

| Art Market San Francisco 2023



Rudik Ovsepyan

Political-Economy Project at Art Market San Francisco

Fort Mason Center for Arts and Culture (2 Marina Blvd, San Francisco, CA 94109).

REISIG AND TAYLOR CONTEMPORARY

Spring 2023

Rudik Ovsepyan

Duration: April 20 through 23, 2023.

Location: Fort Mason Center for Arts and Culture (2 Marina Blvd, San Francisco, CA 94109).

Type: Political-Economy Project.

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In both Ovsepyan's early figurative work and his later abstract work, the concurrent aesthetic influence of various movements of modern and contemporary art, as well as medieval Armenian manuscripts, is present across series. These medieval manuscripts are inscribed with highly decorative Armenian script and sophisticatedly organized, puzzle-like structures/geometries formed through colorfully patterned borders. Similarly, his work is also evidently influenced by the colorful and ornately arranged imagery of traditional Armenian rugs. (Though, he often revisions such imagery with a monochromatic palette, as in the included works from his *Labyrinth* series.)

Initially and ultimately, however, Ovsepyan appears to be most energetically influenced by his own prolific and unrepentant mode of production. Effortlessly, but industriously, his work springs—*wakes*—from his work (in the wake of his work...). His work continually cycles. He is constantly moving from one series to the next, always exhausting a particular way of working until it comes to be folded into the next phase. And although each series or body of work has its own peculiarities, it is clear that, sequentially, the central matter of his work is simply the passage of time (and space) consumed by making them.

This sense of preserving lost time comes clearly into view in his “mummified” works, eternally resting between here and hereafter (as with *Zaun* (or *Fence*), the included “mummy” piece from 2010). Mapping borders between worlds upon the bodies of his work, his art forms a record of a life of displacement. Consuming the refuse of his immigrations—cardboard, newspaper, found objects—his work builds the home he was never permitted to have (using all he has left). (Ovsepyan is a *former* member of the Fine Art Association of the USSR, having been banned for his refusal to paint in the propagandistic style of “social realism.”)

Re-finding and redefining his own narrative through the history of state violence in Germany, Ovsepyan found a deep connection between the Holocaust and the genocide of the Armenian people carried out by the Ottomans. This relation to the violent treatments of other marginalized groups in his new countries of residence became even more layered and complex upon his immigration to the United States. In his work *Borderline* (2009), created after immigrating to the United States from Germany, there are both newspaper clippings from Nazi-era German newspapers, as well as clippings from various U.S. publications having to do with civil rights, race relations, and the assassination of Martin Luther King Junior. With each phase of Ovsepyan's life, he seamlessly folds one place into another, one history into another, through the act of his memory recorded on a surface. (And in his most recent body of work, he incorporates pills leftover from his wife's work as nurse as elements in his collaged pieces.) Moreover, his waxy “mummified” pieces—such as *Zaun* (2010)—reach even further into the annals of the Armenian diaspora, recalling the ancient historical connections between Armenia and Egypt. With his works forming these tide pools of temporal and migratory connections, his oeuvre always encounters itself as a simultaneous event of memory and history. This synchronic moment between personal life and historical context is a primary process of Ovsepyan's work.

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**Rudik Ovsepyan** (b. 1949: Armenia); currently living in Los Angeles.

Ovsepyan's works are included in public and private collections in Russia, Europe, Israel, Canada, and the United States, including: UNESCO, Geneva, Switzerland; Pushkin Museum, Moscow; Museum of Modern Art, Armenia, Yerevan; Museum of Modern Art, Georgia, Tblisi; Sparkasse Schleswig-Holstein, Germany; Sparkasse, Muenster, Germany; Provincial Versicherung; Bundesministerium der Verteidigung, Kiel, Germany.

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Rudik Ovsepyan

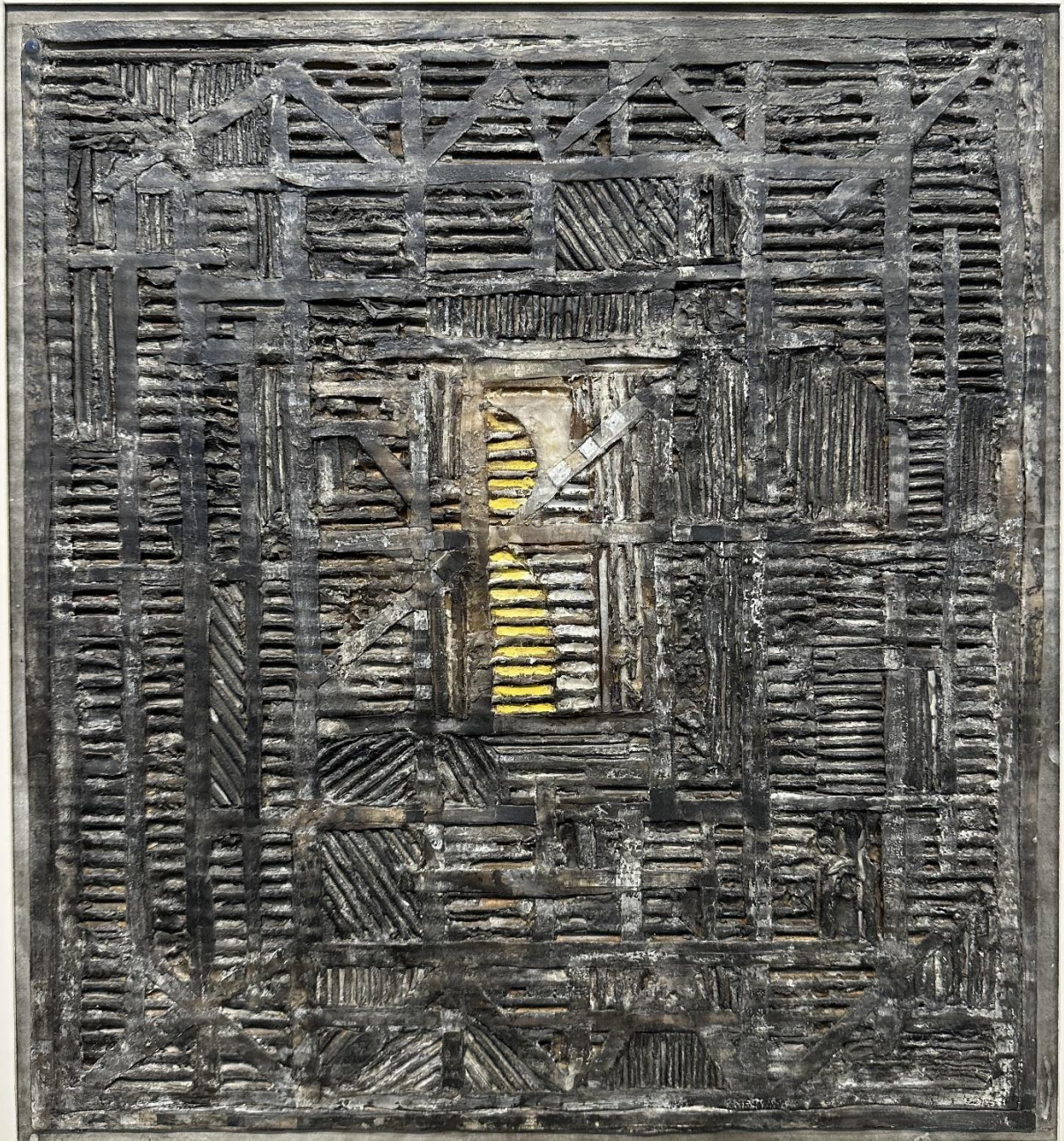
*Untitled*

2004

Mixed-Media on Cardboard.

17 x 15.5 inches.

Series: *Labyrinth*



Rudik Ovsepyan

*Untitled*

2009

Mixed-Media on Cardboard.

17 x 15.5 inches.

Series: *Labyrinth*



Rudik Ovsepyan

*Untitled*

2011

Mixed-Media on Cardboard.

14 x 12.5 inches.

Series: *Labyrinth*



Rudik Ovsepyan  
*Borderline*  
2009  
Mixed-Media on Linen.  
36 x 36 inches.



Rudik Ovsepyan

*Zaun*

2010

Mixed-Media on Cardboard.

11.5 x 10.5 inches.