

# Tracing paintings reveals history

"I know now where I come from..." These are the words of Glenwood Springs resident Annig Raley.

Raley's odyssey began in her early twenties. Her father passed away when she was twenty, her mother died three years later. Raley became heir to over 75 of her father's paintings. It was an awesome responsibility but also fueled her desire to know of her past.

Sacred to Profane: Early 20th Century Armenian Art by Ariel Agemian (1904-1963) is being exhibited at the Center for the Arts through Dec. 30. The paintings exhibited are those remaining in the family's private collection.

## Artscene

By Mary Steinbrecher



"Through other people's eyes I would see things about my father as they interpreted his paintings. Art is so subjective. They would make some observation about the work and I would say 'yes, yes, you are right. He was that way,' I needed to know why," explained Raley.

Since her parent's death she had kept up correspondence with her father's brother, Jacques, who still lived in France. It became apparent that Jacques was getting older and in ill health. There was such warmth and emotion in the letters, Raley felt comfortable in planning a visit. She and her husband, Howard, set off for Paris in May 1987.

Ariel Agemian was born in Brussa, Turkey (Armenia). At six he was separated from his mother and brother during the Turkish Massacre. He was rescued by Armenian monks and sent to Italy where he was raised.

At age 22 he graduated from the Venice Academy of Fine Arts. He worked and taught in Italy, then Paris. In France he was reunited with his mother and brother.

In 1938, at the age of 34, he traveled to America to study and exhibit his paintings. Although he always planned to, he never returned to Europe.

Agemian had kept records, sketches and photographic copies of his works in churches and colleges in Europe. However, part of his works remained in his Paris studio. When he did not return it is thought they were probably stolen by thieves.

Annig Raley's first stop in Europe was Paris. Here she sought two paintings hanging in the college where Agemian was a professor and lived for a time. One work was a 6X4

foot painting called Armenian Scholars.

The next stop was a church in Arnoueville, a suburb of northern Paris. Here she had the surprise of her life. What she thought would be a series of paintings turned out to be a massive mural of 4X4 foot panels.

To make the visit even more memorable, the same priest was still at the church and remembered her father when he was in residence while doing the mural.

Raley's arrival at her uncle's home in La Ciotat, on the Bord de la mer, between Marseille and Monaco, was the highlight of the trip.

"Being with my uncle and his family, I now know the Armenian side of my heritage. I realize when I grew up I actually lived the life of a European in America. My mother cooked and went to the grocery store every day.

"We had a simple home setting. The emphasis was always placed on education. Even though my father received his American citizenship, he always thought of himself as a European," stated Raley.

Raley describes her father as intense, compassionate, intelligent, philosophical, questioning and contemplative.

Forty or 50 paintings still have unknown whereabouts in Europe. A collection of Armenian paintings has been assembled in Paris. Raley would like to return to see if

any of her father's paintings are in the group.

Her uncle has since passed away at the age of 81. A painting of her father's, hanging in her uncle's home, has been requested by the Louvre and will be given to them at the death of her aunt.

Surrounded by the works of Ariel Agemian, Raley revels in the knowledge she has gained about her father. She is glad to know at last where she comes from.

## Stock show is Jan. 7-19

DENVER—The individual breeding cattle entry total at the 86th National Western Stock Show, Jan 7-19, is the second highest in show history and exhibit numbers in the carload division are an all-time record.

Individual entries in the breeding cattle shows amount to 3,983, just under to record total of 4,154 established in 1984 and far above the 3,484 entries a year ago.

The 510 entries in the carload competition, where cattle are shown in groups of from three to ten, top the previous record of 488 entries set last Jan.

Breeding cattle entries for

1992 represent 22 breeds from more than 40 states and five Canadian provinces and solidify the National Western's position as the No. 1 cattle showcase in the world."

In the carload division at the stockyards Livestock Center, entries include 314 breeding cattle pens, 51 breeding cattle carloads, 74 feeder steer pens, 12 Colorado Cattlemen's heifer pens, 17 commercial heifer pens, 26 fed beef contest pens and 16 fed lamb contest pens.

Breeding cattle pen entries are Angus (51), Limousin (44), simmental (38), Charolais (35), Salers (27), Red Angus (23), Golburn (20), Rolled Hereford

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