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forum



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PROMISE & HOPE:

The Present and Future Phases
of the Kingdom of God;
Its Growth and Challenge

Biblical Truths Depicted
by the Art of Lucy Janjigian

The Art of Lucy Janjigian

A Graphic Language of God's Love

By Charles DeMirjian

Few among us have the talent to express our faith and convictions in graphic form. Lucy Janjigian is one of the chosen few. A devout Evangelical Christian and skilled artist, Mrs. Janjigian has received critical acclaim throughout her career as a painter of biblical and humanitarian-based subjects.

This article will verbally sketch a brief background of Lucy Janjigian and her role in the world of art. A sampling of her paintings is reproduced here. Even in their reduced scale, you get some idea of the dramatic richness of Janjigian's palette and the range of her styles and subject matter. The author's objective is to inform, and possibly, to whet your interest to contact the artist personally.

The Early Years

Lucy Janjigian was born in Jerusalem to Mary and Haroutune Boyadjian. Her parents were survivors of the 1915 Genocide. Indeed, her father was rescued from Musa Dagh, the event and locale made famous by Franz Werfel's account, *The Forty Days of Musa Dagh*. Such events were to later shape Janjigian's artistic direction.

An exceptionally perceptive student, her education began in Jerusalem's English Middle Schools, continued in Beirut, and was completed in the United States. Here she earned a B.Sc. in Biology from Heidelberg College in Ohio, and a M.Sc. in Plant Ecology art Emory University in Atlanta. Those familiar with her paintings will discern how her specialized education infuses her work. There is a correlation between the organic forms of biology and Janjigian's stylistic compositions.

The Segue to Art

Throughout Mrs. Janjigian's years of schooling and world travel, art was an ever-present calling not to be denied. A student of the Bible with strong imperatives of social justice, painting would become her motivational language. Inevitably, she received formal training at New York City's eminent Art Students' League. Today a prize-winning painter and listed in *Who's Who in American Art*, Janjigian does not rest on any laurels. Even now, she maintains studies at the Stacy Studio Workshop in New York.

Painting professionally since the 1970's, Janjigian's prolific work has

been exhibited widely in one-person as well as group shows throughout the U.S., but primarily in the Northeast. Her paintings and murals are featured in numerous private and corporate collections, institutions and churches. Among noteworthy commissions, one of singular importance is a triptych (three-panel painting) executed for Haigazian University, in Beirut, in 1998.

Lucy Janjigian's persona and paintings are one and the same - warm, open, engaging and compassionate. Meeting her, you feel at ease, drawn to a smiling, sensitive and stylish woman. The Janjigian residence in the rolling-green town of Franklin Lakes, New Jersey, is shared with husband Edward, an international business entrepreneur. Together, Edward and Lucy are staunch leaders and supporters of the Armenian Missionary Association of America, and Armenian Evangelical and humanitarian causes.

The house itself reflects gracious hospitality. An inviting interior is enhanced by sight-lines to floral gardens and greenery. There is also a foretelling distinction about the décor. Tastefully eclectic, it merges the traditional with the contemporary. And that essentially portrays Lucy Janjigian's painting style. Rooted in academic traditionalism, it incorporates contemporary idioms of bold color and abstraction.

Thematic Series

What distinguishes the home is that Lucy Janjigian's art enlivens its many rooms. Moreover, at special times, it serves as an extended gallery to exhibit her thematic paintings. Such was the case during a recent visit, when my wife Diane and I were treated to a guided tour of about 125 canvases, some measuring up to six feet across. Her medium of choice is acrylic.

Some of her paintings are single expressions of a landscape or still life. Most, however, are episodic series with self-descriptive titles. One such grouping is "The Uprooted" which began in 1984 to commemorate the Armenian Genocide. It has expanded over the years to reveal and decry the universality of "man's inhumanity to man." Two recent paintings depict the Afghan crisis, bringing the series total to 32.

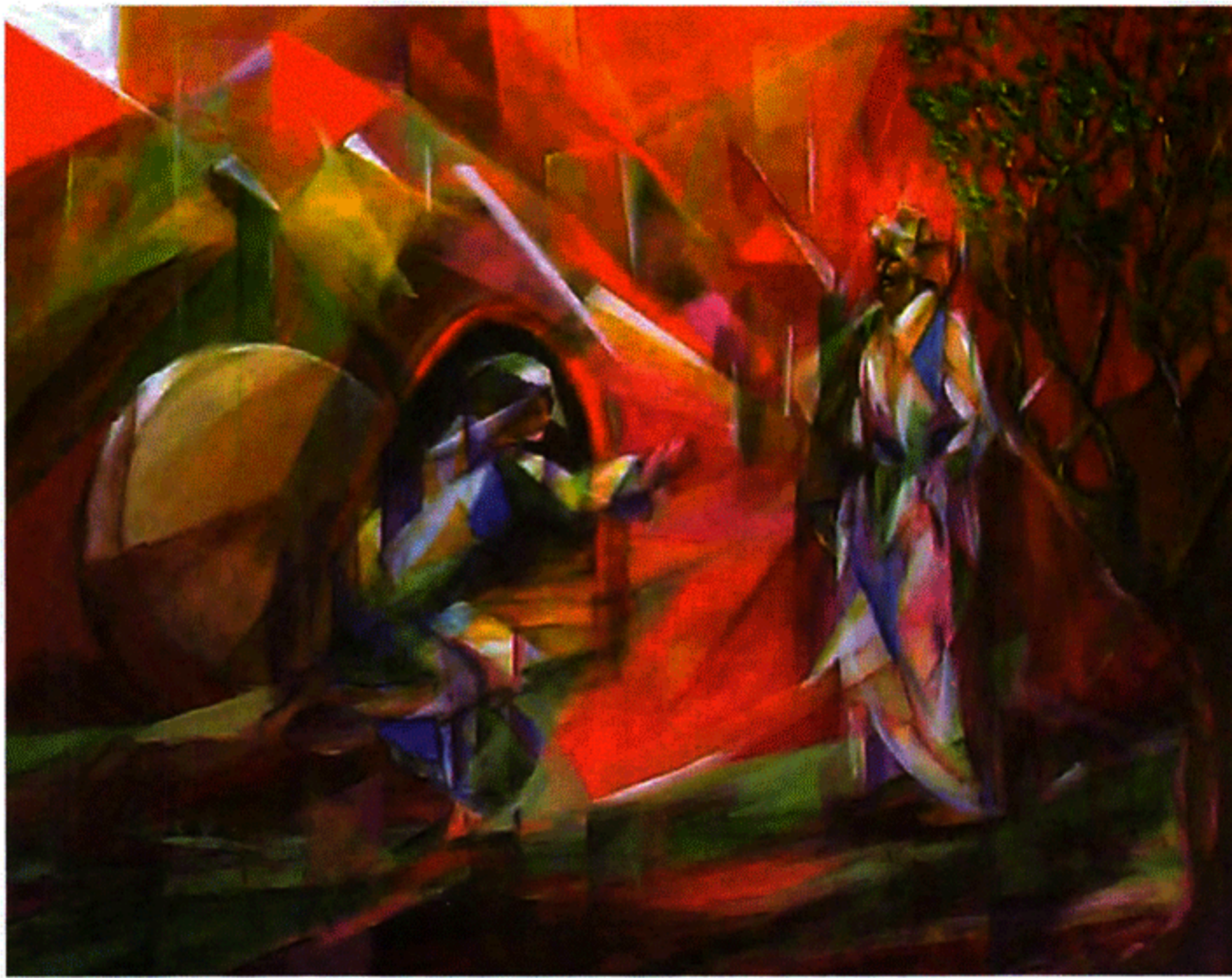
A related series entitled, "The Homeless" followed. Since its first expression in 1989, this group now includes 19 large works. Not content to confine herself to the studio, Lucy Janjigian is a hands-on activist working to alleviate the plight of the homeless.



Janjigian's persona and paintings are one and the same - **warm, open, engaging and compassionate.**



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MARY IN THE GARDEN 24"x30" Journey to Resurrection Series



PASSAGES 36"x48" Journey to Resurrection Series



A LITTLE CHILD SHALL LEAD THEM 42"x46" Uprooted Series



DELIVERANCE 54"x36" Uprooted Series

CRITICS' CHOICE

Comments on the work of Lucy Janjigian

Lucy Janjigian's canvases evoke a sense of the spirit of the refugee. The paintings are richly formed, brilliantly colored images expressing her awareness of the helpless and dispossessed.

- Hope Noah, Art Critic, Spotlight Magazine

Your Christian faith has taught you to follow the Man of Galilee ... for your paintings are really evangelism.

- Arthur Charles Finmann, Flushing, NY

Her lyrical abstractions utilize bold color.

"Kaleidoscope" employs large areas of light blue and violet, from which rhythmic shapes of warmer color emerge, suggesting the works of Arshile Gorky.

- Diana Freedman, Art Critic, Artspeak Magazine

Your art is a quiet ministry of spiritual power.

- Rev. Vartan Hartunian, Belmont, Mass.

For her graphic power, Janjigian most resembles Kathe Kollwitz, the German printmaker. But Janjigian's rich, vivid color is much closer in spirit to the Expressionism of Emile Nolde.

- Sean Simon, Art Critic, Artspeak Magazine

What started as an individual commission with the commemoration of the Armenian Genocide turned into a spiritual affinity and a personal ministry.

- Ronnie Levine, Senior Staff-writer, The News, Wyckoff, NJ

Your work is so strong and beautiful, it should be shared with as many people in the world as possible.

- Dr. Jean Sindab, Executive Secretary
Commission on the Programme to Combat Racism
World Council of Churches, Geneva,
Switzerland

"Janjigian's work alerts to biblical truths, to Christ's mission and to our responsibility to those around us."

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Journey to Resurrection

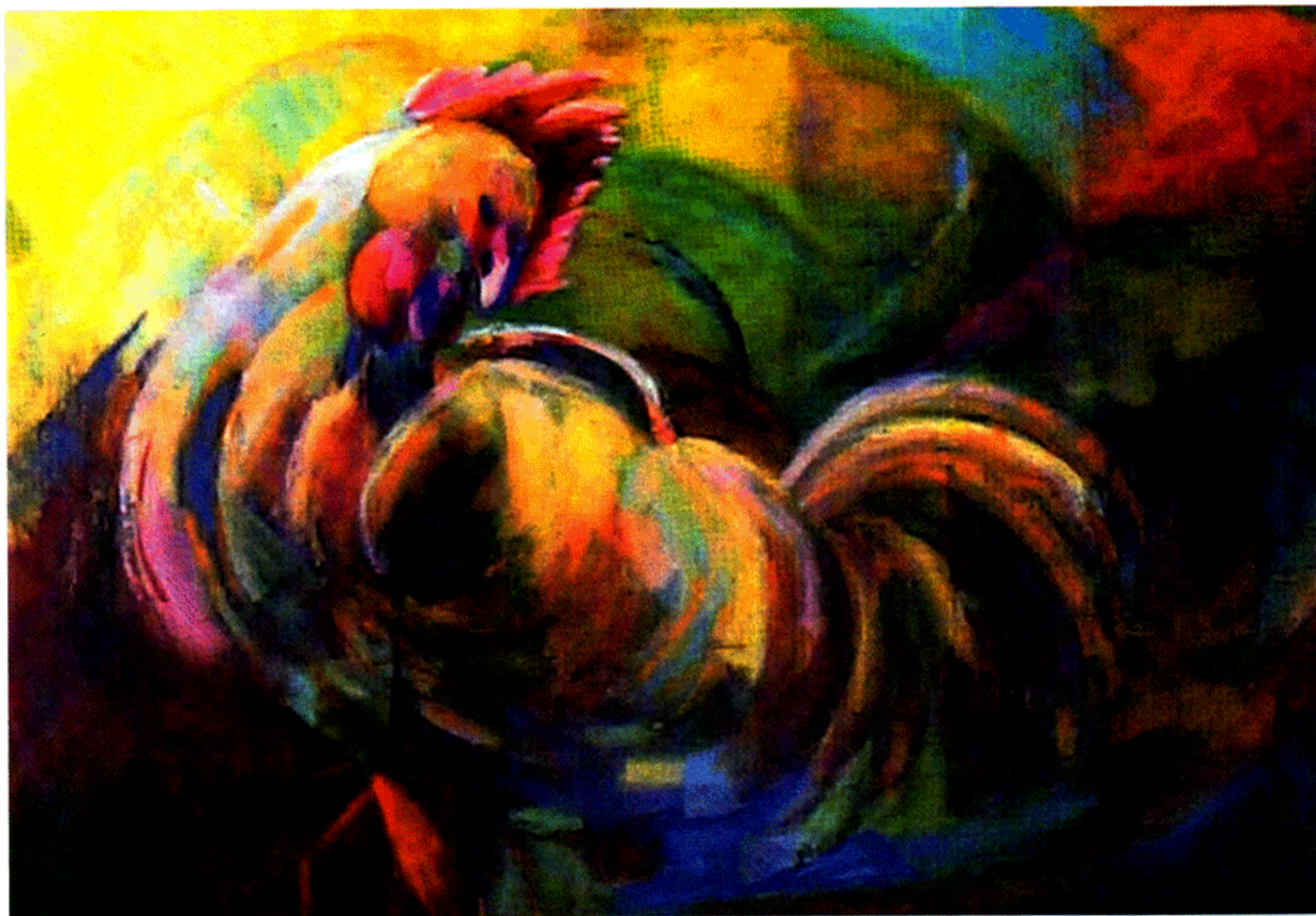
Asked what impels her artistic direction, Janjigian's comments are edifying. A case in point is a major opus, a series she calls "Journey to Resurrection". Perhaps subliminally, the seed was planted on a summer Sunday, when she was asked to give a sermon at church, and that was her subject. Years later, the theme sprouted into an ongoing succession that now numbers 34 paintings. "Journey to Resurrection" traces the events of Passion Week, representing Christ's agony and culminating in His glorious resurrection.

It will interest readers to know that "Journey to Resurrection" was newly released as a first-rate video documentary. Mrs. Janjigian herself leads the viewer on an enlightening exposition of this

adjacent "Critics' Choice"). In that regard, art history buffs may recognize such influences as the prismatic cubism of Lyonel Feininger, the color dynamics of Robert Delaunay, and the free, facile forms of Arshile Gorky.

Ultimately, however, what strikes us most clearly is Janjigian's nobility of purpose. Her work alerts us to biblical truths, to Christ's mission and teachings, and to our responsibility to those around us. What's more, we are given an aesthetic bonus of the paintings themselves.

Artist, humanitarian, and homemaker, Lucy Janjigian not only leads a life of rich meaning, but she also brings it to those within her orbit. A woman with international focus (fluent in English, Armenian,



ROOSTER 20"x32" Journey to Resurrection Series

substantive series with her own voice-over commentary. In addition, it is an excellent way to meet the artist. The video is available in both VHS and DVD at \$25.00 each (for which you may contact the artist directly).

Nobility of Purpose

Knowledgeable critics and fans alike laud Janjigian for her individual creativity which evolved from her keen study of noted masters (see

French and Arabic), she affirms a simple truth. Art at its most eloquent speaks to us to inform and to inspire, provided that we have the sensibility to learn its language. The art of Lucy Janjigian speaks the language of God's love for all mankind.

Note: Charles DeMirjian is a lifelong devotee of the arts, and is long retired as a writer and design director for DuPont.

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MUSICAL ANGELS 24"x36" Private collection



MIRAGE 46"x40" Uprooted Series



Lucy Janjigian

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