

 Visual artist Vahagn Hamalbashyan was selected as the 1st artist to participate in the new exchange project between Leeds and Yerevan, through our organisation Akos and the School of Design, University of Leeds, from the 16th April to the 7th May, 2012.

We hope to continue with this exchange into the future.

Following Prof. Kenneth G. Hay's visit to Yerevan last spring and his residency at AKOS, we are now following up on possible future plans with this exchange project, which we are building on the very positive relations and contacts which we made during M. Tonoyan's (chair of the Akos Cultural NGO) visit to Leeds and France, to set up a regular exchange between our two countries, and in particular to enable the sharing of art ideas and exchanges between Leeds and Yerevan, through Akos and the School of Design, University of Leeds.

For the beginning we see this as operating on a relatively small scale, enabling one artist/scholar per year from each country to have short study trips to each other's country to learn about and develop understanding of each other's art and cultures. Activities might include researching into the art and culture of each region for exhibition or publication purposes, or short artists' residencies to produce a body of work about the locality, study trips to visit key cultural sites of each country and lectures, talks, meetings and debates to extend learning and fellowship between our two countries. This might develop, longer term into a permanent cultural link, involving joint exhibitions, publications, films and research projects.