

# Returning to the Motherland: Mireille Goguikian's Retrospective in Yerevan

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📷 Lebanese-Armenian artists Rita Massoyan Yedalian, Mireille Goguikian, Raffi Yedalian and director of the Toros Roslin Art Academy Hagop Handian

On October 7, 2023, the Modern Art Museum of Yerevan held an exhibition entitled, “Retrospective – 35 Years of Artistic Creation,” in honor of Lebanese-Armenian painter Mireille Goguikian.

“This exhibition shows my resilience as an Armenian artist. This exhibition is me taking a stance with Artsakh. I wanted to share my Retrospective with my Armenian people,” Goguikian said. Now, visitors

of the Modern Art Museum of Yerevan can see two of Goguikian's works in the museum's permanent collection.



*Retrospective in honor of Lebanese-Armenian artist Mireille Goguikian*

Born and raised in Beirut, Goguikian's true artistic talent remained undiscovered until she was 17 years old studying to become an architect. Her professors and peers encouraged her to change paths and pursue art. Three years deep into her architecture program, Goguikian decided to take the risk, changed her major and studied visual arts. One year into the degree, Goguikian's paintings began to stand out, earning multiple honorary prizes and distinctions, such as the first Samir Tabet Prize and the second prize of the Béchir Gemayel. After graduating from the Lebanese Academy of Fine Arts (ALBA) in 1988, she started regularly exhibiting in local galleries and even taught in an academy for a year before she left for Paris.

The next five years of Goguikian's life in Paris witnessed a creative shift in her career, as she fully committed to her artistic path. "During my stay in Paris, I got more involved in the Armenian community. Even though I didn't speak very good Armenian, they welcomed me with open arms. This was when I started searching for my Armenian roots," Goguikian said.

Throughout her career, Goguikian participated in 50 international exhibitions in Tokyo, London, Paris, Italy, Seoul and so on. She also presented 17 solo exhibitions, the latest being her first-ever solo exhibition in Yerevan.

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Titled "Mireille of Cities" and "Queen of Colors" back home in Beirut, Goguikian mainly paints cityscapes. "I paint cities just like I imagine them in my head, cities filled with light and love, where chaos doesn't exist," Goguikian explained.

"You can see the sun and the light as recurring themes in most of my paintings. In many ways, the sun also represents Armenia," she continued. All of the red paintings in her collection are about Armenia. For Goguikian, the strength and the passion of the color red represent Armenia.



*Chaleur Rouge, 2021 by Mireille Goguikian. Oil on canvas 50x70cm.*

“I wanted to offer some light and positivity despite these challenging times,” Goguikian said regarding her exhibit in Yerevan. “I believe this was a successful exhibition, and we Armenians needed it.” Many people attended the opening reception of Retrospective, all eager to see and learn more about the Lebanese-Armenian artist and painter.

Goguikian’s works have appeared in several collections, both private and public, and they are exhibited in many cultural foundations and museums worldwide. Despite her popularity in the broader art scene, Goguikian has always wanted to share her talent through educational activities, especially with those in her community. She is a member of the National Federation of French Culture and the Armenian Artists of France and a previous art teacher at Hamazkayin’s Toros Roslin Fine Arts Academy.





*Lebanese-Armenian artists Rita Massoyan Yedalian, Mireille Goguikian, Raffi Yedalian and director of the Toros Roslin Art Academy Hagop Handian*

In addition to her ongoing contributions to the Armenian art community, Goguikian continues to represent a valuable resource for Armenia by actively engaging in international exhibitions. For the XIII Biennale in Florence, Goguikian was selected as a participating artist to showcase seven paintings, “Shards of Beirut,” and she won the very selective Jury Prize. In 2021, she won the Caravaggio Prize in Milan and the International Prize in Barcelona in November 2022. In the near future, Goguikian will have a collective exhibition in Dubai and a solo exhibition in Beirut Kaleem Art Space in April.

 **Bio**

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