



Sara Cohen presents a three-hour workshop about the experience of Armenian Genocide orphans for approximately 40 students in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Bay Area Youth Learn About Armenian Genocide Orphans

SAN FRANCISCO - The Genocide Education Project (GenEd) recently presented a three-hour workshop about the experience of Armenian Genocide orphans for approximately 40 high school students from all over the Bay Area. The students were among more than 700 youth and educators from more than 100 schools participating in the "Day of Learning," a program of the Holocaust Center of the Jewish Family Children's Services in San Francisco.

Sara Cohan, Education Director for The Genocide Education Project presented the interactive workshop focusing on the fate of more than 200,000 Armenian Genocide orphans.

"I thought that the workshop was very interesting and I wish we had more time to spend! It was incredibly informative, beautifully worded, and I've taken a great interest in the Armenian Genocide now, not only for our project, but also from pure personal interest," said Leeshia Rocha of Moreau High School in Hayward, CA. "The speakers/hostesses were lovely and the presentation was perfect and answered all the questions I had. I hope the Armenian Genocide gains more awareness because I truly believe it is worth learning about!"

After a brief history of the Armenian Genocide, students learned how orphans mostly died along deportation routes, or were taken by Turks or Kurds, or put in orphanages run by Americans, Europeans, or "Turkification" centers to transform them into Turks.

"It was gratifying to see how engaged the students were in the stories of the Armenian Genocide orphans," said Cohan. "Their questions were so insightful and the carried out their workshop assignments with interest and imagination."

Students heard from San Francisco Armenian-American community member, Mihran Mis-

serlian, who told students his grandmother's survival story: Ovsanna Misserlian was three years old when she, her mother, and her older sister were forced to leave their home in Izmit, Turkey. Ovsanna's mother did not survive the death march, and her sister sought to protect her by placing her in an Arab home until she could retrieve her. Ovsanna's sister never returned, and eventually French troops found Ovsanna and placed her in an orphanage in Aleppo, Syria. She was later placed in the Armenian home of the Misserlian family as a housekeeper, and she married the family's older son, Mihran Misserlian.

Students also watched a video interview of 101-year old Armenian Genocide orphan survivor, Almas Avakian, from the documentary film, "Orphans of the Genocide," produced by Bared Maronian. GenEd board member, Roxanne Makasdjian, and Sara Cohan told the stories of their grandparents' escape from the Armenian Genocide.

The workshop included a section about the problem of continuing denial of the Armenian Genocide and the current controversy over the White House's "Orphan Rug," handmade in the 1920s by Armenian orphans as a gift to the United States. During an activity session at the end of the workshop, students broke up into groups to devise some kind of action they would take to express or respond to what they had learned.

In addition to attending individual workshops, students attending the Day of Learning gathered to hear testimony from a Rwandan genocide survivor and watch a short film about the experience of a Jewish family in Poland during the Holocaust.

Educators interested in obtaining instructional materials about the orphans of the Armenian Genocide are welcome to contact The Genocide Education Project at info@GenocideEducation.org.

Kahvedjian's Photos Of Pre-Israel Jerusalem On Exhibit in Bay Area

SAN FRANCISCO (San Francisco Chronicle) - As a child, Elia Kahvedjian (c. 1910-1999) arrived in Nazareth, an orphaned refugee of the Armenian genocide. Finally settling in Jerusalem, he set up as a photographer and began making and collecting images of the city in the first half of the 20th century. A The selection of his photos comes to San Francisco for the first time.

They are on exhibit through June 21, Monday-Friday, at the Jewish Community Center of San Francisco, 3200 California St. (414) 292-1233.

It was a miracle that he survived and lived to create such photographic masterpieces.

His archive in Israel consists of 3,000 images.

Art Review

Why Narine Isajanyan's Art Should be in Every Museum, Gallery, Home

By Nickolas Chelyapov

When you enter a gallery harboring a group show and start scanning the walls filled with paintings, at some point you notice something that attracts your attention. You return to that piece and continue scanning. If your eye catches a piece by Narine Isajanyan – you stop.

If you want to construct a glossary to describe the reason for that, the following nouns will be used: roots, mystery, earth, philosophy, spirit, depth, energy, cosmos, ground, beauty, space, emotion, Armenia, universe, and many more. A list of adjectives will include: harmonious, sincere, open, captivating, charged, balanced, restrained, borderless, free, infinite, and a plethora of others. If you look at Narine's pieces from afar, sometimes not much is happening on the canvas at first sight, but something draws you to that. When you approach it, the whole world, her world, very much related to your world appears in front of you as you come closer and closer.

Her usage of quite raw earthy materials, such as soil and sand on the one hand, brings you closer to Mother-Nature in its physical manifestation, but the materials transformed by the soul and spirit of the artist now disappear as such and become a new entity defining sacred message of eternal values.

One more important observation regarding the artist's impact. She not only teaches us by conveying her message, but draws out of us emotions, thoughts, and contemplations and invokes our spiritual forces.

That's why Narine Isajanyan's Art should be in every Museum, Gallery, Collection, and Home.



LCO volunteers leaning the church's interior.

LCO Continues Historical Restoration In Northern and Southern Armenia

PASADENA – Last month, the Union International de Organisation Terre et Culture (UIOTC)/ Land and Culture Organization (LCO) chapters from France, the US, United Kingdom, Belgium and Armenia held this year's annual meeting in France. Projects and plans for the upcoming 2014 campaigns were reviewed. Members of the Lyon Armenian community attended a fundraising cultural program at the AGBU Armenian Center for a presentation about the OTC/LCO mission and its projects.

The board discussed the status of ongoing projects, including Syria. In the 1980-1990s, OTC/LCO restored Karadouran's village church and three traditional Armenian dwellings in Kessab, one of which is used as the Kessab ethnographical museum. During this current crisis in Syria, Armenian refugees from Aleppo, Yacoubiyah, and other areas found shelter in these homes until the recent attack on Kessab.

During the 2013-summer campaign, 20 volunteers from Canada, England, France, Russia, and the US launched a new project in southern Syunik region in Shikahogh, located in Armenia's second largest forest reserve. Volunteers lived in the village while renovating the 16th century Sourp Stepanos Nakhavegah Church with inscriptions from the 13th century.

The 2013 group cleared the site and conducted archaeological excavations. Swords and artifacts from the 17-18th century era of David Beg were discovered during the digs. In 2014, a new group of volunteers will start on the restoration phase of the project.

Another ongoing project is the 7th-10th century Tchitchkhavanank in Shirakamut, near Spitak. LCO already completed archaeological excavations in 2011 and 2012 with the restoration phase beginning this summer. Completion date is expected to be summer of 2015. This summer's campaign dates will be July 20-August 17.

More campaign information can be found at www.lcousa.org.

As the Armenian nation continues to struggle with many challenges in Syria, Karabagh, and Armenia, LCO strives to be diligent in solidifying the Armenian historical presence and remains committed to the restoration of Armenian cultural heritage. These landmarks are the only tangible, physical proof of Armenians' existence on the land.

For over 36 years, LCO has been one of the earliest volunteer groups in Armenia and Karabakh working to restore, renovate, and rejuvenate the historical monuments and sites of the Armenian nation. It has performed this mission through its summer campaigns, by volunteers of every age from the Diaspora and Armenia. To learn more about LCO or join in its summer volunteer program, contact www.lcousa.org.

L.A. Times' Ken Dilanian Jumps to AP

By Dylan Byers

LOS ANGELES - Ken Dilanian, an intelligence and national security reporter, has left the Los Angeles Times for the Associated Press, the latest in a string of notable departures for the beleaguered newspaper.

Dilanian, who spent two years at the Times, will join AP's national security team, where he will cover the CIA and the NSA, among other areas. He will also team with Eileen Sullivan on stories about surveillance, privacy and intelligence-gathering.

The Tribune Company, which owns the Times, restructured its entire business late last year to accommodate falling revenues in print advertising at its newspapers, which also include the Chicago Tribune and the Baltimore Sun. The company slashed a total of 700 jobs across the papers.