

# **NOUVEL HAY** MAGAZINE

*SANS FRONTIÈRES*

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Not everything in NAASR's Mardigian Library is a book. There are also, among other things, a huge number of recordings—78s, LPs, tapes, CDs, etc., all with some Armenian connection or another. Some of these will be topics of future installments; most of them are obscure, except to specialists and collectors.

For this installment we will go in a totally different direction and focus on a record that was a huge hit in its day, and its Armenian connections.

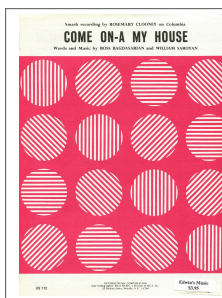


In 1951 Rosemary Clooney (1928-2002) had the biggest hit of her career—a career that would include some 30 American Top 40 hits and acting in the holiday classic film *White Christmas* (1954)—with [“Come On-a My House,” written by Ross Bagdasarian \(1919-1972\) and his cousin William Saroyan \(1908-1981\).](#)

Clooney had had minor hits before, but nothing like “Come On-a My House” which spent most of the summer of 1951 at number 1 and was one of the biggest songs of the year. (We take it as merely a coincidence that the song’s success in 1951 aligned with the 1500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Battle of Avarayr.)



Bagdasarian, the Fresno-born actor, songwriter, and musician, would go on to great success (under the name David Seville) in the late 1950s as the manic creator of the hit song [“The Witch Doctor”](#) and the Chipmunks, for which he won three Grammy Awards in 1959 for [“The Chipmunk Song \(Christmas Don't Be Late\).”](#) As for William Saroyan, he never again hit the Top 40, but he could console himself with having already won a Pulitzer Prize and an Academy Award among other distinctions.



Saroyan and Bagdasarian wrote the song together in the late 30s and it sort of kicked around for while. In 1950, Bagdasarian was acting in Saroyan's play *The Son* and his performance of the song was incorporated into the production. Finally the song got some interest at major record labels and, most significantly, from [Mitch Miller](#) who, besides his later fame as the king of the sing-a-long was the head of A & R (artists and repertory) at Columbia Records and, as such, one of the most powerful men in the record business. Miller arranged Rosemary...

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In these challenging times, we're incredibly heartened by the community surrounding our mission, especially because you are a part of it.

In response to the pandemic and local directives, staff are working remotely to enrich the world community and advance our mission in numerous ways. Fortunately, NAASR had designed a cloud-based technology infrastructure as part of the comprehensive planning for our new headquarters, providing us with the necessary capabilities.....

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