



## American University of Armenia

# The Life and Art of Sumbat

*by Dr. Armen Der Kiureghian*

**Sumbat Der Kiureghian** (1913-1999) is the most celebrated Iranian watercolorist of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. A descendant of 17<sup>th</sup> century Armenian settlers in the New Julfa district of Isfahan, he embodied the artistic traditions of his people and of his hometown. He is admired for his watercolor and gouache renditions of Iranian and Armenian village scenes and of landscapes. Through his art, he played the role of a mediator between East and West: He brought a European artistic style (lucid watercolor applied in loose brushwork) to Iran and he introduced Iranian lifestyle, folk traditions and landscapes to Western audiences. Of particular note are his “Sumbatisms,” eponymous innovations he created by turning his newspaper-palettes into abstract depictions of busy street scenes. These works capture the energy and diversity of Iranian society while also straddling the line between figurative and abstract painting. Sumbat lived and created in Glendale, California, during the last 19 years of his life.

*The Life and Art of Sumbat* (ISBN 978-0-578-03598-7, 176 pages in hardcover) describes the life and art of Sumbat Der Kiureghian, renowned Iranian-Armenian watercolorist. Written by his son, Armen Der Kiureghian, professor of engineering at the University of California, Berkeley, the book describes Sumbat’s biography through a series of intimate stories, letters, pictures and quotations from other writers. The book includes more than 180 color reproductions of Sumbat’s paintings, drawings, and sketches. The book is available for purchase at [www.Sumbat.com](http://www.Sumbat.com), [www.Amazon.com](http://www.Amazon.com) and at selected bookstores.

### **About the Author**

Armen Der Kiureghian is Professor of Civil Engineering and holder of Taisei Chair at the University of California, Berkeley. He is one of the founders of the American University of Armenia and served as its founding dean of engineering from 1991 to 2007 concurrently with his Berkeley position. Among other awards, he is the recipient of *Movses Khorenatsi* medal from the government of Armenia for his efforts in advancing higher education in Armenia, and the *Alfred M. Freudenthal* Medal from the American Society of Civil Engineers for his research. He has an extensive record of publications in his areas of specialization, which include structural reliability, risk analysis, stochastic structural dynamics and earthquake engineering. He is an accomplished watercolorist, who studied under his father, Sumbat.

*The talk is open to the public*

**Monday, June 28, 2010**

**4:00-5:00 pm**

**American University of Armenia**

**PAB Manoogian Hall**