereignty under pressure from outside forces and as a result of internal fights. We have a tendency of blaming others for our tragedies and never take responsibility for them.

Next door, meanwhile, Mustafa Kemal carved a new republic from the ashes of the Ottoman Empire, by courting Lenin in the East and the European powers in the West. While pursuing these political aims, he continued the expulsion policy of the Young Turks and depopulated Cilicia of Armenians and Smyrna of Greeks.

Our counterpart to Ataturk would have been General Antranik, an uneducated soldier who happened to be a military genius and political realist, but Armenians betrayed him as he lacked the dictatorial instincts of Ataturk which were essential attributes for nation building at that time. There is a legend, whose veracity we cannot vouch. It is said that Ataturk was fond of Armenian songs dedicated to Antranik and that he would ask historian and linguist Hagop Mortayan (named Dilacar by him) who is one of the architects of the modern Turkish language and alphabet, to sing the Antranik songs and he would say, "Today

Antranik would be in my position had he been the winner."

As the second wave of independence arrived in 1991, our patriotism would not allow us to admit that the opportunity arose because of the tectonic shifts in the world geopolitical structure which once again thrust independence upon Armenia.

The most ardent patriots among us believe that it was the Karabagh movement at the southern borders of the Soviet Union that generated the political tsunami effect which brought down the Berlin wall and the Soviet Empire.

Either way, we seized the opportunity and the spirit of Vartanants was rekindled once again, helping us to liberate Karabagh from Azeri rule. Today, we are still at a stalemate.

This is not the first time that Armenians will demonstrate their resentment at being ruled by other Armenians. And that dangerous trend may lead us again to the loss of our independence if political prudence does not supersede.

You may blame the three presidential administrations of the current republic with many misdeeds, but one focal idea is clear – they were able to maintain and strengthen our independence. As inexperienced as Levon Ter-Petrosian's administration was, it steered Armenia to state building and secured the Karabagh victory. As corrupt as the Kocharian administration was, it was equally skilled at preserving the territorial integrity of the country and consolidating its sovereignty.

The same can be said for the Serge Sargisian administration, which is rightfully blamed for the exponential rise of the oligarchs.

President Sargisian's recent U-turn to join the Moscow-led Customs Union was derived from the same political instinct of survival and maintenance of independence.

Siding with Europe would have placed Armenia under the same Russian blackmail that was recently directed at Ukraine and Moldova. And Armenia, being more fragile, would have meant it would have suffered more.

Another aspect which is overlooked in this deal is that Europe would not touch the resolution of the Karabagh stalemate with a 10-foot pole as a disputed territory, whereas the agreement in the Customs Union will indirectly cover Karabagh. In fact, any international deal which includes Karabagh, down the road will facilitate its annexation to Armenia.

As Armenia prepares to celebrate the 22nd anniversary of independence, decorating the capital and flaunting its state-of-the-art weaponry to scare Azerbaijan, the question still looms: how independent is Armenia with its economy under Russian control and its territory used as a military base for Moscow, making the country suspect for the West and Turkey?

Countries no longer exist in isolation. The world has become a global village and the independence of individual nations is measured through factors controlling international relations.

A case in point may be India with a population of one billion. Since the 1960s, India was part of a coalition of non-aligned countries bound through the Bandung Pact, developed jointly by President Sukarno of Indonesia, Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru of India and President Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt. Long after Nasser and Sukarno were gone, India pursued its non-aligned policy, which initially supported the Palestinian plight against Israeli occupation. With arm-twisting from Washington, India opened up to Israel and its diamond industry developed rapidly, the US software companies set up shop in India and the economic boom began. Had India continued its traditional policy, it would have been guided by justice and sound moral principles, but nations have self-interests, morality notwithstanding.

On the eve of Armenia's independence day there are more questions that loom in the air. The main painful source of concern is its depopulation. It is reported that Armenia's unemployment rate has fallen this year to 16 percent down from the mid 30s and that is believed to be a healthy sign of economic recovery. However, much more likely, the dip in the unemployment rate is partially caused by the outflow of skilled workers, rather than the creation of jobs through investments in the economy.

One business booming is the gaming industry. And that may be very symbolic: Is Armenia gambling with its future? Perhaps.

The question still remains: What is the price of independence?

Notice to Contributors

The Armenian Mirror-Spectator welcomes articles, commentaries and community news from our readers. In order to assure the accurate and timely publication of articles submitted, please note the following policies:

– All articles submitted should be typed, double (or triple) spaced and printed in a type size large enough to be clearly legible (10 point or larger). Submissions that do not conform to these specifications will be assigned lowest priority.

– Articles sent by fax are acceptable, and e-mail submissions are

encouraged.

– All submissions should include the name of a contact person and a daytime telephone number.

– Deadline for submission of all articles and advertising is noon on the Monday of the week of publication.

– Photos will be published without charge at the discretion of the editors and art director. Photos will be returned only if a self-addressed and stamped envelope is included.

– The M-S will publish only one article about an upcoming organizational event. For major special events, exceptions may be made only by special arrangement with the editors.



COMMENTARY



My Turn

By Harut Sassounian

Leading Expert's Final Words on Turkey's Legal Responsibility for The Genocide

With the approaching Centennial of the Armenian Genocide, there has been growing public interest in taking legal action against Turkey in international courts.

One of the leading experts in this field was Dr. Yuri Barseghov, professor of international law, who wrote scores of pioneering books and articles on Armenian claims. Shortly before his death in 2008, Professor Barseghov of Moscow outlined the basis for legal action against Turkey in an article titled: "Ways and Means of Assigning Responsibility for the Armenian Genocide."

Dr. Barseghov maintained that in 1920, "the Ottoman Empire admitted its responsibility for committing this crime" by signing the Treaty of Sevres, which unfortunately was not ratified due to the reluctance of the Allied Powers to pressure Turkey. Since then, despite the recognition of the Armenian Genocide by dozens of countries and international organizations, Professor Barseghov believed that such acknowledgments "will not solve the problem of [Turkish] responsibility."

Professor Barseghov contended that "since Turkey stub-

bornly continues to refuse recognizing that it committed this crime, it is still necessary to solve the question of responsibility for the Armenian Genocide through competent international bodies by making such decisions mandatory for both parties [Armenia and Turkey]."

Dr. Barseghov did not believe that the United Nations is a practical vehicle for the resolution of the Armenian Genocide issue, since it is a highly politicized body. "Decisions of the General Assembly are not mandatory," while the major powers, such as the United States and Great Britain, enjoy the privilege of veto power in the Security Council blocking any action against Turkey.

The problem of initiating litigation under the statute of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) is that both Armenia and Turkey have to agree in advance to abide by the decisions of the Court. Neither country has so far "recognized the obligatory jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice." Since Turkey most probably would not agree to submit itself to such jurisdiction, Dr. Barseghov suggested that the Republic of Armenia as a sovereign state take advantage of "the unique opportunity" of filing a unilateral case against Turkey on its responsibility for the Armenian Genocide, "under Article IX of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide."

Dr. Barseghov expressed regret that no response was received from the Armenian government after the Armenian Institute of International Law and Political Science of the Union of Armenians of Russia – which he directed – several years ago submitted a study on this subject to Pres. Robert Kocharian and Foreign Minister Vartan Oskanian.

Dr. Barseghov explained that "in order to start a case by this judicial procedure [Article IX], the Government of Armenia has to formulate its position on the questions of

interpretation, application or implementation of the Convention on this basis on the question of responsibility of the Turkish state for the committed crime."

Professor Barseghov warned Armenian officials that "there exists a provision in international law which is confirmed by the International Court of Justice in other cases: if a state has the opportunity to submit a dispute but does not take such action, it would mean that the state accepts the existing situation."

Dr. Barseghov allayed possible Armenian concerns that the ICJ may object to filing such a case due to questions regarding the retroactivity of the Genocide Convention. He expressed his firm belief that the Convention applies to the Armenian Genocide even though it preceded the Convention. He noted that the ICJ in its Advisory Opinion of 1951 stated: "the principles inherited by the Convention on Genocide, unlike the treaty obligations established in it, were already part of common international law by the time these awful crimes were committed."

Professor Barseghov pointed out that arguments supporting the Convention's retroactivity were put forward by the ICJ, which has "twice given competent, exhaustive explanations on the fundamental basic questions of the applicability of the Convention including also its retroactivity." Based on these rulings, Professor Barseghov concluded: "the Convention applies also to crimes committed in the past whose consequences have not been eliminated."

As announced during a recent conference in Yerevan, the Armenian government has formed a task force to prepare the legal file for a case to be brought against Turkey in international courts. The expert advice of Professor Barseghov and other specialists should ensure that the lawsuit is properly prepared and presented to obtain long overdue justice for Armenian Genocide victims.

Erebuni Museum Corruption Places Shengavit Historical Preserve in Jeopardy

By Hovsep Dagdigian

YEREVAN – The Shengavit Historical and Archaeological Culture Preserve is a stone-age settlement on 12 acres of land above Yerevan Lake, with inadequate security and fencing, a small museum in need of repair and foundations of ancient dwellings. It was inhabited from the fourth to the second millennium BC. From 2009 until the summer of 2013, Vladimir Tshagharyan, an architect with experience protecting Armenia's antiquities, served as the preserve's director.

While Armenia's Ministry of Culture is in control of Armenia's antiquities, the site belongs to the city of Yerevan. Shengavit is under the overall directorship of Erebuni museum's director Gagik Gyurjyan. Although Erebuni is funded by the Armenian government and is responsible for Shengavit, Shengavit receives no funding for its operation or maintenance.

Having discovered that 40 percent of Shengavit's territory had been privatized after Armenian independence, Tshagharyan fought a year-long battle to recover this land. Those who acquired this land verbally agreed to return it to the Shengavit preserve. But Gyurjyan, Erebuni's director, must complete the process. As of late July 2013, he had still not done so. The question is: Why?

Upon Tshagharyan's assumption of Shengavit's directorship, the site had no water, rest room facilities, or visitor amenities.



Shengavit museum building after Vladimir Tshagharyan became director

An inadequate section of fencing provided no protection from intruders or trespassers. The museum building was in shambles. Often garbage was dumped on the site. Though there originally was a staff of three poorly paid workers, including Tshagharyan, there was no operational funding whatsoever. Tshagharyan renovated the museum building, posted attractive signs on the site and made other improvements with funds from friends and his own meager pay.

In 2012, the Cambridge Yerevan Sister City Association (CYSCA), with donor support, purchased supplies to repair a broken bench, install some fencing and add visitor conveniences. The transformation was startling though there remained much more to do. This was done without any funding from Erebuni or the government. In 2012, Gyurjyan indicated to me that all assistance to Shengavit should go through him or Yerevan's government. He was informed that funds were raised explicitly to purchase building supplies for use by Tshagharyan for Shengavit's renovation. Any other use would be illegal under US law. He replied "You're doing the right thing."

In 2013, CYSCA collected additional funding to support Shengavit with priorities

established by Tshagharyan. Plans were to renovate the museum building, provide water and rest rooms and add other amenities. In 2013, Tshagharyan and I visited the US Embassy's Cultural Affairs Officer Sean O'Hara. There were good indications that embassy assistance might be forthcoming.



Ancient artifacts on display in the Shengavit museum

The American Research In the South Caucasus (ARISC), through a grant initiated by archaeologist Dr. Mitchell Rothman of Widener University in Pennsylvania, allocated funds to help renovate Shengavit's museum using Tshagharyan's architectural plans. Shengavit's renovation was an evolving success.

During the summer of 2013, Shengavit's director dismissed one of the staff for just causes. On the following day, Erebuni's director reinstated this individual, telling him not to cooperate with Tshagharyan. Tshagharyan attempted to hire a young man to help with renovations with no net increase in total salaries paid to Shengavit's staff. Again, Erebuni's director overruled Tshagharyan, prohibiting the hiring of this young man. Shengavit's renovation was being deliberately blocked and was not going to proceed. Tshagharyan resigned as Shengavit's director.

Erebuni's director initiated a meaningless investigation of Shengavit's finances. There were no Shengavit finances. Shengavit received no operational funding from Erebuni, the Armenian government or anyone else. Gyurjyan certainly had enough influence to rectify any problems regarding Shengavit's financing. Evidence of his influ-

ence may be gleaned from a June 30, 2009 news article from Armenia Now's web site at http://www.armenianow.com/news/10114/culture_and_corruption_audit_shows.

The article cites corruption within Armenia's Ministry of Culture where \$330,000 was misappropriated. Gyurjyan was Deputy Minister of Culture in charge of monument preservation. On June 24, 2009, Gyurjyan was removed from his position. Despite this scandal, he was made director of the Erebuni preserve and museum later the same year.

Erebuni with its museum is a Urartian site dating to the iron-age. Shengavit predates the Urartian era by roughly 2,500 years and is some distance from Erebuni. It is difficult to justify Shengavit being under Erebuni's authority as there are different issues involved in the study and preservation of these two disparate sites. Many believe the indifference, neglect and mismanagement of Shengavit by Erebuni's director makes it imperative that Shengavit be separated from Erebuni's management, and be placed under honest and competent upper-level management with adequate funding.

(Joe [Hovsep] Dagdigian is a community activist in Massachusetts and frequent visitor to Armenia.)



Shengavit museum building before renovation



Alan Semerdjian: Exploring Universal Truths through Art

SEMERDJIAN, from page 1

Semerdjian grew up speaking Armenian at home with his family and grandparents. Participating in traditional holidays, eating Armenian cuisine, his culture played an evident role in shaping his creative aesthetics. Semerdjian came to understand the world through an "Armenian cultural lens," he said. "I have come to understand Armenians as a hearty and imaginative folk full of life, yes, but also filled with a deep longing – all modifiers critics have used to describe my work."

Today, he calls the East Village his "urban home," while the beaches and bays of the island of Manhattan serve as his "rural home." His passion for artistic expression of the human condition has led him to channel those feelings and sensations in variety of different forms and roles – as a musician, a poet, a writer, an artist and a teacher. The lines between these roles are not clearly defined, but rather interact and inform one another. Semerdjian also shares his propensity for artistic expression with others. "Ultimately, the goal of making art, for me, is to enter conversations about the human condition. All three [writing,

music, teaching] do this for me. They each shine a light into what it means to be human and alive and full of love and fear and joy and hesitation and reflection." He also credited his position teaching high school English with informing his process and noted the importance of sharing in "a community of thinkers."

For Semerdjian, the composition and the creation of lyrics are intertwined with the art of performance – singing and performing his works for others. In addition to guitar, Semerdjian plays some piano and light percussion, but says he would love to learn the oud and the duduk, noting, "Someday, I want to do versions of my indie folk music accompanied by duduk and oud."

From the British invasion to Armenian church music, bands like U2, The Cure, Anouar Brahem, jazz of John Coltrane and Miles Davis, contemporary voices like David Bazan and Jose Gonzalez, to his grandfather's favorite, Dvorak's *Cello Concerto*, Semerdjian's musical influences are wide-ranging and evolving, but comprising "Wonderful writers who are supremely inventive but who haven't lost the capacity to be human," he said.

It is easy to see how the same attributes he sees within his own Armenian cultural atmosphere – the themes of longing and reflection – are also applicable at the universal level. "We come into this world surging and full of intention, but so rarely do we get what we want. The Buddhists say life is suffering and advocate compassion as the path. My art is one step towards fostering that compassion for me. For Semerdjian, creating music and writing are a way of making sense of the world around him and his place within it. "I can only hope that my songs about desire and confusion are significant for some listeners because maybe they have felt that desire and confusion too. The act of constructing them is the first layer of meaning...how they resonate for others is the second and, especially lately, the more important layer."

Semerdjian will be performing in Los Angeles on October 13 at The Hotel Café and at Rockwood Music Hall in New York City on December 9.

For more information on Semerdjian's work and upcoming show dates, visit www.alansemerdjian.com.

Gerard Cafesjian Dies

CAFESJIAN, from page 1

married Cleo Thomas, a nurse he had met during the war.

He earned a degree in economics from Hunter College, and a law degree from St. John's University Law School.

He was a self-made man who rose through the ranks at West Publishing, starting as a legal editor in New York City. He was transferred to the home office in St. Paul, Minn. He eventually became executive vice president. At West, he also conceived of and started the West Legal Directory and a well-known program, "Art and the Law," which earned him and West numerous awards.

Cafesjian retired from West Publishing when it was sold to Thompson Publishing in 1996.

After attending to his family needs, Cafesjian established the Cafesjian Family Foundation. Through that foundation he devoted millions of dollars to Armenia on relief projects including renewable energy, a TV station, a newspaper, contributed to the clearing of land mines by specially-trained dogs, founded a bank, insurance company, and supplied the resources for many other projects. If any of the projects



Gerard Cafesjian

were to prove successful, the profits were to remain in Armenia for further development.

He received accolades and recognition from both the United States and Armenia institutions, including the Ellis Island Award in 2000.

Cafesjian completely renovated the Cascade site in downtown Yerevan. The Cascade was a crumbling Soviet structure of epic proportions. He opened the Cafesjian Center for the Arts at the Cascade in 2009. The museum enjoys a world-class sculpture garden with works by Botero, Flanagan, Chadwick, Plensa and Lalanne, to name a few.

Toward the end of his life, he and the CFF became embroiled in a protracted suit regarding the proposed Armenian Genocide Museum and Memorial in Washington, DC, that never got off the ground.

A consolidated complaint had pitted the Armenian Assembly of America and the Armenian Genocide Museum and Memorial against two former board members, Gerard Cafesjian and John Waters, and the Cafesjian Family Foundation.

Cafesjian, a founding member of the museum's board of trustees, helped purchase the museum site, a vacant National Bank building at 14th and G Street in downtown Washington. He stepped back, however, after the board later failed to reach consensus on how to complete the museum.

He had Waters, his right-hand man, to succeed him, but the board excluded Waters from further participation in the project after Cafesjian sued the Assembly for payment of an unpaid promissory note.

Peter Koutoujian FOR CONGRESS



My family's story, like so many others in Massachusetts and across the nation, reflects the promise of the American Dream.

My parents always believed in the honor and importance of public service. My mom dedicated her life to teaching and my dad was the City Clerk in Waltham for 30 years.

They instilled in me a desire to help people and to try to make a difference in their lives.

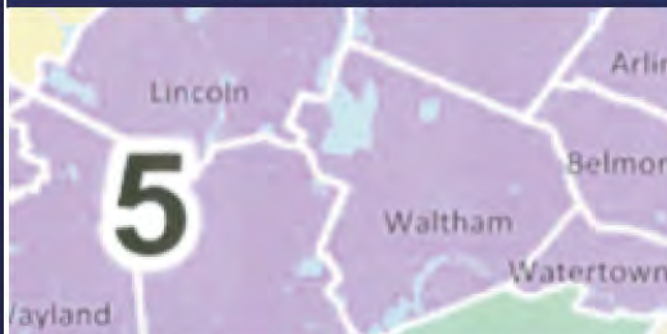
They taught me that when you listen to people, empower people, and help them take action – you can change lives for the better.



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