

Professor Ariel Agemian, Paintings Decorate Moorat College in Milan, Armenian Churches in Paris and College S. Moorat in Sevres

News Release, March 28, 1938, Reprinted

New York, New York

After receiving the highest degree in art he set to work in a more independent direction, which culminated in the decoration of the entrance hallway of the Moorat College in Milan. The subject is divided in two parts, one opposite the other and is completing the other. On the one side is the painting "Thoughts of Life" and on the other "The Life of Thoughts." The artist has written on this subject and has given us a complete picture of what he later creates on the canvas.

The subject gives life to the idea and reciprocally the idea to the subject. Both are equivalent means to realize the personality according to the character of the being.

Agemian is an artist-writer with the dual expression of both the idealistic and materialistic art, but always the artist who demonstrates the myriad appearance in the existence of life.

He belongs to no particular school of art. His school is the polarization of the expression of art of life itself. As an artist-writer he is a poet, and as a poet a philosopher. Naturally gifted with a vivid imagination he feels and expresses himself by literary and pictorial scenes. His pictures are composite condensed outlines.

His work shows that he pays little attention to the modernistic influences, whether they be idealistic, impressionistic, materialistic or expressionistic. All of these above influences are helpful when they must form a thesis.

The direction cultivated by the artist does not abandon the tradition of the past nor does it reject the promises of the future, which are hidden in the consideration of the present in his own particular way and illuminated by the light of the past reflected on the mirror of the future.

A student in the Moorat College in Venice for the three years following the armistice he early shows his abilities. The scholastic committee considering him outstandingly capable, grants him a scholarship which permits him to enter the Academy of Beaux Arts of Venice. At the age of 21 he graduates with high honors receiving the degree of "Maestro d' Arte." Two years later he successfully passes the national examination giving him the title of professor and the right to lecture in the art schools of Italy.

In the ten year period he has been out in the world of the practical, he has produced many works. He has done portraits, large "tableaux" also large and small pictures on all subjects. He is well known in Venice, Milan and Paris art circles.

The finesse of his art is seen in the examination of his taste and “motifs” where a radiant joy dominates and from which a warm and vivid poem emanates.

The outstanding beauty of his portraits in which the real man is seen, centers itself about the spirit and the revelation of the character. The coloring of these portraits is bold and full of life together with opposing light effects, while that of his other picture is not only delicate and joyful but has a forceful expression. Professor Agemian has understood the use of light and shade (chiaroscuro). In the use of colors, at times he produces them captivatingly soft and then again forceful, all which brings out that which is strong and beautiful in the subject.

Professor Agemian has taken part in the decoration and complete painting of the various “plafonds” in the Armenian churches in Paris. His work consists of five murals about the central altar. “Jesus the Savior of the World,” is represented in the center picture. The others are St. Mark, St. Luke, St. Matthew and St. John, the Evangelist.

The artist has not limited himself to pictorial representation but rather a spiritual interpretation. Each picture is a free and natural thought in itself without interfering with the whole. Here Agemian has a universal imagination, a bold stroke and a reverence for the faces. The painstaking care of the artist allows him to create movement and life. Here inspired by Tintoretto the pictures show force, inspired by Veronese they have color and inspired by Tiziano they have a perfection of design.

Professor Agemian has recently completed a series of huge panels at the College S. Moorat located in Sevres, a suburb of Paris. The institution occupies the former residence of Madame de Pompadour, mistress of Louis XV who gave it to her as a token of friendship. Here in this historically famous chateau, students’ voices ring through the halls and learning is now the order of the day where once gay revelry and intrigue reigned. In this college his four principal works are, “The Armenian Pantheon,” “The Rebirth of a Nation,” “The Abbot Mechitar” and “The Virgin Mary and the Child.”

The picture of the “Virgin Mary and the Child,” painted in 1933 by Ariel Agemian is placed directly above the altar in the chapel of the Mechitarest School. Here the mystic style is kept. The Virgin Mary with the Babe in her arms is seen in a brilliantly lighted center stepping on silver clouds as though advancing toward the praying Believers. Her illuminant face with a purest light gives the flesh an appearance of transparency. The expression is so pure and holy, affects us with a feeling of admiration and reverence for the Virgin. The child yet small, with outstretched arms yearns to be among His people and to lead them to the Truth. The entire tone of the picture is silver. The frame itself, made of precious 18th century walnut gives an effect of age to an otherwise modern work.

The “Massacre” is successful in expressing the emotions and barbarisms of one race to another. Tragic scenes horrify us with the screams of children, women and aged people. On the one hand we see the hideous faces, bloody, arms and eyes of hell of the persecutors while on the other we feel the calm and dignity expressed by those who are being torn apart. In the background we see the village in flames, barren and deserted fields where even the clouds give the effect of sorrow and disaster.

The four principal pictures Professor Agemian has created for the school, represent the four principal element which go to make up the life of nation, religion, patriotism, instruction and literature. These pictures form a living inspiration for the coming generations of students who shall pass through the portals of this institution located in the picturesque and historical grounds associated with the reign of Louis XV and Madame de Pompadour.