

Notre cousine Eugénie Papazian était une ancienne du lycée Guétronagan (Centrale) à Istanbul : Salpi l'a visité



Le lycée
d'Istanbul
où tous les
cours sont
en arménien
:

From Institute Director, Salpi Ghazarian

Immediately following the Institute's 15th Anniversary Gala banquet, I traveled to Yerevan and Istanbul.

In Istanbul, I visited several Armenian institutions with whom I hope we will be able to partner. One of them is the Getronagan High School, right in the center of Istanbul. The principal Mrs. Silva Kuyumjyan told us about their most recent achievement. [This is a school with multiple achievements. It is possibly the only school outside Armenia where *all* topics are taught in Armenian: math, science, world geography - everything. And this is in Turkey. *More on this at [Innovate Armenia: Learning to be Armenian in Turkey](#).*

Komitas taught at Getronagan. His piano, an American Star, is still in the school's auditorium. So it's no surprise that this year, on Komitas's 150th birth anniversary, the school held a series of celebratory events. And published a booklet. I missed the concerts

but was given a copy of the beautiful booklet which is special, because it's not just a series of emotional odes to the intellectual-genius-martyr, but a very contentful compendium of letters and photos. It's the photos that I can't get over. In one photo, Komitas is with Hovannes Tumanian and Avetik Isahakian. In another, he's with several other prominent writers and the dramatist Kaspar Ipekian, just sitting around a dinner table. So normal and banal, it's shocking.

But the best is the sketch above - a self-portrait really - drawn in his own hand, and sent along in a letter to a friend.

"The Future Thinker," it says. About himself. Dated 1906

He was so right. His work serves us, in the future. Did you hear *Sound Stories*, which first debuted at Innovate Armenia this year? There's a Komitas song in the second half. You'll enjoy the performance, by Element Band, and the song's back story, too. Take some time during the holidays to watch or listen to *Sound Stories*. It really does feed the soul. We loved preparing this unique mix of history and art, and I hope it brings you joy over the Christmas and New Years holidays.

- Salpi Ghazarian