

11 / 06 - 13 / 06 / 2012

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sweet confusion conference / sweet sixties

● Armenian and Turkish Cinematography
of the 1960s: Conference and Film
Screenings

sweet

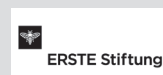


Hosted by
National Cinema Development Foundation

Eurasia Partnership Foundation supports this project as a part of ‚Support to Armenia-Turkey Rapprochement‘ (SATR) project, funded by USAID. The „Sweet Confusion - Sweet 60s“ project will allow the societies of Armenia and Turkey to learn about major formative cultural productions of both societies, created in the times which laid the foundation for the ideas that helped to shape these societies in today. The films selected for the project have become, one could say, symbols of identity of the two societies. They are remembered, re-shown, quoted, discussed, learned, and phrases or episodes from them have become aphorisms which convey the messages of the identity to the large segments of these societies today.

Thus knowing and understanding these major formative cinematographic products will help the two societies, especially new generations, to make another step in the understanding of where are they both coming from in their today’s search for dialogue, mutual identification and recognition.

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Sweet Confusion

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The project Sweet Confusion is being realized in the framework of an international research project entitled Sweet 60s, that explores, through the contemporary artistic and theoretical perspectives, the unknown/ underestimated/ hidden contexts and territories of 1960s that were omitted from the master narrative of the 'romantic revolutionary epoch'. The curatorial and the artistic focus of the Sweet 60s lies on 'post-ideological societies' (in post-Soviet, post socialist, Eastern European, Middle Eastern, West also Central Asian and North African countries as well as in a second phase in China and Latin America), in making a comparative analysis and contextualizing the historical developments in the arts, culture and the societies of the 60s and the 70s, and researching their subsequent effects on contemporary social, political and cultural situations.

The general perception of the 60s period is still associated with Western culture and with the formal fragmented replications of Western processes in the 'peripheries' and 'outskirts'. In contrast to the currently accepted master narratives and the historical canons, the Sweet 60s project considers the processes of the 60s not as an eruption of a volcano generating echoes in the rest of the world, but as a general socio-cultural, political, economical condition, that evolved in a global context and determined the development of parallel modernities interrelated to the development of diverse sociopolitical and cultural radical processes in every part of the world.

Sweet Confusion is a conference project that intends to investigate the artistic and historical processes of two countries that remain in the 'peripheries'. The conference will explore Armenian and Turkish cinematography of the 60s; by doing so, it is attempting to reread the social-political and cultural paradigms of two geopolitically estranged situations, which throughout 1960s were in the process of self-defining and self-positioning by determining and shaping the 'Other' through a complex correlation of cultural and political systems.



1960s was a period within 20th century when the relation between Armenia and Turkey got a new round of developments. Radical changes that Soviet society experienced after Stalinism during the so called "Thaw" epoch, drastic transformations in Turkey between two military coups of 1960 and 1971, that were evolving parallel to the Cold War are generally being perceived as the 'main contexts' that had conditioned the formation of new sociopolitical situations and cultural constructs in both societies as well as aggravated the existing geopolitical rupture between the two countries. Beyond the local master narratives, it is obvious that much more heterogeneous and contradictive processes were evolving within each situation; the expressions of the former could be traced in the complex constellations of social, political, economical and cultural developments of that period.

In the Armenian case, it is possible to follow how the ideas and visions based on extreme individualism were coming to confront and substitute the ideas of socialist collectiveness and the project of alternative social order in general. An increasing interest in the intellectual and artistic circles towards one's own history, existential issues and questions concerning 'identity' were embedded in the late modernist universalist visions of the 60s. Consideration of the Self became one of the key subjects in the literature and cinematography of that period; its scope was furthermore extending from humanistic to essentialist perspectives.

In the midst of paradigmatic shift other vectors were also emerging in the cultural thinking related to universalist visions that were on one hand opening up new potentialities for the ideas of socialist modernization intertwined with humanistic principles; and, on the other, creating a critical alienated attitude towards the reality. The quite complex superposition of different perceptive vectors found diverse representations in the Soviet Armenian literature and cinematography of the 60s where new types of protagonists (like the character in the film *Hello, It's Me!*) endlessly stroll in their own memory or other spaces, having a dialogue with their alter ego, trying to perceive their role, or trying to solve the relation between their particular existence and universalities. In some other cases, despite the fact that sometimes the dénouement comes up as a kind of an epiphany, the protagonists still remain in a state of confusion and doubts as the problems that had been questioned remain open.

— SWEET CONFUSION —

film synopses:

The Triangle
(Erankyuni)

Daddy
(Hayrik)

We and Our Mountains
(Menq Enq, Mer Sarery)

Hello, It's Me!
(Barev, Es Em)

My Prostitute Love
(Vesikalı Yarım)

One Night Bride
(Bir Gecelik Gelin)

Bitter Life
(Acı Hayat)

Birds of Exile
(Gurbet Kuşları)



The Triangle (Erankyuni)

Five blacksmiths and a teenage united by traumatic displacement, common discreet grief for past, adaptation to new social conditions, and the gentrifying habitat are experiencing elusive moments of brotherhood and solidarity in a tiny triangle-shape smithy. While the adults set a choir of melancholic folk tunes waived by singing and the strikes of hammers, Hovik the teenage dreams of Hollywood, Mary Pickford, Wild West, casinos and cinema.

A short-lived limbo between nostalgia for lost homeland, a frightful optimism about uncertain future, and an undisguised admiration for Silent Era Cinema, the film is a canto of sweet sorrowful journey to the waters of oblivion that can never be fully accomplished.

1967, Hayfilm Studio, 84 min.

Director: Henrik Malyan

Scriptwriter: Aghasi Ayvazyan

Cast: Armen Jigarkhanyan, Frunze (Mher) Mkrtchyan, Sos Sargsyan, Pavel Arsenyan, Zurab Laperadze, Misha Hovsepyan, Ina Alabina





Daddy (Hayrik)

Daddy marks the end of the Thaw epoch likewise the shift in social-political paradigm -the transition from modern to post-modern condition in Soviet Armenia. Generation conflict described through the life of a big family living in the center of early 70s' Yerevan is perplexed with the arrival of a countryside resident patriarch, the grandfather. A 1915 survivor strives to regain his national identity and sense of homeland through restoring the conservative values that seem to have disappeared in his descendants' lifestyle: notions of family as an autonomic microcosm, shelter of the nation as well as the ultimate accumulation of vigor and morality.

1972, Hayfilm Studio, 76 min.

Director: Henrik Malyan

Scriptwriter: Aghasi Ayvazyan

Cast: Frunze (Mher) Mkrtychyan, A.Sherents, Varduhi Varderesyan, H Kostanyan, H.Dallakyan, A.Melikjanyan, Sh.Tukhmanyan, S.Chrchyan, A.Nikoghosyan, K.Sukiasyan



We and Our Mountains (Menq Enq, Mer Sarery)

Working in the mountains, the mowers and shepherds of Antaramej village find lost sheep. They decide to butcher and roast them for a barbeque. During the night feast it turns out that the sheep belong to their fellow villager Revaz. The 'criminals' pay the herder in order to settle the incident. But somehow the state gets to know about the occurrence. The village and its 'idyllic' life are thus startled by the arrival of a militia lieutenant from Yerevan endeavoring to investigate the case. In the end, the notions of justice, order imposed by the state authority, the role of the state and the assumptions of social structure in the peasant community are bilaterally rethought by the police officer and the villagers.

1969, Hayfilm Studio, 94 min.

Director: Henrik Malyan

Scriptwriter: Hrant Matevosyan

Cast: Sos Sargsyan, Frunze (Mher) Mkrtychyan, Khoren Abrahamyan, Azat Sherents, Armen Ayvazyan, Artavazd (Arthur) Peleshyan





Hello, It's Me! (Barev, Es Em)

Moments of happiness with the best friend Oleg and the beloved Lyusya in 40s' Moscow, who is taken away by the frontline are constantly chasing the young physicist Artyom Manvelyan while he strives for the development of cosmic physics in a research laboratory on Aragats peak, Armenia.

Endlessly strolling in and between past and present, the wartime Moscow, the heights of an eternal winter in Armenian highlands, Yerevan, the 60s' Moscow and his own memory space, the hero is constantly having a dialogue with his alter ego.

1965, Hayfilm Studio, 137 min.

Director: Frunze Dovlatyan

Scriptwriter: Arnold Aghababov

Cast: Armen Jigarkhanyan, Rolan Bikov, Natalia Fateeva, Margarita Terekhova, Nasi-Galya Novents



My Prostitute Love (Vesikalı Yarım)

The greatest love story in Turkish cinema ever, *My Prostitute Love* is a 'realist melodrama' that represents the sentiment of 60s' Istanbul in an authentic way. Poetically written and carefully crafted in cinematography, *My Prostitute Love* juxtaposes the realist imagery of the 60s' diverse interiors and landscape with the mystical moments of love between a greengrocer and an escort, Halil and Sabiha, that come to life with the impressive performances of Türkan Şoray and İzzet Günay.

Still remembered with its memorable dialogues, and an insightful use of music, *My Prostitute Love* presents an oscillation between desire and withdrawal, and a long lasting doubt that pervades the story throughout; yet, it eventually succeeds in creating a rupture in the traditional moralist approach.

1968, Şeref Film, 90 min.

Director: Lütfi Ö.Akad

Scriptwriter: Safa Önal

Cast: Türkan Şoray, İzzet Günay, Ayfer Feray, Aydemir Akbaş, Behçet Nacar, Semih Sezerli





One Night Bride (Bir Gecelik Gelin)

Not long after his divorce from his 11th wife, Burhan, the Casanova, meets a young woman, Oya, and marries her until on their first night he slightly realizes that she is different from his earlier spouses. The tricks of Oya starting on the wedding night continue with almost fantastic settings she plans for Burhan including abduction by an Arab prince and a fight with a Gypsy gang. As Oya disguises in different characters, Burhan keeps on falling more and more in love with her, finally giving in to her. Having tamed Burhan finally, Oya this time remarries him with her real identity.

One of the most refreshing yet very little known comedies of the 60s, *One Night Bride* is an interesting film that appealingly displays different cultural influences on the lifestyles of the 60s.

1962, *Be-Ya Film*, 77 min.

Director: Atif Yılmaz

Scriptwriter: Vedat Türkali

Cast: Orhan Günşiray, Gönül Yazar, Ahmet Tarık Tekçe, Suna Pekuysal, Saadetin Erbil, Suphi Kaner, Erol Keskin, Bedia Muvahhit



Bitter Life (Acı Hayat)

Starting as the innocent love story of a manicure girl working for rich women and a poor young man working as a welder, *Bitter Life* advances into a revenge story soon later. Nermin and Mehmet try to find a place they can afford before they get married, and realize that the new scapes of the city is designed only for richer people. When Nermin meets Ender, the opportunities of wealth slowly allure her; yet her life gets devastated as Ender takes advantage of her. Mehmet plans for revenge with Ender's sister as all the relationships in the film get far more bitter.

Starring the most renowned actors of its time, Türkan Şoray and Ayhan Işık, and despite of its familiar dramatic structure, *Bitter Life* is an exceptional melodrama with its class depiction in 60s' Istanbul.

1962, *Sine Film*, 96 min.

Director: Metin Erksan

Scriptwriter: Metin Erksan

Cast: Ayhan Işık, Türkan Şoray, Ekrem Bora, Nebahat Çehre, Hüseyin Baradan



Birds of Exile (Gurbet Kuşları)

Still considered as one of the best films of classical Turkish cinema, *Birds of Exile* is the quintessential tale of an immigrant family coming from Anatolia to 'conquer' Istanbul. While the traditional parents live an introverted life, each of the 4 children faces different challenges the 'modern' city presents before them. The eldest brother works as a taxi driver and falls in love with a belly dancer; the younger brother has his business going down in the family's auto repair shop when he has a forbidden affair with the wife of his rival. Ignorance and high ambitions slowly give in to the tragic fall of the family as the film points at the binary outcome: The younger sister represents 'the victim' of the crisis in traditional morality while the university student youngest brother stands for 'hope' for the promises of modern urban life.

1964, Artist Film, 93 min.

Director: Halit Refiğ

Scriptwriter: Halit Refiğ-Orhan Kemal

Cast: Tanju Gürsu, Filiz Akin, Cüneyt Arkin, Özden Çelik, Pervin Par, Önder Somer, Sevda Ferdağ, Mümtaz Ener, Hüseyin Baradan, Danyal Topatan



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— SWEET CONFUSION —

speakers

Hrach Bayadyan
Keti Chukhrov
Zeynep Dadak
Siranush Dvoyan
Dimitris Eleftheriotis
Vigen Galstyan
Ahmet Gürata
Nazareth Karoyan
Nadire Mater
Fatih Özgüven

Hrach Bayadyan

Hrach Bayadyan is a cultural critic from Yerevan, Armenia. He is a Media and Cultural Studies lecturer at Yerevan State University. Bayadyan is the author of numerous articles and essays on political, social and cultural implications of information and communication technologies. His recent publications include *New Social Order and Change in Media Landscape in Public Spheres After Socialism* (co-ed. by Angela Harutyunyan, Kathrin Horschelmann and Malcolm Miles), Intellect, Bristol, UK/ Chicago, 2009; "Boredom" and "Hierarchy" in *Atlas of Transformation* (ed. by: Z. Baladran and V. Havranek), tranzit.cz, JRP-Ringier, 2010. His research interests are particularly focused on post- Soviet media culture, urban spaces and post-Soviet/ post-colonial relationship.

Keti Chukhrov

Keti Chukhrov is a cultural critic from Russia. She is an associate professor of Art Theory and Cultural Studies at Russian State University for the Humanities. She contributes to various publications on culture, philosophy and art theory namely *Moscow Art Magazine*, *NLO*, *Chto delat*, *Brumaria*, *Documenta* magazines, *Sarai* readers, *Art-forum*, *Springerin*, *E-Flux*, *Pushkin*, *After-all* and *OpenSpace*. Chukhrov is the member of *Moscow Art Magazine* editorial board. Her books include *Pound & £*, Logos publishers, Moscow 1999; *To Be - to Perform: 'Theatre' in the Philosophic Criticism of Art*, European Univ. Press, Saint Petersburg 2011; *War of Quantities: dramatic poetry*, Borey art-center, Saint Petersburg, 2003 and *Just Humans (Prosto Liudi): dramatic poetry*, Translit/ Free Marxist Publishers, Moscow, 2010.



Zeynep Dadak

Zeynep Dadak holds an undergraduate degree from Marmara University and a graduate degree from Istanbul Bilgi University in Cinema and TV. She is currently a Ph.D. candidate in Cinema Studies at New York University, and lectures on cinema at various universities. She has been one of the writers and editorial board member of *Altyazı Monthly Cinema Magazine* since 2004. She is a member of Turkish Film Critics Association and one of the two editors of books entitled *Turkish Cinema of the '60s* and *Turkish Cinema of the '70s* published by Golden Orange Publications. Dadak has been making short films and documentaries since 2001. Following the documentary film *On the Coast*, directed together with Merve Kayan, she is currently working on her first feature length film *The Blue Wave*, which she will co-direct with Merve Kayan.

Siranush Dvoyan

Siranush Dvoyan is a literary critic and a Comparative Literature lecturer at Yerevan State University; she reads a course in the Literature of Diaspora - with a special focus on 1920-1960's French-Armenian Literature, the topic of her Ph.D. dissertation. Since 2011, Dvoyan is the co-editor of *Arteria* critical magazine and cultural e-platform. She is working on the development of interdisciplinary methodology in critical writing operating on the meeting point of art and politics. Her most recent articles include "Between Two Strategies in Arteria" and "The Problem of Speaking and Participation" in *Hakob Oshakan Conference Materials* (edited by L. Galstian). Her research interests include the culture of Armenian communities in post-Soviet realms, new diasporic experiences and the revolutionary articulations in literature.

Dimitris Eleftheriotis

Dimitris Eleftheriotis is a Reader in Film and Television Studies and Head of Theatre, Film and Television Studies at the University of Glasgow. He is an editor of the world-leading journal *Screen* and on the advisory editorial boards of *Portal* and *The Journal of Greek Film Studies*. His publications include the monographs *Popular Cinemas of Europe* (2001) and *Cinematic Journeys* (2010), the edited collection *Asian Cinemas: A Reader and Guide* (2006) and numerous articles increasingly focusing on the theory and history of transcultural aspects of cinema. Current projects include an article on childhood in Emir Kusturica's 'Yugoslavian' period, a monograph on Film and Cosmopolitanism and a special issue of *Interactions* on Contemporary Greek Culture.

Vigen Galstyan

Vigen Galstyan is a cinema critic, photography theorist and a curator from Sydney, Australia. Galstyan holds the position of Assistant Curator at the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney. He is also the co-founder and director of Lusadaran Armenian Photography Foundation and the co-founder of ReArk Architectural Research Center, Yerevan. The recent exhibits curated by Galstyan include *Forgotten Art: The Armenian Film Poster* (National Gallery of Armenia, Yerevan 2006), *Industrial Symphony: Photography and The Post-industrial era* (Armenian Center of Contemporary and Experimental Art, Yerevan 2011). Galstyan's research interests include aesthetic theory, Armenian and Eastern European art and cinema, the 19th century and contemporary photography in the Middle East as well as poster art and colonial architecture.



Ahmet Gürata



Ahmet Gürata teaches at the Department of Communication and Design, Bilkent University. He holds a PhD from the London Consortium, which examined remakes and cross-cultural reception in Turkish cinema. He has published research on the history of Turkish cinema, reception, remakes and documentary in anthologies and journals. He has served on several film festival juries and is currently an advisor for the Festival on Wheels. He is a member of Turkish Association of Documentary Filmmakers and Turkish Film Critics Association, and regularly contributes to the leading magazines on politics and culture, *bir+bir* and *Express*.

Nazareth Karoyan

Nazareth Karoyan is an art critic and free-lance curator from Armenia. He is the president of AICA-Armenia. Karoyan's activity was affiliated with the late 1970s' art group from Armenia, the Black Square; he has also been the co-founder of the 3rd Floor art movement. In the early 1990s Karoyan initiated the first Armenian contemporary art periodical, *In Vitro*. He is the curator of around 20 exhibitions in Armenia and abroad, and the co-curator of Armenian National Pavilion at 54th Venice Biennale, 2011. Karoyan is also the co-founder of Summer Seminars for Art Curators and the Critical and Curatorial Studies 2-year post-graduate education program in Yerevan. Karoyan's interests focus on the problems of institutionalization of contemporary art, cooperation with Europe and representation of socio-political contexts in contemporary art.

Nadire Mater

Nadire Mater is the advisor of Bianet and the chairperson of IPS Communications Foundation. She began journalism while she was working as a social service expert. She served as a reporter for local, national and international magazines, newspapers and radios. She has a rights based approach to journalism and has been serving for Bianet for 12 years. In 1990s, she was the Turkey representative of Journalists without Borders. Her book *Voices from the Front: Turkish Soldiers on the War with the Kurdish Guerrillas* which is composed of interviews carried out with 42 young men who had been at the conflict zone in the Southeast for military service was published, banned and cleared in 1999. The book has been translated into English, German, Italian, Finnish and Greek. Her book *The Street is Beautiful: What Happened in 1968* got published in 2009.

Fatih Özgüven

Fatih Özgüven graduated from the Austrian High School and later on English Language and Literature Department of Istanbul University. He worked as an editor at İletişim Publishing House and taught cinema and literature at Istanbul Bilgi University Cinema and TV Department and Bosphorus University. He is currently writing weekly film reviews for Radikal. He has translated Borges, Nabokov, Henry James, Paul Auster, Flannery O'Connor, Virginia Woolf, Brett Easton Ellis into Turkish. He published a novel, *Mysterious Mr. Kartaloğlu* in 1990, a collection of essays, *Notes from the Overground* in 2001, and three collections of short stories, *Something Happens* (2006), *I Never Meant To* (2007) and *Stories of Those Who Always Wanted to Write* (2010).



— SWEET CONFUSION —

program



Screenings and Panels at NAIRI Cinema Theater's main hall

11 June 2012 Monday

- 11.00 Screening Birds of Exile, 93 mins.
- 13.00 Screening Hello, its Me, 137 mins.
- 15.30 Screening One Night Bride, 77 mins.

12 June 2012 Tuesday

- 11.00 – 13.30 Panel I
Presentations on Armenian Cinema of the 60s and Neighboring Contexts (Nazareth Karoyan, Keti Chukhrov, Vigen Galstyan, Siranush Dvoyan, Hrach Bayadyan)
- 14.30 – 17.00 Panel II
Presentations on Turkish Cinema of the 60s and Neighboring Contexts [Nadire Mater, Zeynep Dadak, Fatih Özgüven, Ahmet Gürata, Dimitris Eleftheriotis]

13 June 2012 Wednesday

- 11.00 Screening My Prostitute Love, 90 mins.
- 13.00 Screening Daddy, 76 mins.
- 15.00 Screening Bitter Life, 96 mins.

Panel I: Presentations on Armenian Cinema of the 60s and Neighboring Contexts

The Armenian Cinema segment will represent a wide range of aspects regarding the historical, political, social and theoretical contexts of the 60s in Soviet Armenia particularly through comparisons between cinema and literature. In overviewing the trajectory of the 60s' and the 70s' Armenian films, Vigen Galstyan will focus on the importance of the 'conflicted' aesthetic of Armenian cinema as a particular example of alternative expressions of late modernity. Siranush Dvoyan will discuss how the main narratives of the literature and the cinema of the 60s make specific tensions between collective and personal individualities on the example of Triangle. Hrach Bayadayan will compare the two literary texts, including the script and also the film *We and Our Mountains* attempting to analyze the complex question of censorship in film and literature, also reviewing the widely used concept of 'national cinema' in the Soviet and post-Soviet periods. Keti Chukhrov will illustrate how the ethical deed and ethical transformation of an individual as the means of post-Stalinist social reconstruction became an indispensable part of the narrative both in Soviet cinema and in literature of the 60s and the 70s, around themes such as political emancipation, equality, the future of socialism. Finally, Nazareth Karoyan will review the three key social and cultural contexts of the Soviet Armenia of the 60s: the general geopolitical and historical context, the recurrences in the theoretical discourses of the second half of the 20th century and the impact of the 60s' social-political and cultural transformations on the Armenian culture localized in the Soviet camp.



Panel II: Presentations on Turkish Cinema of the 60s and Neighboring Contexts

The panel on Turkish Cinema will focus on a wide array of issues concerning the historical and aesthetic contexts of the period in relation to 60s' culture. Nadire Mater will present an overall introduction on significant trajectories of the 60s in the political and cultural realm in and outside Turkey. Ahmet Gürata will focus on one of the most significant classics of 60s' Turkish cinema, *Birds of Exile*, and discuss how social realism was incorporated within the Turkish context in relation to the political discourses of the period, particularly around issues like national cinema, migration and class. Zeynep Dadak will expand on the most prevalent of genres in classical Turkish cinema, melodrama, in relation to musical, which has significant affects on the later periods of cinema in Turkey in retrospective look. Fatih Özgüven will have a close look on one of the exceptional comedies of the period, *One Night Bride*, in relation to various cultural influences and representations. Finally, Dimitris Eleftheriotis will present a complementary talk on a neighboring context, Greek popular culture and cinema of the 60s in relation to the manifestations of cosmopolitanism that also partly refers to certain overlapping moments with Turkish cinema.

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tatlı karmaşa

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