



# Bulletin

**ARMENIAN  
INSTITUTE**

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## ARMENIAN INSTITUTE CHOIR

The Armenian Institute choir (pictured above) began in September 2009 under the direction of Aris Nadirian. After auditioning, over 20 people have joined and enjoy rehearsals every Friday night. Their impressive debut performance was at the Opening Reception for Mr Dear Brother at the Brunei Gallery. The choir already sings a variety of Armenian music from Komitas to modern composers, folk, classical and popular. A concert is planned for the autumn. Please contact the Institute if you wish to join.



*Cilician landscape, courtesy of A Bakalian*

## ILLUSTRATED LECTURE

### HENRY FINNIS BLOSSE LYNCH: TRAVELLER IN ARMENIA OR ARMENIAN TRAVELLER?

**By Christopher Young**  
**29 October 2009 at Armenian House**

Lynch (1862-1913) made two journeys to Armenia in the 1890s. These form the basis of *Armenia: Travels and Studies*. But why did he go, and what did he hope to achieve? Lynch's paternal forebears were Irish landowners with strong links to the east. His mother, however, was half Armenian, and there was a strong Armenian presence in his home. His book has a strong political note, but what concerned him more? Was it an end to the oppression of Armenians, or the threat that Russian intervention would



*Photograph of H Lynch, courtesy of C Young*

pose to the British position (and his own business interests) in the Persian Gulf? A filled to capacity Armenian House followed Harry Lynch through Armenia with the help of his personal diaries and one of the ice picks used in the ascent of Ararat was at hand. On this occasion we served French red and white wine (Château des Hourtets, Gaillac, Tarn) produced by an Armenian couple and transported to England courtesy of Christopher Young. Young is a retired judge writing a PhD thesis in Oxford on Lynch and the Euphrates and Tigris Steamship Company.

## RETHINKING ARSHILE

### GORKY with Dr K Theriault A CELEBRATION OF THE ART OF ARSHILE GORKY with Nouritza Matossian

The Gorky exhibition at the Tate Modern was a unique opportunity to see a full range of the artist's works under one roof. AI invited two Gorky scholars to present their research. Dr Kim Theriault, author of *Rethinking Arshile Gorky* (2009) spoke at the Khalili Theatre on 10 February, the evening being co-sponsored by the SOAS Armenian Studies programme. On March 10 at Kensington Central Library, Nouritza Matossian gave an illustrated presentation of her research and travels undergone in the writing of her book, *Black Angel*. Accompanied by saz player Aylan in the role of Gorky, Matossian carried on a conversation about questions she would have liked to have pursued with Gorky. Delicious food from Zara Café (Hampstead) was enjoyed after the performance.

## SUBVERSIVE TOURISM? ARMENIAN PILGRIMAGE TO HISTORIC CILICIA

**By Dr Anny Bakalian**  
**28 January 2010 at Armenian House**

Dr Bakalian has written a classic study of generational change among Armenians in the United States: *From Being to Feeling Armenian*. Currently Associate Director of the Middle East and Middle Eastern American Center at the Graduate Center, City University of New York, Bakalian has recently co-authored *Backlash 9/11: Middle Eastern and Muslim Americans Respond* with Mehdi Bozorgmehr. Her beautifully illustrated talk took her audience along her 2009 tour through Armenian towns and landscapes in present-day Turkey. The group confronted the past and present relations of Armenians with these lands and Bakalian spoke movingly of the need for more "subversive tourism" to undermine accepted attitudes and to make Armenians more of a presence in those areas.

## THE INVENTION OF HISTORY: AZERBAIJAN, ARMENIA AND THE SHOWCASING OF IMAGINATION

**By Rouben Galichian**  
**18 March 2010 at Armenian House**

In early Middle Ages Caucasian Albania was a country situated north of the Arax River, northwest of Persia, near Armenia and Iberia. During the 11th to 12th centuries this Christian country disappeared from maps with various khanates appearing in the area later. Borders and names have since changed and controversies continue over the heritage and history of the area. Galichian explored the allegations of Azerbaijani authorities about the Christian monuments of the South Caucasus, untangling the complex history of the area. Galichian has an engineering degree from the University of Aston and worked in oil, gas and petrochemical industries until 2004. His long-standing interest in geography and cartography has culminated in a number of books on Armenian and Caucasian cartography. His latest book *The Invention of History: Azerbaijan, Armenia, and the Showcasing of Imagination* was published in Yerevan in 2009. For services to Armenian historical cartography, Galichian was awarded an Honorary Doctorate by the Armenian National Academy of Sciences.

## THE ARMENIAN CONNECTION WITH FREEMASONRY by Pauline Chakmakjian

1 October 2009 at Armenian House

The first recorded Grand Lodge was formed in London in 1717. Gradually, an entire network of British lodges formed with freemasonry eventually spreading throughout the world, including Armenia and places with strong Armenian presence. Chakmakjian briefly sketched the historical origins of freemasonry and explored some of the various Armenian connections with freemasonry all over the world from Argentina to Armenia to Hong Kong. A PhD candidate at the University of Wales, Chakmakjian mainly lectures on English freemasonry.



## MEET THE ARTIST: ARSHAK SARKISSIAN

10 November 2009 at Armenian House



A large and enthusiastic crowd of mostly young people filled the Armenian House to see this accomplished artist's art and hear his views. Sarkissian was in conversation with the writer and broadcaster Nouritza Matossian. AI Friends were invited to the Opening of Sarkissian's one-man show at the Albemarle Gallery, London. Sarkissian received the 2005 Armenian Presidential Honour of Fine Arts Gold Medal. He has designed stamps for the Armenian Post and painted interiors for Zvartnots Airport.

## A CELEBRATION OF LITERATURE IN ENGLISH AND ARMENIAN

28 November 2009 at Sydney Miller Court

21 February 2010 at Armenian House

For the second year running residents of Sydney Miller Court (W3) and guests enjoyed an afternoon of poetry and prose in English and Armenian by volunteers from the Armenian Institute. Nvard Stepanian-Kathrani organised the event to share the love of literature with those who have few opportunities to attend such events in the community. In February Stepanian-Kathrani once more organised a group of friends to provide another inspiring programme of poetry readings. The poetry ranged across a variety of moods and topics, all on the theme of love. The enthusiastic crowd indeed echoed the "love of literature" and many requests were heard for more opportunities to hear poetry. We are grateful to the Notting Hill Trust for their financial support of these events.

## BRAINY BEANS: A NEW CHILDREN'S PROJECT FOR 4-10 YEAR OLDS With Naneh Hovhannisyian

13 March 2010 at N Gulbenkian Hall

This action - packed adventure featured children's yoga, games, arts & crafts and readings in Armenian and English. Kids went on an imagined journey to Armenia with passports they made, learned about different methods of transport and altogether had a fun-filled afternoon with songs and activities.



## THE ARMENIANS OF MARSOVAN AND ANATOLIA COLLEGE by Dr Armen T Marsoobian

9 December 2009 at N Gulbenkian Hall

Founded by American Protestant missionaries in Marsovan, Anatolia college played a central role in the cultural life of Armenians and Greeks of the region. Professor Marsoobian traced his family's history from Sivas to Marsovan, where his grandfather became the official photographer for the college and the regional governor. The growth and prosperity of the college and the Armenians of



Marsovan came to a tragic end in 1915. Marsoobian is Professor and Chairperson of Philosophy at Southern Connecticut State University in New Haven.

*Photograph courtesy of A T Marsoobian*

This is the 6th AI Bulletin with news of recent events. The Armenian Institute News including original articles, reviews and essays is sent to current Friends, Patrons and Benefactors. If you wish to join, please complete and return the enclosed form.

## THE INFLUENCE OF MASS MEDIA ON TRAUMA FOLLOWING DISASTER: THE 2006 ARMAVIA AIR CRASH IN SOCHI By Dr Khachatur Gasparyan

7 January 2010 at Armenian House

Dr Gasparyan is known to many London Armenians through his dedicated work following the 1988 Armenian earthquake. His work with victims of trauma continues and this evening he raised many important questions regarding the public context within which the victims attempt to come to terms with the disaster and begin to recover.

## HRANT DINK ANNUAL COMMEMORATION EVENING

19 January 2010 at Armenian House

This evening was marred by technical malfunction interrupting the film: Hrant Dink Murder File (this film is now to be shown at the Khalili Theatre on June 15). However, we were able to continue with the main purpose of the evening – to bring people together to remember Hrant Dink and to discuss his ideas. Readings from his book, *Two Close Peoples, Two Far Neighbours*, in Armenian, Turkish and English – focused thoughts on Dink's appeal to responsible citizenship and minority rights and led to a wide-ranging discussion.