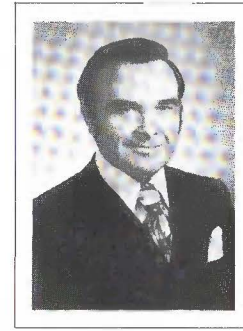




philadelphia



The
Armenian-American
Community
Celebrates
The American
Bicentennial



On the occasion of the 200th anniversary of our nation, Americans of Armenian ancestry yesterday presented their gift to America. Khoren Der Harootian's sculpture, Meher, in appreciation for the freedom and opportunity our people found in this great country. Tonight, we honor those of our people who have achieved singular success in their respective fields—the first time so many exemplar Armenian-Americans have gathered at one time in one place.

These two events mark our participation in the American Bicentennial. Each event serves a deep and abiding purpose.

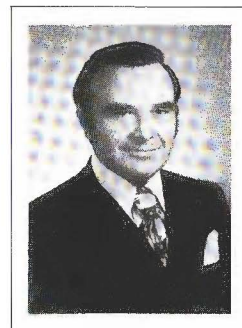
The monument, Meher, stands forever as a permanent tribute to the past and an inspiration to future generations of Armenian-Americans. The Bicentennial Awards for Excellence Banquet will instill in us a further sense of pride in the abilities and talents of Americans of Armenian ancestry. It will help assure the continuity of the best of our ideals and traditions, which, in turn, will make us even better Americans.

On behalf of the Armenian Bicentennial Commemoration Committee, I thank from the bottom of my heart all of you who have made these great events possible. And on behalf of all Armenian-Americans everywhere,

Happy Birthday, America—we love you!

M. George Mooradian, Esquire
Chairman





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A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "M. George Mooradian".

M. George Mooradian, Esquire
Chairman



Program

National Anthem

Invocation

The Rev. Der Arsen Hagopian
St. Gregory The Illuminator Armenian Apostolic Church

Toast

Dinner

Introductions

John Tokmajian
Toastmaster and Chairman Banquet Committee

Message

M. George Mooradian, Esq.
Chairman, Armenian Bicentennial Commemoration Committee

Presentation of Awards For Excellence

Presentation of Special Award

Closing Remarks

Benediction

The Very Rev. Zaven Arzoumanian
St. Sahag & St. Mesrob Armenian Apostolic Church

The Armenian-American Community
Salutes with Pride
the Recipients of
The Award For Excellence

Operatic Arts

Lili Chookasian

Contralto, Metropolitan Opera Company

Born in Chicago

Possessor of an extraordinary sumptuous voice, described by the New York Times as "dark, rich . . . used with great sensitivity and powerful feeling for musical phrase and projection," Lili Chookasian today ranks among the great contraltos in the world of opera, concert, and oratorio. Versatile as she is vivacious, Miss Chookasian's repertoire spans from the cantatas of Bach to Wagner's heroic "Ring" cycle—and still finds room for the whimsy of Hansel & Gretel. A gifted artist who has brought joy to music lovers everywhere,

Lili Chookasian in private life is proud to be known as Mrs. George Gavejian and the mother of three children.



Operatic Arts

Lucine Amara

Soprano, Metropolitan Opera

Born in Hartford, Connecticut

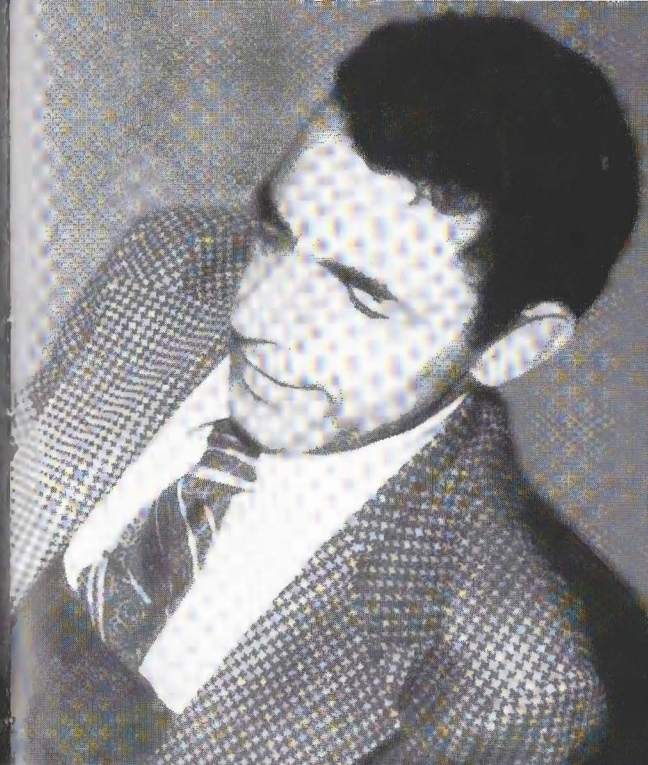
An international luminary of opera, concert, screen, radio, television and recordings,

Lucine Amara is a gifted musician and linguist who sings in eight languages.

With a repertoire of over thirty major operatic roles, Miss Amara was honored by the Met in November, 1975, upon her 25th Anniversary with that distinguished institution.

On hearing her perform, violinist Isaac Stern once remarked, "You sing like a beautiful violin".

To which we add "and like a beautiful Armenian-American of whom we are justly proud".



Science

Emik Alexander Avakian

Scientist, Engineer, Inventor

President of Avakian Systems Development

Born in Teheran

Among his contributions within the science of electronic communications, this remarkable inventor has given audible speech to the computer and introduced the tablet system of data entry, obsoleting the indirect punch-card method. Author of scores of scientific papers and recipient of numerous awards and international honors, his main effort today is to aid communication within man's own body. Stricken by the breakdown of his own neurological system, Emik Avakian's goal is to augment faulty neuro mechanisms with a thimble-sized computer that would be permanently implanted in one's body. May his genius achieve the miraculous.

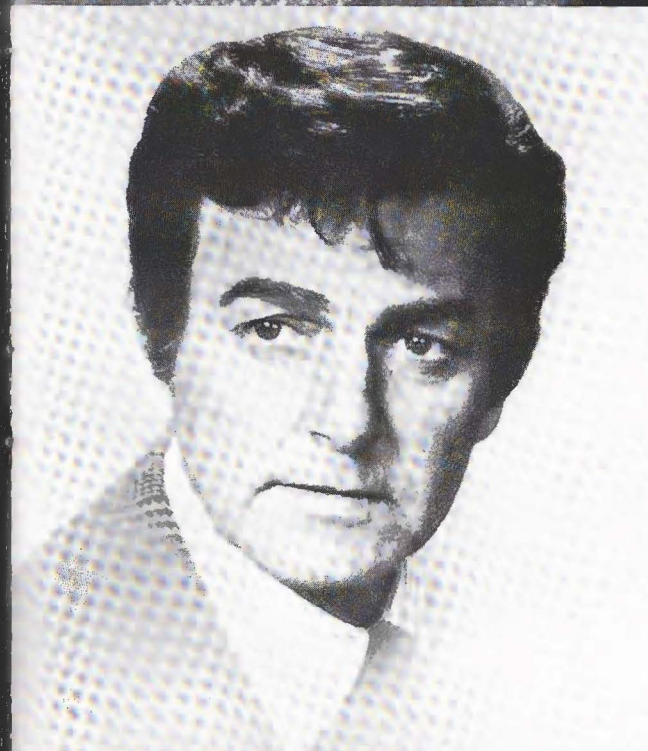
Dramatic Arts

Mike Connors

Actor

Born in Fresno

His incredible success as television's "Mannix" has won millions of fans in 80 countries and resulted in five Emmy nominations plus a Golden Globe award as Best Actor. At the very top of the fantastic though fragile world of show business, Mike Connors yet emerges as a magnetic and genuine person. Despite grueling 12 to 14 hour days on the Mannix set, his personal life is devoted to his family, his wife of more than 20 years, and to the support of such charities as the Armenian General Benevolent Union and the American Cancer Society. Ever the thorough professional throughout a glittering career in television and cinema, Mike Connors is the rare star in the Hollywood sky with his feet on the ground—and his heart with his friends.





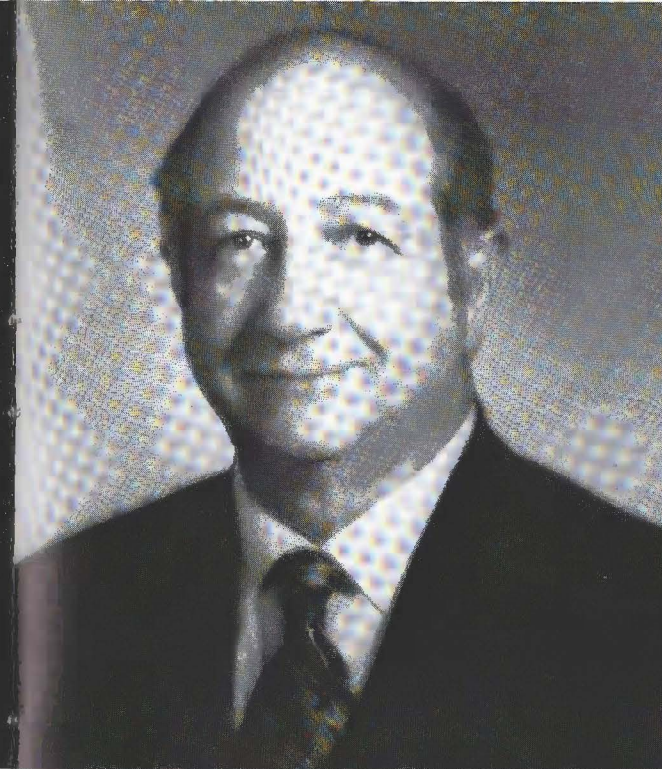
Dramatic Arts
David Hedison
Actor

Born in Providence, Rhode Island
With a list of credits that could fill a book, including award-winning roles in both the American and British stage and screen, David Hedison is perhaps best known as the exciting star of the long-running television series, "Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea". As scholarly as he is athletic and handsome, David Hedison is critically regarded as a versatile performer who communicates dramatically in every medium of acting. Like his great and good friend Mike Connors, David Hedison is a devoted family man and generous contributor of time and talent to numerous educational and charitable causes, particularly those affecting Armenian-Americans.



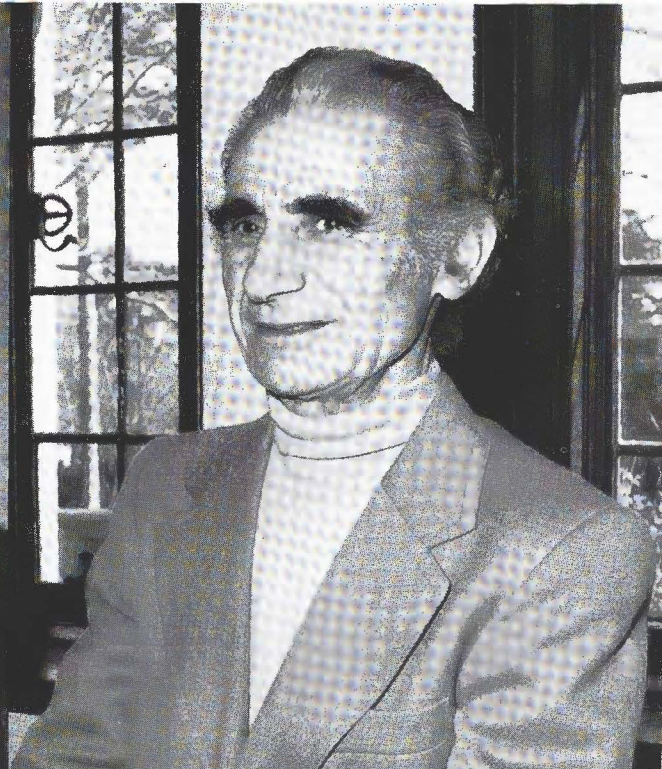
Dramatic Arts
Arlene Francis
Actress

Born in Boston
Bennett Cerf hailed Arlene Francis as the "Queen of Broadway". First Lady Betty Ford warmly commended her championship of women's rights. Clive Barnes wrote of her supreme naturalness, a comedienne of great talent and versatility. Ever young, ever glamorous, Arlene Francis gained international fame as the star of television's long-running "What's My Line", dazzling millions with her charm and with her quick, incisive wit. Star of stage, screen and television, her philosophy remains simple and well worth emulating: Give your best and your potential will surprise you. The higher you reach, the higher you will go.



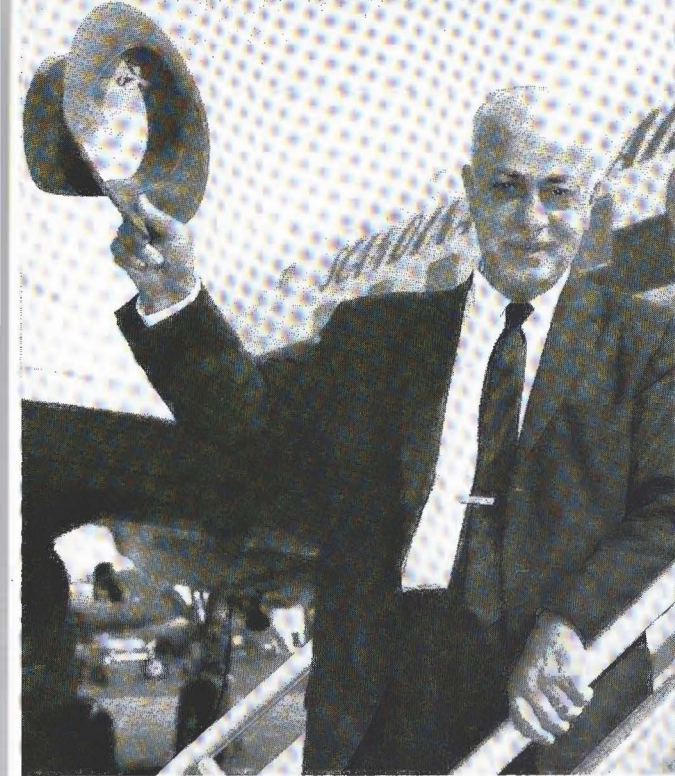
In Service to His Country
Ernest Herbert Dervishian
Attorney

Born in Richmond, Virginia
By the time he retired from the United States Army in November, 1945 with the rank of Colonel, this recipient of a World War II battlefield commission had won a chest-full of decorations from Italy and Poland, as well as the United States. Above all, he, among a handful of men in American military history, was awarded this nation's supreme and highest citation, the Congressional Medal of Honor. Thus, a son of Armenian heritage brings honor to our name, symbolizing the highest qualities of loyalty, valor and sacrifice. Today, Ernest Herbert Dervishian carries these same qualities to his peaceful pursuits as a distinguished lawyer, devoted familyman and churchman, and honored leader of numerous professional and fraternal organizations—not least of all, the Knights of Vartan.



Fine Arts
Khoren Der Harootian
Sculptor

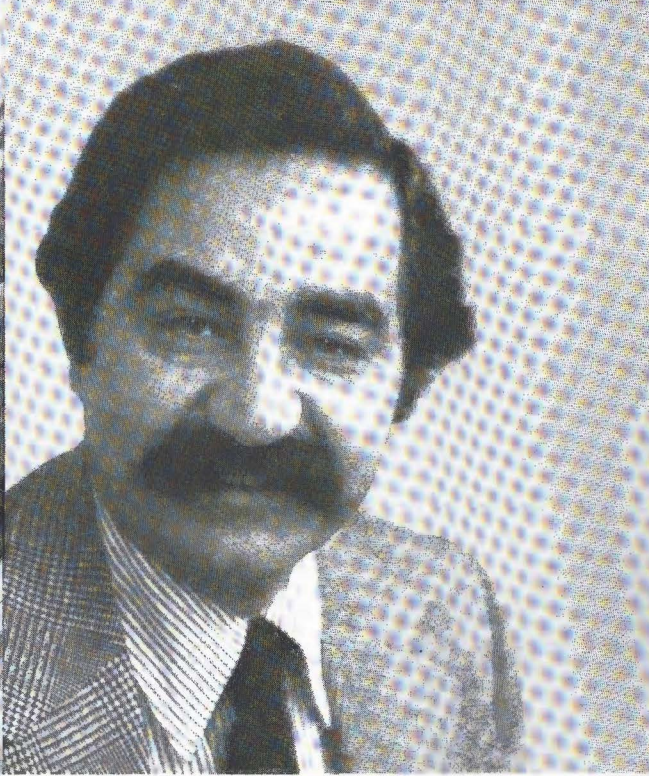
Born in Ashodovan, Armenia
The commencement of his outstanding career in the fine arts began with his escape to the United States from the tragic crucible of the 1915 Turkish massacres which claimed his Priest father and brother. Thus Khoren Der Harootian's characteristics—intensity, spirituality, strength, integrity—are inevitably manifest in his work. Museums the world around, ranging from New York's mighty Metropolitan to the State Museum in Erevan, have proudly displayed the sculptures of Khoren Der Harootian. And yet, the capstone of an honor-studded career of over half a century occurred only yesterday, Armenian Martyrs Day, at the Philadelphia Museum of Art: The dedication of his masterwork, "Meher"—the enduring monument of thanks from all Armenian-Americans to the United States of America.



Business and Industry

Harry A. Kuljian
Founder, The Kuljian Corporation
Born in Aintab

Though he is no longer with us, the benefits of this dynamic and inventive engineer's work are universal. Harry Kuljian brought the impact of electric power to many millions of people in this nation and the under-developed countries of the world. In his book "The Universe and its Man" he set forth his sadness in the fact that advances in human relations did not keep pace with the advance in technology. But his was not merely a voice crying in vain. His philanthropic efforts were as real and as powerful as the physical plants he built.



Business and Industry

Hirair S. Hovnanian
Builder
Born in Bagdad

Builder extraordinaire, his concern for humanity is manifest in the fact that he is both a builder of cities and a builder of people through his many efforts in cultural, educational and civic endeavors. Two retirement communities, now nearing completion, embody Hirair Hovnanian's total involvement in furthering the best through his professional and personal interests. Representative of a new generation who came to America after World War II, he retains a strong respect for Armenian traditions and ideals—giving fully of himself to show the way for others—building for the future on the strong foundations of the past.



Music

Alan Hovhaness
Composer
Born in Massachusetts

One of America's most profound composers, Alan Hovhaness has achieved international appeal through his inventive fusing of Oriental source material and classical Western modes. Haunting, mysterious, deeply God-oriented, the work of Alan Hovhaness communicates the beauty and soul of Armenian culture to the four corners of the Earth. By any serious measure, he stands today among the top rank of composers of this century and his music is performed and recorded with equal appreciation in the East as well as in the West. Prolific in all forms of composition yet humbly reluctant to make any public show of his genius, Alan Hovhaness lets his music speak for him. His music will speak to the ages.



Cinematic Arts

Rouben Mamoulian
Director, Producer, Writer
Born in Tiflis

As a director, producer and writer, he has thrilled us at times, terrified us, but above all entertained us. From "Dr. Jeckyll and Mr. Hyde" to the first Technicolor film "Becky Sharp" he has always been an innovator.

Rouben Mamoulian has blended the arts and sciences to bring us many hours of unforgettable entertainment. A great among greats, he has combined his talents with those of the world's outstanding artists in all the performing arts to widen our vision, delight our hearing, and touch the heart of all. Merely a listing of his many theatrical triumphs would immediately recall to the minds of all of us the emotional depths he probed. And to a new generation he has shown the way.

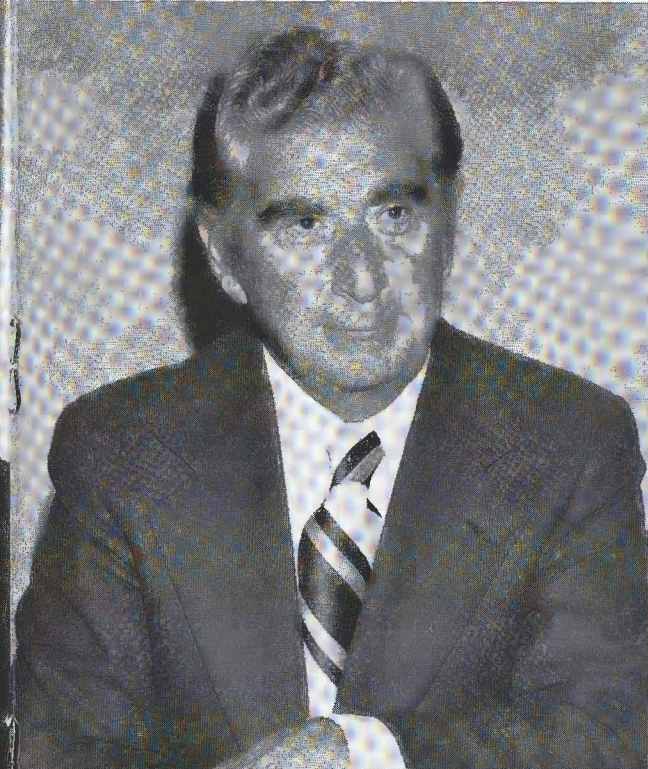
Business and Industry
Alex Manoogian
Founder, Masco Corporation
Born in Izmir

Before the age of 30 he established an international firm which forged new goals for business and industry. Throughout his life, Alex Manoogian's dedication to maintaining the Armenian cultural heritage has found his support of church and charity, schools and sports, community centers and cultural organizations throughout the Nation and the World. Distinguished president of the Armenian General Benevolent Union International, his philanthropic efforts have included establishing AGBU Centers through North and South America, Europe and the Middle East. An outstanding product of the Armenian drive for excellence, Alex Manoogian has traversed the globe to foster and enrich the Armenian heritage.

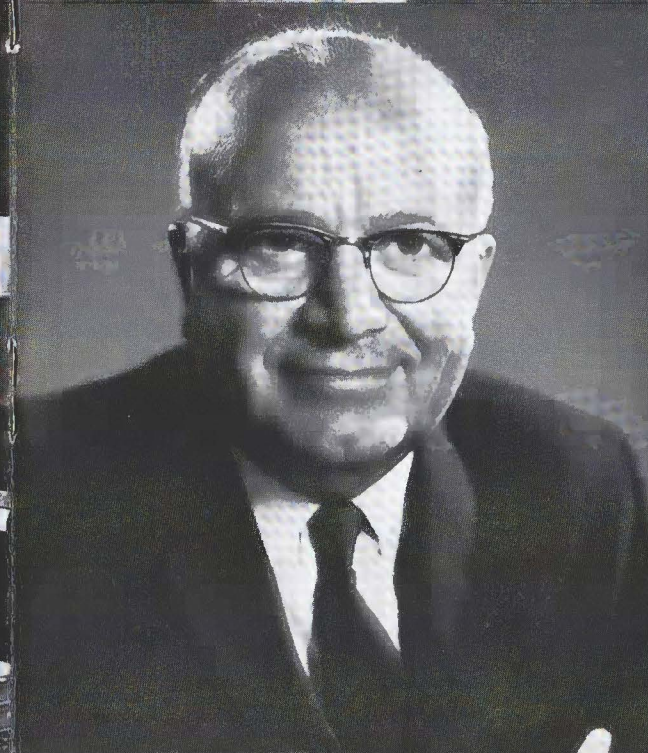


Business and Industry
George M. Mardikian
Restaurateur, Patriot
Born in Armenia

Few people have earned as many colorful titles as the legendary George Mardikian: "San Francisco's Chopin of Chefs," "Advisor to Presidents," and "Uncle Sam's No. 1 Fan" are but a few. Friend of legions of the humble and the exalted, this irrepressible and big-hearted man knows what it is to be both. Among his numerous philanthropies as a proud Armenian-American, one of his greatest triumphs was the transplanting of hundreds of displaced Armenians to America's shores. Recipient of an endless list of tributes, no pan of praise can match the elocution of his own words: "The priceless thing America has given me has nothing to do with money or fame. I call it the dignity of being American."



Business and Industry
Edward Mardigian
Engineer, Founder, Mardigian Corporation
Born in Istanbul
Long a believer in the necessity of building bridges for understanding, he has devoted much of his life to this work. Edward Mardigian's diverse efforts in the business world are stamped with the hallmark of ringing success, as are his efforts to preserve our common heritage. Often called upon to express his conviction and devotion to Armenian cultural and educational institutions, in a recent address he stressed the national awakening of our Armenian-American youth to community goals and our religious and cultural calling. Through his many philanthropies in helping to build and maintain our institutions, Edward Mardigian has matched word with deed.

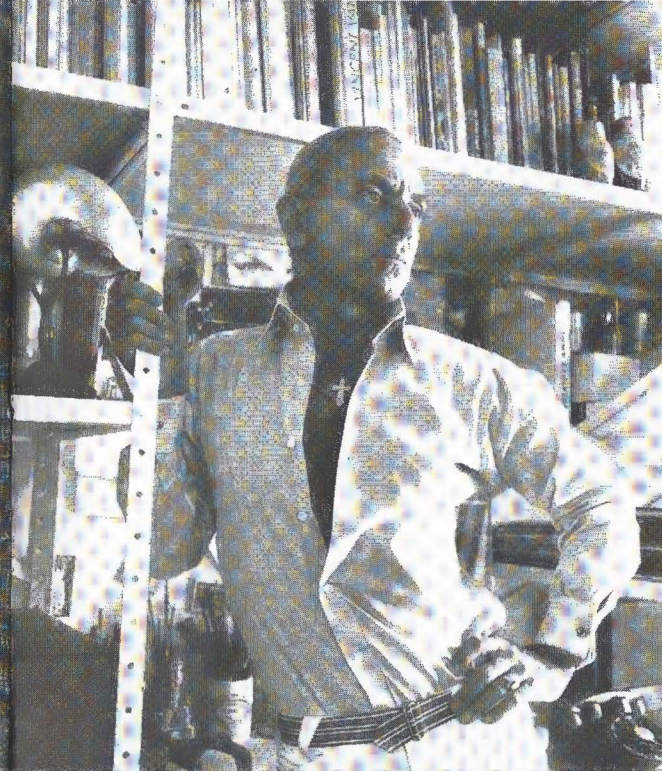


Business and Industry
Stephen P. Mugar
Founder, Star Market Company
Born in Kharpoot
Epithets such as democracy, distinguished service, Americanism, and human relations catch the eye as one encounters the awards and honors granted this pillar of American ideals and opportunity. A large chain of food markets attests to Stephen Mugar's determination in the business world. Moreover, his presence, strength and guiding hand are to be found in many endeavors aimed at preserving our Armenian Heritage. Trustee of four colleges and universities, Fellow at Brandeis University, the recipient of five honorary doctorate degrees—all bear evidence of his sure belief in the American Dream.

Business and Industry
Sarkes Tarzian
Founder, Sarkes Tarzian, Inc.

Born in Kharpoot

The dedication he has shown in his chosen field is exceeded by his dedication to creating a better understanding of our ideals. Innumerable homes throughout the nation have been touched through his pioneering work in broadcast electronics; both present and future generations are indebted to the spirit and inventiveness of Sarkes Tarzian. He has brought the same leadership shown in his professional field to many charitable, cultural and educational endeavors for a broad spectrum of voluntary activity—including the founding of the Chair for Armenian Studies at the University of Pennsylvania. His many awards are ample evidence that in everything he has given the best of himself.



Theatrical Design
Rouben Ter-Arutunian
Designer

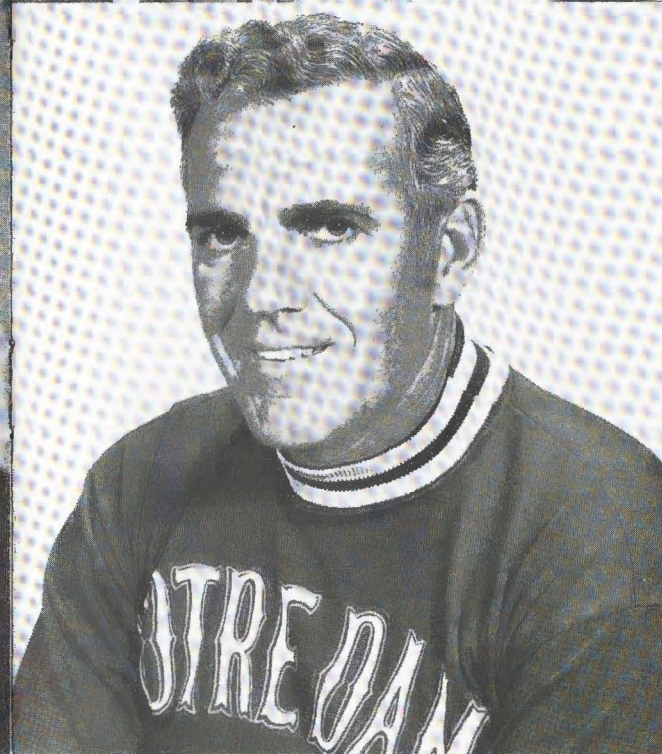
Born in Tiflis

Here is one of the rare creative forces in the exciting cosmos of dance, opera, theatre and television. The inevitable rightness and drama of his scenery and costume designs have enchanted audiences in the fine arts capitals of the world. Winner of an Emmy among other coveted awards, Rouben Ter-Arutunian is as versatile as he is prolific, as attested by his remarkable list of credits in every theatrical medium. As to his artistry, Gian Carlo Menotti said it best: "There is surely something of the magician in him; he can handle space with an illusionary grace little short of miraculous . . . a stage designer not only with taste but ideas."

Business and Industry
Stephen Philibosian
Entrepreneur, Philanthropist

Born in Hadjin

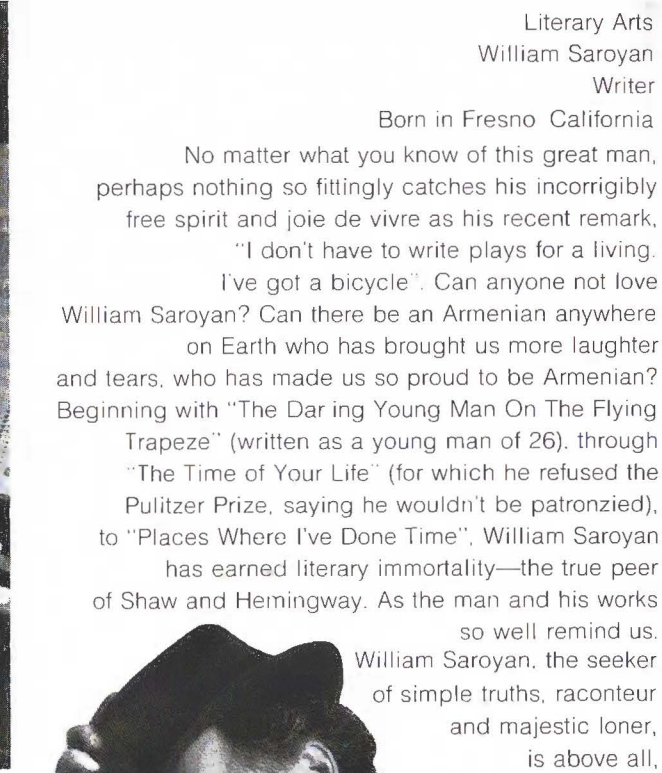
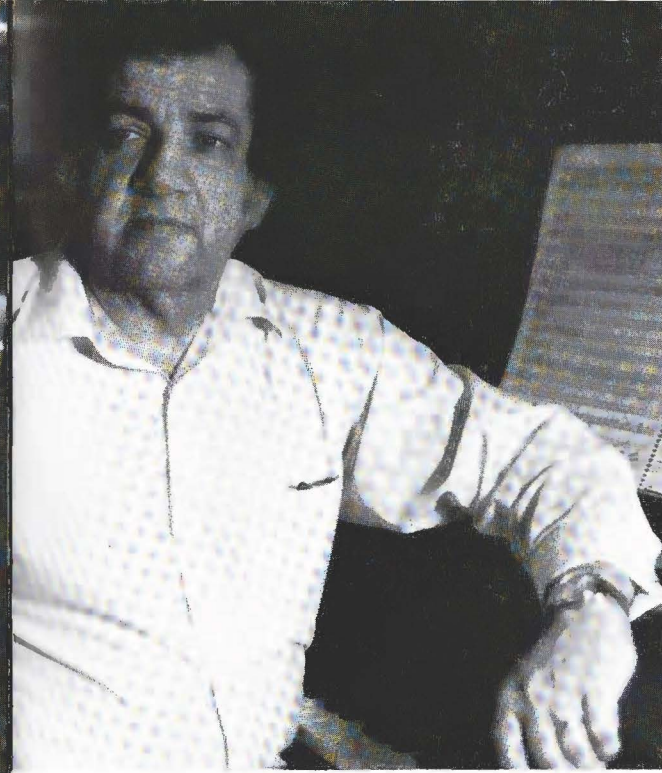
The saga of Stephen Philibosian might be just one more tale of rags to riches but for a vital difference: This man gave his riches to those who were in rags. Notwithstanding his inborn genius for salesmanship that vaulted him from immigrant lad to wealthy businessman, Stephen Philibosian was above all a compassionate humanitarian. A nonstop motivator in a legion of Armenian and non-Armenian charities, his primary medium for philanthropy was the Armenian Missionary Association of America. Through this institution, Stephen Philibosian became an inspiring practical force that bore such fruit as Haigazian College and the Child Education program, serving hundreds of orphans in the Middle East. Today, the man has gone home to God, but his magnanimous spirit and good works continue unabated through the Foundation that bears his name.



Athletics
Ara Parseghian

Former Head Football Coach, Notre Dame
Born in Akron, Ohio

When the Notre Dame team lost for four straight years to Northwestern, the school fathers realized that the only way to stop the streak was to hire the enemy coach. His name: Ara Raoul Parseghian. For the next eleven seasons, this dedicated and brilliant man transposed a losing team into a disciplined band of athletes who truly earned the name—Fighting Irish. When the era of Ara closed, his record spoke for itself: 95 wins, 17 losses, 5 ties. A head coach at 27, Ara Parseghian earned the most coveted awards of his profession including "Coach of the Year." Today, as a businessman, familyman, churchman, gentleman, and as chairman of the Multiple Sclerosis Campaign, one trait stands clear: In all things, Ara Parseghian is a winner.



Literary Arts

William Saroyan

Writer

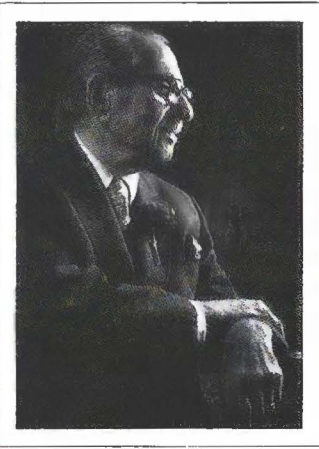
Born in Fresno California

No matter what you know of this great man, perhaps nothing so fittingly catches his incorrigibly free spirit and joie de vivre as his recent remark, "I don't have to write plays for a living. I've got a bicycle". Can anyone not love William Saroyan? Can there be an Armenian anywhere on Earth who has brought us more laughter and tears, who has made us so proud to be Armenian? Beginning with "The Darling Young Man On The Flying Trapeze" (written as a young man of 26), through "The Time of Your Life" (for which he refused the Pulitzer Prize, saying he wouldn't be patronized), to "Places Where I've Done Time", William Saroyan has earned literary immortality—the true peer of Shaw and Hemingway. As the man and his works so well remind us, William Saroyan, the seeker of simple truths, raconteur and majestic loner, is above all, a lover of humanity.

Journalism
Barry Zorthian
Journalist, Attorney
Born in Kutahia
Barry Zorthian is one of America's most distinguished journalists. Now the Vice President for Government Affairs for Time, Inc., his meteoric career has included such executive posts as the United States' chief of press relations in Saigon. There, he became the first director of the Joint U.S. Public Affairs Office and Counselor of Embassy for Information, achieving the rank of Minister. In his four continuous years of duty in Viet Nam, he served under three U.S. Ambassadors and received the U.S.I.A.'s Distinguished Service Award. A Yale man with an LL.B. cum laude from New York University Law School, and a World War II Marine Colonel, Barry Zorthian yet shares his superb gift for leadership as a director for a host of charitable and professional organizations.

Musical Arts
Avedis Zildjian
Cymbalsmith
Born in Istanbul
No serious percussionist or drummer would dare be caught without his Zildjian cymbals. In one of the most romantic chapters in all Armenian folk history, the Zildjian family secret of cymbal-smithing goes back in an unbroken line to the original Avedis' discovery in 1623, in Constantinople. In time, Zildjian cymbals gained wide recognition, winning prizes at trade fairs in Paris and London. In 1929, the business moved to America where the present-day Avedis Zildjian assumed charge and continues to this day as master of an unmatched enterprise. Now in Accord, Mass., three and one-half centuries later, the Avedis Zildjian Co. still crafts the best band and orchestral cymbals in the world.

Music
Richard Yardumian
Composer
Born in Philadelphia
Son of the Reverend Haig Yardumian, the great beacon of hope who guided hundreds of war-ravaged Armenians to America's shores, Richard Yardumian is the product of a deeply religious and musical family. Few men have been able to perceive and master as many sides of music as has this internationally prized composer. With works of ever-present spirituality and supreme beauty in the forms of symphony, concerti, oratorio and chamber music, his "Come, Creator Spirit", commissioned by Fordham University, was the first setting of the Mass in the English vernacular. Equally significant, a theme from his "Armenian Suite" was the signature for the "Voice of America" broadcasts to the Soviet Union. The music of Richard Yardumian has a universal message, but speaks individually to each person. Herein lies his genius.



On Armenian Martyrs Day, April 24, 1976, at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the venerable Haik Kavookjian, in his 101st year, unveiled Khoren Der Harootian's masterwork, "Meher"—the Armenian-American community's enduring gift of gratitude to the United States of America.



Khoren Der Harootian's heroic 15-foot high bronze sculpture stands adjacent to the world-famous Philadelphia Museum of Art. The dramatic representation of Meher is mounted on a 7-foot granite base on which are placed four panels in high relief representing scenes from Armenian History. The end panels are entitled "The Future" and "Protector of Armenian Culture," and the larger, side panels depict "The Battle of Avarair" and "The Last Survivors." Meher is derived from the Armenian epic poem, David of Sassoun, a saga of heroic deeds in the same genre as the Illiad and Beowulf. Meher is kin to David of Sassoun and is portrayed as the valiant defender of Armenian freedom and independence, and the personification of the invincible spirit of the Armenian people. This magnificent monument stands for all time, and for all Armenians everywhere, as a tribute to the past and an inspiration to future generations.



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The
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Sunday
April 25,
1976
Grand Ballroom
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