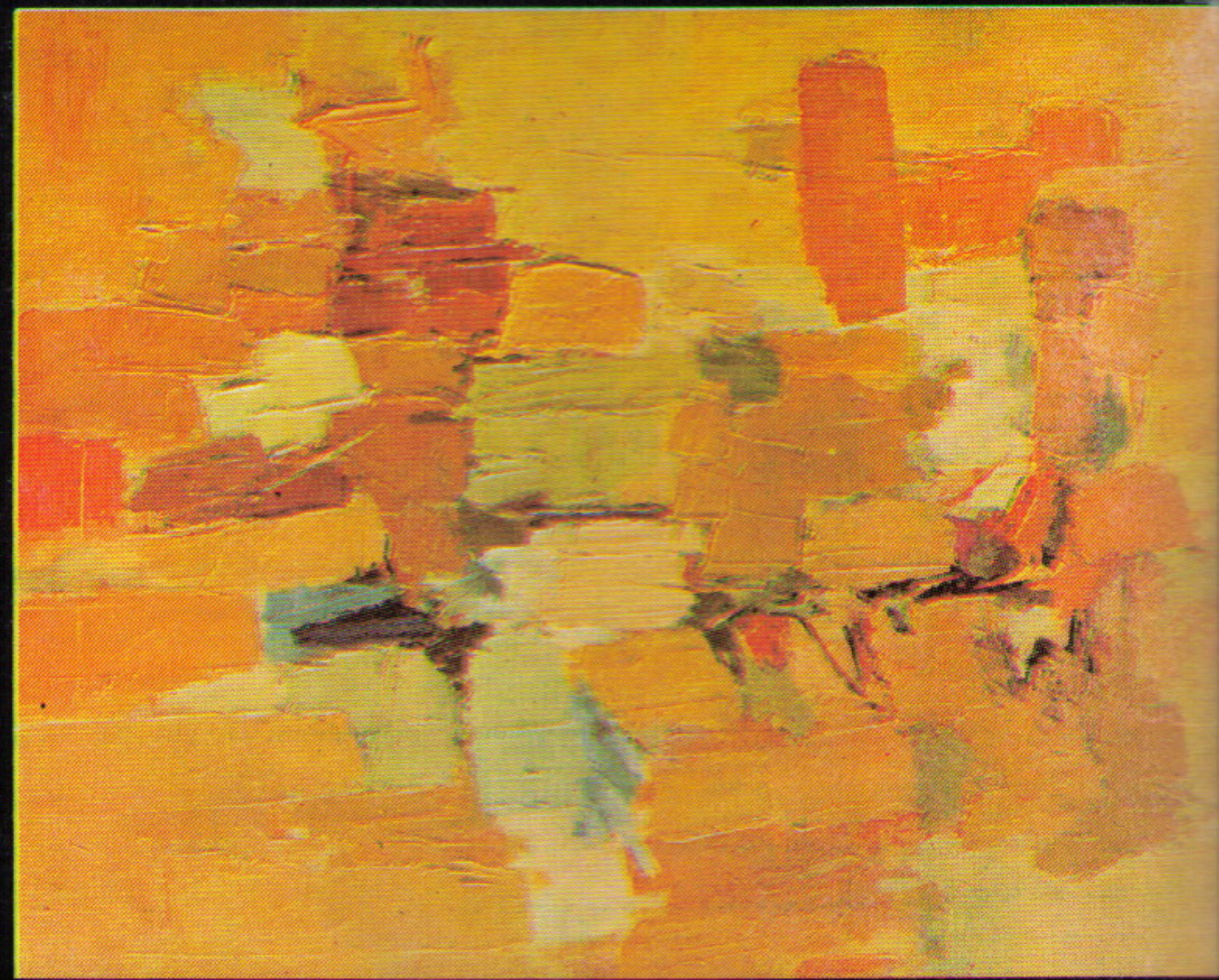
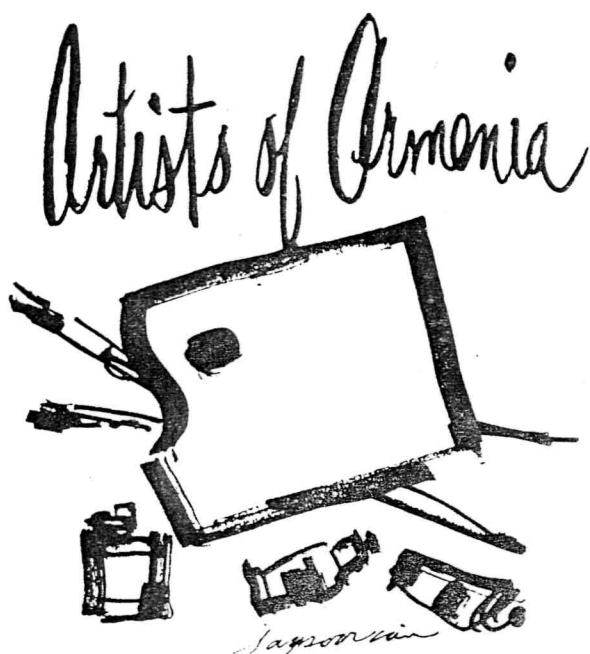




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The paintings represented on the cover of this issue are drawn from an exhibition organized by Garig Basmadjian in October, 1978 at the AGBU Gallery of New York. Twelve artists contributed 120 works to the exhibition. These artists are part of a new movement which emerged in Armenia during the 1960s and gained amplitude in the 1970s. Though the exhibit did not claim to cover all the *avant-garde* artists of Armenia, the selection was made in an attempt to assemble work characteristic of contemporary Soviet Armenian painting. We have condensed the following from Basmadjian's catalogue published on this occasion.

Taken as a whole, these paintings coming from the Soviet Union seem to go beyond socialist realism in the strictest sense of the term, but they do not represent a refusal or an opposition. Contemporary Armenian art has developed naturally from a two-thousand-year-old tradition. The artists remain spiritually linked to their ancient culture, primarily that of murals, medieval miniature painting (illuminated manuscripts), khatchkars (carved stone crosses) and Armenian carpets. In recent years the influences of Yakoulov, Gorky and Sarian have accentuated this evolution. The eternal source of inspiration for all Armenian art, however, remains in the local colors: the sun; the multicolored tufa stones of pink, red, ochre... the blue sky, cloudless for more than three hundred days a year — set against the white majestic background of Mount Ararat.

In Soviet Armenia all artistic manifestations take place in broad daylight; there are no exhibitions in pri-

vate apartments. The artists represented on the cover are members of the Union of Artists of Armenia which counts more than five hundred members for a population of three million. There is strong support by the local population and the number of collectors is increasing. The covers of literary magazines regularly print works by these artists.

These artists are Hagop Ananikian, born in 1919 in Leninakan and graduated from the Yerevan Institute of Drama and Fine Arts in 1952. Before his death in 1977, his unusual watercolors were shown in galleries in Czechoslovakia, Poland, Argentina, and Mongolia.

Ardashes Hounanian, born in 1922, who teaches at the Pedagogical Institute in Yerevan, draws inspiration, according to one critic, from "the hard forms of stone, the recoiling space hiding the legend of his ancient earth."

Hagop Hagopian was born in Alexandria in 1923 and studied at the Academy of Fine Arts in Cairo. After settling in Yerevan, he exhibited in France, Lebanon, Czechoslovakia, Canada, and Moscow; his "simple landscapes with simple houses, dead trees and telegraph posts" were awarded the State Prize of Armenia in 1978.

Also born in Leninakan in 1932, Garen Sempadian was trained in Yerevan. One critic wrote of his work: "It unexpectedly unites medieval Armenian miniatures with contemporary primitive art. The result is like an enchanting fairy tale."

Henry Elibekian was born in Tiflis in 1936 to a family of artists and is known throughout Armenia as a painter, sculptor, graphic artist and stage designer whose "language of color and philosophic themes are in constant collision to bring out a universal harmony."

Born in Rostov in 1937, Seyran Khatlamadjian, according to Garig Basmadjian, depicts better than anyone else in his generation "the fiery colors of Armenia and the Armenian temperament."

Rudolph Khatchadrian, self-taught, won the Komitas Centennial Art Competition in Yerevan in 1969.

Edward Kharazian teaches in Yerevan and works as a stage designer. Raffi Adalian, a violinist with the Armenian Symphony Orchestra, put on his first personal exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art in Yerevan in 1976.

Robert Elibekian, a Georgian-Armenian, creates "powerful and poetic" canvasses out of his dream world. Both Viguen Tadevossian and Varoujan Vartanian are regarded as two of the most promising young painters of Yerevan.

ARARAT

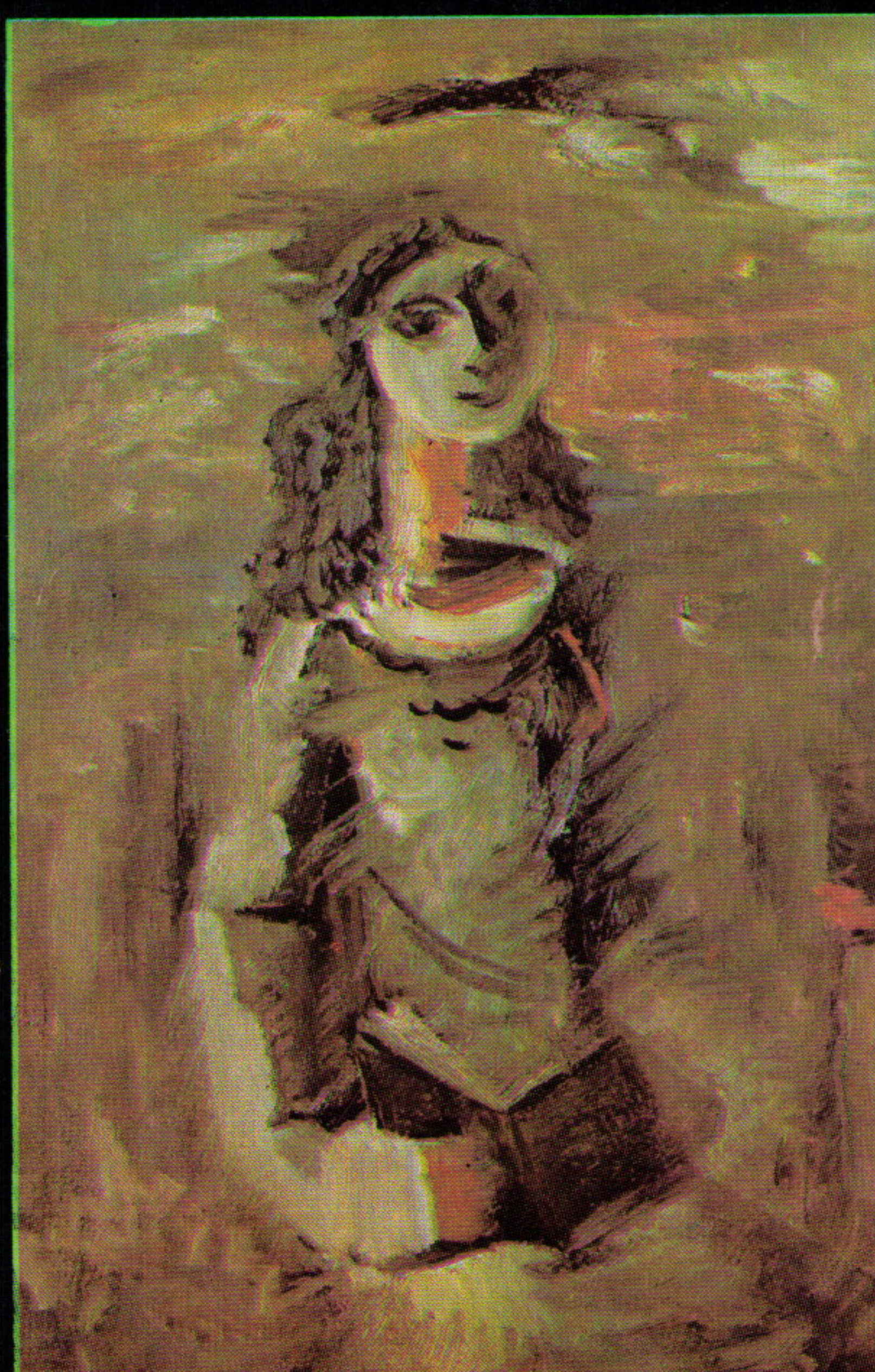
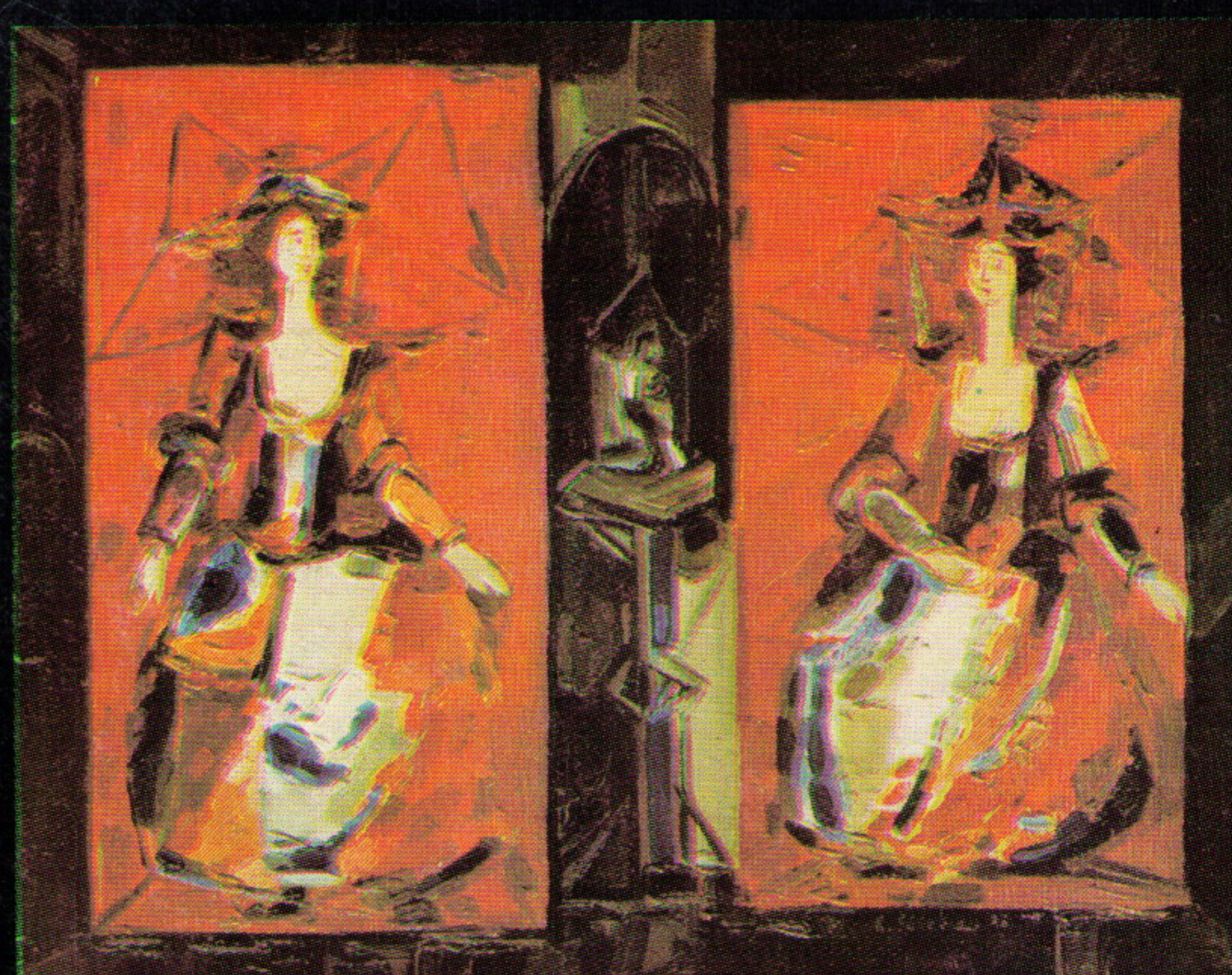
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Hagop ANANIKIAN
Ardaches HOUNANIAN
Hagop HAGOPIAN
Garen SEMPADIAN
Henri ELIBEKIAN
Seyran KHATLAMADJIAN
Rudolph KHATCHADRIAN
Edward KHARAZIAN
Raffi ADALIAN
Robert ELIBEKIAN
Viguen TADEVOSSIAN
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