

Screening Memory: Homage to Sergei Parajanov

by Gariné Torossian

I first discovered Sergei Parajanov's *Color of Pomegranates* in 1989 as a high school student who had just started to work with super 8 film. I had this sense that its evocative imagery represented me and what Armenia embodied. Parajanov's film was like tapestry stitched with symbolism, legend, and metaphor. It captured everything that drew me to Armenia: the mythical, the folkloric, the grace and beauty, the faith and mysticism of the land. The images, color, and sound are brocaded into this wondrous and powerful narrative. It was entirely immersive and made complete sense to me. It became this bedrock and defined my cinematic sensibility. Like an author who articulates what you feel, this film affirmed my feelings and identity at that point in my life. I made *Girl from Moush* as an homage to Parajanov who opened the way for me.



When I visit Parajanov's museum, it affirms my vision of reality. Every time I enter the museum, I feel like I'm entering the real world. The museum is in Yerevan, the capital of Armenia, but it is less Armenia to me than Parajanov's world. I'm drawn more to the imaginary and beautiful world inside the museum than to the city outside, a city that has destroyed a significant part of its architectural heritage in the last quarter of a century.

Gariné Torossian, Yerevan, February 28th, 2017