



*Jirayr Zorthian, **The Development of Power**, 1937 - Detail of mural study – Full Study is 8 X 5 feet*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WHAT: VISIONS of AMERICA – THE MURAL ART of JIRAYR ZORTHIAN (1936-1945)

The Zorthian Family is pleased to present a group of mural studies by late artist and muralist Jirayr Zorthian. These studies were recently discovered and preserved and have never been shown in public before. The studies illustrate Jirayr Zorthian's rigorous research and dynamic creative process in rendering and creating 42 murals, many of which are still on display throughout America.

WHEN: October 15, 16, 22, 23 (10:00am – 5:00pm)
(VIP Night - Friday, October 14 at 7:00pm – Press and invited guests only)

ADMISSION: Free to the public (Family Friendly – No Animals Allowed)

PARKING/ACCESS: Free on-site parking. Exhibit space is wheelchair accessible.

WHERE: The Zorthian Ranch, 3696 Fair Oaks Ave, Altadena, CA 91001

ON VIEW: An assortment of Jirayr Zorthian's original mural art studies will be on display in the Zorthian Barn Gallery, some of which became completed full-scale murals as part of the WPA Project. This Fine Arts Program was started by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt to put artists to work during the Great Depression and to place art in public places for the masses to view and enjoy. These mural studies present Zorthian's classically trained skills and his grasp of visual storytelling at its finest, depicting

different facets of the history of America, and representing his significant contribution to the WPA project.

While stationed at Camp Ritchie, Maryland during World War II, Zorthian produced the mural which he considered to be his crowning achievement as a fine artist, *The Phantasmagoria of Military Intelligence Training*. This mural was 4 feet high and 157 feet long. Color studies, photographs and a short film on this mural will be featured in the exhibit. Although this mural is currently missing and considered lost, the Zorthian family and branches of the government are currently on the hunt to locate it.

RANCH TOURS: The Zorthian Family will also be opening up their Ranch to the public, and will be giving guided tours during the hours of the exhibit. The tours are also free. Donations accepted. Comfortable walking shoes recommended. Not wheelchair accessible.

A BRIEF BIO: Jirayr Zorthian was born in Turkey in 1911 of Armenian parents. The Zorthian family arrived in America in 1923, escaping the Armenian Genocide. Jirayr earned a Master of Fine Arts at Yale University followed by an art Fellowship in Europe. He returned to America during the Great Depression winning multiple mural painting commissions. During World War II, Jirayr served stateside for army intelligence, who put his artistic ability to work. In 1946 he moved to his Altadena ranch, which he called *The Center for Research and Development of Industrial Discards, with an emphasis on Aesthetics*, where he lived and created until his death in 2004.

Press/media contact: Jeff Rack (Curator), (818) 624-3884, jeffgrack@att.net

Further information can be found @ <https://zorthianranch.com/>