

May 9, 2009



Emil Kazaz, Burning Fish 1, 2007, Oil on Linen, 48 x 36.

AGBU to show Emil Kazaz

Underconstruction, 2009: Crossing Points



by **Christopher Atamian**

For the first time ever, in 2009 the Venice Biennale will be presenting not only an official Armenian pavilion, but also five Armenian artists from the diaspora who belong to a collective called Underconstruction and who will present their work together at a Pavilion called Krossings – a great honor and accomplishment. I decided to ask the four other artists in question – Emily Artinian, Archi Galentz, Silvina Der-Meguerditchian and Achot Achot – basic questions and then present their answers as I received them, *grosso modo*. (Two of the Q&As will appear next week.)

Though I am a filmmaker as well as

a critic and writer, the piece that I am presenting in the Krossings Pavillion (excerpts from Nigoghos Sarafian's *The Vincennes Woods*) was really meant as a text, and a translated one at that. The book was written by an Armenian refugee living in Paris in the late 1940s and examines issues pertaining to language, translation, identity, and exile. Some of the themes that naturally arise from an examination of Sarafian's text seem antiquated at first sight. As Emily Artinian correctly points out, the term "multiculturalism" sounds trite at best today. "Transnationalism" also sounds outdated as do, I might add, the terms "global" and "transglobal." And yet the issues of identity and the self – national or transnational, individual or group, diasporan or Armenian, ethnic or religious, encumbered or situated – are with us still – otherwise why the multiplicity of terms and their insistent recurrence in the critical dialogue?

Although the five of us were in fact brought together because we are all in one way or another Armenian, there is an almost reflexive distaste and rejection

of this common thread as a communal *raison d'être*. One of the most interesting aspects of the artists' comments were the slippages – inadvertent or not – that occurred in this respect. Artinian for example states that she is unconcerned with the diasporan-Armenian dialectic or *topos*, yet one of her main pieces includes Mount Ararat in its title; she spent two months doing a residency at the Armenian Center for Contemporary and Experimental Art (ACCEA) in Yerevan and she has spent much creative time of late meditating on her paternal – and Armenian – inheritance in all its many facets, material and psychological. Achot Achot states that language is of critical importance to diaspora Armenian survival yet in an interesting and inescapably nationalist move asserts that Eastern Armenian – the language spoken in the Republic or Armenia – should "without a doubt" be the language of all Armenians, although Western Armenians have spoken their own language or dialect for ages and although the Republic of Armenia does not have the means or will to impose

their language on Armenians outside its borders. Finally Archi Galentz implicitly understands the stakes surrounding language, identity, and loss, yet in relating an incident at an Armenian community center in Berlin perhaps erases the causal relationship between the three.

Linguistic choices aside, the Krossings Pavilion is in fact perfectly relevant. As technology accelerates, as cultures and peoples increasingly intermingle and form exciting new linguistic and cultural paradigms, the issue of how we define ourselves becomes an ever more pressing, complex, and fascinating question. Whatever terminology or paradigm one chooses, the artists presented in the following pages will certainly help to shed some light on ways of thinking about identity – what we have morphed into and what, as the French might term it, is our *devenir*. To quote Archi Galentz quoting Branko Dimitrievich, "Who am I" may in fact be less important than where am I standing. But any way you look at it, one seems somehow inexorably conditioned or influenced by the other. ■

AGBU to exhibit Emil Kazaz's work in the fall

by **Aleen L. Khanjian**

"Every great work of art has two faces, one toward its own time and one toward the future, toward eternity."

—Daniel Barenboim.

As humans, we are faced with the daily realization of mortality. For this reason, we appreciate the rare occurrences of immortality. Art is one of them.

While many of us thirst for cultural outlets to stretch our minds and increase our collective awareness, the Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU) quenches that thirst by exposing us to the brilliance of artists who live among us. Through the years, AGBU in Southern California has held memorable art exhibits. Most recently, in 2007, AGBU allowed us to witness its perpetual effort to promote Armenian culture and preserve our unique heritage throughout the world, through a highly successful exhibition entitled "Nine Contemporary Artists from Armenia." It was an incredible display of color, emotion, and passion, inspired by nine unique "new generation" artists from Armenia.

This year, AGBU will bring you the internationally known, Los Angeles-based, Armenian artist Emil Kazaz. Once again, AGBU strives not only to familiarize our minds, but to leave a lasting impression on our souls by exhibiting the immortal handiwork of Emil Kazaz. As those who are familiar with Kazaz know, his unique expression embodies a culmination of politics, mysticism, and eroti-



cism in a way that most sculptors and painters cannot do.

Emil Kazaz has achieved international critical recognition, including the prestigious Lorenzo Medici medal from the Florence Biennale in 2003, as well as the Grande Lorenzo il Magnifico (Medici) Prize in Sculpture from Florence Biennale 2007. He has had many successful and highly acclaimed exhibitions in Europe, Asia, Russia, North and South America, and just recently in New York City. Next fall, AGBU will celebrate Emil Kazaz's unique talent with a major exhibition and an evening of tribute honoring the artist at the AGBU Alex Manugian Center in Pasadena, taking place from November 5 to 8, 2009.

This unique Emil Kazaz Exhibition is being organized with the close cooperation of the Airian Dome of Fine Art Inc., home of the largest Emil Kazaz collection, through its founder and president, Monet Airian, who represents the artist worldwide. The exhibited artwork will be available to the public at special prices to encourage sales to raise

Above: King's Toy, 2006, Bronze, 25 x 33 x 21. Right: Emil Kazaz.



funds for the AGBU to benefit its social, cultural and youth-oriented programs in Southern California. The portion of the sales amount designated and provided as a donation to the AGBU will be

deductible for income, gift, and estate purposes. ■

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Interview: Silvina Der Meguerditchian

Silvina der Meguerditchian and others exhibiting at the Venice Biennale were interviewed by Christopher Atamian. See introduction on page C2.

Christopher Atamian: Can you describe the work that you will be showing at the Venice Biennale this year?

Silvina der Meguerditchian: I will be showing three three larger formats in my Semantic Fields series. They are mixed media works on wool and paper.

CA: What is the theory behind the piece(s), if any?

SdM: In Semantic Fields I explore the space between the image and the written word. Sometimes I like to create the illusion that the wool is going across walls or buildings. In this series I work with paper. Paper - the primary support of the written word - is punctured by the materiality of wool or sewing thread. The words "we," "love," "place" are deconstructed in a thicket of fibers. This "woolly encoding" with its soft, porous surface, speaks to the osmotic properties of language and the permeable limits between ideas and their signifiers.

CA: How does your piece fit in with the themes of the group or of the Krosings Pavilion that you are coordinating and will be part of? What does the title of the presentation "voulu / obligé" mean to you?

SdM: Well it seems to me that the concepts of diaspora and transnations are very important both to the exhibit and to our work at Underconstruction. The notion of a "transnation" is a concept that has been discussed for the last 15 to 20 years and is not yet well-defined...But from the pragmatic side, the difference is that for me a diaspora is a temporary state in which one is waiting to go back "home" when the situation (economic, political or whatever) gets better, while the idea of a transnation accepts that there is a place in-between. That both a mother land and a diaspora will continue to exist, in our case, both the Republic Armenia and the Diaspora build the transnation. The title came from a conversation with Achot Achot when we were discussing the focus for a new exhibition of Underconstruction. And in the discussion we asked several times, "What is it that brings us together?" What is behind this common cultural inheritance, or what choices does this inheritance give us? Is this inheritance a choice, or we have no choice?

Can we create a microcosmos where we



Left: Silvina der Meguerditchian. Above and bottom: Some of Silvina's works.

do behave differently as in the societies that we criticize/ or are unhappy with? I think that there must be place for contradictions and we have the right to enunciate them. Why should I shut up because I feel and think contradictory ideas? May be in the tension between two opposite or distant points (national identity/ cultural identity) we can experience a bit of truth. Maybe in the tension between voulu and obligé we can experience our Armenianness. As Derrida says in his last interview with J, Birnbaum, "I don't see why I would renounce a contradiction because one or the other journalist doesn't understand me. To renounce an idea, only because it contradicts another would mean to deny myself."

CA: How and when did you become part of Underconstruction?

SdM: I founded the group in 2005.

CA: Where were you born and where do you currently reside?

SdM: I was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina and I currently reside in Berlin.

CA: Please comment on how you see the Diaspora-Armenia relationship-please discuss any aspect or in general terms-and the relationship or interplay between artists in

the Armenian diaspora and Armenia? Is the art scene healthy in either location?

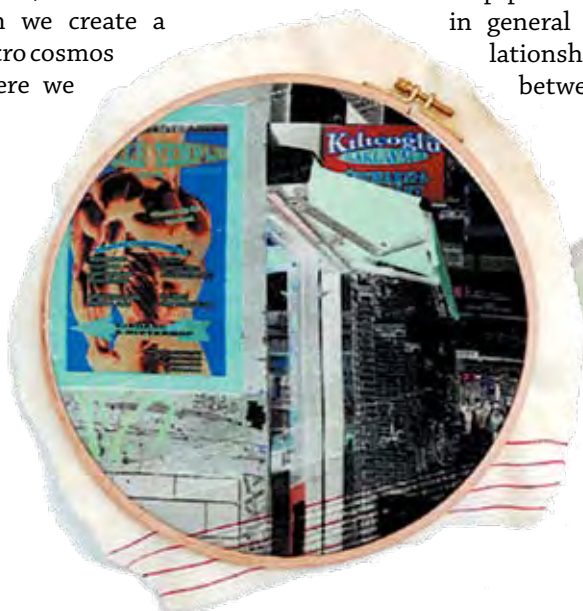
SdM: At Underconstruction we're trying to create something that will last and that enriches "at the same time as" the art landscape in Armenia. It means that we are thinking of enlarging the landscape that maps our identities rather than making it smaller.

I think that as artists, intellectuals, scholars, writers, etc. we can give a good example. Somebody has to begin. Competition is a good thing, but in our case, being dispersed and integrated/disintegrated in our host countries, I think that we have to join efforts and try to exchange, first of all "know-how," to respect the efforts of others and work at building a landscape. Every attempt whose goal is to place one specific project ahead of another or "instead" of other projects or individual egos is like killing a part of ourselves. Of course, we have to remain critical, but all these good projects that are alive, such as your own (Chris Atamian's) Nor Alik or Neery Melkonian's Columbia University conference, or the San Francisco Film Festival, or our own Underconstruction and others have to be connected. If the Arme-

nian communities cannot function as places were this happens, then we have to take the initiative and make it happen ourselves. I can imagine that there are enough benefactors that would be happy to know about our existence. I think our projects are strong enough to survive outside the diaspora and communities and have recognition in the outside world, and through the impact of our work together we can motivate some perhaps doubtful benefactors to join us and support this culture of diversity and generosity. I know it is difficult. In this respect, my diaspora project at the last, 52nd Venice Biennale was frustrating, because the political level was fighting against this generous concept of "Armenian", and the financial aspect was very difficult. But one big foundation in the Netherlands made it possible for us to continue.

Concerning the art scene in the diaspora, when I was growing up in the Armenian community in Buenos Aires, this element was completely absent: there were no artists that I wanted to emulate. I think that the Armenian communities around the world are obsessed with the idea of preserving, preserving, preserving at all costs. What is lacking in the Armenian diaspora is the understanding that art isn't a hobby, and that for there to be artists who can spend time creating truly professional art - and not coffee-table art that only people within the community see - you have to create professionals and you have to believe in them for them and their art to exist. Finally, there also exists a mentality which says that one must send all one's money

Continued on page C6



Interview: Achot Achot

Achot Achot and others exhibiting at the Venice Biennale were interviewed by Christopher Atamian. See introduction on page C2.

Christopher Atamian: What is the title of your piece at the Venice Biennale?

Achot Achot: All my works are called AFACTUM, a title I've been giving to all my works since 1990. It's an invented word that means non-fact, an action outside material facts.

CA: Can you describe it and the theory, ideas or subject behind it?

AA: Creating is a way to harmonize my existence. I am mostly concerned by self-realization, the difference between body and soul, the subtle forms of existence, the translation of my ecstasies and my moral sufferings. Art is another way to communicate with God, a way to pray.

CA: How does it fit in with your previous work, if at all?

AA: It's a logical result of all my spiritual and philosophical researches. I often find the same plastic or artistic links in them.

CA: Where were you born/did you grow up?

AA: I was born in Armenia in 1961 and I left the country in 1993 to settle down for good in France, where I currently live.

CA: How healthy is the art world in both these cases and what can be done to ameliorate things (education, museums, visibility, curatorial training etc)?

AA: Worldwide, art is gravely sick: I made a performance piece on this subject in Colombia in 2005. Today, contemporary art has a unidentified disease that is difficult for many to identify, but for me it's quite clear: it has been completely invented for propaganda and control. Contemporary by comparison to whom and what? When did contemporary art begin and when will it finish? The medium does not matter: painting, installation, video, photo, etc. Contemporary art is a spirit which controls the mentality of the artists so that they stay subservient to (governmental) politics



AFACTUM by Achot Achot.

and in its service. With this cliché one imposes a way of thinking and deprives us of our moral freedom! To get out from this situation, one must work towards a real education based on the disinterested transmission of knowledge, free of any judgment by the art market.

CA: Difficult question: why hasn't there been a "great" Armenian artist since Gorky?

AA: On the one hand, Gorky is an excellent artist and on the other hand he was a part of a movement which was promoted a lot. His relation with de Kooning, Breton and the others played an important role. For now, there is no Armenian artist as famous as Gorky, not because we are running out of great artists, but because of the "karma" of current Armenian artists. This will certainly change one day and we will then have another famous Armenian artists.

CA: Can you discuss one or two previ-

ous works that you'd like to bring to the attention of readers, please. Please feel free to explain your work or theoretical concerns as you see fit.

AA: My entire work is concerned with a broad understanding of human existence. Art is not a profession for me: it is the way to understand and to explain the world. Often, I create shocking work in order to awaken my spectators, to jolt them to attention. I am also interested in medicine, philosophy and religion - all things which I also express in my works.

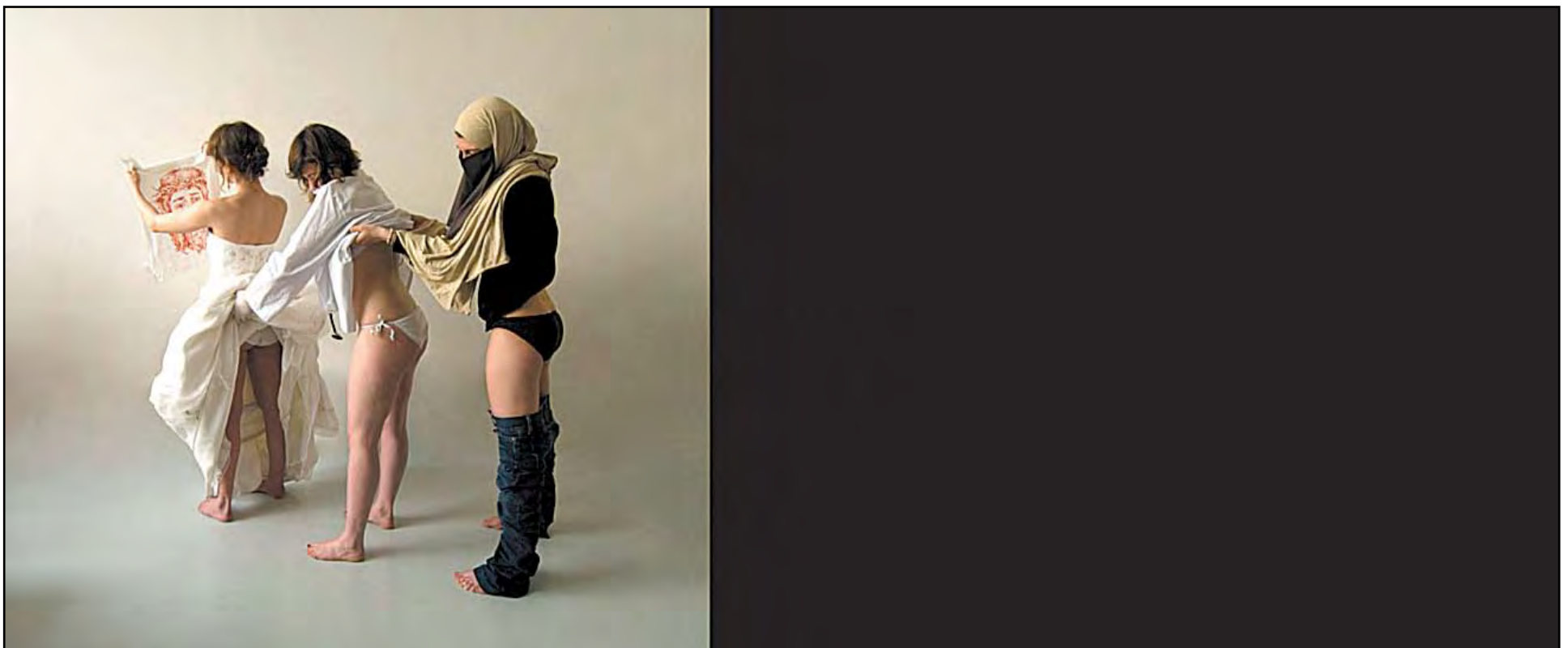
CA: You write in the ThisPLACed catalogue that "you grew up in the USSR but didn't realize it" and that "you gave bribes at the market but didn't realize it." Can you explain what you mean?

AA: The Apostle Paul said that we were not sinners because there was no law; but now we are, because the law is established.

CA: My piece for the Venice Biennale centers around Nigoghos Sarafian and the questions of language and exile. Can you comment on any aspect that interests you surrounding these issues? How language structures us or how we are structured by language particularly in diasporic existence? Sarafian writes: "Our homeland has escaped us, we have been thrown out to sea. This is perhaps the best way to learn how to swim." Are we Michael Phelps or a bunch of toddlers splashing around in a wading pool?

AA: If we eliminate our language outside Armenia we also eliminate the Diaspora. Western vs Eastern Armenian? I am convinced that the official language of every Armenian in the world has to be the official language of Armenia. We can speak all the dialects we want between us, but what is official has to be in the language of the official country.

CA: Thank you.



AFACTUM by Achot Achot.

		11 May	12 May	13 May	14 May	15 May	16 May	17 May
		MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
EST	PST							
09:30 PM	12:30 AM	The Armenian	The Armenian	The Armenian	The Armenian	The Armenian	Hot Line	Hot Line
10:00 PM	1:00 AM	Stepan Partamian	Stepan Partamian	Stepan Partamian	Stepan Partamian	Stepan Partamian	Hamerk	Gongret Show
10:30 PM	1:30 AM	Bari Louys Hayer	Bari Louys Hayer	Bari Louys Hayer	Bari Louys Hayer	Bari Louys Hayer		P S Club
11:00 PM	2:00 AM							Blef
11:30 PM	2:30 AM							Yere 1 (ye:re:van)
12:00 AM	3:00 AM	7 Mekhq	7 Mekhq	7 Mekhq	7 Mekhq	7 Mekhq		Mer Lezoun - Mer Khoske
12:30 AM	3:30 AM	5	1	2	3	4	Khohanotz	Mer Aybenaran
1:00 AM	4:00 AM	Khohanotz	Khohanotz	Khohanotz	Khohanotz	Khohanotz	Arogchabahagan	Century
1:30 AM	4:30 AM	When Stars are Dancing	When Stars are Dancing	When Stars are Dancing	Arogchabahagan	Arogchabahagan	Discovery	Discovery
2:00 AM	5:00 AM	Discovery	Discovery	Discovery	Discovery	Discovery	Century	Film Story
2:30 AM	5:30 AM	Century	Century	Century	Century	Century	Gevo	
3:00 AM	6:00 AM	Gevo	Gevo	Gevo	Gevo	Gevo	Tesangouyn	Hay Film
3:30 AM	6:30 AM	Bari Louys Hayer	Bari Louys Hayer	Bari Louys Hayer	Bari Louys Hayer	Bari Louys Hayer	My Big, Fat Armenian Wedding	Armenian Movie
4:00 AM	7:00 AM						Deal or No Deal	Deal or No Deal
4:30 AM	7:30 AM							
5:00 AM	8:00 AM	CLONE Repeat	CLONE Repeat	CLONE Repeat	CLONE Repeat	CLONE Repeat		
5:30 AM	8:30 AM	5	1	2	3	4	News	Hot Line
6:00 AM	9:00 AM	Sassounian Commentary	News	News	News	News	Mer Aibenarane	
6:30 AM	9:30 AM	Unlucky Happiness Repeat	Unlucky Happiness Repeat	Unlucky Happiness Repeat	Unlucky Happiness Repeat	Unlucky Happiness Repeat	Mer Lezoun Mer Khoske	Armenian Teletime
7:00 AM	10:00 AM	5	1	2	3	4	Yere 1 (ye:re:van)	
7:30 AM	10:30 AM	Bari Kisher Hayer	Bari Kisher Hayer	Bari Kisher Hayer	Bari Kisher Hayer	Bari Kisher Hayer	P S Club	Film Story
8:00 AM	11:00 AM	Live	Live	Live	Live	Live	When Stars are Dancing (Hamerk)	Hay Film
8:30 AM	11:30 AM							Armenian Movie
9:00 AM	12:00 AM						Hay Film	Hamerk
9:30 AM	12:30 PM	The Armenian	The Armenian	The Armenian	The Armenian	The Armenian	Armenian Movie	
10:00 AM	01:00 PM	Stepan Partamian	Stepan Partamian	Stepan Partamian	Stepan Partamian	Stepan Partamian		
10:30 AM	01:30 PM	Sassounian Commentary	News	News	News	News		
11:00 AM	02:00 PM	7 Mekhq	7 Mekhq	7 Mekhq	7 Mekhq	7 Mekhq		
11:30 AM	02:30 PM	1	2	3	4	5	News	Love E Lee
12:00 PM	03:00 PM	P S Club	Mi Gatil Megher	Blef	Yere 1	Garkin Haghortum	Tesangouyn	Tesangouyn
12:30 PM	03:30 PM	YO YO	YO YO	YO YO	YO YO	YO YO	Mi Gatil Megher	Mi Gatil Megher
01:00 PM	04:00 PM	When Stars are Dancing	When Stars are Dancing	When Stars are Dancing	Arogchabahagan	Arogchabahagan	Yere 1 (ye:re:van)	Yere 1 (ye:re:van)
01:30 PM	04:30 PM	Live from America	Live from America	Live from America	Mi Gatil Megher	Mi Gatil Megher	Garkin Haghortum	Garkin Haghortum
02:00 PM	05:00 PM	News	News	News	News	News	Sassounian Commentary	Sassounian Commentary
02:30 PM	05:30 PM	CLONE Original	CLONE Original	CLONE Original	CLONE Original	CLONE Original	Discovery	Deal or No Deal
03:00 PM	06:00 PM	1	2	3	4	5	Century	
03:30 AM	06:30 AM	Unlucky Happiness Original	Unlucky Happiness Original	Unlucky Happiness Original	Unlucky Happiness Original	Unlucky Happiness Original	Mer Lezoun Mer Khoske	Blef
04:00 PM	07:00 PM	1	2	3	4	5	Armenia Diaspora	My Big, Fat Armenian Wedding
04:30 AM	07:30 AM						Deal or No Deal	Directions With Rafi Manoukian
05:00 PM	08:00 PM						Sassounian Commentary	When Stars are Dancing
05:30 PM	08:30 PM	News	News	News	News	News	Blef	Yere 1 (ye:re:van)
06:00 PM	09:00 PM	Gyanki Keene - Original	Gyanki Keene - Original	Gyanki Keene - Original	Gyanki Keene -Original	Gyanki Keene -Original	Gongret Show	Cool Program
06:30 PM	09:30 PM	1	2	3	4	5	PS NEWS	Hot Line
07:00 PM	10:00 PM	Bari Kisher Hayer	Bari Kisher Hayer	Bari Kisher Hayer	Bari Kisher Hayer	Bari Kisher Hayer	Film Story	
07:30 PM	10:30 PM						Hot Line	
08:00 PM	11:00 PM							
08:30 PM	11:30 PM							
09:00 PM	12:00 AM							

Interview: Silvina Der Meguerditchian

Continued from page C4

to Armenia, thinking that this will be one's salvation. They are forgetting that the diaspora is not 90 years old (i.e., it didn't begin in 1915 with the Armenian Genocide), but rather many centuries old. It's also an extremely rich culture, but it's a culture that must be cultivated as well. That includes, for example, beautiful illuminated manuscripts that were produced in times of peace. Those works of art were produced in the diaspora! The first Armenian newspaper was printed in the diaspora, in Madras. Which means that diasporan culture is extremely rich, but it has to be modernized and brought up to date because we can't continue to operate along paradigms that are hundreds of years old - it's impossible. If we continue this way, then the diaspora will simply die.

CA: Difficult question: why hasn't there been a "great" Armenian artist since Gorky?

SdM: I don't know what you mean by "great," you mean perhaps one that is recognized in the transnational scene? I don't have an answer to this question. I suppose that to have internationally well-known artists you need countries or interested groups behind them that for one reason or another support or push the artists. And Armenian artists have nobody who wants to push them or who see an economic or political interest in that. I think that in the ROA, they had a kind of support system and that produced some great painters...

CA: My piece for the Venice Biennale centers around Nigoghos Sarafian and the questions of language and exile. Can you comment on any aspect that interests you about this? The importance or

place of language? Sarafian writes: Our homeland has escaped us, we have been thrown out to sea. This is perhaps the best way to learn how to swim. Are we Michael Phelps or a bunch of toddlers splashing around in a wading pool?

SdM: Language is also one of my main issues/passions. I also work as a translator and subtitler, so I understand your interest. I learned Armenian in school. When I was a little child, I use to live two and a half hours by bus from the Armenian school, so until the 4th grade I went to a normal Argentinian school. When I was ten, my desire to be part of the "Armenian world" where the rest of my family was and my desire to learn Armenian was so large that my sister and I woke up at 5 AM every day spent two hours commuting each way to this Argentinian/Armenian school. Because my classmates were, of course, already more advanced, I started in the "masnavor tasaran," (a special class for complete beginners). Im one year, I learned enough Armenian to jump four classes! So I can say that the relationship that I had very early with the Armenian language came from my own "desire". Later on the Armenian school system, the lack of people able to recognize and encourage this desire, and the conservative context of the Armenian community let this desire die of starvation... I'm very sorry about that, and I'm very angry when Achot or Archi try to correct my Armenian, sometimes I don't know if what I'm saying is wrong or they want to convert me to their Eastern Armenian... And I don't agree with Archi, when he complains about the different ways to say this and that in Armenian. Or how to pronounce a "p"



Silvina der Meguerditchian's work.

or a "b." I think that diversity is a wonderful thing and I'm very sad about the fact that Western Armenian is dying. I would love to be motivated to learn through contemporary books or literature... Can you suggest something?

Regarding languages, I think we are definitely Michael Phelps, regarding solidarity and building something together the Armenians are less effective. We are trying to fill this gap with Underconstruction.

I worked for a long time with the theme of memory and it so happened that in 2004 I went to Armenia with the conscious goal of continuing to learn about myself and my identity. I was terribly disappointed: what I was looking for didn't exist in Armenia. The world that our grandparents came from is in the Middle East and Turkey, not present-day Arme-

nia. On top of this, you have to add the fact that in the past 90 years, diaspora-Armenians and those living in Armenia have had very different experiences, so that in the end our desire to find the Armenian who is missing in us in the Republic of Armenia cannot be satisfied. Hayastantsis lived in Armenia for the past 90 years: they were born there, so they ask different questions. Those Armenians lived in a real geography, while ours was imaginary, with everything that entails. They are living in a post-Soviet country, and they have other worries. And so I said to myself, "I will never find what I'm looking for in Armenia, so I will have to create it myself." That's why I started the platform called underconstructionhome.net, so that artists - Armenians and non-Armenians - can communicate on a daily basis.

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Satellite Broadcast Program Grid

11 - 17 May



11 May		12 May		13 May		14 May		15 May		16 May		17 May	
MONDAY		TUESDAY		WEDNESDAY		THURSDAY		FRIDAY		SATURDAY		SUNDAY	
EST	PST	EST	PST	EST	PST	EST	PST	EST	PST	EST	PST	EST	PST
4:30	7:30	4:30	7:30	4:30	7:30	4:30	7:30	4:30	7:30	4:30	7:30	5:00	8:00
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10:00	13:00	10:00	13:00	10:00	13:00	10:00	13:00	10:00	13:00	10:00	13:00	13:30	16:30
11:00	14:00	11:00	14:00	11:00	14:00	11:00	14:00	11:00	14:00	11:00	14:00	13:30	16:30
11:30	14:30	11:30	14:30	11:30	14:30	11:30	14:30	11:30	14:30	11:30	14:30	14:00	17:00
12:00	15:00	12:00	15:00	12:00	15:00	12:00	15:00	12:00	15:00	12:00	15:00	14:30	17:30
12:30	15:30	12:30	15:30	12:30	15:30	12:30	15:30	12:30	15:30	12:30	15:30	15:00	18:00
13:00	16:00	13:00	16:00	13:00	16:00	13:00	16:00	13:00	16:00	13:00	16:00	17:30	20:30
13:30	16:30	13:30	16:30	13:30	16:30	13:30	16:30	13:30	16:30	13:30	16:30	18:00	21:00
14:00	17:00	14:00	17:00	14:00	17:00	14:00	17:00	14:00	17:00	14:00	17:00	19:00	22:00
15:00	18:00	15:00	18:00	15:00	18:00	15:00	18:00	15:00	18:00	15:00	18:00	19:30	22:30
15:30	18:30	15:30	18:30	15:30	18:30	15:30	18:30	15:30	18:30	15:30	18:30	21:00	0:00
16:30	19:30	16:30	19:30	16:30	19:30	16:30	19:30	16:30	19:30	16:30	19:30	21:30	0:30
17:00	20:00	17:00	20:00	17:00	20:00	17:00	20:00	17:00	20:00	17:00	20:00	22:15	1:15
17:30	20:30	17:30	20:30	17:30	20:30	17:30	20:30	17:30	20:30	17:30	20:30	22:40	1:40
19:00	22:00	19:00	22:00	19:00	22:00	19:00	22:00	19:00	22:00	19:00	22:00	23:10	2:10
19:30	22:30	19:30	22:30	19:30	22:30	19:30	22:30	19:30	22:30	19:30	22:30	1:30	4:30
21:00	0:00	21:00	0:00	21:00	0:00	21:00	0:00	21:00	0:00	21:00	0:00	2:10	5:10
21:30	0:30	21:30	0:30	21:30	0:30	21:30	0:30	21:30	0:30	21:30	0:30	3:00	6:00
22:15	1:15	22:15	1:15	22:15	1:15	22:15	1:15	22:15	1:15	22:15	1:15	3:00	6:00
22:35	1:35	22:35	1:35	22:35	1:35	22:35	1:35	22:35	1:35	22:35	1:35		
23:00	2:00	23:00	2:00	23:00	2:00	23:00	2:00	23:00	2:00	23:00	2:00		
0:00	3:00	0:00	3:00	0:00	3:00	0:00	3:00	0:00	3:00	0:00	3:00		
1:00	4:00	1:00	4:00	1:00	4:00	1:00	4:00	1:00	4:00	1:00	4:00		
1:30	4:30	1:30	4:30	1:30	4:30	1:30	4:30	1:30	4:30	1:30	4:30		
2:00	5:00	2:00	5:00	2:00	5:00	2:00	5:00	2:00	5:00	2:00	5:00		
2:30	5:30	2:30	5:30	2:30	5:30	2:30	5:30	2:30	5:30	2:30	5:30		
3:00	6:00	3:00	6:00	3:00	6:00	3:00	6:00	3:00	6:00	3:00	6:00		

Atamian: Artist's Statement

"Nigoghos Sarafian: the language of exile, the exile of language"

"Who am I?" Nigoghos Sarafian asks repeatedly in his seminal 1947 poetic novel *The Bois de Vincennes*. For Sarafian this basic ontological question was intimately linked to the question of language. Born in Varna during the last days of the Ottoman Empire, Sarafian – like many of his Armenian contemporaries – settled in Paris where he lived as a political and intellectual refugee. He was educated in French schools and explains that when he wrote in Western Armenian as an adult, the language was already foreign to him. Sarafian's writing is important in part because it attempts to incorporate the notion of exile into language itself.

As a third generation descendant of Armenian Genocide survivors, I was fascinated by Sarafian's fate. Born in New York City, I attended French school, learned English after French, and Ar-

menian after nine other languages. My project attempts to examine the role that language plays in identity. By projecting excerpts of *The Bois de Vincennes* in the original Western Armenian and in English (translation mine), I attempt to ask whether the questions that faced an exiled Armenian diasporan in the late 1940s are still relevant to the increasingly transglobal modern world of multi-linguistic and polyphonous transnations.

I'd also like to suggest that language perhaps erects as many borders as it destroys, that it can be intensely revelatory but isolating as well. Sarafian after all was doubly invisible—to other Armenians who no longer read their own language and to the world-at-large, which remains largely ignorant to this day of Armenian literature. What Babel has unleashed can perhaps never be put back together again. But as technology accelerates and pushes us towards either a future of peace or one of destruction, we should understand the role that language plays in creating and undermining identity.

Gayane Khachaturian, 1942–2009



Gayane Khachaturian, a Georgian-Armenian artist whose works will represent Armenian contemporary art at the Venice Biennale has died in her home in Tbilisi. The venerable artist was profiled in the Arts and Culture Section of the *Armenian Reporter* (April 11, 2009). Architect Dr. Edward Balassanian, co-founder of NPAK, as well as the Commissioner and curator of the Armenian Pavilion at the Venice Biennale said, "Gayane Khachaturian's works are distinctly allegoric. They are inundated with colorful and rich collection of symbols referring to unending parables and metaphors from her personal past and her collective memories of the Armenian community of her native town. Her colorful canvases are reminiscent of such world masters as Marc Chagall, Arshile Gorky and even Hieronymus Bosch of a much earlier era."



Gayane Khachaturian, "Still Life," 1970, oil on canvas, 75 x 106 cm





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