

AGBU  
ARTS

ARMENIANS  
IN FILM  
MILAN

FEATURING WORKS  
BY ARMENIAN FILMMAKERS

2024  
FILMMAKERS

**THE MUD**

Vahan Grigoryan

**THE ROAD (Ճանապարհ)**

Charlotte Mungomery, featuring the  
Zela Margossian Quintet

**STONES**

Arman Ayvazyan

**250KM**

Hasmik Movsisyan

**GETTING FAT IN A  
HEALTHY WAY**

Kevork Aslanyan

**LEVON - A WONDROUS  
LIFE**

Emily Mkrtichian by Anahid Yahjian



NUOVO ARMENIA  
VIA LIVIGNO, 9, 20158  
MILANO MI, ITALY

JUL.14.24 | 9:00 PM

AGBU  
ARMENIAN GENERAL BENEVOLENT UNION  
MILAN



## ABOUT AGBU ARTS

Armenian culture is as deep as its ancient roots, as rich as its mastery of diverse art forms, and as inventive and ingenious as its people. For this reason, AGBU Arts has become a driving force for developing and showcasing Armenian artists and performers while treating audiences to experiences that reveal the transcendent human spirit in the Armenian context.

Central to AGBU Arts' mission is introducing Armenian culture and traditions to audiences worldwide. The **AGBU Musical Armenia Program** hosts musicians from around the world in Yerevan each summer; **Armenians in Film at Lincoln Center** showcases the works of award-winning filmmakers at one of the country's leading film presenting venues; and **AGBU Performing Artists in Concert at Carnegie Hall** gives young Armenian musicians the unique opportunity to perform on one of the world's most famous stages.

Together with other global AGBU Chapters, AGBU Arts organizes performance and exhibition opportunities to support and increase exposure to Armenian creatives. These artists works have been featured in venues such as **Shinjuku Tsunohazu Kumin Hall in Tokyo, Caixa Forum in Barcelona, Cadillac Shanghai Concert Hall in Shanghai, Salle Cortot in Paris, Frankston Arts Centre in Melbourne and The Concourse in Sydney**. They have also participated in collaborations with institutions such as **Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), the Weill Institute of Music at Carnegie Hall, Centre Pompidou, the MET Museum,** and countless others.

For more information, and to support AGBU Arts, visit [www.agbu.org/arts](http://www.agbu.org/arts).



## AGBU ARTS CREATIVE TEAM

Anita Anserian, Advisor

Hayk Arsenyan, Director, AGBU Arts

Naheed Elyasi, Director, Marketing

Karen Papazian, Director, Development & Outreach

Anna Naumenko, Manager, Special Events

Ashley Toner, Coordinator, AGBU Arts

Yuqun Xing, Manager, Marketing

Stephen Colangelo, Coordinator, Social Media

Giovanni Bernal, Graphic Designer

## AGBU

The **Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU)** is the world's largest non-profit organization devoted to upholding the Armenian heritage through educational, cultural and humanitarian programs. Each year, AGBU is committed to making a difference in the lives of 500,000 people across Armenia, Artsakh and the Armenian diaspora. Since 1906, AGBU has remained true to one overarching goal: to create a foundation for the prosperity of all Armenians.

To learn more, visit [www.agbu.org](http://www.agbu.org).

**PROGRAM**



## The Mud by Vahan Grigoryan

Rafael is approaching his home. At his entryway, he notices a lone goose. No one in the village keeps geese. Upon rushing to catch the goose, he leaves a path of muddy footprints behind.

Shortly after Rafael leaves for the mountains, Ashkhen, his wife, returns home. When she and her neighbors follow the trail of muddy footprints and feathers outdoors, they conclude that an angel must have visited her home.



### Vahan Grigoryan

Vahan is an aspiring film director and screenwriter, who was born and grew up in Yerevan, Armenia. He is an international relations specialist by trade but has never worked in the field. In 2021, Vahan decided to embrace his childhood passion for filmmaking by writing and directing his debut short film, "The Mud". The film won "Best Director" and "The Yerevan State Institute of Theatre and Cinematography Special Prize" at the 2022 Yerevan International Short Film Festival. Currently, Vahan is in the post-production stage of his second short film, "The Egg".



## The Road (Ճանապարհ) by Charlotte Mungomery, feat. the Zela Margossian Quintet

The poetic vision of director Charlotte Mungomery converges with the spellbinding score of Armenian-Australian jazz band, Zela Margossian Quintet in THE ROAD ‘Ճանապարհ’.

This international art-film collaboration catches you from its opening, luring you into a liminal desert space, blurring the bounds between diorama and reality.

Circumnavigate these stories of isolation and connection through the opulent and atmospheric eye of a filmmaking collective poised from their recent experimental opera film, ‘A Delicate Fire’.

ZMQ’s sonic landscape is amplified by international contributors: Armenian calligrapher, Ruben Malayan and Dutch visual artist, Saskia Boelsums - who add to the mystique of this rich tapestry of awe, causation, and revelation.

Witness the overlapping of these disparate vignettes in the entrancing physically and figuratively circular narratives of these characters brought together by a temporally ambiguous fate.

# The Road (Ճանապարհ)



## Charlotte Mungomery

Charlotte Mungomery is a Director & Artist based in Eastern Australia.

Known for her signature style, Charlotte's work focuses on experimental filmmaking, playing daringly with narrative & aesthetic abstractions. Charlotte's background as an APDG award winning production designer informs her formally inventive & subversive approach to cinema & art creation. Her work plays

daringly with narrative & aesthetic abstractions.

Charlotte's filmography includes A DELICATE FIRE, UNTIL WE TOUCH, THE ROAD and THIS IS NOT HERE. This work has been featured in film festivals across Australia and internationally. Her short documentary project, UNTIL WE TOUCH was selected for Melbourne Documentary Film Festival, Atlanta DocFest, Montreal Independent Film Festival & won 'Best Film' at Seoul International Short Film Festival. It is now exhibited at the Swedish Postal Museum in Stockholm. Her short jazz film THE ROAD premiered on NOWNESS.

Charlotte co-created and production designed the feature film A DELICATE FIRE for Pinchgut Opera Company. A DELICATE FIRE won was part of the official selection at the 2022 Revelation Perth International Film Festival. Last year Charlotte was selected to attend Playlab Films Creators Lab 'Filming in The Amazon' where she directed the short film THIS IS NOT HERE under the mentorship of Apichatpong Weerasethakul. This film was selected as part of a group exhibit with Weerasethakul at the 2023 Cannes Film Festival and is part of the official selection at this year's Melbourne International Film Festival, SXSW Sydney & Vancouver International Film Festival.

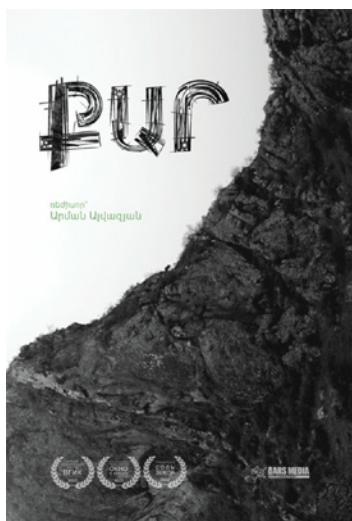
Charlotte is currently in advanced development on her debut feature film TOAD MOUTH. Late last year this project underwent development through the prestigious Venice Biennale College Cinema.



## The Zela Margossian Quintet

The Zela Margossian Quintet is an ARIA nominated ethno-jazz band based in Sydney, performing original works and arrangements carrying influences from Armenian traditional music.

Composed of talented and multicultural musicians from Sydney, the Zela Margossian Quintet creates an exotic musical atmosphere that is sure to take you on an emotive and pleasurable journey. Transition, the band's debut album, received an ARIA nomination for Best World Music Album category in October 2019. The Quintet held their debut performance at the prestigious Sydney Opera House in December 2020, and have since participated in different festivals in Sydney and around the world such as the International Women's Jazz Festival, the Wangaratta Festival of Jazz and Blues, the Sydney Festival, and the Beirut International Jazz Festival.



## Stones

by Arman Aivazyan

The brutal Nagorno-Karabakh War of 2020 ended in a Russian-mediated ceasefire forcing Armenia to cede territory it had controlled to Azerbaijan. As a result, thousands of Armenians living in these regions were forced to leave their homes. Days before the handover deadline, a group of volunteers risk their lives to enter the Lachin region to search for and save the beautiful, ancient sacred Armenian stone inscriptions known as “khachkars,” from destruction.



### Arman Aivazyan

Arman Aivazyan was born in 1994 in Yerevan, Armenia. He graduated from the Armenian Pedagogical Institute in 2016 with a focus in film directing. He later attended the Russian State University of Cinematography named after Sergei Gerasimov (VGIK), where he graduated in 2022 with a specialization in the department of directing non-fiction films.

Arman now works as a documentary filmmaker in his native country of Armenia and has seen his work showcased at several prestigious film festivals, including but not limited to the Silver Scad Film Festival (Sevastopol, 2022 Winner: Best Director), the Golden Short Film Festival (Avezzano, 2022), the Prague International Film Awards (Prague), and the Window to Europe Film Festival (St. Petersburg).





## 250km by Hasmik Movsisyan

When a war suddenly breaks out, a 14-year-old boy finds himself faced with a decision that could save his family, with no time to think, he embarks on a treacherous 250-kilometer journey to safety...

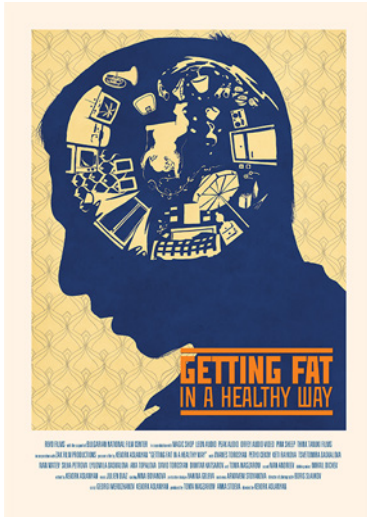


### Kristine Khanamiryan

Hasmik was born in Yerevan, Armenia, and moved to St. Petersburg, Russia with her family at the age of 11. After graduating from the medical faculty of St. Petersburg State University, she pursued her passion for filmmaking and was accepted into the directing department of Gerasimov Institute of Cinematography (VGIK), studying under the guidance of

Alexander and Vladimir Kott and Anna Fenchenko.

During her time at VGIK, Hasmik directed three films - "Apnea" (2019), "Side by side" (2021), and "Harisa" (2022) - all of which received critical acclaim and won awards at various student film festivals. Her latest film, "250km," began as a student project but quickly grew into a fully independent production.



## Getting Fat in a Healthy Way by Kevork Aslanyan

In a world where gravity is weak and skinny people fly into the sky, Constantine has never left the apartment he shares with his father Atanas. One day the beautiful stewardess who moves into the building will change Constantine's life forever.



### Kevork Aslanyan

Kevork Aslanyan is a director and writer. He received his BA in Film and TV editing at the National Academy for Theatre and Film Arts (Sofia, Bulgaria) in 2009. In 2012, he finished his studies at the London Film Academy in writing and film direction. Aslanyan made his debut with the short film, Getting Fat in a Healthy Way, in 2015.

Aslanyan's work has been featured on Nowness, shots, LBB, Directors Notes, AotW, Short of the Week, VOTD, Campaign Brief Asia, Boyscout and Lürzer's Archiveam.



## Levon – A Wondrous Life

by Anahid Yahjian & Emily Mkrtychian

Levon is a 60-year-old rollerblader living exuberantly in the post-Soviet landscape of Yerevan, Armenia. He is aware of the struggles his people face and understands why they are emigrating in droves. But that doesn't change his enduring belief in and contentment with the simple magic of being alive.



### Anahid Yahjian

Anahid Yahjian is an independent writer, director, and producer of experimental, documentary, and narrative cinema. Her work is driven by questioning and pursuit: of history, of power, of memory, of liminality, of the surreal and the sublime.

Her commitment to telling true stories (even if they come from her imagination) was shaped by an early love for visual storytelling that was formalized in college and took flight during her coming of age in Armenia. There, she produced the internationally awarded narrative short *140 Drams* (Camerimage, Clermont-Ferrand 2013), laid the creative groundwork for the feature documentary *Spiral* (IDFA Bertha Fund 2015, Golden Apricot 2017) and shot and directed the viral digital documentary *LEVON: A Wondrous Life* (2013). Since returning to Los Angeles, she shot and directed the experimental cine-triptych, *Corpus Callosum* (2014-2016) and directed the narrative science-fiction short *Transmission* (BFI Flare, Vancouver QFF 2019). She was later commissioned by the City of Glendale's ReflectSpace gallery to create the docu-memoir *Hishé* (2021). When not creating her own work, she directs branded content and music videos for clients such as AMC Networks, Amazon Music, and Joyful Noise Recordings. Recently, she also supervised postproduction on televised series and digital content for A24, Netflix, Vice, and Spotify.

A citizen of the world, she is fluent in English, Armenian and Bulgarian and can get by in Spanish and Russian. She splits her time between Yerevan, Sofia (her birthplace), Los Angeles (her home), and New York City.

# Levon – A Wondrous Life



## Emily Mkrtichian

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Emily Mkrtichian is a filmmaker, multimedia artist, and interdisciplinary creative collaborator. Her evolving artistic practice reflects her upbringing in a displaced, diasporic family, and centers the decolonized narratives of women, especially from the SWANA region, as well as a deep commitment to the healing power of relational, ethical, collaborative storytelling.

Emily has been a *Flaherty Seminar* Fellow, a *LA Arts Activation Fund* recipient, a *Locarno Film Festival* development grant winner, a *UnionDocs Summer Lab* Fellow, and participated in the *Torino Film Creative Producing Lab*. She is currently working on her first feature documentary film *There Was, There Was Not*, which has been supported by the *Sundance Institute Documentary Fund*, the *International Documentary Association Enterprise Fund*, *Chicken & Egg Pictures*, and the *HotDocs Cross Currents Fund*.

Her work includes the immersive, multimedia installation *Luys i Luso*, created in collaboration with Tigran Hamasyan, an exploration music's effect on spaces that were lost to a genocide a century before. The installation has traveled to NYC (BRIC Arts), LA (Arts Activation fund recipient for public art), Istanbul (DEPO Gallery), Munich (Unterfahrt), Armenia, and Sophia, Bulgaria (European Capital of Culture).

Emily co-directed the sci-fi short *Transmission* about an activist couple searching for each other between worlds (World Premiere BFI Flare); and in 2019 completed the short documentary *Motherland* (World Premiere Full Frame Film Festival, *Winner Best Documentary Short* at Copenhagen International Film Festival and Pomegranate International Film Festival) about the women who shake tradition and risk their lives to rid their country of landmines leftover from an ethnic war.