Musicologist Grikor Mirzaian in his reveries

Armenian Songs of
Grikor Mirzaian Suni (1876-1939)

"– Oh, if I only had... a choir and talented artists, I can assure you that the theater would grow by itself like a mushroom."

Chorus from the opera Արջ (From the Claws of the Bear) by Grikor Suni Mirzaian

O.E. Shling
O.P. 5.7.0.

from the Tbilis satirical weekly Խաղաղություն ("Disaster")

"I can assure you that the theater would grow by itself like a mushroom."

Vocal Solos And Duets

Elisabeth Pehlivanian, soprano
Maro Partamian, mezzo-soprano
Henrik Mihranian, tenor
Gourgen (George) Suny, baritone
Armena Marderosian, pianist
Table of Contents

I. Biography of Grikor Mirzaian Suni in English ............................................. 3
II. Map in English ..................................................................................................... 7
III. Biography of Grikor Mirzaian Suni in Armenian ........................................... 8
IV. Map in Armenian ................................................................................................. 14
V. About the Artists ................................................................................................. 15
VI. Armenian Alphabet Chart ................................................................................ 18
VII. Biography of Grikor Mirzaian Suni in Armenian ........................................... 8
VIII. Song List ........................................................................................................... 21
IX. Song Texts ......................................................................................................... 22
X. Credits in Armenian ............................................................................................. 43
XI. Credits in English ............................................................................................... 42
XII. Cartoon .............................................................................................................. 44
GRIKOR MIRZAIAN SUNI  
(1876-1939)

Grikor Mirzaian Suni, composer, conductor, ethnomusicologist, and teacher, was steeped both in his own Armenian folk tradition and, later, European classical music. He was first and foremost a composer of choral music, and creator of scores of vocal solos, and orchestral, operatic, instrumental, and piano works. Some of these are from one-voiced folk material, which Suni rendered polyphonically in four parts. Suni gave harmony to melody in a way that “sounds Armenian” but is also uniquely “Suni.” “Suni’s treatment of the songs was a revelation”; “the harmonization of folk songs...very beautiful”; “never heard more exquisitely shaded chorus work... Suni’s conducting left nothing to be desired”; (from reviews of his Philadelphia concert, 1934).

“Suni has composed some of the sweetest lyrical pieces in the realm of Armenian music” (Levon Kazanjian, 1924, Philadelphia). Suni wrote beautiful songs of love, and nature, of his beloved mountains of Karabagh, of their fog, waters, valleys, flowers. He set to music works of great poets of the Armenian language. Some of these may be considered European art songs richly saturated with folk color, belonging in fact to the world of lieder.

Grikor Suni traveled widely in the Russian, Ottoman, and Persian (Iran) Empires, as well as India and finally the United States, directing church choirs, studying folk music, and organizing choirs of Armenian amateur singers for the concert presentation of Armenian music. He elevated and enriched the cultural life of every place he settled and visited, a unique and inspiring artist dedicated to bringing the common people to the highest artistic level, yet always searching for the best talent.

Grikor Mirzaian Suni was born Grikor Mirzaian on September 10, 1876 in the village of Getashen in the old Armenian principality of Garzam, at that time a part of the imperial Russian province of Yezdaztop (the former khanate of Ganja, Arm.: Gandzak) before the Russian occupation in 1903. From age two to fifteen, Grikor lived in Shushi, a district capital in the Karabagh (Arm.: Garabagh) region. He came from a line of musicians documented back to his great-grandfather, the ashugh (minstrel) Teymur Melik Hovhanessian Mirzaelian (c.1775). Suni’s grandfather was the ashugh Dadas, and his father was folk poet/lyricist and miniature painter Hovhanessian Varandets. Grikor also painted miniatures, and liked to illustrate his song titles. He was probably descended from princes of the ancient Armenian kingdom of Sjunik, thus used the name Suni (pronounced “Suni”).

Suni began studies in 1883 in the parish school, the same year his father fell off a horse and died. In 1885, the Russian tsar, fearful of the growing nationalism of the non-Russian peoples, ordered all Armenian parish schools closed, breaking the tradition of education in the Armenian language. By 1891, all Armenian parish schools were closed.

As his great musical ability had already been recognized, in 1891 Suni left home and began studies in Echmiadzin, seat of the head of the Armenian Apostolic Church, near Armenia’s current capital of Yerevan. Based there at the Georgian Academy, Suni worked with the major teachers of Armenian music, first with Sahak Amatuni, then Kristapor Garegin Nzhaz, then Baghchelian and, later known as Komitas Vardapet (priest). During summers, Suni took private lessons in Tiflis (Tbilisi, Georgia) with the distinguished teacher and composer Komitas. Suni then decided to leave the Academy and work closely with Komitas and his friend, the famous violinist and conductor Komitas Vardapet.

Suni’s conducting left nothing to be desired; (from reviews of his Philadelphia concert, 1934).
father, however, were used to singing with one vocal line alone ("One God: one voice"), and eventually harmony instructor K• ara-Murza was using the students to sing with one vocal line alone. The walls of Echmiadzin are not wide enough for your ideas." Moreover, K• ara-Murza was siding with the students who even asked advice of the young musician from the Caucasus when he wanted "oriental sounding" orchestration. As Rimsky-Korsakov and colleagues were also deeply interested in folk music, these study years nurtured a happy amalgam of Suni's national polyphony, especially impressive for Suni's time. "This is a unique input into Armenia's classical compositional heritage," says Ayanyan, who was at the forefront of the rediscovery of Suni's contributions.

In 1902, Suni won first prize for the best musical drama of Bab (in Russian), by Isabella Grinevski, produced by the Theatre Art of St. Petersburg. Bab was later banned. St. Petersburg had a lively Armenian student life, and Suni participated fervently. He was present at the January 9, 1905 Tsarist massacre of demonstrators called "Bloody Sunday." In the aftermath, Rimsky-Korsakov especially liked two of these, and would come to the church to listen, "with tears in his eyes." Eighty-some years later, Yerevan professor Robert Atayan was surprised to discover in the Echmiadzin library an unknown Suni liturgical manuscript, "Masbtahut Or Hangtsayan" (Sadbast Repos), with words by 12th century priest/historian Nerses Shnorhali. This work, which Ayanyan analyzed and published in the 1987 Echmiadzin Journal, is scored for three-part male choir plus solo tenor, with brief additions of three-part, then two-part children's choir, yielding at one point seven-part harmony. Suni and K• omit•as were close colleagues and friends working together on the passion of those times, preserving folk music with a goal of organizing mixed choruses for concert presentation.

Working then with K• omit•as, Suni began formally gathering traditional and religious melodies, listening to the people, and writing down in Ilkaz notation eventually hundreds of folk songs, a calling which he followed for decades. Suni and K• omit•as were close colleagues and friends working together on the passion of those times, preserving folk music with a goal of organizing mixed choruses for concert presentation.

Upon graduating in 1895 from the Georgian Academy, Suni returned to his native Shusha, formed a choir, and presented his first concert of his own arrangements of Armenian folk songs. This debut was celebrated forty years later all through the Armenian world. Its success propelled Suni’s next stage of study in St. Petersburg where he moved in autumn 1895, and remained for almost a decade.

Now in the capital of the empire, Suni took private lessons in music theory and composition for three years, preparing for entering, in 1898, with a scholarship, the theoretical composition class of Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov at the St. Petersburg Conservatory of Music. He studied also with Alexandr Glazunov and Anatolii Liadov, graduating in 1904.

Here Suni learned orchestration, encountered and mastered the piano, wrote fugues, and became close to Rimsky-Korsakov, who even asked advice of the young musician from the Caucasus when he wanted "oriental sounding" orchestration. As Rimsky-Korsakov and colleagues were also deeply interested in folk music, these study years nurtured a happy amalgam of Suni's national pride and musicianship. Suni arranged folk songs, composed patriotic songs and choruses, and also composed a series of romances, which received the high approval of his teacher; his first folk song collection was published in 1904.

From 1899, Suni was director of the Armenian Church choir; teaching the new Yek• malian liturgy along with his own polyphonic liturgical settings. Rimsky-Korsakov especially liked two of these, and would come to the church to listen, "with tears in his eyes." Eighty-some years later, Yerevan professor Robert Ayanyan was surprised to discover in the Echmiadzin library an unknown Suni liturgical manuscript, "Masbtahut Or Hangtsayan" (Sadbast Repos), with words by 12th century priest/historian Nerses Shnorhali. This work, which Ayanyan analyzed and published in the 1987 Echmiadzin Journal, is scored for three-part male choir plus solo tenor, with brief additions of three-part, then two-part children's choir, yielding at one point seven-part polyphony, especially impressive for Suni's time. "This is a unique input into Armenia's classical compositional heritage," says Ayanyan, who was at the forefront of the rediscovery of Suni's contributions.

In 1902, Suni won first prize for the best musical drama of Bab (in Russian), by Isabella Grinevski, produced by the Theatre Art of St. Petersburg. Bab was later banned. St. Petersburg had a lively Armenian student life, and Suni participated fervently. He founded and directed a chorus and an instrumental folk song group, and organized concerts and student events. He married Tiflis-Armenian university math student Nvart Sonyants. The first three of their eight children were born there.
29. Agh Al Vardi

Akh al vardi, sirv varti.
Cher ponsoun muskun.
En pooden ter muskun
Kourk en so jemun.
Serious, sweet rose,
It remains delicious.
What a lovely rose!
It remains delicious.

29. Akh, of the Red Rose

Words by Ameil Shakhian (1875–1957)

Akh, of the red rose, of the rose of love
Dry thorns (only) remain.
Those thorns my tender heart
They tormented and left it up.
Red green my (young) days
From Lewis's morning to the moon.
Akh, alas in my spring life
(Only) thorns remain.

Note: From the poem “Armocana” (Tears).

→

During the years he devoted particular attention to the collection of Armenian musical legend, as well as folk songs, studying the elements of Armenian music that give it its specific character. Still living on the Ottoman side of the border, he moved in 1910 to Erzrum (Arm.: Gümüs), the largest city in the Eastern Anatolian peninsula, and taught until 1914 at the same school.

Here he composed the “Erzurum March” of which city officials were quite proud. When World War I broke out, with Russia and Turkey enemies, and Suni a Russian subject in Turkey, the family was awakened in the night by an official, and warned to flee for their lives back to the Russian side of the border. Suni attributed this act of humanity to the appreciation for his “Erzurum March.” In gratitude, he began many concerts thereafter with that march. The Mirzaian-Suni family reached Tiflis in safety, and remained there until 1912.

During World War I, Suni conducted the Symphony Orchestra of Tiflis, and founded an Armenian opera company. He composed the operas Armocana (1906, text from Chazaran Agayian) and Arzavut II, the operettas Agh Karmen (Agh Kerun) (libretto by Suni) and Mezok (stage music for Leon Shav’s Hn Avatamar (Ancient Gods), and also orchestral works including Symphony in C Minor, and the suites Sketches of Van, and Oriental (Arveloim)). He created orchestral arrangements to choral, solo, and liturgical works, and orchestral arrangements of other composers’ works, including G.O. Kargásian’s piano work, Byalat: Fantasia on Caucasian Themes, and V. Vatsner’s opera, Secrets of the Harem. He wrote a history of Armenian music and the theory of Persian music, poems and essays (“What is art?”). He founded the Society of Armenian Music Theoreticians, working with musicians Arzutik, Agh Karmen, and the great poet Hovhannes Toumanian, Suni’s close friend and neighbor.

The Russian Revolution and Civil War marked this period, in the latter part of which Suni traveled to Tehran (1919–1920), India, Egypt, and Constantinople. In October 1919, the government of the first republic of Armenia (1918–1920) invited Grigor Mirzayan (Suni) to be the founder of a national conservatory of music. At that time, the railroads were blocked by military actions, so Suni probably could not reach Yerevan. In 1921, the Communists took over Tiflis, and by 1922, Suni was targeted as a political enemy, so that after finally he was able to return to Tiflis, he had to flee, with his large family, to Istanbul (then still commonly called Constantinople). He had to leave behind the trunk full of his precious music scores with the family of Hovhannes Toumanian, whose poetry Suni had set to music. Suni intended to return, but was never able to, and that trunk still has not been found.

So in 1905 Suni accepted the invitation to teach in Tiflis, the largest city in Transcaucasia, at the Nersissian School, where he took the place of (now deceased) Yekmalian, directed the monastery choir, and was a highly esteemed teacher. In 1903 the Tarist government in Transcaucasia had seized the properties of the Armenian Church, stimulating the revolutionary organizations to resist. Suni joined the struggle, and by 1908, during a full-scale repression, had to flee with his family to Turkish Armenia, where the recently established Young Turk government promised a more tolerant and constitutional regime.

Now a member of the Dashnak układ, the major Armenian revolutionary party working against Ottoman and Russian imperial oppression of Armenians, Suni was both a musician and a political activist. He was writing patriotic and political songs, including at least twenty marches, some of which were adopted as Dashnak hymns, many of which he left unsigned. For Griktor Suni, music was not only high art, but a living part of the revolutionary struggle against autocracy. His commitment to political activism resulted in his music being repressed wherever his politics were out of favor. Ultimately his music was lost for a generation.

While in Turkish Armenia, Suni organized and directed choirs and taught in Trapizon, Samson, Kirasen, and elsewhere. During these years he devoted particular attention to the collection of Armenian musical legend, as well as folk songs, studying the elements of Armenian music that give it its specific character.
Suni spent almost two years in Istanbul where he organized an Armenian cultural/musical society, gathering to his home musicians and writers, including Vahan Tekeyan. He taught at five Armenian schools, Vessian, Berberian, Hintlian, Renazian, and Karageozian, many with children orphaned by the 1915 Ottoman Turkish state genocide of its Armenian subjects. In this period, Suni wrote in a letter, “The Kemalist alarm is approaching.” As an Armenian in an ominously changing Turkey, in 1923, he was forced again to flee. This time, he moved his family to the safety of America.

The Armenian Church of America brought Suni to create church choirs. After a brief stay in New York, he began work with choirs in five Boston area churches. In 1925, he moved to Philadelphia, his final home. He conducted church choirs, and organized folk choirs, presenting concerts from the start, winning much acclaim. In 1925 and 1935 in Boston’s Symphony Hall, the Suni-led Armenian chorus won first prize in the inter-ethnic competition for best folk music examples, and in 1933, second prize at the Chicago exposition competition. Suni directed “Suni Choruses” around the U.S., including New York, Boston, Worcester, Providence, Philadelphia, Detroit, and Chicago.

Through correspondence, Suni kept in close touch with his colleagues abroad. He heard how life was in the new Soviet Armenia, and that Armenian cultural arts were being supported. He decided to support Soviet Armenia and join the Communist Party. His colleagues in Yerevan implored him to return home to head the Yerevan Conservatory of Music. Though Suni’s desire was to return to Armenia, it was never to be, for it was impossible as long as Armenia had no insulin for the now diabetic Suni. Suni helped all he could from a distance by sending music, instruments, letters, and by publishing in 1934 in New York a song collection, Nor E vans Y erger (Songs for a New Life).

In 1935, the fortieth anniversary of his musical debut was celebrated in the U.S. and in Soviet Armenia with jubilee concerts, and the formal organizing of the U.S. Suni choirs as the Armenian Musical Society of America. Soviet Armenia published a volume of ten of his works for voice and piano.

The Church, and also his former associates in the Dashnak Party now rejected him for having joined the Communists. Then, in 1937, at the time of the political purges in the Soviet Union in which hundreds of thousands of innocent people perished, Suni made a public criticism of Joseph Stalin. The news traveled back to Armenia, Suni was rejected by the Soviet regime, and his political and personal life, in music, Suni expressed himself honestly and freely, and made tangible contributions to Armenian music, and indeed, to world music.

Much of Grikor Suni’s music is still unpublished, nearly all out of print, and unrecorded. This body of work is waiting to be brought open to the public. Some of the manuscripts are in Yerevan, in the Chairsants Museum, and some are in the Ann Arbor archive of the Suni Project: Music Preservation. And some are in that, now legendary, trunk in Tbilisi.
25. From the Mountains Comes a Horseman

From the mountains comes a horseman...
To our terraced home,
Thy bity, my little sweetheart...

New came my husband
Var le, le, le.
A three day king,
He laid me, embraced me, caressed me, my sweetheart.
Your tall height has no blemishes
Vai le, le, le,
Your illuminated face has no marks
Vai le, le, le,
Itsy bitsy, my little sweetheart...

25. Note: Arranged for four-part chorus.

26. My Tormented Soul

My soul is tormented, my heart in pieces.
Akh, you have tied me, love, to your door.
Hey, sweet love, hey, heartless,
Akh, find a way for my heart.
Your door is tight (closed),
As hard as stone.
Your life-tie, just a vine, (when it should be with me).
Where should I go, where?

26. Note: Orchestrated. Also called "Janus Mrmoor.”
22. Maosoom E. Patej

Makatao e pata, larkaet gumante.
Tevash lees game pambant.
Ona es, ah, ave? Ona es, ah, analytical?
Im pena jasunno et makatao e pata.
Zeh sii raman jant, panntale.
Ona es anomaly?
Ona es autonimite?

22. The Fog Has Encompassed All

The fog has encompassed all, become petrified, settled in.
The forest of the mountains with black has been wrapped.
Where you are, ah, sun? Where you are, ah, min?
My spring life also has taken in this fog.
Like a flattened cliff, has contracted, become heavy.
Where are you, veuv?
Where are you, tears?

22. Note: Suni was from Karabagh (Gharabagh), and often wrote of its mountains, sounds of its rivers, and here its solid, unmoving fog. Travelers and often wrote of its mountains, sounds of its rivers, and here its solid, unmoving fog. Travelers and often wrote of its mountains, sounds of its rivers, and here its solid, unmoving fog. Travelers and often wrote of its mountains, sounds of its rivers, and here its solid, unmoving fog.
19. Sarerii Hovin Merinim
Sareri hovin merinim.
One sweetener of joy.
It is a sweetener.
For your sweet singer, I’m die.
For the mountains, I’m die.
For the mountains, I’m die.
For the mountains, I’m die.
For the mountains, I’m die.

20. Oh Ye Mountains
Worthy by Chacram Ayghay (1840-1911)
Oh ye my mountains, oh ye valleys, Raise your voice, open the way, Oh ye mountains, oh ye valleys, Raise your voice, open the way, Oh ye mountains, oh ye valleys, Raise your voice, open the way, Oh ye mountains, oh ye valleys, Raise your voice, open the way,
Wounded love,
Hey love, my gazelle,
Come out, you beyond compare,
I’m a sacrifice to your radiance.
I have gotten up and gone
To Mount Sipan’s heights,
To set alight the moon,
To count all the stars,
To illumine the morning star,
To greet the dawn,
Not one have I seen
To match my sweetheart.
Wounded love,
Hey love, my gazelle,
Come out, my peerless one,
I sacrifice myself to your beaming light.
Wounded love,
Hey love, hey gazelle,
Come out, my hope,
Your… sacrifice.

1922 Grikor Mirzaian Suni with mother Anna

1922 Wounded love by Lep Teh Marman, C. 1930s

Yamik yar jan,
Hey yar, hiy yarjan,
Doors yel, annman,
Shogh food heyman.
Yamik yar jan,
Hey yar, he yar jan,
Doors yel, im gyooman,
Ko… heyran.

1922 Győrös Mihály Suni with mother Anna

1922 Névrál fagyi huzsuk a magányos élet

1922 Longos Géza a körelakban

Wounded love,
Hey love, my gazelle,
Come out, my hope,
Your… sacrifice.
17. Sareru Man Em Yekel
Sareri men em yekel, yar nay nand jan,
Var nay nay ta nay, ta nay.
Yar nay nand jan,
Sang yar ind em kasel,
Yar nay nand jan.

17. In the Mountains I Have Wandered
In the mountains I have wandered, love nai nand deel;
For my beloved sweetheart a rose I’ve picked,
Love nai nand deel.


18. Yarali Yar Jan
Yarali yar jan,
Sareru man em yekel, yar nay nani jan,
Angin kar pnt•r• el,
Egik man yek• el,
Ko kelkin ghoorban.
He´ y yar, im jeyran,
Yarali yar jan,
Yeghoong chen arzher.
Amenkn al yaris
Kapoor vard kaghel;
Havkoots yerg lsel,
Zov hovu shnchel,
17. Sareru Man Em Yekel
Almast• anhamar;
Zmrookht•, adamand,
Yaghoot oo lalvar,
18. Yarali Yar Jan
Yar nay nani dear.
In the mountains I have wandered, love nai nani dear,

The radiance of my sweetheart.

Countless diamonds in the rough,
Emeralds, diamonds,
Sapphire and ruby,
Found many jewels,
I have gotten up
I die for the sight of your beauty.

I die for your walk.

Hey love, my gazelle,
Wounded love,
The nail of my sweetheart.
All these aren’t worth even
Plucked the fragrant crimson rose,
I’ve heard the song of the fowl,
Breathed in the cool air,
I have gotten up and gone
The nail of my sweetheart.
15. Nenni Bala (Nyanni Bala)
Nenni, bala, nenni, nenni, nenni.
Bala, nenni, nenni, nenni, nenni.
Nenni, diaqook, nenni, nenni, nenni.
Akar magheb boku unen.
Ko vu boku loos unen.
Shaf bujetin du unen.
Nenni, nenni, nenni, nenni, nenni.
Nenni, nenni, nenni, nenni, nenni.
Nenni, nenni, nenni, nenni, nenni.

16. Gatsek Amper
Gatsek amper, shoot, gatsek
Nanay, nanay, nanay, zolun nanay.
To my love, take a message.
My dear, alas, alas,
My fair one, alas, alas,
Akh my pretty love, my love, my love,
Akh greeting love, my love, my love,
Find a cure for my heart.
Tell my love that my eyes have turned into water
Nanay, nanay, nanay, zolun nanay.
(Watching) your path, my eyes are frozen.
At midnight I went outside,
The cloud in the sky is shining with light.
My little heart, don’t stay tormented,
My love very soon will come home.

15. Go to Sleep, My Child
Go to sleep, my child, sleep, sleep, sleep.
Go to sleep, little one, while I rock you.
How we’ll sit, dough we’ll make,
The fire spring, light we’ll make.
The moral dog we’ll throw him outside.
My child, sleep, sleep, sleep, sleep.
Go to sleep, my child, sleep, sleep, sleep, sleep.
Sleep, little one, sleep, sleep, while I rock you.

16. Go Away, Clouds
Go away, clouds, go quickly
Nanai, nanai, nanai woe nanai.
To my love, take a message.
My dear, alas, alas,
Dear heart, alas, alas,
My fair one, alas, alas,
Akh my pretty love, my love, my love,
Akh grieving love, my love, my love,
Find a cure for my heart.
Tell my love that my eyes have turned into water
Nanai, nanai, nanai woe nanai.
At midnight I went outside,
The cloud in the sky is shining with light.
My little heart, don’t stay tormented,
My love very soon will come home.

16. Note:
Nanai is an introspective expression.
Bala is a bewailing word. Orchestrated. Also written for duet with four-part chorus.
14. If One Day

Words by Hovhannes Toumanian (1869-1923)

If one day, noble friend,
You visit my tomb
And you notice fresh
And vivid flowers all around,
Do not think that they are ordinary
Flowers that are growing,
Or that the spring has brought
To decorate its new nest.
These are those unsung songs
That in my heart I carried.
They are words of love
That without uttering, I died.
They are the thousands of kisses
Sent to you from that world
Whose path for you
By the grave is closed.

Note: Suni and Toumanian were
close friends and neighbors in Tbilisi.
When Suni fled the Bolsheviks in
1922, he left his trunk of music
scores with the Toumanian family.
Piano accompaniment written out by
Gourgen (George) Suny from his
memory of his father’s playing of it.
Suni, son of the composer, had a
special connection to this song. It
describes well the great loss felt when
the outflowing of the abundant
musical genius and charismatic
personality of his father was cut off
by illness, and death. Gourgen
(George) Suny (1910-1995) sang
this on his 84th birthday, July 29,
1994.
12. Mayisn Yek\nMay\nMay\nMay\nMay\n\n13. Mer Sareru\nMer\nMer\nMer\n\n13. Our Mountains\nOur\n\n13. Note: They were excited at the help expected\nfrom the new canal completed in Armenia in 1925. Written for four-part chorus. Also called\"Le, Le, Le, Le.\"
11. Kyamancha

Kyamancha im. dafaq pej im, Volek-smer shahcar oncin, 
Shat maroon loo laterastin, 
Rajitney el gipqapghinim.

Ajab kiz ich get in ar? 
Becen in khzry achali los, 
Akhkhsh akhsharn keshpanyet 
Is karamna rez achali los.

Ajab kiz Saiat-Nova, 
Dmitry shakargamgha ov a? 
Hajje shgjgh jeji reo 
Saiat-Nova akshki jeve.

Yeyox haume derv eneem, 
Ves shabummos ali cham mi, 
Im hoomki bekumina doo, 
Yes 5-oort Shah chiman mi.

Saiat-Nova asuts, Zalam 
Yes en mahim mah cham mi; 
Hinchak eli, donn vorees los, 
Moudh johgh join duhch jin.

HENRIK MIHRANIAN, Tenor

Born in Tehran, Iran, performed in the Armenian Song and Dance Ensemble of Iran, studied also in Armenia, lives in Hollywood, CA. Performed in Armenia, Russia, Europe, U.S. Member of the LA Opera Company, and the Los Angeles Master Chorale.

ARMENA MARDEROSIAN, Pianist

1. ու w a father
2. բ p b boy (p) piano
3. գ q g go (k) kid
4. դ d d glance (t) ten
5. ե e ye wet initial e pen medial e pen initial hο, hο, hο, hο, hο, hο, hο, hο you are yawn before vowel
6. ը s z zebra
7. ե t e pen
8. կ c u focus s
9. ռ r t ten
10. ս s zh treasure
11. տ t i meet
12. լ l l lap
13. հ h w kh German Bach

ARmenian Alphabet
First created in the 5th c. by Mesrop Mashtots. Eastern Armenian Dialect transliteration. (Western Dialect, when different, follows in parentheses).

14. ու տ s unaspirated ts/dz (dz) adze
15. ու տ k skp unaspirated k/g (g) go
16. ե է h hot
17. թ t (adze) (ts) cats
18. ու ղ gh Parisian French Paris
19. ու չ ch/j j (j) jet
20. ու մ m meet
21. օ ə h hot initial y Maya medial y final in monosyllable except verbs silent final elsewhere
22. օ ն n nut
23. չ c sh shine
24. օ ո vo vortex initial except before ո more initial position before ո more elsewhere

9. Khali Yerg
Dagij jore yem, Tjaran jen
Hagred ho
Hemam daman ara,
Ho, ho, ho, ho,
Ho, ho, ho, ho.
Ho-lo-lo ho,
Jan akhber jen ho-lo-lo ho.
Dagij jore oot ghochian yem, ho!
Dag, Yemal, ye! ye! ye!
Dag, Yemal, ye! ye! ye!
Dag, Simon, ye! ye! ye!
Mep ara, wjabelghochian
Hagred ho.
Darmans eet, teeren meet.

10. Habrban
Habrban
Habran
Horovel ho.
Work your foot, I die for your foot,
I wish I could get up on your pillow
Girl, your hair I wish I could braid,
But letting go is trouble.
Holding on to your love is good
Love
I'm not a redhead, I've only a red scarf,
A flower have I, it's red.
Dear, dear
Calling you

9. Threshold Song
Gove a poll, on, Tjarm dear
Hagred, ho
Separate the wheat from the chaff
Hic-to, hic-to, hic-to, hic-to,
Hic-to, hic-to,
Dear brother dear, ho-lo-lo ho,
Give a poll, on, I die for your shoulder!
Oh, Melal, get up,
Oh, Yaram, get up,
Oh, Sieros, get up.
Work your foot, I die for your foot,
Hagred, ho.
The chaff to you, the wheat to us.
(And) sing like a nightingale.
I wish I could get up on your pillow
Your cheek on my face to rub,
Girl, your hair I wish I could braid,
But letting go is trouble.
Holding on to your love is good
Love
I'm not a redhead, I've only a red scarf,
A flower have I, it's red.
Dear, dear
Calling you
8. I Have Sown Wheat
Co-Composer Harutiun Samuelian (1902-1960)
I have sown wheat, it has grown as tall as I am.
I have loved her since childhood, I can’t forget her.
All around Aron small villages,
That sweetheart whom I love was from a lovely lineage.

8. Note: Arranged for four-part chorus.

25. ስ/ቁ ch church
26. ት ፊ p spin unaspirated p’b (b) boy
27. ቴ ፱ j jet (ch) church
28. ሃ ፱ r rolled strongly
29. አ ፂ s sing
30. ዳ ሳ v violin
31. ስ ፅ t step unaspirated t’d (d) dance
32. ዝ ፁ r rolled softly
33. ስ ፈ ts cats
34. ክ ፂ v violin
35. የ ፂ p piano
36. ታ ለ k kid
37. ኧ ሲ o more
38. ዑ ጋ f fantastic

COMBINATIONS
1. ም/ማ ay May, my, hi, pie initial, medial
ai final monosyllabic words except verbs
a farther other final positions
2. ም/ማ ooy phooey before consonants
oy boy before vowels
oy boy final, monosyllabic nouns
o more other final positions
3. ሮ oo boot
v violin before vowels
u boot in some names as Shushi
4. ን yoo cyte (French lune) before consonant
iv weave elsewhere
u cyte in some names, as Suni
iu cyte (French lune) in some names as Sunik
5. ኢ ya yard
6. አ ya yard
7. እ yo yoke
8. ኦ yo yoke
9. እ yoo yugh
10. ኢ yoo yugh
11. እ yev Russian Yevgeny

STRESS falls on last full syllable

Note: The Eastern Dialect has five unaspirated consonants, #14, 15, 19, 26, and 31, distinguished here by an under-dot. Each may be viewed as an in between sound, e.g. #26 is in between p and b, “p/b,” as in spin. The more strongly rolled r, #28, is distinguished here from r #32 by an under-dot. Eastern and Western Armenian are the two modern literary languages. There are many spoken dialects. Our transliterations are in Eastern, though some songs have western elements (vocabulary, grammar). Pronunciation can differ. Also, in practice, some words are not pronounced exactly phonetically. Among these are yerg, “yerg,” and aghjik, “akhjik.”
6. Aghjí Ari
Aghjí, act shephard, you
Néji, handmade in your,
Mítta, cherries in your,
En, a man looking at your:
Taghem yén en skóp yór, hamér džok yór.
Pooch ou zemén en yór, témé ou amén en yór.
Aghjí, ari serđar po
Boo ou looys en yór, ao ou koones en yór.
Hogheem yén en skóp yór, Pooch ari yeş ou.
Mólpia koosh en yór, Zópoch ou koosh en yór.

7. Miyan Kez
Géehír vor miyan kár hamér kár,
Kéénévo pú shíchen, kéénévo fún kár.
Géehír vor chéen pí mian ari;
Anjou, ari serđar ari serđar ari.
Aghjí vor jartém;
Ari serđar ari serđar ari.

8. 6. 7. 8. 6. 7. 8. 6. 7. 8. 6. 7. 8. 6. Note: This duet from the operetta Asli-Kyaram is between two sweethearts who can never marry because she is the daughter of an Armenian priest and he is the son of a Muslim imam. Orchestrated.

6. Men, Come
Méndm, cén jégy ou
Póou, i jégy ou.
Kár yén en skóp, shór.

7. Only For You
You should know that only for you I live, With you I breathe, with you I draw life. You should know that without you I will be abandoned, Friendless, my heart always in ruins, Ask me to cry, Ask me to weep.

6. 6. Note: Also arranged for four-part chorus and called "Na Ní Chá" ("On This Day").
The Partridge Flute

Papadopulos, baritone, son of Suni, age 84; Maro Partamian (soprano; Ay9a, mezzo-soprano; Rjuhj) was a son of Suni, age 84; Armena Marderosian, mezzo-soprano; Henrik Mihranian, tenor; Gourgen (George) Suny, mezzo-soprano; Henrik Mihranian, pianist.

8. Tsoren Em Tsaner I Am Planting Wheat EP 0:44
9. K. Em Yerg Threshing Song HM 3:44
10. Habrban (Sweethearts Calling) EP+ HM 1:57
11. K. Moshxav The Fog Has Encompassed All HM 1:52
12. Papal, Papal Song to a Baby Boy EP 1:01
13. Mer Sareru Our Mountains EP 1:04
14. Yar Mi Or If One Day Gourgen (George) Suny 2:53
15. Nenni Bala Sleep My Child MP 1:39
16. Gatsek Amp Engineer EP 3:26
17. Sareri Hovin Mer• nim For the Mountain Breeze I’d Die MP 2:40
19. Sareri Mer• nim Our Mountains EP+ 1:04
20. Ov Dook Sarer Oh Ye Mountains HM 1:46
22. Mshooshn E P• at•el The Fog Has Encompassed All HM 1:52
23. Papal, Papal Song to a Baby Boy EP 1:01
24. Dil, Lyoo, Lyoo Uncle Came to Our Backyard EP 0:32
25. Saren K. Em Yerg From the Mountains Comes a Horseman HM 0:41
27. Aghk • ek• Es You’re Lovely EP+ HM 0:40
28. K. Em K• oo Gas You Walk Around Like a Partridge HM 2:16
29. Akh Al Vardi Akh, of the Red Rose EP 4:02
30. K. Em K• oo Gas You Walk Around Like a Partridge HM 2:16

Total Time 72:36

ARMENIAN SONGS of GRIKOR MIRZAIAN SUNI (1876-1939) Vocal Solos and Duets

Elisabeth Pehlivanian, soprano; Gourgen (George) Suny, baritone, son of Suni, age 84; Armena Marderosian, pianist.

Folk song arrangements, songs in the folk tradition, and original compositions.

Papadopulos, baritone, son of Suni, age 84; Maro Partamian (soprano; Ay9a, mezzo-soprano; Rjuhj) was a son of Suni, age 84; Armena Marderosian, mezzo-soprano; Henrik Mihranian, pianist.

5. Note: Naren is the two or three circular strings tied by the priest at the marriage ceremony around the foreheads or waists of the bride and groom. Green, red and white symbolize youth, life and purity. Untied by the priest in a special ceremony after the wedding.

4. K. Em Yerg Threshing Song HM 3:44
5. K. Em Yerg Threshing Song HM 3:44
6. Aghji Ari Maiden Come EP+ MP 1:30
7. Miayn Kez Only for You MP+ HM 4:00
8. Т• oo T• oo (Love Song) EP 2:01
9. K• akav Tr• av The Partridge Flew MP 3:54
10. Habrban (Sweethearts Calling) EP+ HM 1:57
11. Kyamancha Spiked Fiddle MP 1:27
12. Maro Partamian (soprano; Ay9a, mezzo-soprano; Rjuhj) was a son of Suni, age 84; Armena Marderosian, mezzo-soprano; Henrik Mihranian, pianist.
13. Mer Sareru Our Mountains EP+ 1:04
14. Yar Mi Or If One Day Gourgen (George) Suny 2:53
15. Nenni Bala Sleep My Child MP 1:39
16. Gatsek Amp Engineer EP 3:26
17. Sareri Hovin Mer• nim For the Mountain Breeze I’d Die MP 2:40
19. Sareri Mer• nim Our Mountains EP+ 1:04
20. Ov Dook Sarer Oh Ye Mountains HM 1:46
22. Mshooshn E P• at•el The Fog Has Encompassed All HM 1:52
23. Papal, Papal Song to a Baby Boy EP 1:01
24. Dil, Lyoo, Lyoo Uncle Came to Our Backyard EP 0:32
25. Sareri Mer• nim Our Mountains EP+ 1:04
27. Aghk • ek• Es You’re Lovely EP+ HM 0:40
28. K. Em K• oo Gas You Walk Around Like a Partridge HM 2:16
29. Akh A Rook’s, oh the Red Rose EP 4:02
30. Lekik Quail HM, EP+MP+HM+V 4:51
ARMENIAN TEXTS

1. Note: Some of the song verses printed are not sung on this recording (song numbers 2, 5, 11, 13, 16, 18, 20, 25, and 30).

TRANSLATIONS into Eastern Armenian

1. Oy Yaro

Vakhteh Causin, tin sim hamar,
Majnuk m schina yursun in hamar.
Oy yar, yar, jam yar, yar.
Oy yar, yar, irun yersin.
En majnuk jasen, yar jag joyoomen.
Pajhe ni aprin, sty zo beren.
Oy yar, yar, yar yarsin gersin.

1. Note: Arranged for four-part chorus. Gorani: origin and definition of this word not clear, but refers to an old dance tune.

2. Kyanka Anoosh

Areni in yertak hrom anoosh.
Zad ev pujakten hrom anoosh.
Mamanstveno nax anoosh.
Mer urjero xoy anoosh.

What grew up was a rose-cheeked almond,
I have a memory, sweet, so sweet,
Get rajooy karm anoosh.

2. Sweet the Life

Clouds in the sky, sweet the wind,
Tires and flowers enchantingly sweet,
Sweet the sky streams,
Sweet the sea of our fields.

Sweet the walk of the plowers,
Sweet the blue emerald life,
Sweet the communal hand.

Sweet the blue streams,
Clouds in the sky, sweet the wind,
Let me take that ring and decorate my sweetheart's finger,
Oh, sweetheart, sweetheart, dear sweetheart, sweetheart,
Make a ring for my sweetheart.

3. Inchoo Bingyolu Miya?

Inchoo Bingyolu miya?
Dule, mu jome.
Bilig huljare qur.
Apen balk jonde.
Tali jum, tali jum, tali jonde.
Dule, mu jome. Apen balk jonde.
Sieron, arbood, hulig hulj.
Inchoo Bingyolu miya?
Dule, mu jome. Apen balk jonde.
Inchoo Karmy o arpa?
Aptg oos ke gajuk.
Inchoo Karmy o arpa?

3. Why Did You Enter Bingyol (Mountain)?

Why did you enter Bingyol?
My heart, do not fret,
And find the nightingale in the garden?
Let Aps do the fretting.
Let Aps do the fretting.
My heart do not fret, do not do the fretting.
Myuns, my knees, my nightingale?
Why did you go to Bingyol?
My heart do not fret, do not do the fretting.
Why did you, wiser?
You became abandoned and captive.
Why did you, wiser?

3. Note: Bingyol is a mountain in Eastern Armenia known also as an "A Thousand Springs."

4. Tooy-Tooy

Majgh minj ja hanem, hay.
Tooy, tooy, tooy Vorn.
Im set jpyj hay kanem, hay.
Tooy, tooy, tooy, tooy Vorn.

Blush disarm ed arpp.
Tooy, tooy, tooy Vorn.
Tooy, tooy, tooy Vorn.

Let Apo do the fretting.
Let Apo do the fretting, Gour.
Let him fret, let him fret,
My heart, do not fret,
(Mountain)?

3. Note: Bingyol is an expression of thanks.

4. Tooy-Tooy

In the meadow there is cilantro
Why did you wed Garo?
You became abandoned and captive.
My heart do not fret; let Apo do the fretting.

3. Why Did You Enter Bingyol (Mountain)?

Why did you enter Bingyol?

Inchoo Bingyolu Miya?
Dule, mu jome.
Bilig huljare qur.
Apen balk jonde.
Tali jum, tali jum, tali jonde.
Dule, mu jome. Apen balk jonde.
Sieron, arbood, hulig hulj.
Inchoo Bingyolu miya?
Dule, mu jome. Apen balk jonde.
Inchoo Karmy o arpa?
Aptg oos ke gajuk.
Inchoo Karmy o arpa?

3. Why Did You Enter Bingyol (Mountain)?

Why did you enter Bingyol?
My heart, do not fret,
And find the nightingale in the garden?
Let Aps do the fretting.
Let Aps do the fretting.
My heart do not fret, do not do the fretting.
Myuns, my knees, my nightingale?
Why did you go to Bingyol?
My heart do not fret, do not do the fretting.
Why did you, wiser?
You became abandoned and captive.
Why did you, wiser?

3. Note: Bingyol is a mountain in Eastern Armenia known also as an "A Thousand Springs."

4. Tooy-Tooy

In the meadow there is cilantro
Why did you enter Bingyol?
My heart, do not fret,
And find the nightingale in the garden?
Let Aps do the fretting.
Let Aps do the fretting.
My heart do not fret, do not do the fretting.
Myuns, my knees, my nightingale?
Why did you go to Bingyol?
My heart do not fret, do not do the fretting.
Why did you, wiser?
You became abandoned and captive.
Why did you, wiser?

3. Note: Bingyol is an expression of thanks.

4. Tooy-Tooy

In the meadow there is cilantro
Why did you enter Bingyol?
My heart, do not fret,
And find the nightingale in the garden?
Let Aps do the fretting.
Let Aps do the fretting.
My heart do not fret, do not do the fretting.
Myuns, my knees, my nightingale?
Why did you go to Bingyol?
My heart do not fret, do not do the fretting.
Why did you, wiser?
You became abandoned and captive.
Why did you, wiser?

3. Note: Bingyol is an expression of thanks.

4. Tooy-Tooy

In the meadow there is cilantro
Why did you enter Bingyol?
My heart, do not fret,
And find the nightingale in the garden?
Let Aps do the fretting.
Let Aps do the fretting.
My heart do not fret, do not do the fretting.
Myuns, my knees, my nightingale?
Why did you go to Bingyol?
My heart do not fret, do not do the fretting.
Why did you, wiser?
You became abandoned and captive.
Why did you, wiser?

3. Note: Bingyol is an expression of thanks.

4. Tooy-Tooy

In the meadow there is cilantro
Why did you enter Bingyol?
My heart, do not fret,
And find the nightingale in the garden?
Let Aps do the fretting.
Let Aps do the fretting.
My heart do not fret, do not do the fretting.
Myuns, my knees, my nightingale?
Why did you go to Bingyol?
My heart do not fret, do not do the fretting.
Why did you, wiser?