

PAVILION OF ARMENIA
59th International Art Exhibition
La Biennale di Venezia

Andrius Arutiunian
GHARĪB - ՂԱՐԻԲ

April 23 – November 27, 2022
Castello 2125, Campo Tana, Venezia



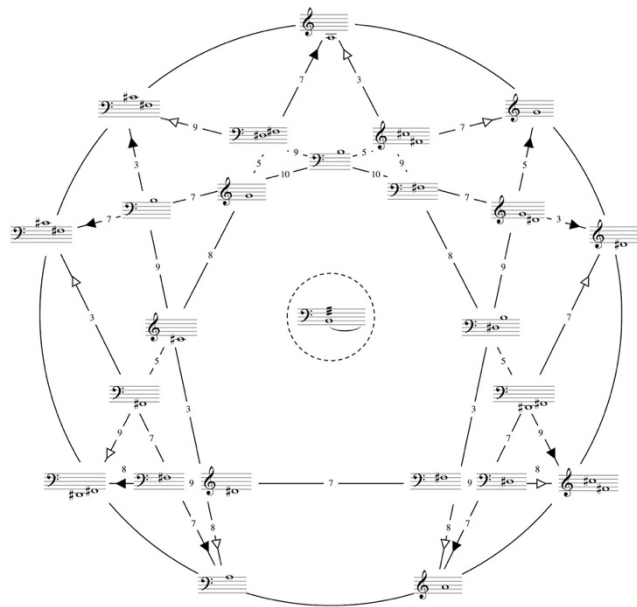
La Biennale di Venezia

59. Esposizione
Internazionale
d'Arte

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MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SCIENCE, CULTURE AND
SPORT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA



Andrius Arutiunian, *Seven Common Ways of Disappearing*,
score fragment, 2022

“At last we arrive to gharĭb – that notion of dissonance, resistance, and retreat. Gharĭb translates as a ‘stranger who enters into our midst’. As a word of almost-cryptogenic origins it moves at ease across Arabic, Armenian, Farsi, and Turkish languages, proposing a way of simultaneous being within and without – beyond a language, a place, an origin and a common myth – a contradiction at its heart, its crucial principle of definition.

Gharĭb has long been associated with the clandestine activities of music-making, illegal social clubs, early psychotropic substance trade and the underground. Gharĭb as a mode of disillusionment and liminality, as a way of retracing the political margins. To embed and disappear, to exist and evaporate at the same time, an attempt to belong, a way of sensing of the world.

The cosmology of the Gharĭb Pavilion plays through the modes of sonic dissent, vernacular knowledges, and messy systems of elusiveness. Songs of illicit origin, alternate tuning systems, oil extraction and Cher with her autotune tricks, Gurdjieff’s harmonious law of seven and divine systems of digestion. A certain musical score emerges, dotted by the hushed voices of the unheard, the disappeared, and the radical.”

– Andrius Arutiunian

The Exhibition

Drawing from Andrius Arutiunian’s research, the Pavilion explores forms of organisation and world ordering, both musical and political, which remain outside the Western imaginaries. Here, the gharĭb is read as a dissonance to the prevailing understandings of time, rhythm, and attunement.

The exhibition is composed of a series of new objects and installations. The Pavilion uses sound and music as its main elements, with a large-scale piece called *You Do Not Remember Yourself* at its centre – an instrument playing with natural resonances and diaphony.

The Pavilion begins with the Midnight Practice, a gathering in a small Venetian courtyard from midnight to the early morning. During these liminal hours, a symbolic dish is consumed, a Gharĭb oghi served, and a series of hypnotic musical exercises is played. Subdued, unhurried, and hushed, the Midnight Practice unfolds as a collective attempt of listening and being together.

The Midnight Practice reconnects with the Armenian-Greek mystic and composer Gurdjieff and his memorable gatherings. One of the first thinkers (and quite possibly charlatans) to introduce a syncretic reading of Eastern philosophy to the West, Gurdjieff stayed a rather enigmatic and conflicting figure among his contemporaries, with his constant fluctuation between mystical appearances, bizarre coincidences, and bouts of simultaneous drunkenness and somberness.

The Location

The Armenian Pavilion moves into a new space on the Biennale map in Castello. A working-class Venetian apartment, neither a palazzo nor a white cube, the space retains the memories of its former occupants, offering a temporary shelter to the manifestations of gharĭb.

The Publications

The Book of Gharĭb containing essays by Andrius Arutiunian, Jason Bahbak Mohaghegh and Anna Della Subin is published together with a vinyl by the Hallow Ground label, with a limited artist edition for the Venice Biennale.

The Gharĭb pocket book – a portable companion to the Pavilion – collects disparate excerpts from stories, essays, recipes, spells, tones and voices in multiple languages.

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Castello 2125, Campo Tana, Venezia
(in front of the main entrance of the Arsenale)



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April 23 – November 27, 2022
Pre-opening: April 21, 5 PM
Press Preview: April 20, 10:30 AM and 12:30 PM

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Andrius Arutiunian (born in 1991) is an Armenian-Lithuanian artist and composer based in the Netherlands. Working through hybrid forms of sound, Arutiunian often combines hypnotic aural structures, synthetic sound sources, and sonic vernaculars.

Recent shows and performances include CTM festival, Berlin; Rewire, The Hague; FACT, Liverpool; Lucia Festival, Florence; Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; documenta 14, Parliament of Bodies, Kassel. Arutiunian was an artist-in-residence at Rupert, Vilnius; Cité internationale des arts, Paris; BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art, Gateshead; ZKM | Centre for Art and Media, Karlsruhe; and Quartertone, Yerevan. In 2020 Arutiunian was selected for EMARE/EMAP annual award and residency at FACT Liverpool. Arutiunian is a recipient of the Talent Development grant by Creative Industries NL.

www.andriusarutiunian.com

Andrius Arutiunian, *Kayīb*, 2021
<https://arutiunian.bandcamp.com/track/kay-b>

Commissioner

Arayik Khzmalyan, Deputy Minister of Education, Science, Culture and Sports of the Republic of Armenia.

Curators

Anne Davidian and Elena Sorokina

Appearances

Hamed Ahmadi, G. I. Gurdjieff, Hallow Ground, Raimundas Malašauskas, Urvakan Festival

Coordinators

Gayané Khodaveerdi, Astghik Marabyan, Marco Scurati

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ONE STARTS
BY MERELY
IMAGINING
REAL THINGS.
EVENTUALLY,
THE REAL THINGS
THEMSELVES
MANIFEST.