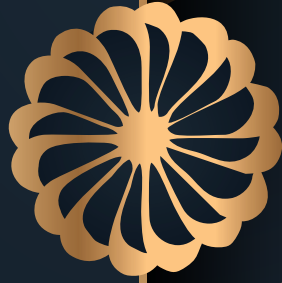


ECHOES OF OUR ANCESTORS

• LET THE ECHOES RISE •



PEOPLE OF AR

CULTURAL FOUNDATION

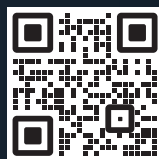
The People of Ar Cultural Foundation is built by cultural professionals for the purpose of safeguarding, celebrating, and evolving Armenian cultural heritage. We are here to make Armenian identity not just proud — but powerfully relevant.

Our mission is to reawaken our roots and inspire the future by creating bold, world-class cultural projects that reach across generations and borders.



PEOPLE OF AR
CULTURAL FOUNDATION

We aim to preserve and elevate Armenian arts through performance and education, reimagining tradition through innovation, and to inspire Armenian youth with pride in their ancestry.



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TOGETHER WE ECHO THE ANCESTORS



ECHOES OF OUR ANCESTORS
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SEPTEMBER 12, 2025
THE GREEK THEATRE, LOS ANGELES





We launch our foundation's vision with *Echoes of Our Ancestors*, a large-scale musical and visual spectacle that traces Armenian history from 7000 BC to the present day through music, dance, and immersive LED visuals. Featuring global icons such as Serj Tankian, Tigran Hamasyan, Sebu of Capital Cities, Isabel Bayrakdarian and others, that is conducted by Sergey Smbatyan of the Armenian State Symphony. The production sets a new bar for artistic excellence and cultural storytelling.

This production is not a standalone event, but the first in a continuing series. Each sequel will explore new chapters of Armenian civilization and spirit diving deeper into the heritage.





ARMAN NSHANIAN

AUTHOR & CREATIVE DIRECTOR

CEO, PEOPLE OF AR CULTURAL FOUNDATION

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Culture is everything. It is our food, our language, our dance, our music, our memory, our resilience, our knowledge. It is the bloodstream of a people and when neglected, it withers. We Armenians have carried extraordinary trauma in our collective body. The Genocides and wars throughout time robbed us of more than land and lives; it severed our thread to our ancestors. In our dislocation, we learned to survive by blending in. Like chameleons taking on the colors of other cultures, forgetting our own. We accepted that shallow materialism, ego-driven fame, and low-vibrational imitation music disguised as “Armenian” could fill the void and pass for our culture. And in doing so, we began to confuse noise for art, spectacle for substance, survival for identity. Culture is not a costume. It is not borrowed. It cannot be reduced to mimicry, nor diluted into fads. To abandon it, or to treat it lightly, is to create a false identity built on victimhood rather than resilience, on imitation rather than authenticity.

This is why *Echoes of Our Ancestors* exists. To remind us that we have a culture as old as time, as deep as the stones of Karahunj, as unshakable as Ararat itself. To remind us that our music, our dance, our words, our faith, our pain, and our victories are not only worthy — they are extraordinary. And they deserve to be presented with reverence, rigor, and truth. If culture is everything, then protecting it is our highest duty. For without culture we are nothing but shadows of others. But with it — alive, honest, and unapologetically our own — we are eternal. I thank you for being here tonight.

Together let us echo the ancestors.



ASKO AKOPYAN

PRODUCER

CFO, PEOPLE OF AR CULTURAL FOUNDATION

Asko Akopyan, Co-Founder, Producer, and CFO of the People of AR Cultural Foundation, is widely recognized in the Armenian community of Los Angeles as a driving force in independent cinema. Beginning his career as a talent agent and founder of iTalent Group, he quickly earned respect among casting directors before channeling his passion for storytelling into film production.



Through his company, Oscar Gold Productions, Asko has produced numerous internationally distributed films, including *Vigilante Diaries* (HBO), *Oxenfree* (Screen Media), *Mind Blown* (SyFy/Lionsgate), *Doomsday Device* (Lionsgate), *Unorganized Crime* directed by Nick Vallelonga and starring Chazz Palminteri, *Songs of Solomon* directed by Arman Nshanian and co-produced by Vallelonga, the two-time Academy Award-winning writer and producer of *Green Book*, and most recently *Hollywood Heist*, starring Alec Baldwin and Nick Cannon.

*With **Echoes of Our Ancestors**, Asko brings his expertise and vision to ensure this historic production reaches both its artistic and global potential.*



SYLVIA KAVOUKJIAN

CREATIVE CONSULTANT

Sylvia Kavoukjian serves on the Board of Directors of the People of Ar Cultural Foundation, where she leads with both vision and heart. As a Creative Consultant, she plays a key role in building meaningful partnerships that bring its mission to life. With a deep passion for Armenian culture and community empowerment, Sylvia is a driving force behind the success and sustainability of the foundation's landmark projects.



GOHAR OHANIAN

DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT AND STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

Her love for music began at home, inspired by her father's violin & the Ballet. As a Master Fitness Presenter for Reebok and Nike, she shared her passion for music and movement worldwide by collaborating with noted musicians on music videos. Influenced by Komitas, Ara Gevorgyan, Arthur Meschian, and others, she now brings the same devotion to the People of AR Cultural Foundation, emphasizing the deep connection between movement, art, and culture.

VARTUHI VARDANYAN

TREASURER

Growing up in Los Angeles, surrounded by diverse cultures, Vartuhi Vardanyan has always kept her Armenian heritage at the heart of her identity. Echoes reflects that spirit—bringing the richness of Armenian culture to the stage for a wider audience through music, dance, spoken word, and art. Vartuhi has built a career in the health care insurance industry, and in her free time she enjoys reading, gardening, and spending time by the sea.





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LET THE ECHOES RISE

We are proud to announce USC Institute of Armenian Studies as a Legacy Sponsor of our foundation. Their pioneering work in academic preservation and community scholarship directly aligns with our mission. This partnership will:

- Support the long-term academic documentation of all foundation productions.
- Create multimedia archives that preserve and contextualize Armenian art and identity.
- Connect our large-scale public projects with rigorous cultural scholarship.

In return, our productions offer the USC Institute:

- A living, high-visibility platform to expand their cultural reach. New material and content for curriculum development.
- Public engagement and legacy-building through shared values and visibility.

Together, we bridge academia and art to protect and promote Armenian identity.





ANDRANIK BERBERYAN

MUSIC PRODUCER

Andranik Berberyan (b. 1994, Yerevan) is a composer, music producer, and founder of *Berberyan Production Studios*, Armenia's leading music and sound production company. A graduate of the Yerevan State Conservatory, he has scored films such as *Songs of Solomon*, *Amerikatsi*, *The Reverse Side of the Medal*, *Yasha and Leonid Brezhnev* and so on. His studio has produced music for major international events including Expo 2020 Dubai, Junior Eurovision 2022, the 2024 EBRD Annual Meeting Gala, European Weightlifting Championships 2023 opening ceremony etc .

Berberyan is a multiple award-winner, receiving Best Original Score at the Anahit National Film Awards (*Songs of Solomon*, 2022; *Amerikatsi*, 2024) and Composer of the Year at the 2025 Khazer Awards. In 2024, he became the first Armenian composer invited to join the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, cementing his role as a leading figure in contemporary Armenian music.





MARO PARIAN

Costume Designer

Maro Parian is an acclaimed costume designer whose work has earned multiple honors, including “Best Costume Design” (LA Weekly), Drama-Logue, and the LA Times Critics’ Circle for Master & Margarita (Zoo District Theatre). She also received recognition for Romeo & Juliet (Odyssey Theatre/Deaf West) and Medea (Deaf West), the latter earning her a Drama-Logue award. Her film credits include Amerikatsi (Best Costume Design, Mystic Film Festival), Songs of Solomon, Hotel Lobby, and Manfish (Best Production, Rome Film Festival). She has designed for Universal Studios, Ardavazd Theatre Company, while also teaching costume construction for 12 years at California State University, Northridge. Currently with the Universal Studios Hollywood Costume Department, she continues to bring innovation and artistry to her work.



DR. SATENIK CHOOKASZIAN

Art & History Consultant

Dr. Satenik Chookaszian is an art historian and scholar specializing in Armenian art and cultural heritage. She is Head of the Decorative-Applied Arts Department at the National Gallery of Armenia and a lecturer at Yerevan State University. Through her academic work and public engagement, she has significantly advanced the understanding of Armenia’s visual culture and intellectual traditions. Her expertise spans from medieval manuscript illumination to issues of modern Armenian cultural identity. Dr. Chookaszian has served as an art and historical consultant for numerous concerts, exhibitions, films, and interdisciplinary projects in Armenia and abroad.



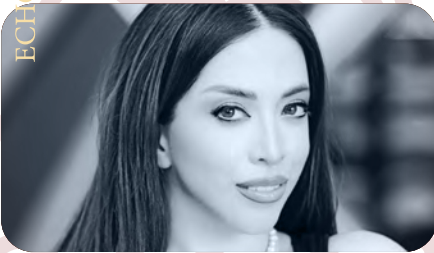
ECHOES OF OUR ANCESTORS

ECHOES OF OUR ANCESTORS

ANI AVETYAN
Showrunner



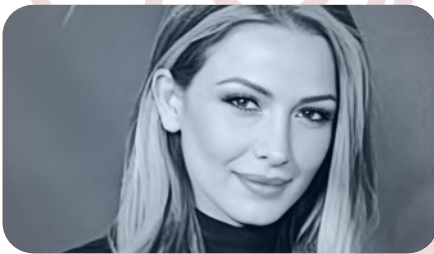
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THANK YOU FOR OUR PRE PANEL SESSION

DR. SHUSHAN KARAPETIAN

SOCIOLOGIST & THE DEPUTY
DIRECTOR OF THE USC DORNSIFE
INSTITUTE OF ARMENIAN STUDIES

A portrait of Dr. Shushan Karapetian, a woman with short blonde hair, wearing a dark blue button-down shirt. She is smiling and looking towards the camera. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with a brick building and arches, likely a university campus.

Shushan Karapetian sets the vision for the USC Dornsife Institute of Armenian Studies, leading research, scholarship, and academic programming while building connections on and off campus. She focuses on the Armenian experience, particularly language and identity. Her award-winning dissertation on Armenian heritage language in Los Angeles received the Society for Armenian Studies Distinguished Dissertation Award (2015), followed by the Russ Campbell Young Scholar Award (2018). She also hosts the podcast Language Therapy with Dr. K and the IG/YouTube series Word of the Day.

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M A E S T R O

SERGEY SMBATYAN

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Legacy*



World-renowned conductor Sergey Smbatyan leads the orchestra for this historic production. As Artistic Director of the Armenian State Symphony Orchestra, his presence brings unmatched precision, passion, and authenticity to the stage.

With a deep connection to Armenian heritage and global acclaim, Maestro Smbatyan will guide the musical journey through every single genre of armenian music ever written, uniting tradition and innovation in one powerful performance.



SYMPHONIC ORCHESTRA

M E M B E R S

1st Violin

Concertmaster Eric Manukyan

Armen Mangasaryan
Stepan Khalatyan
Ruzanna Sargsyan
Anna Kharazyan
Araksia Nazlikyan

2nd Violin

Hovhannes Meghrikyan
Hripsime Yepremyan
Katerina Kolesnyk
Sahak Karapetyan
Tatevik Yaghoobyan
Alisa Darbinyan

Viola Artashes Asatryan
Yelena Hayrapetyan
Hovhannes Fishyan
Shushan Daniyelyan

Cello Haik Babayan
Maxim Vilichkin
Cathy Biagini
Milena Mardanyan

Contrabass Hakim Haloway
Jay Rubottom
Nune Hayrapetyan

Harp Paul Backer

Flute Gevorge Avetisyan

Oboe Francisco Castillo

**Clarinet/
Alto
Saxophone** Artyom
Ordubekyan

Bassoon Christin Webb

**French
Horn** Armen Karagyan
Kristin Morrison

Trumpet Jonathan Bradley
Vahagn Elbakyan

Trombone Fred Simmons

**Basse
Trombone** David Goya

Tuba Bradley Moller

Timpani Edward Papoyan

**Percussion
Instruments** Artashes Sinanyan
Edward Harutyunyan
Armenak Grigoryan

**Electric
Guitar** Levon Simonyan

Bass Guitar Vardan Arakelyan

Keyboard Arman Berberyan

SARO MANGASARIAN

FOUNDER OF INTL. SCHOOL OF MUSIC ORCHESTRA CONTRACTOR

Saro Mangasarian is the founder of the International School of Music in Glendale, California, with over 33 years dedicated to children's musical education. Since 1999, he has collaborated with Maestro Mikayel Avetisyan on numerous concerts and cultural projects, and has worked with renowned artists such as Konstantin Orbelyan, Arus Ajemyan, Vatche Mankerian, Sergey Khachatryan, Aram Gharabekian, and Loris Tjeknavorian. Committed to fostering excellence and preserving cultural heritage, he is honored to contribute to *Echoes of Our Ancestors* with director Arman Nshanian.

MIKAEL AVETISYAN

CONSULTING CONDUCTOR

Mikael Avetisyan (born 1966) is an Armenian conductor, professor, and Doctor of Music. Trained at the Yerevan Komitas and St. Petersburg Conservatories, he has led major Armenian orchestras and served as Artistic Director of the Armenian Philharmonic (1998–1999). Since 2002, he has conducted the New Valley Symphony and is currently Artistic Director and Principal Conductor of the Glendale Philharmonic Orchestra (USA). His honors include the Kirill Kondrashin Conductors Master Classes diploma (Netherlands) and the Glendale and Los Angeles County Artistic Achievement Diamond Award.





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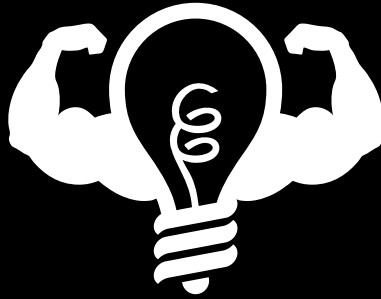
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HIS EMINENCE ARCHBISHOP HOVNAN DERDERIAN, PRIMATE

September 12, 2025

**Congratulatory Message of
H.E. Archbishop Hovnan Derderian
Primate of the Western Diocese of the Armenian Church
of North America**

With heartfelt joy, I extend my warmest congratulations on the occasion of the monumental concert, *Echoes of Our Ancestors: A Journey Through 7,000 Years of Spirit*, held at the iconic Greek Theater on September 12, 2025. This historic production stands as a radiant testament to the power of cultural heritage. It is a moment of pride for the Armenian nation and a gift to the global community, reminding all of us of the timeless legacy entrusted to us by our ancestors.

I commend the PEOPLE OF AR CULTURAL FOUNDATION, in collaboration with the USC Dornsife Institute of Armenian Studies, for their vision in presenting this extraordinary celebration.

Special recognition is owed to the Board Members, led by Mr. Arman Nshanian, CEO, Creative Director, and Author, alongside Mr. Asko Akopyan, Ms. Sylvia Kavoukjian, Mr. Andranik Berberyan, and Mr. Vahan Hovhannisyian. Their vision and creative spirit know no bounds, and their dedication has given life to a project that elevates our cultural identity on the grandest stage.

I also extend my heartfelt congratulations to the performers, whose impeccable artistry and delivery perfectly encapsulated the indomitable Armenian spirit.

Through music, song, and performance, they carried the voice of our ancestors into the present moment, uniting generations and inspiring hearts with the beauty of Armenian resilience and creativity. Their devotion and talent stand as a shining example of how art continues to sustain our identity and strengthen our collective memory.

May the Almighty God continue to bless all who contributed to this extraordinary achievement. May He grant you strength and wisdom to further enrich our cultural and spiritual life, and may the eternal echoes of our ancestors guide us toward an ever-brighter future for our people.

Prayerfully,

Archbishop Hovnan Derderian
Primate

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HAIKIAN CHAMBER CHOIR



Founded in 2024, the Haikian Chamber Choir preserves Armenian choral heritage while embracing global traditions. Led by executive director and principal conductor *Gayane Baghdasaryan*, the ensemble unites talented voices through a shared passion for music, culture, and community.

Early milestones include the Ani Requiem World Premiere (2024, Alex Theatre, Glendale), debuting Khachatur Avetisyan's work in honor of Armenian memory; the Grand Meet & Greet Debut Concert (March 2025, Glendale), introducing Haikian's mission; and collaborations with leading artists and institutions that strengthen ties across Armenian and global circles.

With a repertoire of sacred hymns, folk songs, and classical works, Haikian seeks to honor centuries-old tradition while inspiring new generations through concerts, collaborations, and educational outreach.



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Together, let's keep building homes, communities wealth and legacies that last.

Anna Kara Loans





SOUND OF CHILDREN

CULTURAL CENTER

Sirvart Kavoukjian is the Founder and Director of the Sound of Children Cultural Center and Summer Program, a pioneering initiative dedicated to nurturing Armenian youth through music, art, and cultural education. With over 40 years of experience working with children in the diaspora, she has devoted her life to inspiring young generations to embrace and celebrate their heritage. Through carefully designed programs, creative workshops, and engaging performances, Sirvart instills in children

a profound appreciation for Armenian culture, identity, and history. Her work goes beyond artistic training — it seeks to empower children to carry their traditions forward, ensuring that the Armenian diaspora not only survives but flourishes as a strong, proud, and vibrant community. Under her guidance, Sound of Children has become a cornerstone for cultural education, shaping the next generation of Armenians who are connected, confident, and committed to their roots.



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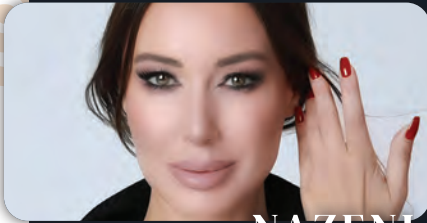
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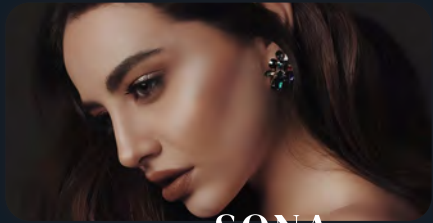
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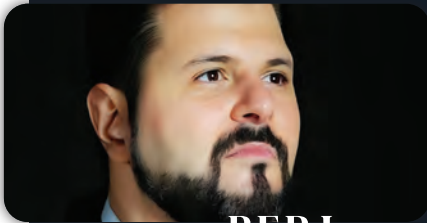
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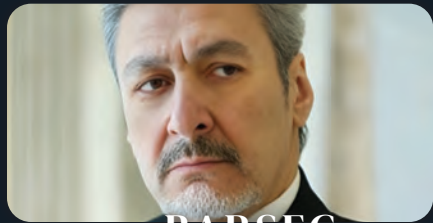
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The Armenian story is one of resilience. Generation after generation, our people have carried forward a legacy of strength, survival, and hope - building communities, preserving traditions, and passing down the wisdom that shapes us today.

At Davana Law Firm, we carry those same values into our work. With compassion, cultural understanding, and an unwavering commitment to justice, our attorneys - fluent in five languages - are devoted to protecting and uplifting those we represent.

We are honored to sponsor Echoes of Our Ancestors, a celebration of heritage and perseverance.

The voices of the past will always guide the victories of tomorrow.



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LUDVIG ISPIRYAN

Ludvig Ispiryan is a professional ballet dancer and choreographer originally from Yerevan, Armenia. He received his formal training at the Armenian National Ballet School and went on to become a soloist with the Armenian National Ballet. After moving to Israel, Ludvig spent 17 years as a principal

dancer with the Israel Ballet, performing leading roles in classical and contemporary productions. In addition to his performance career, he established himself as a choreographer, creating original works for the Israel Ballet and contributing choreography for high-profile television shows including X Factor and So You Think You Can Dance. In 2024, Ludvig relocated to Los Angeles, where he continues to pursue his career in dance and choreography.

T H E D A N C E R S

Natalie Palmgren

Kayla Mutterer

Lena Fern Harris

Hayley Book

Emily Van Citters

Leah McCall

Emma Bryn Graham McRee

Aimana Tazhibaeva

Hillary Tang

Sydney Rose Huber

Isabella Hoy

Eduard Sargsyan

Brandon Forrest

James Velasco

Rafael Kalashyan

Isaiah Sedano

Jacob Mogaña

Edmond Baghdasaryan

Avik Hovhannisyan



ZVARTNOTS DANCE ENSEMBLE

Zvartnots Dance Ensemble was founded by Vartan Aghajanyan on December 9, 1989, with the mission of preserving and presenting authentic Armenian dance, music, and folk attire. For over three decades, its performances have showcased the resilience and spirit of the Armenian people through professional choreography rooted in tradition. The Ensemble has staged numerous acclaimed productions in Los Angeles, including *Mother Armenia* (1993), *Christian Armenia* (2001), *Armenian Cross Stones* (2005), *Sun Worshipers* (2012), *Armenian Eagles* (2017), *Lernahayastan* (2022), and celebrated its 35th anniversary in both Los Angeles and Armenia in 2024. Zvartnots has also performed across the United States,

including Fresno, Phoenix, and Boston, as well as internationally in Armenia, Artsakh, Malta, Montreal, Sydney, and aboard the Carnival Cruise Line. Notable highlights include winning first place at the 2004 International Dance Festival in Malta, sold-out performances in Sydney in 2012, and a 2023 South American tour with concerts in Uruguay, Argentina, and Brazil. In July 2024, the Ensemble returned to Armenia for anniversary performances in Gyumri and at the Yerevan Opera House. Created to safeguard Armenian cultural traditions, Zvartnots continues to inspire new generations of dancers through the Armenian Dance Center, bringing Armenian heritage to audiences worldwide.

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l a w s u i t . a m

The Program

ACT 1

In the Beginning

THE BIRD OF A
THOUSAND VOICES
TIGRAN HAMASYAN

The show begins with a powerful visual and musical tribute to the ancient origins of the Armenian people, featuring the legend of Hayk and Bel. This opening piece highlights the mythological roots of the nation, evoking the heroic spirit of its forefather. The visuals also explore the early astronomical knowledge of the Armenians—their first concepts of the cosmos, observations of celestial bodies, and the remarkable scientific advancements of that era (such as Karahunj–Zorats Karer). Karahunj is believed to have been an ancient astronomical observatory, with at least seventeen of its stones aligned to mark sunrise and sunset positions.



01



am



Each musical number is introduced with its title and an act name given by the director. Alongside, you will find images from the original animations that bring each piece to life, allowing the music, story, and vision to move together as one.

PROGRAM

Haya & Ar

RITUAL TRIPTYCH

INGA & ANUSH ARSHAKYAN

This piece delves into Armenia's ancient era from an artistic perspective. Inspired by the natural world around them, early Armenians began to depict their environment through rock carvings—revealing their first perceptions, spiritual expressions, and ideas about eternity. The visuals showcase these early artistic impulses, reflecting the imagination and symbolism of the time. It was during this period that humanity's earliest observatory, traces of winemaking, and even the world's oldest known shoe were discovered in Armenia.



God Speaks To Noy

MASHTOTS: ANKANIM ARAJI QO

TIGRAN HAMASYAN

This chapter shifts from darkness to light — a moment of divine connection and renewal. Here, the visuals portray the biblical scene where God speaks to Noy, signaling hope after destruction. Light appears as a symbol of the sun's presence, illuminating the world once more. This transition marks the end of chaos and the beginning of purification, with the theme of water and cleansing symbolizing a new chapter for humanity. The performance captures this spiritual awakening, offering a sense of peace and rebirth through sound and image.



Man's Demise

AVET TERTERIAN: SYMPHONY N5

LUDVIG ISPIRYAN

This movement confronts the raw, ancient instinct for human aggression — the drive to destroy one's own kind. It offers a visceral reflection on violence, loss, and the cruelty we have inflicted upon ourselves. Through the haunting power of Armenia's ancient art, conflict is revealed not as myth, but as memory — carved in metal and stone. At its center stands the *Karashamb Goblet*, a Bronze Age silver vessel from 2100 BCE, unearthed from royal tombs. Rich in symbolic imagery, it evokes ritual, power, the hunt, and the enduring shadow of sacrifice.

The Great Flood

AVET TERTERIAN: SYMPHONY N₃
LUDVIG ISPIRYAN

This segment presents the moment of Noy's survival, symbolizing the continuation of human life after the flood. It marks a turning point—the end of destruction and the beginning of renewal. Though the world is still recovering, signs of new life begin to emerge. It is the first breath after devastation, as the waters recede and life slowly returns. The ark comes to rest, symbolically tied to the sacred peak of Mount Ararat, which stands as a timeless witness to endurance and faith.



05

And So We Start Anew Urartu Kingdom

HARSANEKAN

INGA & ANUSH ARSHAKYAN

This chapter explores the symbolic world of Urartu, a powerful kingdom that flourished in the Armenian Highlands from the 9th to 6th centuries BCE. Through abstract visuals shaped by strength, order, and ritual, the performance evokes the spirit of a civilization expressed in cuneiform inscriptions, monumental fortresses, and finely crafted weapons.

Urartu stood at the crossroads of empires, engaging in warfare and diplomacy with Assyria, trading with neighbors to the north and east, and influencing the cultural landscape of the ancient Near East. These exchanges deepened its artistic richness and affirmed its role as both rival and bridge between great civilizations.

A highlight is the vibrant wall painting from Erebouni Fortress, offering rare insight into Urartian aesthetics and ceremonial life. Recurring images—ceremonial scenes, divine symbols, and the Tree of Life guarded by winged creatures—reflect a society rooted in power, sacred order, and enduring myth, communicating through symbols carved, painted, and cast in stone and metal.



Ancient Gods

YARKHUSHTA

SEVAK AMROYAN

This act continues the journey through ancient divinities, ascending to the majestic heights of Mount Nemrut, where a sacred pantheon—including Aramazd, god of gods, and Anahit, goddess of fertility and wisdom—evokes a world shaped by divine presence and imperial vision.

The image of Tigran the Great then emerges on a coin—more than a ruler, a symbol of ambition and sovereignty. As the scene unfolds, a map of his vast empire stretches from the Mediterranean to the Caspian Sea, defining the legendary “Sea-to-Sea Armenia”—a powerful testament to a golden era of Armenian statehood.



We are Kings and Queens

ARIOSO OF ARSHAK

TIGRAN CHUKHADJIAN: ARSHAK II OPERA
BARSEG TUMANYAN

This segment highlights Armenia’s medieval golden age, when dynasties elevated art, scholarship, and identity to new heights. The coats of arms of the Bagratuni, Arcruni, Arshakuni, and others symbolize sovereignty and guardianship of culture and faith. Patrons of the arts and protectors of learning, these rulers fostered a renaissance of architecture, theology, literature, and reform. This chapter honors a legacy carved in stone and ink, a testament to Armenia’s enduring strength.



From Sea to Shining Sea

BERD DANCE

ZVARTNOTS DANCE ENSEMBLE

This segment explores the Armenian Hellenistic period, when classical influences blended with native traditions. Central to this era were ancient Armenian deities, whose presence endured even as new artistic forms emerged. The Temple of Garni—the only surviving Greco-Roman colonnaded structure in the region—stands as a symbol of this unique fusion of spirituality and style. Surrounding it, traditional Armenian patterns recall ancient rituals and heritage. This chapter celebrates Armenia’s cultural depth and spiritual continuity—an era of embracing outside influences while preserving its own enduring identity.

Resurrection

GRIGOR NAREGATSI: HAVUN
ISABEL BAYRAKDARIAN

This segment marks a pivotal moment in Armenian history: the adoption of Christianity as the state religion in the early 4th century, making Armenia the first nation to officially embrace the faith. This transformed the nation's spiritual and cultural identity for generations. The visuals trace this sacred shift—from fading pagan rites to the rise of domed churches like Geghard Monastery, where the Proshyan-Orbelian coat of arms stands testament to enduring devotion. The creation of the Armenian alphabet in the 5th century by Mesrop Mashtots birthed a sacred language, fueling a renaissance of scripture, hymnody, and theology. From this rebirth came iconic sacred art: intricately carved khachkars, gilded reliquaries, and richly embroidered church textiles—each a profound expression of faith in stone and fabric.



10

Light Against Fire

KHACH OF VARDAN

SEVAK AMROYAN, SUREN AVOYAN, ARMEN DAVTYAN

This segment portrays the Battle of Vardanants (451 CE), a defining moment in Armenian history and a symbol of the people's unwavering struggle to protect their faith, identity, and freedom. Led by Vardan Mamikonian, the battle was more than a military clash—it was a moral and spiritual stand for the right to worship and exist as Armenians. The performance features Grigor Khanjyan's epic painting *Vardanank*, a monumental work that vividly captures the courage, sacrifice, and turmoil of the battle. Through sweeping imagery, it connects past and present, honoring a legacy of defiance and faith that continues to inspire Armenian identity today.



The Last Kingdom

CILICIA

SONA RUBENYAN

This chapter tells the story of the Cilician Armenian Kingdom (11th–14th centuries), the last Armenian kingdom and a flourishing realm on the Mediterranean coast where faith, diplomacy, and culture thrived. Under the Rubenid and Hetumid dynasties, Cilicia upheld Armenian statehood, forging alliances with Crusader and European kingdoms while renewing its traditions. The spiritual legacy of mystic Grigor Narekatsi continued to influence religious life. Cilicia reached artistic heights through Toros Roslin and his successors, who developed a unique Armenian miniature painting style blending native and foreign influences. Though the kingdom fell in 1375 with the loss of Sis, its legacy lives on—in illuminated manuscripts, sacred chants, and the enduring memory of a proud Armenian monarchy. This performance honors an era of strength, creativity, and identity beyond Armenia's borders.



Rewearing a Nation

SAYAT-NOVA: QANI VUR JAN IM

NUNE YESAYAN

This segment shifts from palace to people, celebrating the rich artistic traditions rooted in everyday Armenian life. Beyond kings and scribes, weavers, merchants, and artisans kept culture alive. At its heart are vibrant Armenian carpets—crafted across villages, they speak a visual language of identity and devotion passed through generations. The era also saw the rise of Armenian printed books in the diaspora, uniting scattered communities through shared faith and learning. Merchants along trade routes from Cilicia to Europe and Asia supported churches, schools, and the arts, preserving Armenian culture beyond the homeland. This performance honors a shared guardianship of heritage—from royal courts to village workshops—building a lasting legacy of artistry, intellect, and resilience.

12



PROGRAM



13



A Beginning to an End

KOMITAS: YES SAREN KUGAYI

SEBU

This chapter explores a time of change as Armenia was divided in the 15th–16th centuries—Western Armenia under Ottoman rule and Eastern Armenia under Persian control. Despite this fragmentation, Armenian art thrived, sustained by artists, monks, and patrons. The visuals highlight silver and gilded manuscript covers that embody devotion and craftsmanship even under foreign domination. This performance reflects both displacement and resilience, honoring the cultural memory preserved in sacred art, skilled hands, and a people determined to safeguard their heritage.



Heroes and Saints

KOMITAS: APRICOT TREE

EMMANUEL HOVHANNISYAN (DUDUK)

This segment reflects on one of Armenia's darkest chapters—the genocide, forced displacement, and cultural destruction that sought to erase a people and their heritage. Through haunting archival photos, it honors intellectuals, artists, and leaders—like Komitas, Ruben Sevak, and Arshile Gorky—whose lives and legacies were cut short or scarred, symbolizing the attempt to annihilate Armenian identity and memory. This performance bears witness to the 1.5 million lives lost and generations uprooted, while standing as an act of remembrance, resistance, and the unbreakable spirit of a culture that refuses to be forgotten.

14

A Nation Orphaned

ORIM ORIM: LULLABY
ISABEL BAYRAKDARIAN

This segment turns to one of the most harrowing chapters in Armenian history—the First World War and the Armenian Genocide. Amidst devastation and loss, it centers on one of Armenia’s most intimate icons: the mother and child. More than tenderness, this image embodies resilience, devotion, and sacrifice. At its heart stands Arshak Fetvadjian’s renowned painting *The Woman of Sasun*. A revered artist and guardian of heritage, Fetvadjian gives form to the soul of a nation: a woman from rugged Sasun—cradle of legend and resistance—nursing her child with one arm while gripping a weapon in the other. This haunting image endures as a tribute to strength, memory, and the unbreakable Armenian spirit.



ACT 2

Rising from the Ashes

GEVORG EMIN: SASUNTSINER
NAZENI HOVHANNISYAN

The genocide shattered a thriving civilization, scattering a nation of refugees and leaving ancestral lands silent. Yet memory endured. In this performance, visuals quietly evoke that lost world as ornamental motifs rise like smoke above mountain peaks. These patterns recall Ani's sacred carvings, Mush's woven geometries, and Van's ancestral designs—fragments of a culture that once adorned temples, homes, and manuscripts. At the center stands Maratuk Mountain in Sasun, a symbol of endurance and faith, watching over a land of legend and resistance. This segment becomes a meditation on absence and memory, honoring the traces of home and the unspoken vow: we remember.



*Sassoun danced and the whole world marveled,
Sassoun danced and the whole world understood,
That this is NOT a dance, but the brave history of a country,
Where even defeat has pride.*

*And nothing can vanquish this ancient nation,
That knows how to dance with such ardor and will...*

.....
May you dance this dance on the slopes of Massis.



The Resistance

ZARTIR LAO, DZAYN MY HNCHEYS
KARNIG SARKISSIAN

This segment highlights the fierce resistance that followed the genocide. Fedayi fighters like Andranik and Kevork Chavush defended their people, becoming symbols of survival and hope despite the loss of Western Armenia. Out of this reckoning came Operation Nemesis, a secret mission to bring justice to the genocide's architects. The assassination of Talaat Pasha by Soghomon Tehlirian—and his historic acquittal—resounded as a moral victory. This performance reflects an era of fractured homeland and uncertain survival, reclaimed by those who refused erasure.

A First Republic

EDGAR HOVHANNISYAN: SARDARAPAT
HAIKIAN CHOIR

This segment honors the Battle of Sardarapat—a decisive stand in May 1918, when Armenians faced the Ottoman Empire’s final advance. Villagers, clergy, and soldiers united by sheer will and faith won a victory that saved their nation from extinction. Days later, on May 28, the First Republic of Armenia was declared—the first in over six centuries. At its heart stood the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (Dashnaksutyun), long devoted to Armenian rights, now building institutions and defending culture amid immense challenges. The visuals draw from Ara Harutiunyan’s Sardarapat Memorial—towering winged bulls, heroic stone guardians, and soaring bell towers—symbols of survival, unity, and the enduring spirit of Armenia.

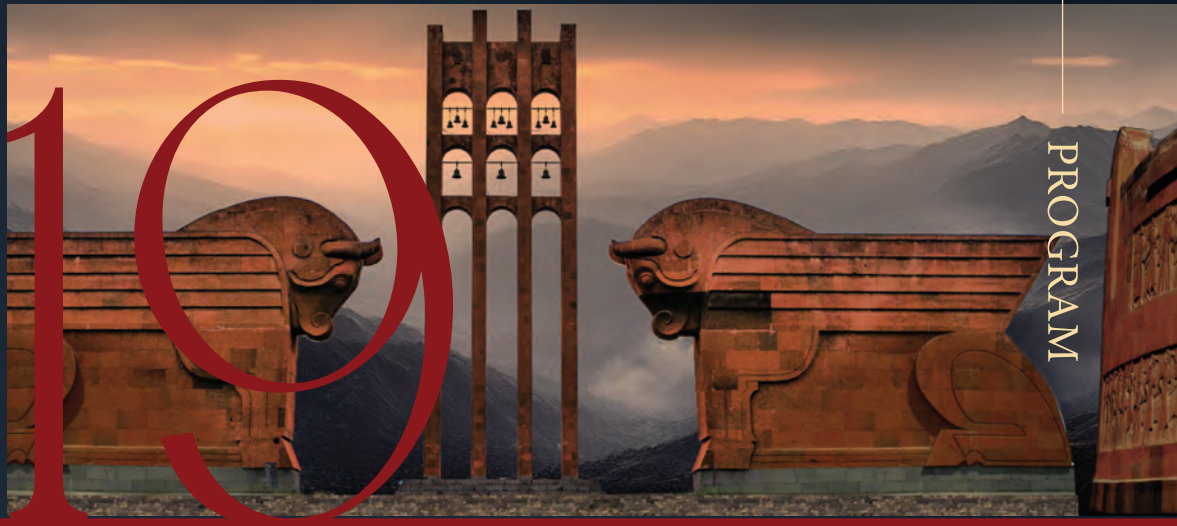


Roots in Chains

ARAM KHACHATURIAN:
SABRE DANCE
LUDVIG ISPIRYAN

This segment portrays the era of reconstruction in Armenia during Soviet rule—a time marked by rebuilding, industrialization, and monumental change, yet also by loss of individuality and spiritual exhaustion.





Between Hammer and Sickle

SOVIET UNION ANTHEM

HAIKIAN CHOIR

This segment marks a turbulent turning point: the fall of the First Republic of Armenia and the rise of Soviet rule. After a brief existence from 1918 to 1920—born from genocide and war—the young republic, strained by famine, epidemics, and blockades, was overtaken by the Red Army under the guise of aiding revolution but intent on Bolshevik control. By late 1920, Armenia was Sovietized and became a founding republic of the USSR. Society was reshaped under Soviet ideology—politics, culture, and identity transformed, religion repressed, and aspirations replaced with internationalist socialism. At the same time, Soviet Azerbaijan was created, a development that would deeply affect Armenia for decades.



The Silent Terror

SONG OF THE SOLDIER

SONA RUBENYAN

In Soviet Armenia, repression ran deep. Cities grew and industry thrived, but freedom was crushed beneath ideology. Artists and thinkers served the state or were silenced through exile, prison, or erasure. Stalinist terror dismantled the intelligentsia, shut churches, and bound creativity to propaganda. Benik Petrosyan's art hauntingly depicts intellectuals behind bars, capturing the era's suffocation. A lasting wound came with Stalin's decision to place Nagorno-Karabakh under Soviet Azerbaijan, laying the ground for conflict over Artsakh, Nakhichevan, and Zangezur. During World War II, hundreds of thousands of Armenians fought



The Light Beyond the Homeland

ARNO BABAJANYAN: BEAUTIFUL DREAM

BERJ KARAZIAN

This performance honors the Armenian diaspora's (Spyurk) role in preserving and renewing the Armenian story. Formed through forced migrations after Cilicia's fall and the 1915 Genocide, Armenians that had spread across the Middle East, Europe, Russia, and the Americas preserved culture and identity. In the U.S., early immigrants settled in Fresno, with writers like William Saroyan capturing their experience. Post-genocide, Los Angeles grew into the largest Armenian community, building churches, schools, organizations, and monuments which stand for memory and resilience. The diaspora became a place of renewal, not exile—building Armenian identity with courage, unity, and spirit.

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in the Red Army - many never returned. Victory came at a bitter price: loyalty to a regime that silenced them and seized their lands. Yet the spirit endured in forbidden songs, hidden manuscripts, and quiet defiance. At the center rises Mother Armenia—towering, dignified, unbreakable. Inspired by Ara Sargsyan's sculptures, she symbolizes rebirth and strength, embodying the endurance of a nation.

The Golden Age

TIGRAN MANSURIAN: WHITE DREAMS

LUDVIG ISPIRYAN

This segment showcases Armenia's architectural language—a reflection of national identity shaped by history and culture. Alexander Tamanyan's master plan for Yerevan blended classical and medieval Armenian principles with sacred geometry, creating a city of harmony and symbolic order. Under Soviet rule, monumental architecture rose, serving civic and ideological needs while preserving Armenian traditions and cosmic symbolism. Key sites like Republic Square and the Matenadaran embody this fusion, using architecture to express cultural values and memory. Here, architecture is more than style—it's a language shaping identity, continuity, and cultural meaning.



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The Spirit That Survived

CHARLES AZNAVOUR: POUR TOI, ARMÉNIE
ENSEMBLE

This performance honors a time of crisis and resilience for Armenians. The Sumgait pogroms in Soviet Azerbaijan unleashed brutal violence, forcing many to fear for their safety. Soon after, the devastating Spitak earthquake killed tens of thousands and flattened cities. Despite the chaos, Armenians united—neighbors, volunteers, doctors, and clergy worked tirelessly in harsh conditions to rescue survivors. Footage shows people digging through rubble with bare hands, carrying children, and sharing food and shelter—proof that the nation's strength lies in its people, not buildings. International aid poured in, with the diaspora and figures like Charles Aznavour,

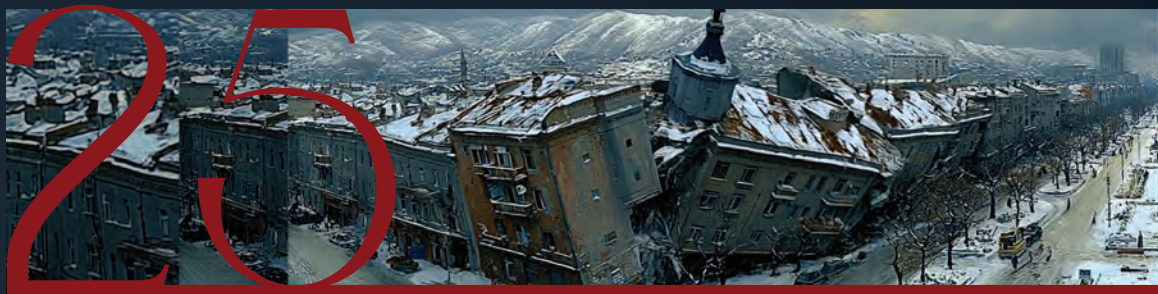


The Seat of Shadows

CLOUDS

SERJ TANKIAN & SEVAK AMROYAN,
SUREN ARUSTAMYAN (GUITAR)

This segment marks a time when political freedom arrived but unity vanished. What could have been a rebirth dissolved into power struggles—parties fractured, leaders rose and fell, and weary citizens filled the streets in protest after protest. Instead of building a shared future, the nation was trapped in infighting, as if the throne mattered more than the homeland it was meant to serve—a house divided, still learning how to be free.



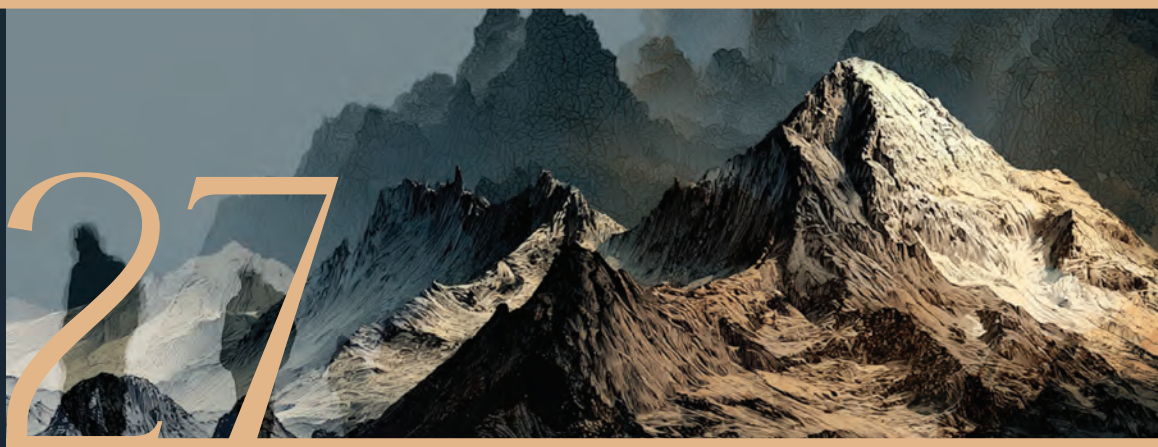
Krikorian, and Cher raising support. Shortly after came the fall of the Soviet Union under Mikhail Gorbachev, whose reforms glasnost and perestroika exposed the system's flaws, leading to its collapse in 1991—and Armenia's independence. Even the cold, dark chaos couldn't stop the mass rallies in Yerevan demanding Nagorno-Karabakh's return to Armenia, sparking a movement of solidarity, resistance, and hope.

The Dawn of Freedom

WE ARE OUR MOUNTAINS

INGA & ANUSH ARSHAKYAN

This segment marks a turbulent turning point: the fall of the First Republic of Armenia and the rise of Soviet rule. After a brief existence from 1918 to 1920—born from genocide and war—the young republic, strained by famine and blockades, was overtaken by the Red Army under the guise of aiding revolution but aiming for Bolshevik control. By late 1920, Armenia was Sovietized and became a founding republic of the USSR. Society was reshaped under Soviet ideology—politics, culture, and identity transformed, religion repressed, and aspirations replaced with socialism. At the same time, Soviet Azerbaijan was created, shaping Armenia's future for decades.



Our Children of War

RISE, MY BROTHER
ARMEN MOVSISYAN

The Second Artsakh War—the 44-day conflict of 2020—left the nation with fallen soldiers, destroyed villages, and abandoned churches. Silence and sorrow dominate: grieving parents, solitary figures among ruins, and thousands displaced, their eyes filled with fear and disbelief. The pain is real, the memory permanent. And the loss of Artsakh—once a symbol of return—becomes a wound carried by an entire people, but not as painful as the wound carried by a mother who has lost her child to war. Still, in that loss, a quiet dignity remains: the strength to endure, to mourn, and to remember.



The Next Chapter is Yours

ARMEN SMBATYAN: ARMENIA
ENSEMBLE

Brightness... Armenia's living landscape unfold -green mountains, deep gorges, ancient monasteries, and timeless villages. The beauty is not just historical -it is present, real, and enduring. Vineyards heavy with grapes, artisans at work, children at play, and families gathered in quiet joy. Yerevan's Cascade rises like a symbol of creativity and continuity -stone steps reaching toward the sky. This final scene is not one of closure, but of possibility. It speaks of a people who, through every trial, have chosen not only to survive, but to build, to care, and to create. It is a message of peace, of renewal, and of the unshakable right to a future. A future we are writing together in this very moment. A future which will linger for generations as echoes for our grandchildren. May our ancestors guide us in our choices.



The Echoes Rise

AURORA'S DREAM

SERJ TANKIAN,

INGA & ANUSH ARSHAKYAN

This chapter is a sweeping flashback through Armenian history, from ancient rock carvings and Urartu, to the invention of the alphabet and medieval monasteries. It recalls royal dynasties, faith's enduring symbols, and the masterpieces of Roslin and Narekatsi. It moves through kingdom falls, exile, genocide, and Soviet rule, yet culture and identity persist. History lives on—in language, memory, song, and stone. Armenia emerges not just as a place, but as an unbroken voice spanning generations that refuse to disappear.








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