

Armenian Film Festival | New York
June 28, 29, 30 - 2002
Cantor Film Center @ NYU
36 East 8th Street
New York City, New York 10003

PROGRAM

Friday, June 28

- 6:00 Pinched Cheeks and Slurs in a Language that Avoids Her
Tina Bastajian, USA, 1994, 11 min, video
+ Movements, Rene Gabri, USA, 2002, 38 min, video
+ Jews in Armenia: The Hidden Diaspora
Vartan Akchyan, 25 min, Israel/Armenia/USA, 2002, video
+ Q & A with filmmakers
- 8:00 Prison Art, Gennadi Melkonian, Armenia, 1997, 26 min, video
+ Charles Garry: Streetfighter in the Courtroom
Roxanne Makasdjian Bezjian, USA, 1992, 58 min, video
+ Q & A with filmmaker

Saturday, June 29

- 2:00 Garod (The Yearning)
Frunze Dovlatian, Armenia, 1990, 137 min, 35mm
- 4:45 Next of Kin, Atom Egoyan, Canada, 1984, 75 min, 16mm
+ Sentenced to Death, Sonia Balassanian, Armenia, 2000, 10', video
+ Q & A with filmmaker Sonia Balassanian
- 6:45 The Old Roman Road, Don Askarian, Armenia, 2001, 76 min, 35mm
- 8:30 Two Thousand and None, Arto Paragamian, Canada, 2000, 94', 35mm

Sunday, June 30

- 2:00 Genatse, Linda Ganjian, Armenia/USA, 2002, 10 min, video
+ Embers of the Sun: Prehistoric Monuments of Armenia
Zareh Tjeknavorian, 2001, 13 min, video
+ I Will Not Be Sad in This World
Karina Epperlein, USA, 2001, 56 min, video
+ Q & A with filmmakers
- 4:00 Non-Stop, Ashot Mkrtychyan, Armenia, 1998, 4 min, video
+ Merry Bus, Albert Mkrtychyan, Armenia, 2001, 113 min, 35mm

6:30 Girl from Moush, Garine Torossian, Canada, 1994, 5 min, 16mm
+ Hokees, Garine Torossian, Canada, 2000, 22 min, 16mm
+ Jagadakeer... Between The Near And The East
Tina Bastajian, USA, 2001, 19 min, video
+ Mother, Here Have I Found a Homeland
Gayana Gashian, USA, 2001, 30 min, video
+ Q & A with filmmakers

8:30 Tribute to Henri Verneuil, (Achod Malakian), 5 min, video
Brief montage on the filmmaker's life
+ Mayrig (Mother), Henri Verneuil, France, 1991, 94 min, 35mm

General admission \$10 , \$7 for students and seniors.
Passes to the entire series are \$30, \$20 for students/seniors.

The Cantor Film Center is located at 36 E. 8th Street, at University
Place (212 375 8116). Subway: N, R to 8th ST-NYU; 6 to Astor Place.

Passes are available in
Midtown: Kalustyan 123 Lexington Av. @ 28th St 202.685.3451
Queens: Sevan Foods 216-07 Horace Harding Expwy, Bayside 718.281.0004
NJ: Krichian Foods 388 Crooks Av. @ Vernon, Paterson 973.569.1033
Brooklyn: Rashid Sales 155 Court @ Atlantic Av. 718-852-3295

This effort is supported and sponsored by:

Fordham University, Communication & Media Studies
Graduate Center CUNY, Middle East and Middle Eastern American Center
New York University, Middle Eastern Studies
Columbia University, Middle Eastern and Asian Languages and Culture

Film Synopses

Friday, June 28

6:00

Pinched Cheeks and Slurs in a Language that Avoids Her
Tina Bastajian, USA, 1994, 11 min, video
in English and Armenian with English subtitles

In this work, a young girl is drawn to a woman as the ambiguous
background track in Armenian questions the woman's presence because of

the color of her skin. The mystery and wisdom of reading coffee grounds challenge racial slurs, and add an ironic twist to the relationship between the girl and the woman, and the viewer.

Movements, Rene Gabri, USA, 2002, 38 min, video
in Armenian with English subtitles

In 2001, the Iranian-born artist made his first journey through Armenia. A collage of interviews, tracking shots, and still shots, the video traces the movements through/of a country.

Jews in Armenia: The Hidden Diaspora
Vartan Akchyan, 25 min, Israel/Armenia/USA, 2002, video
in English, Hebrew, Russian and Armenian with English subtitles.

Here is presented the long history of Jews in Armenia, through the newly discovered medieval Jewish cemetery in the Armenian highlands, to the story of a tiny yet devoted group of Subbotniks today. Questions of identity and nationality are raised as elsewhere in the Armenian diaspora.

Q & A with filmmakers

8:00

Prison Art
Gennadi Melkonian, Armenia, 1997, 26 min, video
in Armenian with English subtitles

About art and creative work, born in the severe, inhuman conditions of prison, this movie presents a layer of art that is blocked from the common view by the high prison wall and barbed wires-- a culture that has become taboo and is officially banned, a culture that is isolated from and unknown to the society outside.

Charles Garry: Streetfighter in the Courtroom
Roxanne Makasdjian Bezjian, USA, 1992, 58 min, video

In this biography, Charles Garry speaks eloquently about his background as an Armenian immigrant in California, his commitment to equality before the law, and his courtroom strategies. He gives intimate portraits of two of his clients, Huey Newton and Bobby Seale, and they, in turn, are interviewed about him, as are William Kunstler, Jessica Mitford, and others.

Q & A with filmmaker

Saturday, June 29th

2:00

Garod (The Yearning)

Frunze Dovlatian, Armenia, 1990, 137 min, 35mm
in Armenian and Russian with English subtitles

Arakel Aloyan is an Armenian who had seen his village burnt by the Turks and had fled to the East and began a new life in Soviet Armenia. But he still dreams of his home village in Turkey; that yearning makes him cross the Soviet border. However, the Soviet government considers it "spying against the nation."

4:45

Sentenced to Death

Sonia Balassanian, Armenia, 2000, 10 min, video
in Armenian

Grief over a son lost to war. Not once are the adversary or the carnage mentioned; rather, the mother speaks of simple things. She is given a gift of fresh spring greens by her grandchild. She talks. His death was sudden, its manner unspeakable.

Next of Kin

Atom Egoyan, Canada, 1984, 75 min, 16mm

Egoyan's first feature follows a bored young Canadian who, while receiving experimental "video therapy", discovers tapes of an Armenian family who are missing a son. The young man assumes the identity of the long-lost boy, and is readily adopted by this new "family."

Q & A with filmmaker Sonia Balassanian

6:45

The Old Roman Road

Don Askarian, Armenia, 2001, 76 min, 35mm
in English and Armenian with English subtitles

Levon--a writer of Armenian extraction now living in Rotterdam--is caught between memories of homeland and the realities of contemporary life. Poetic, almost surrealist scenes of magic love and political cruelty are contrasted with the reality of present-day Rotterdam,

presented in the guise of a modern crime story.

8:30

Two Thousand and None
Arto Paragamian, Canada, 2000, 94 min, 35mm

Benjamin Kasparian (John Turturro), a brilliant paleontologist, has just made a groundbreaking discovery. But before he has a moment to bask in the glory, he learns he has a rare medical condition that causes a bizarre and fatal swelling of the brain.

Sunday, June 30th

2:00

Genatse
Linda Ganjian, Armenia/USA, 2002, 10 min, video
in Armenian with English subtitles

Genatse presents the Armenian toastmaking tradition as a unique oratorical art form and a folk tradition. Its masters adeptly weave elements of politics, history, storytelling, jeketelling, philosophy and poetry into eloquent, heartfelt and individualistic expressions that create a powerful intimacy among those seated around the table.

Embers of the Sun: Prehistoric Monuments of Armenia
Zareh Tjeknavorian, 2001, 13 min, video

This short evokes the haunting beauty and enduring power of Armenia's prehistoric monuments. Many sites are presented here for the first time; hidden in remote areas of Armenia's mountains, they are mysterious vestiges of the Bronze Age cultures that flourished in the Armenian Highlands between 9 and 3 thousand years ago.

I Will Not Be Sad in This World
Karina Epperlein, USA, 2001, 56 min, video

This is the story of Zaroche, a survivor of the genocide of 1915, narrated as an Armenian fairy tale, and the result is a lyrical piece, a poetic portrait of an ordinary woman with an extraordinary spirit.

Q & A with filmmakers

4:00

Non-Stop

Ashot Mkrtychyan, Armenia, 1998, 4 min, video

When politicians are not able to reach an agreement, "leaders" appear, meetings are convened, and as a rule everything ends up in a bloodbath. In this case it is Armenia. But with a little imagination, it becomes, Chechnia or Bosnia, Prednestrovie or Albania, Abkhasia, Africa...

Merry Bus

Albert Mkrtychyan, Armenia, 2001, 113 min, 35mm
in Armenian with English subtitles

A child and a woman, who have suffered the loss of their families during 1988's disastrous earthquake in Armenia, find each other listening to the "music" of the telephone wires. The child believes that he has found the first column of his "new" family, and the woman indeed adopts him. Nevertheless, the little boy is sure that the family should necessarily have a father as well....

6:30

Girl from Moush

Garine Torossian, Canada, 1994, 5 min, 16mm

A poetic montage of the artist's journey through her subconscious Armenia. It is not one based in reality but one that appears, like the mythical city of Shangri-La, when one's eyes are closed. It is an homage to the Armenian filmmaker Sergey Paradjanov.

Hokees

Garine Torossian, Canada, 2000, 22 min, 16mm

Anahid, a contemporary Armenian woman, pregnant with the child of her Canadian-Turkish lover, is haunted by the past when her great-grandmother, murdered along with her unborn child during the Armenian Genocide of 1915, returns to reclaim what was lost.

Jagadakeer... Between The Near And The East

Tina Bastajian, USA, 2001, 19 min, video
in English, Turkish and Armenian with English subtitles

Jagadakeer means fate, destiny or literally what is written on one's forehead. Memory, nostalgia, displacement, absence and reconnection are explored using the Armenian Genocide as a point of reference, and visual/ aural backdrop.

Mother, Here Have I Found a Homeland
Gayana Gashian, USA, 2001, 30 min, video

A journey into the past by six women who survived the Genocide of 1915.
The piece reveals the inner strength of Armenian women and their
gratitude to their new homeland, America.

Q&A with filmmakers

8:30

Tribute to Henri Verneuil, (Achod Malakian), 5 min, video
--Brief montage on the filmmaker's life

Mayrig (Mother)
Henri Verneuil, France, 1991, 94 min, 35mm
in French with English subtitles

Story of an Armenian family (Omar Sharif, Claudia Cardinale) that
arrives in France in 1921 and endure the pain and privations of exile
in a foreign land. The son, Azad, eventually discovers his gift for
cinema.

=====