Kef Time Fresno Brings Community Together For an Evening of Traditional Music and Dance

CARA TORKATIAN STAFF WRITER

Walking into “Kef Time Fresno” felt like entering any Armenian’s nirvana. There was lavish food, spirited conversations, lively laughter, warm hugs, and smiling faces everywhere. Most of all, there was the lively group of dancers and musicians—the stars of the evening—who offered any spectator a taste of sublimity. “Kef Time Fresno” was held on the evening of Saturday, February 26, in the Holy Trinity Armenian Apostolic Church Social Hall. The net proceeds of “Kef Time Fresno” were donated to the Armenian Studies Program at Fresno State.

The Kef Time Legacy Band hosted over 400 people for the kebab dinner and dance. The event was sponsored by the Kef Time Productions Committee headed by Andrew Hagopian, and the food was prepared by the Holy Trinity Men’s Society. The Kef Time Legacy Band is composed of: Phillip Hagopian, performing on the oud and vocals; Michael Kamalian on clarinet; Andrew Hagopian, grandson of Oud Richard Hagopian, playing drums; Mal Barsamian on guitar; Jim Karagozian on the kanun. The Kef Time Band has been in existence since the late 1960s when the group first produced “Kef Time Vegas.” This was followed by three more albums: “Kef Time Fresno,” “Kef Time Detroit,” and “Kef Time Hartford.” The original members of the “Kef Time Fresno” group were Richard Hagopian, on oud and vocals, Hachig Kazarian on the clarinet, Buddy Sarkissian on the drums, Jack Chalikian on the kanun, and Ed Derderian playing the bass guitar.

The Kef Time Fresno band began hosting annual events at Fresno’s Rainbow Ballroom on April 20, 1974. They were also often invited to perform at Armenian Studies Program is Celebrating Its 45th Year of Educating College Students at Fresno State

Studies Program in the United State (and perhaps anywhere), teaching hundreds of students each semester. Over the past forty-five years more than 8,000 students have taken Armenian and Armenian Studies courses at Fresno State.

The core of the Armenian Studies Program is the study of Armenian history, language, art, literature, and an introductory course on Armenian Studies. Courses on Armenian literature, William Saroyan, Armenian architecture, and The Program has also been recognized for its record of faculty scholarship and for its outreach program bringing the Armenian community of Fresno closer to the University.

Enhancing the mission of the Program was the establishment of the Haig and Isabel Berberian Chair of Armenian Studies in December, 1988. The Berberian Endowed Chair provides financial support for a distinguished Armenianologist and honors the


The Armenian Studies Program at Fresno State has a long and distinguished history. Armenian and Armenian Studies courses have been taught at Fresno State for more than fifty years. The Program was established in 1977 and over the years the has developed an international reputation in terms of excellence in teaching, quality of scholarship, and active student and community outreach. In the variety and depth of courses offered, the Program has become the most dynamic undergraduate Armenian
Armenian Studies Program Book/Video/CD Archival Gifts

Ankyunacar Publishing, Yerevan, Armenia for a copy of Cyril of Alexandria, Commentary on the Letter to the Hebrews (Yerevan: Ankyunacar Publishing), 395pp., in Armenian and English. This book includes the classical Armenian text and the English translation. The newly found Armenian text of Cyril of Alexandria’s Commentary is one of the few works of the famous theologian of the fifth century, which was thought lost until today. Classical Armenian text by Hakob Keoseyan, translation from the Classical Armenian into English and index by Khachig Gregorian, and English translation editor, Diana Tsaghikyan.

Dr. Abraham D. Krikorian and Eugene Taylor, Port Jefferson, NY, for a set of DVD’s that they have produced dealing with Armenia or the Armenian Genocide. Some of the titles include: “Armenian Genocide and Impunity,” “The Amazing Story of an Armenia Orphan Rug,” and “Raphael Lemkin on the genesis of the Concept behind the word ‘Genocide.’” The DVDs include documentation of the interviews, events, and trips of the producers.

Dr. Gillisann Harootunian, Fresno, for a copy of Memoirs of a Soldier: About the Days of Tragedy by Bedros Haroian (Fresno: Tadem Press, 2021), 442pp., in English. This is the memoir of Bedros Haroian, translated from the original 1963 Armenian memoir. The book was edited by Gillisann Harootunian. The memoir tells of Haroian’s experience as an Ottoman soldier in early World War I, and his participation in the Battle of Sarikamish, from which he was one of the small number of Armenian survivors.

Fr. Vartan Kasparian, Visalia, California, for a collection of Armenian language and Armenian themed books.

Bishop Bagrat Galstanyan Visits William Saroyan House Museum

Left to right: Lena Altebarmakian, Primate of the Diocese of Tavush (Armenia) Bishop Bagrat Galstanyan, Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian, and Dr. Varouj Altebarmakian at the William Saroyan House Museum.

California State University, Fresno
Armenian Studies Program
Fall 2022 Schedule of Courses

Course Units Time Day Instructor
General Education-Breadth, Humanities, Area C2 4 10:00A-11:50A MW B. Der Mugrdechian (Class #72489)
General Education-Breadth, Arts, Area C1 3 11:00A-12:15P TuTh B. Der Mugrdechian (Class #73305)
General Education-Breadth, Area D2 3 9:00A- 9:50A MWF H. Ohanessian (Class #73013)
General Education-Integration, Area IC 3 10:00A-10:50A MWF H. Ohanessian (Class #73905)
Arm 148-Mastpocs Arm Cult 3 2:00P-3:15P MW H. Ohanessian (Class #73381)
Upper Division Armenian Studies Course 3 9:30A-10:45A TuTh B. Der Mugrdechian (Class #73755)

Get a Minor in Armenian Studies

For more information call the Armenian Studies Program at 278-2669. Check on requirements for the Minor in Armenian Studies in the current catalog.

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Make your reservation online to visit the William Saroyan House Museum
https://saroyanhouse.com

Give Your Way to the Armenian Studies Program

There are many ways to support the Armenian Studies Program.

1) A gift today could come through the donation of cash, stock, or goods.
2) The Armenian Studies Program can also be supported in the future in estate plans.

Hye Sharzhoom is an ethnic supplement of The College and is the newspaper of the Fresno State Armenian Students Organization and the Armenian Studies Program and is funded by the Associated Students. Articles may be reprinted provided Hye Sharzhoom is acknowledged. Hye Sharzhoom welcomes prose, poetry, articles and other material from its student readers. For further information concerning the newspaper or the Armenian Studies Program contact us at:

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March 2022

Dr. Kebranian reflects on Zabel Yessayan's short stories published in new book-Captive Nights

"My objective wasn’t then just simply to translate more Armenian works into English, and the impact of Ara Publishing, an Armenian and Turkish language press in Istanbul, that is translating Armenian literature and history into Turkish. "It’s played a really incredible role in revising and rewriting history about the presence of Armenian women in the Ottoman Empire and Turkey just by translating Armenian literary works into Turkish," explained Dr. Kebranian.

Next, Dr. Nanor Kebranian walked through the life and publications of Zabel Yessayan. "In life, Yessayan was keen to be translated into Turkish… She would have done the translations herself if her knowledge of Ottoman Turkish had been good enough," explained Dr. Kebranian. She wrote letters to her husband in Paris informing him that the Committee of Union and Progress had published a Turkish translation of her works and that it made her quite famous in Istanbul. "She was quite pleased at finally being recognized by a great or big nation," said Dr. Kebranian. Though Zabel Yessayan’s works were in high demand, she needed her husband, Dikran Yessayan, to translate her works.

In her teens, Yessayan’s family moved to Paris to pursue higher education and protect her from the dangers arising against Armenians in Istanbul at a time, including the massacres and political and socioeconomic repression of Armenians in a losing Ottoman Empire. "Europe offered better opportunities to both who had the financial means, or other opportunities, a way to escape those circumstances," explained Dr. Kebranian. Yessayan was lucky that her father presented those means to her. Along with Zabel Yessayan, another liberal Armenian who arrived in Paris too new beginning, many of whom collaborated with Tigran, and continued to write law that prevented Armenians from moving back from their homes and revoked their citizenship if they were in Istanbul from 1914 to 1915," explained Dr. Kebranian.

"Melih… seems to be an exact mirror of the Armenian women that she [Zabel] has presented in similar contexts. Melih is also a nurse; Yessayan also worked as a nurse for months to support herself in Paris when she was a student there [and] Yessayan had to dress as a Turkish woman to hide in Istanbul from 1914 to 1915," explained Dr. Kebranian.

At the end of the discussion, viewers were able to ask Dr. Nanor Kebranian questions through the question module on Zoom. A recording of this discussion can be found on the Armenian Studies YouTube channel at https://bit.ly/arianstudiesyoutube.

Dr. Vartan Matiossian discussed his new book on January 28, 2022.

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Sara Bebayan Staff Writer

We often forget how important words are. Our choice of words and the way we use certain words can influence the impact our story has on others.

How does one begin to describe a genocide? A completely traumatic event that tears apart homes, families, and everything that is familiar… if the word "genocide" does not even exist? It also becomes increasingly difficult when you try to translate the word into another language.

Dr. Vartan Matiossian was the first speaker in the Armenian Studies Program Spring 2022 Lecture Series. Fresno State students and community members were present on Friday, January 28, 2022, through Zoom, to hear his lecture on "What’s in a Name?: Language, the Politics of Armenian Genocide, and Medz Yeghern.

Dr. Matiossian was introduced by Armenian Studies Program Director Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian. Dr. Matiossian is a co-author of a forthcoming book Women of the World: Armenians: The Dancer of Shamakhi, number 16 in the Armenian Series of The Press at California State University Press.

Dr. Matiossian received his doctorate in 2006 from the Institute of History of the National Academy of Sciences of Armenia. He is a literary scholar, historian, and has been the Executive Director of the Eastern Region of the Armenian Studies Program since 2020. Dr. Matiossian’s presentation was based on his recent book, The Politics of Naming the Armenian Genocide: Language, History and Medz Yeghern, published in 2021.

He also discussed the term "Medz Yeghern" (genocide) came into use more often, and the meaning changed again to the "Genocide of the Armenians." A secondary meaning of "great calamity" or "catastrophe" for yeghern was developed after the early 2000s. He argued that this new meaning was "uncritically accepted by the Armenians, leading to self-denial." This meaning lessened the extent of the atrocities and could be used by deniers of the Genocide.

U.S. Presidents Bush and Obama used the terms "Great Calamity" and "Meds Yeghern" respectively, thus avoiding the word Genocide.

Dr. Matiossian also discussed the usage of "Medz Yeghern" and "Great Calamity" and its effect in the usage of these terms. The Genocide was no accident, the pain was inflicted on us. In contrast, a "catastrophe"

See Matiossian page 6

Christine Pambukyan Staff Writer

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Also, the publication, Captive Nights: From the Bosphorus to Gallipoli with Zabel Yessayan, can be purchased online from the Aras Publishing’s online store at https://araspublisher.com/captive-nights-from-the-bosphorus-to-gallipoli-with-zabel-yessayan.html and from the NAASR bookstore at https://naasr.org/products/captive-nights-from-the-bosphorus-to-gallipoli-with-zabel-yessayan.
Prof. Der Mugrdechian Speaks on “Armenian Literature and Identity” to Scottsdale Community

"We know about our identity from reading the stories of our writers," said Professor Barlow Der Mugrdechian. "Without that literature and history, it would be difficult to understand Armenian identity." On Sunday, January 16, 2022, Prof. Der Mugrdechian gave a talk on "Armenian Literature and Identity" at St. Apkan Armenian Apostolic Church in Scottsdale, Arizona. Prof. Der Mugrdechian is the Berberian Director of the Armenian Studies Program at Fresno State and has been teaching courses in Armenian literature and history for more than thirty-six years.

Prof. Der Mugrdechian began his talk by defining identity as the distinguishing characteristics of an individual or a society/culture. He said Armenian identity is both: 1) how the Armenians see themselves and 2) how others see the Armenians.

The creation of the Armenian alphabet by Mesrop Mashtots in the 4th century AD marked a significant milestone. From the contributions of 5th c. A.D. Armenian historians such as Agatangelos, Movses Khorenatsi, and Yeghishe, Armenian writers have left a legacy that has shaped the identity of the Armenians.

Armenians acquired a Christian identity during the 4th c. AD. Armenians acquired a Christian identity in addition to their pre-Christian identity. Christianity was a way of distinguishing Armenians from their Persian neighbors and in time from their Byzantine Christian neighbors. Christianity is a fundamental aspect of Armenian identity today.

Movses Khorenatsi, also known as "The Father of Armenian History," was a 5th c. A.D. historian who wrote History of the Armenians. Khorenatsi tied the origin of the Armenians to the Biblical story of the flood by connecting the Armenian lineage to Noah. He wrote that Armenian works and the works of other authors who followed him, began to shape a more modern concept of Armenian identity. Even though the Western Armenians were politically under the Ottoman Turks, Armenian literature began to flourish. The Armenian sense of identity was expressed through literature.

Miskh Medzarests, whose career was cut short by illness, was another outstanding poet of the pre-revolution period. His collected work, Miskh Medzarests: The Complete Lyric Poems, translated by Dr. James Russell, was recently published by the Armenian Series at Fresno State.

The Ottoman Turkish revolution of July 1908 brought hopes for a truly equal society in the Ottoman Empire. The Sultan was overthrown and an Ottoman Parliament was elected which ignited the Western Armenian Renaissance (1908-1915).

Some of the writers of the time were: Daniel Varoujan, Knor Zohrab, Rupen Zartarian, Yeghishe Charents, and Rupen Sevak. Sadly, the atmosphere of cosmopolitanism that was an outgrowth of the revolution was stamped out by the militaristic/totalitarian elements of the Committee of Union and Progress. This change ultimately led to the Armenian Genocide of 1915.

One of the writers who managed to escape the genocidal persecution was Zabel Yessayan (1878-1943?), an author, humanitarian, and activist who was born in middle-class Ottoman Istanbul. In 1909, she was appointed by the Patriarchate of Constantinople as part of a delegation sent to Russia. Adana, in 1915. Prof. Der Mugrdechian asked, "How did the Armenians maintain their identity while living more than four centuries under foreign rule?" The maintenance of the early identity of the Armenians continued to be the role of education for those who lived in the Diaspora, the remnants of subaltern leaders, and the role of merchants in taking on leadership roles all contributed to the preservation of Armenian identity during a time when there was no independent Armenian state. Because of these factors, Armenians were recognized as a people with a special status by the empires they lived under.

The period of Western Armenian history is known as the "Zartnik" period. The first writer of this period was the poet, Bedros Tourian (1851-1872), whose

Follow the ASO on Instagram
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Hye Sharzhoom
March 2022

ASO Christmas Ball Attracts Students and Community

The Andrew Hagopian Ensemble: Jonathan Chardukian, Andrew Hagopian, and Michael Mazman, at the ASO Ball.

Staff Writer

On Wednesday, December 22, 2021, the Armenian Students Organization held its biggest fundraiser of the year, the ASO "Christmas Ball." On this night, members of the Armenian community from all over the Central Valley gathered at Pilgrim Armenian Congregational Church to enjoy a full dinner, catered by Ararat Market and Grill. Guests had the pleasure of bidding in a silent dessert auction with cakes donated from local bakeries and dessert shops, while listening to live traditional Armenian music.

The Ball was held at the Armenian Students Organization on the Fresno State campus and included traditional Armenian food, music, and dance. The evening was filled with festive decorations and holiday cheer, creating a warm and inviting atmosphere.

The ASO would like to thank the Armenian community of Fresno for its continued investment and participation in our club. With the support of our donors and business sponsors, we will be able to continue our mission of serving the Armenian students at Fresno State. Additionally, the Armenian Students Organization would like to thank ASO President Michael Mazman, Assistant President Andrew Hagopian, and Vice-President Christian Tufenkjian for their support and guidance.

"Fundraisers like these go directly towards the benefit of our club and its members, hopefully for years to come."

A group of students at the ASO Christmas Ball.

Read Hye Sharzhoom online:
hyesharzhoom.com
All issues have been archived on the site.
The International Court of Justice (ICJ) rules against Azerbaijan on all counts! Armenia won a landmark victory in a hearing brought before the ICJ on the basis of urgency and the need to take all necessary measures to prevent all manifestations of religious, racial, and national hatred. The court made three orders to secure the safety of Armenian prisoners of war, the cessation of hate speech and violence by Azerbaijan, and the destruction of cultural heritage by the same.

Kerkonian is an international litigator of renown, presenting regularly on issues of human rights before the International Court of Justice and the European Court of Human Rights. He is currently working on the case of Armenia v. Azerbaijan before the International Court of Justice and presented what progress his team has made on the case as well as the road ahead to Armenian Studies students here at Fresno State.

Kerkonian gave his presentation, "Armenia v. Azerbaijan in the International Court of Justice: An Overview of the Case and the Outcome," on Thursday, February 17, 2022. He spoke via Zoom in a lecture streamed on YouTube and Facebook and was introduced by Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian.

Kerkonian, a member of the Armenian delegation to the International Court of Justice, provided Armenian Studies students with an overview of the case itself, the context surrounding the litigation, and the decision reached by the International Court of Justice, or ICJ, on December 7, 2021.

Kerkonian began with a discussion of the ICJ and its jurisdiction. The court can adjudicate cases where a specific promissory clause has been placed into existing treaties, clauses which specifically allow the ICJ to resolve disputes among the parties of said treaty. The United Nations adopted the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD) in 1965, and from this convention came a binding implementation of CERD to enter into force in 1969. This treaty commits its members to criminalize certain forms of hate speech and violence, the universal declaration of human rights and the intention to take all necessary measures to prevent all manifestations of religious, racial, and national hatred.

CERD defined racial discrimination, in part, as the need for specific prohibitions to render the treaty effective. Article 2, for example, requires that states not practice racial discrimination in public settings, and in institutions among other things. Equality before the law, regardless of race, color, or nation of origin, practical protection against acts of racial discrimination, prohibition of apartheid and segregation, condemnation of racial supremacist propaganda, criminalization of hate speech, and racial tolerance in education were among many of the other provisions in this treaty.

Kerkonian noted that both Armenia and Azerbaijan ratified and made themselves party to this treaty decades ago. Immediately after the signing of the Trilateral agreement on November 11, 2020, the Armenian Foreign Minister initiated communication with the Azeri Foreign Minister alleging that Azerbaijan violated CERD. After over 40 items of correspondence and seven rounds of meetings, Armenia declared that Azerbaijan refused to admit to any wrongdoing, nor intended to remedy damages incurred. On September 16th of 2021, negotiations having failed, Armenia filed its case with the ICJ. Armenia presented the historic context of Armenian-Azerbaijani relations to the court and accused Azerbaijan of breaking the terms of CERD with anti-Armenian hate speech sponsored by the government in Azeri news, in speeches by Azeri President Ilham Aliyev, in the curriculum in public schools, the committing violent acts and by the destruction of Armenian artifacts and buildings.

While the case has yet to be decided on the merits, Armenia requested a hearing to ask that the court take certain specific measures to end hate speech, destruction of cultural heritage, and the abuse and murder of Armenian POWs by Azerbaijan. Armenia placed take place immediately due to the ongoing civil rights abuses and the urgency of the situation. Armenia presented videos and photos of ongoing murder, and torture of POWs, destruction of churches and artifacts, and abuse of civilians to the court and their panel of 15 judges.

On December 7, 2021, the court ruled that Azerbaijan shall protect from bodily harm and ensure the security of all facilities and then was appointed in 2019 to serve as the project coordinator for the Save Mart Center.

In 1989, after marrying her high school sweetheart, Mark, who she met at Fresno State, Adishian-Astone went back to school for her master’s degree in Business Administration. It was a busy time — working, attending class and raising their oldest son, Andrew, who was born in 1992. She graduated with her MBA in 1994. As she continued to grow in her career, she also grew her family, welcoming second son, Matthew, just days before attending the groundbreaking ceremony for the Save Mart Center in May 2001.

Adishian-Astone was named as the associate vice president for Auxiliary Operations/executive director of Auxiliary Services in 2001. In this role, she oversaw all Auxiliary operations, including the Kennel Bookstore, Fresno State Student Housing, University Dining Services, and the Save Mart Center.

She also served as executive director for both the Fresno State Foundation and Agricultural Foundation. In addition, she oversaw the construction of the Student Recreation Center and Campus Pointe — the largest mixed-use, public-private part- nership in the country. She also oversaw an inspiration for schools in California and across the nation to engage with students and the public.

Adishian-Astone says her biggest inspiration has always been to serve and support the students at Fresno State. “Our students deserve to have access to state-of-the-art facilities. I have always strived to look to the future — what we can do better, what we can do differently. I have had the reach by this court is of utmost importance in terms of the preservation of Armenian culture and the precedent that this will set.

While there are no magic bullets, this ruling is a clear sign of positive change and provides great hope for the future. The Armenian community is grateful to Mr. Kerkonian for his advocacy on behalf of Armenia before the International Court of Justice, and for his time in speaking to Armenian Studies students at Fresno State and the community to inform them on the case and its progress. Have you moved? Please let us know of any change in address. Call us at 278-2669 or email: barlowd@csufresno.edu
Dr. Ronald Marchese

Staff Report

The YSU delegation then met with the Dean of Continuing and Professional Education and Associate Dean Dr. Daniel Bernard. Ideas were exchanged about establishing a summer program in Armenia for students in various disciplines at Fresno State. The focus will be on one or two disciplines in which the two universities share common interests. A working group was established to bring these ideas to fruition.

Dr. Der Mugrdechian also discussed the activities of the Armenian Studies Program at Fresno State and an Armenian Series of Talks on Armenian Genocide Perpetrators: “The Ordinary Killers: Genocide and the Armenian Studies Program, among them Hye Sharzhoom, discusses the sporadic and irregular forces that had a key role in the Armenian Genocide. These forces created for extermination and deportation and extermination of the Armenians had four goals, including: 1) the military, such as the “Special Organization,” who participated in the killings, or who were released. They were set free from prisons to organize and genocide is escaped to the true perpetrators to the objectified, mass of people, stated Dr. Manukyan. Due to the propaganda, participation in the genocide included not only men, but also women, similar to German participation in the Holocaust. Unlike other genocides, however, every Armenian was harmed and killed no matter if they were young or old, man, woman, or child. Excessive propaganda was an important precondition of war and new leadership, leading to an “Us vs. Them” situation.

At the end of the discussion, viewers were able to ask Dr. Manukyan and Prof. Der Mugrdechian questions through the chat function on Zoom.

A recording of the discussion, along with other lectures of this semester, can be found on the Armenian Studies YouTube Channel at https://bit.ly/armenianstudiesyoutube.
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Roundtable Discussion Held on “Cultural Heritage in Law and Diplomacy” at Fresno State Law

On October 14, 2021, the Armenian Studies Program co-sponsored a roundtable discussion with the Initiative on Religion, Law, and Diplomacy of The Fletcher School of Law & Diplomacy at Tufts University, and the Center for Law and Religion at St. John’s Law School on the topic “Cultural Heritage in Law and Diplomacy.”

The idea for the roundtable originated in response to the ongoing conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh which has thrown into sharp relief the global problem of access to sacred spaces and of the effective protection of cultural heritage both during and outside of conditions of armed conflict.

The roundtable addressed questions such as how do we define sacred spaces; how does both tangible and intangible cultural heritage function in living communities; what tools in international law and diplomacy exist for the protection of cultural heritage that is threatened in times of conflict as well as in peace; and what are the limits of those tools.

The two-hour discussion involved five participants from the United States and Europe, and included, in alphabetical order, KOOYUMJIAN, PAGE 1: Trio concert and an international conference.

The Kooyumjian Family also made an additional donation of $25,000 to the Kooyumjian Endowed Scholarship Fund at Fresno State. Together with previous gifts, the Kooyumjian Family Scholarship has reached nearly $500,000.

Thomas A. Kooyumjian passed away in 1985 and his Foundation was established in 1987.

The goals of the Foundation are to encourage education, with an emphasis on the appreciation of fine arts. Kooyumjian was an employee and inventor at Belmor Manufacturing and excelled in his field, but also wanted to encourage the finer arts and encourage the same in others.

The current President of the Foundation is Tony Kooyumjian. One of the Foundation’s goals is to encourage all generations to experience and be educated in the effects of fine arts on society as a whole.

The Foundation is also one of the sponsors of the Armenian Genocide Memorial on the Fresno State campus.

The Kooyumjian Endowed Scholarship will benefit students within the Armenian Studies Program, in the College of Arts and Humanities at Fresno State. Scholarship recipients will be known as the Thomas A. Kooyumjian Scholars in Armenian Studies.

Dr. Narinagh Gazaryan, Associate Professor in EU law at the School of Law of the University of Nottingham; Dr. Leonard Hammer, the Director of Outreach and Program Development, Human Rights Practice Graduate Programs (SSS) at the University of Arizona; Dr. Evangelos Kyriakidis, the founding director of the Heritage Management Organization; Dr. Peter Perkoff, Senior Lecturer at the Brunel Law School, and Director of the Religion, Law and International Relations Programme, Regent’s Park College, Oxford; and Dr. Mchalyne St selfie, Professor of Law and Associate Dean for Research and Academic Affairs at Brigham Young University where she has taught on Federal Indian Law, Evidence, and Civil Rights.

The moderators of the discussion were Dr. Elizabeth Proctorsson, Faculty Director of the Initiative on Religion, Law, and Diplomacy at The Fletcher School of Law & Diplomacy, Tufts University; Prof. Mark Movsesian, Frederick A. Whitney Professor & Co-Director, Center for Law and Religion, St. John’s Law School; and Dr. Sergio La Ota Porta, Haig and Isabel Berberian Professor of Armenian Studies at Fresno State University.

The participants posted blog posts with their reflections on the topic to the lawandreligionforum.org website, a recording of the discussion can be found at https://youtu.be/3XljQDSyjI4.

10th Annual Genocide Awareness Week at Arizona State University

April 4-9, 2022

The 10th Annual Roosevelt Family Charitable Foundation Genocide Awareness Week is a series of events, activities and documentaries that seeks to bring to light how, as a global society, we can protect sacred sites, define sacred spaces; how does both tangible and intangible cultural heritage function in living communities; what tools in international law and diplomacy exist for the protection of cultural heritage that is threatened in times of conflict as well as in peace; and what are the limits of those tools.

The current President of the Foundation is Tony Kooyumjian. One of the Foundation’s goals is to encourage all generations to experience and be educated in the effects of fine arts on society as a whole.

The Foundation is also one of the sponsors of the Armenian Genocide Monument on the Fresno State campus.

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The idea for the roundtable originated in response to the ongoing conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh which has thrown into sharp relief the global problem of access to sacred spaces and of the effective protection of cultural heritage both during and outside of conditions of armed conflict.

The roundtable addressed questions such as how do we define sacred spaces; how does both tangible and intangible cultural heritage function in living communities; what tools in international law and diplomacy exist for the protection of cultural heritage that is threatened in times of conflict as well as in peace; and what are the limits of those tools.

The two-hour discussion involved five participants from the United States and Europe, and included, in alphabetical order, KOOYUMJIAN, PAGE 1: Trio concert and an international conference.

The Kooyumjian Family also made an additional donation of $25,000 to the Kooyumjian Endowed Scholarship Fund at Fresno State. Together with previous gifts, the Kooyumjian Family Scholarship has reached nearly $500,000.

Thomas A. Kooyumjian passed away in 1985 and his Foundation was established in 1987.

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KEY TIME FRESNO, from page 1

events across the nation, such as weddings and picnics.

The group coined its name from the genre of music they played “kef” music which translates to “party” music in Armenian. These folksongs date back to nineteenth-and-twentieth-century Western Armenian villages and eventually made their way to the Central Valley’s Diaspora community.

Andrew Hagopian noted how the festivities began to wane by the mid-1980s, as many Armenians began to assimilate. The “Kef Time Band” held its last formal event on February 15, 1986, though they continued to play at weddings and other private events.

This did not hinder Andrew, however, from resurrecting his grandfather’s band. “It has always been a dream of mine to throw my own dance,” Andrew said. Especially in light of the pandemic, he recognized how “people have been cooped up too long.” So, as COVID cases began to decline in the Valley, he was determined to revitalize the social event of his grandfather’s generation. And he certainly was not alone in his vision.

Within two months, the event sold out with nearly a third of the attendees traveling from Massachusetts, Michigan, Illinois, Wisconsin, New York, Nevada, and Southern and Northern California.

“I enjoy looking out and seeing the community take part in their culture,” asserted Andrew. Considering the Genocide and the recent situation in Artsakh, he sees the necessity of Armenians fostering a “reconnection to their roots.” He emphasized how “there are nations and forces working to erase our history, so we have to claim what is ours.”

And a significant aspect of that history is the folk music which Andrew recognized as untainted by synthesizers and the modern instruments of Western culture. “I see it as a service that we are preserving our ancestors’ roots,” he stated.

But what Andrew enjoys most about being in the band is working alongside his colleagues. He recalled how “in that moment, it is almost as if our minds are linked… each person is doing their own thing, but in the end, we’re producing one uniting sound.”

For Michael Kamalian, the pleasure similarly lies in “creating a brotherhood between the musicians.”

“I don’t see them as ’co-workers,’ it’s a family of great people who work together to create memories and carry on the tradition,” said Michael. Hooked on the music at a young age, Kamalian was inspired to become involved in the band with the encouragement of Richard Hagopian and Archig Kazarian. “It’s very humbling that I have the opportunity to create that same feeling for the next generation” he stated.

Phillip Hagopian also added how “it’s incredibly rewarding and fulfilling to see a new generation enjoy this music and to see the whole community—both younger and older people—come together and thoroughly enjoy a shared experience.”

Ultimately, Andrew believes that he has made his grandfather proud to see his legacy continue for another generation.

The success of the February 26 event has led to discussion about more events in the near future. As Andrew passionately stated, “There’s nothing more important to me than bringing together the whole community.”

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Armenian Studies April 2022 Events

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Photo: ASP Archive

Hagopian.

L. to R.: Michael Kamalian, Phillip Hagopian, and Andrew Hagopian.

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