

ANNOUNCEMENT

Creative Resistance: A Literary Reading in Paintings, Poetry, Collage and Fiction

BOSTON, Mass.—The Midway Gallery will present poet Arthur Kayzakian and novelist Nancy Agabian on Sunday, July 23 at 4 p.m., who will read from their recent books which demonstrate creativity as a form of personal transformation and political resistance. A conversation and book signing will follow with books by both authors available for sale. Admission is free and refreshments will be served.

In Kayzakian's *The Book of Redacted Paintings*, the narrative arc follows a boy in search of his father's painting, but it is unclear whether the painting exists or not. The book, a poetry collection, is also populated by a series of paintings. Some are real, incomplete and/or missing, while most are redacted from reality. The withdrawn paintings concept is the emotional arc of the book, a combination of wishing one could paint the pieces he/she/they envision and the feeling of something torn out of a person due to a traumatic upbringing—a sort of erasure ekphrasis, to foresee artwork that was never painted.

Kayzakian is the winner of the 2021 Black Lawrence Immigrant Writing Series award for *The Book of Redacted Paintings*, which was



also selected as a finalist for the 2021 Philip Levine Prize for Poetry. He is also the winner of the Finishing Line Press Open Chapbook Competition for his chapbook, *My Burning City*. He has been a finalist for the Locked Horn Press Chapbook Prize, Two Sylvias Press Chapbook Prize, the C.D. Wright Prize and the Black River Chapbook Competition. He is a contribu-

ting editor at *Poetry International* and a recipient of the Minas Savvas Fellowship. His work has appeared in or is forthcoming from several publications, including *Taos Journal of International Poetry & Art*, *COUNTERCLOCK*, *Chicago Review*, *Nat. Brut*, *Michigan Quarterly Review*, *Witness Magazine* and *Prairie Schooner*.

In Agabian's *The Fear of Large*

and *Small Nations*, feminist writer and teacher Natalee—aka Na—seeks to reclaim her cultural roots in Armenia only to be confronted with the many contradictions of being a diasporan. When she falls for a charismatic younger man and returns with him to New York City, Na becomes trapped in an abusive web of codependency, bound by intergenerational trauma and politi-

cal ideals. Written in short stories collaged with intimate journal entries and blog posts, the fragmented narrative reveals what is lost in the tightrope passage between cultures ravaged by violence and colonialism—and what is gained when Na seizes control of her story, pulsating in its many shades and realities, daring to be witnessed.

Agabian's previous books include *Me as her again: True Stories of an Armentian Daughter* (aunt lute books), a memoir honored as a Lambda Literary Award finalist for LGBT Nonfiction and shortlisted for a William Saroyan International Writing Prize, and *Princess Freak* (Beyond Baroque Books), a collection of poetry and performance art texts. In 2021 she was awarded Lambda Literary Foundation's Jeanne Córdova Prize for Lesbian/Queer Nonfiction. *The Fear of Large and Small Nations*, a finalist for the PEN/Bellwether Prize for Socially Engaged Fiction, is her first novel.

For more information, visit the Midway Gallery website: <http://www.midwaygallery.org/>

"Let's Party for the Park!" a Resounding Success



Zack Armen delicately pours while Gary Mardiros looks on (Photo: Arlan Fonseca)

BOSTON, Mass.—The "Let's Party for the Park!" benefit for The Armenian Heritage Park on the Greenway, Boston, was held on June 13. More than 135 attendees enjoyed luscious wines in the Storica Wine portfolio. The benefit launched the newest initiative of the Friends of Armenian Heritage Park: Let's Meet at the Park, where guests can network and socialize.



Pictured from l. to. r.: Storica Wines: Wines from Armenia co-founder & president Zack Armen with general manager & head of wine Ara Sarkissian, national sales coordinator Simon Balatian and community engagement manager Garo Safaian (Photo: Arlan Fonseca)

The event was hosted by Storica Wines: Wines from Armenia and the InterContinental Hotel.

FROM THE DESK OF THE ANCA, CTD

Thirteen amendments to major defense bill

► Continued from front page

Hamparian. "Take action today at www.anca.org/NDAA."

The thirteen pro-Artsakh/Armenia amendments to the NDAA Bill are as follows:

Amendment 163 – Introduced by Rep. Judy Chu (D-CA), the amendment "directs a report to Congress on the humanitarian impact of the blockade of the Lachin Corridor and a long-term assessment of the blockade's impact on Nagorno-Karabakh's food, agricultural, water, and energy security."

Amendment 340 – Spearheaded by Congressional Armenian Caucus co-chairs Rep. Frank Pallone (D-NJ) and Rep. Gus Bilirakis (R-FL), this amendment calls for

the "prohibition on military aid and security assistance to the defense, security, and border forces of the Government of Azerbaijan."

Amendment 426 – Introduced by Rep. Katie Porter (D-CA), this amendment commissions a report on the energy partnerships Azerbaijan has had with Russian and Iranian companies which undermine international sanctions.

Amendment 556 – Spearheaded by Greek American Representatives Chris Pappas (D-NH) and Dina Titus (D-NV), this amendment calls for an investigation into the use of Turkish F-16s during the 2020 Artsakh war.

Amendment 692 – Led by Rep. Frank Pallone and Rep. Gus Bilirakis,

this amendment calls for U.S. sanctions on Azerbaijan for human rights violations committed against Armenians in Artsakh and calls for the immediate opening of the Berdzor (Lachin) corridor.

Amendment 721 – Led by the chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Europe, Rep. Thomas Kean Jr. (R-NJ), this amendment "requires the Secretary of State to provide the relevant Congressional Committees updates on the status of freedom of movement in the Lachin Corridor."

Amendment 858 – This second amendment led by Rep. Thomas Kean Jr. "requires the Secretary of State to report on if U.S. assistance to Azerbaijan is being used to undermine the status of ongoing peace negotiations with Armenia."

Amendment 863 – Led by Central Valley California Rep. Jim Costa (D-CA), this amendment "requires a report into the applicability of sanctions under existing statute (Magnitsky Act) to designate Azer-

bajani government and military officials complicit in the perpetration of human rights abuses during the 2020 Nagorno-Karabakh War, and in relation to the ongoing blockade of the Lachin Corridor."

Amendment 947 – Led by Rep. Anna Eshoo (D-CA) and Rep. Chris Smith (R-NJ), this amendment calls on the Departments of State and Defense to explain their waiver of Section 907 restrictions on U.S. aid to Azerbaijan and argues that the waiver has "emboldened Azerbaijan to violate human rights and international law with impunity."

Amendment 1087 – Introduced by Rep. Tony Cardenas (D-CA), this amendment calls on the Secretaries of State and Defense to submit a report to Congress on the use of "U.S. parts and technology discovered in Turkish Bayraktar drones deployed by Azerbaijan against Nagorno Karabakh, Azerbaijan's use of prohibited munitions against Nagorno Karabakh and Turkey and Azerbaijan's re-

cruitment of foreign terrorist fighters to participate in military operations against Nagorno Karabakh."

Amendment 1127 – Introduced by Rep. Adam Schiff (D-CA), this amendment would prohibit the Departments of Defense, State and Commerce from "authorizing new export licenses for offensive weapons for Azerbaijan, until Azerbaijan ceases the offensive use of force against Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh."

Amendment 1132 – This second amendment introduced by Rep. Adam Schiff expresses the "sense of Congress that any lasting peace in the South Caucasus must ensure that the inalienable right to self-determination of the Armenians of Nagorno-Karabakh is upheld."

Amendment 1160 – This third amendment introduced by Rep. Adam Schiff calls for Azerbaijan's "immediate and unconditional release of Armenian POWs."