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RCQ

ROBERT COLLEGE ALUMNI MAGAZINE

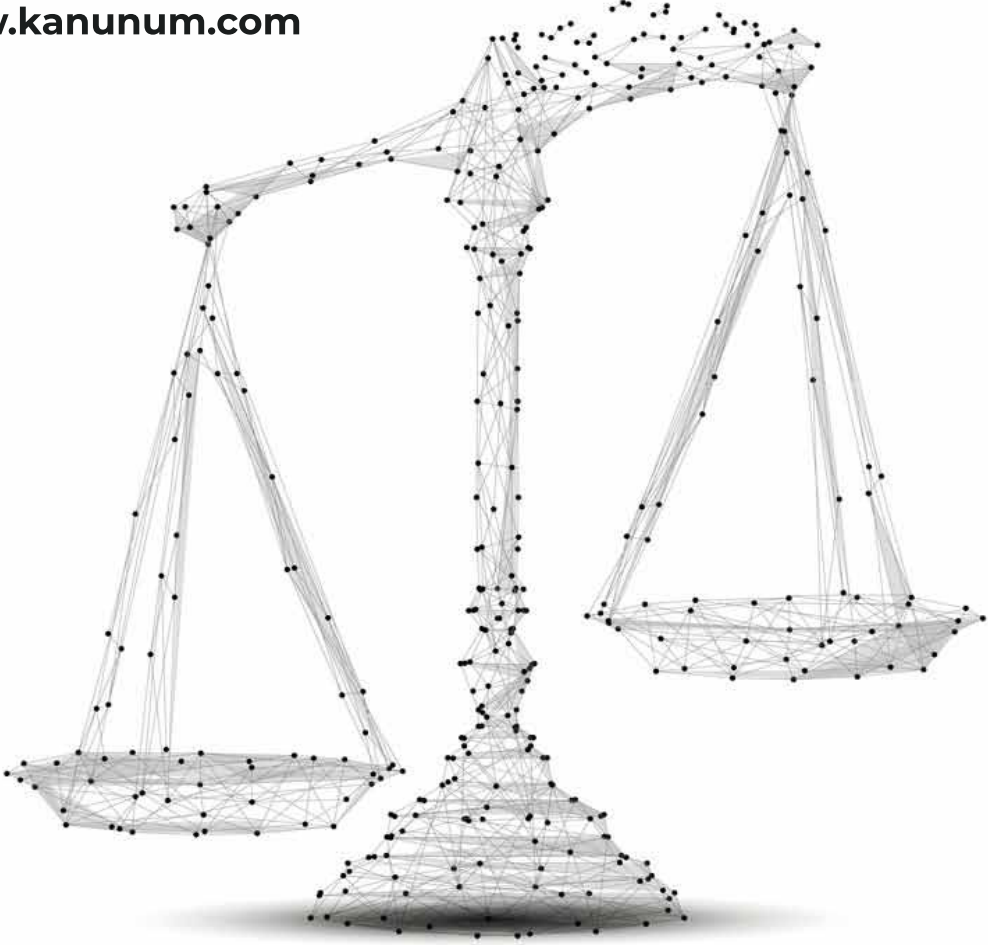


THE FINE ARTS ISSUE

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TEPTA
AYDINLATMA

The cover of this issue was once again illustrated by Kayansel Kaya RC L12 03. With a cover theme so close to her heart, Kayansel included objects that inspire the artist in her illustration. There is also a nod to a beloved art book taught at RC for many years.



Alumni Journal published periodically by the RC Development Office for approximately 10,000 members of the RC community: graduates, students, faculty, administration, parents and friends.

In this issue



As we reflect on 2020 with all the surprises and changes it brought, and move into 2021 with hope and resilience, the RC Quarterly's 57th issue turns its focus to the fine arts. Indeed, is there a better source of reinvigoration and inspiration than art? This issue surveys how art was taught at RC and how it is evolving to provide students new skills, as well as presenting the illuminating perspectives that our alumni in the arts offer (p. 34).

Can Göknül ACG 66 was kind enough to allow us to reprint one of her works as a postcard insert for this issue, and we thank her for her generosity.

Because the precautions around the pandemic continue, the RCQ reports on how Robert College is handling it all in the 2020-2021 school year (p. 10). Details are up to date as we go to print, but please note they could change again by the time the magazine reaches you.

The pandemic did not stop our alumni from receiving awards, writing books, and being in the news, and the RCQ proudly features many of their accomplishments.

As always, we would love to hear from you. If you have any comments or would like to share news, please write us at rcq@robcol.k12.tr

Here is to a wonderful 2021!

Happy reading!
The RCQ Team

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Your feedback on the RCQ matters! Did you enjoy this issue? Write us at: rcq@robcol.k12.tr

RC NEWS

- 4 A Message from Head of School Adam Oliver
- 5 RC's New Director of Institutional Advancement
- 6 A Class that Will Go Down in History
- 8 Where is the Class of 2020 Now?
- 10 Special Report: Covid Update
- 20 Annual Giving Kickoff Goes Global
- 22 RC Stands Up Against Bullying
Back to School
- 24 Robert College Joins SDG 13 Climate Action Challenge

GIFTS

- 25 New Endowed Scholarships Established

CIP

- 26 CIP Expands Impact with Online Projects

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

- 28 A Socially Distant Summer at Bizim Tepe

GRADS IN THE NEWS

- 30 Jan Nahum RA 67 Receives Sabancı
University's First Honorary Doctorate
Gülru Necipoğlu RC 75 Elected to the British Academy
- 31 Jale Parla ACG 64 Receives Prestigious Literature Award
Bülent Sankur RC ENG 70 Recognized for Lifetime Achievement
- 32 Emine Fetvacı RC 92 Appointed to Calderwood Professorship
Deniz Tortum RC 08 Wins Awards for Latest Film
- 33 Ayşe Erkmen ACG 70ex Recognized with Sculpture Award
Sertaç Yeltekin RC 88 Hosts News Program

COVER STORY

- 34 The Fine Arts of the Robert College Experience
- 42 Street Art: A Conversation with Club Advisor Narciso Argüelles
- 44 RC Alumni in the Arts: A Wide Range of Disciplines

MEMORIES

- 58 A Passion for Her School

BOOKS

- Latest Novel from Hikmet Hükümenoğlu RC 89 **62**
- Lale Deliveli Alp RC 98 Writes Book for Expecting and New Moms
- Two New Poetry Collections from Gül Özseven RC 86 **63**
- Ömer Eğecioğlu RC 72 Publishes Compilation of
Classical Music Articles
- Riva Düvenyas Şalhon RC 88 Publishes Essay Collection **64**
- Ezgi Emel RC 10 Shares Life Lessons Through Children's Books
- Eray Çaylı RC L3 03 Offers a Multidisciplinary Approach to
Climate Change **65**
- Selva Mısırlı Bayındır RC 80 Releases Two New Books

RC REACHES OUT

- Autism in the Workforce: Nevra Eker RC 94 Spearheads a
Transformation **66**
- Senem Başyurt RC 88 Champions Equal Opportunity in Education **67**

ESSAY

- The Vibrant World of Contemporary Art **68**

ONES TO WATCH

- MVP Sophomore Helps Bring Home the Gold **70**
- The Numbers Add Up for Lise 9 Math Whiz

ALUMNI NEWS **71**

FACULTY AND FRIENDS NEWS **74**

OBITUARIES **76**

FACULTY AND FRIENDS OBITUARIES **86**

Our Reunion Will Feel Liberating and Joyful

Head of School Adam Oliver had been in his role for a little over eight months when the pandemic hit. A seasoned school administrator, he and the rest of RC's Senior Leadership Team have had to be agile during this extraordinary time. The RCQ asked him how he has adjusted and how the lessons we have learned during this time will affect our program going forward.

How is your role as an administrator different during the pandemic than it was before?

Rather than "different", it has in some ways been a case of "more". I have had to make more decisions than usual, and often to do so with less time for consideration and with less information. That has been a good learning exercise for me!

Of course, some things have been very different. As a school faces new experiences, all the individuals in it need to change and adapt: if we don't evolve, we can't thrive ourselves, nor help others to flourish. I have certainly needed to give more time to communication, as one example, to try and keep up with the volume of uncertainty we have faced.

It has also been a balancing act, as we have had to constantly do our utmost to care for everyone's health and well-being while also trying to maintain the excellent all-round education that characterizes RC.



Head of School Adam Oliver

How do you envision the spring semester will be?

I have learned that it is very difficult to predict the future right now! I am probably expecting that we will have a staggered return for students, though at the moment we have no news other than to be re-opening on March 1 for face-to-face learning.

When we do come back together, I think that despite the need for careful

social distancing our reunion will feel liberating and even joyful. Schools should be full of noise and life, so it may be a little like the coming of spring after winter as we reconnect with each other and our beautiful campus. I also hope that we can re-open for alumni as soon as it is safe. The spring will also bring challenges of course: we need to make up for lost ground, which will require both hard and clever work from us all.

What have we learned or done differently that you think will be applied to our program post-Covid?

Crises push us hard, and therefore sometimes lead to inspiration and innovation. The most significant silver lining may reside in what we have learned about the power of technology. Most of us are probably looking forward to reducing our screen time for a few months, but after that well-deserved respite we should consider how we can harness the ability of software like Zoom to bring the RC community into closer contact internally and extra-murally. We are already shaping new e-pen-pal schemes, with students in touch with their peers on the other side of the world. In the past couple months, the Community Involvement Program has been working with groups that it otherwise would not be able to reach. These are just a couple instances of technology's ability to help us make new connections.

Meet RC's New Director of Institutional Advancement:

Monika Mraz



Monika Mraz, Director of Institutional Advancement

At the start of the 2020-21 school year, new Director of Institutional Advancement Monika Mraz joined Robert College to lead the alumni, development, and communications teams. The RCQ sat down with Monika to get to know her a little better.

What's your background in development?

My fundraising career started at the Bronx Zoo about 20 years ago. My office was the former birdhouse which might have been a telling description for some days at work. The zoo is a legendary New York City institution that taught me about the importance of relationships with awe and gratitude for the dedication of volunteers who give their time and expertise to support a greater purpose. That experience is what has kept me dedicated to non-profit organizations throughout my career. After the zoo, I moved to Conservation International which expanded my purview to include the whole US,

followed by UNICEF USA where I spent ten years. My work at UNICEF USA offered me numerous opportunities to learn and grow – from organizing multimillion-dollar society galas and managing global partnerships with Rotary, to supporting the Philippines country office in the recovery from typhoon Haiyan – I learned a great deal and built lifelong relationships. And now I am excited to bring all of those experiences to Robert College to not only contribute to the Institutional Advancement team's work but the greater community at RC.

What do you think of the RC community?

I enjoy every chance I get to meet RC community members, from the alumni I meet on Zoom, to our current Student Council members, or my neighbors on campus. Everyone has been kind, welcoming and full of RC stories!

It is our goal to keep Robert College's traditions and legacy strong while supporting the school as it moves into the future.

Why has the name changed to Institutional Advancement?

Our Trustees chose to change the name from Development Office to reflect the wider impact we have on the school. We aren't here just to ask for donations or be a contact directory. It is our goal to keep Robert College's traditions and legacy strong while supporting the school as it moves into the future. Whether that is providing support for new initiatives

like environmental education and social entrepreneurship, expanding the scholarship pool so more students in need can access an RC education, or creating an environment where today's students benefit from the wisdom and knowledge of our alumni.

How do you intend to engage with alumni?

When we can gather again on campus, I can't wait to shake hands and enjoy lunch with our alumni at reunions, Homecoming, or any random Tuesday. I believe the RC alumni community is one of the most valuable resources at Robert College, I think it is only second to the education gained in one of our classrooms. I look forward to getting to know everyone and hear how we can strengthen our alumni network and the opportunities it will afford.

What is the most surprising thing you've learned about RC?

A fun surprise since joining is discovering how many of my connections lead back to RC – one friend's college roommate was from RC, another married an RC grad, or their grandparent was a Trustee. Robert College graduates are everywhere!

How has it been to start a new job in a new country during Covid-19?

I feel very lucky to be joining RC right now. While it is a unique time, the forward-thinking leadership and warm community have made the transition relatively easy. Also seeing alumni come together during a crisis has underlined for me the importance of having the support of a tight-knit community.

A Class that Will Go Down in History



The student procession enters the Dave Phillips Field

What a year it was for the Class of 2020! A spring semester that would have been full of celebrations on campus was spent at home during distance learning at the beginning of the pandemic. Although many of the end-of-year traditions took place online, one celebration the school didn't want the Lise 12 students to miss was graduation.

The commencement ceremony for the 220 members of the Class of 2020 took place on August 21, on the Dave Phillips Field. Every precaution was taken to ensure that it was a safe

event for the graduates and their families, emphasizing masks and social distancing. As families arrived on campus from the upper gate, they were directed to their seats in groups of three, spaced apart from other families.

At the beginning of the ceremony, the student procession led up the field to the platform, where they took their seats, spaced at a safe distance from each other. Students who weren't able to be there in person had photo cutouts placed on their seats and they watched the ceremony via livestream, appearing on screen at different points

in the program. Family members who were not able to attend the ceremony were also able to watch via livestream.

The ceremony opened with words from Head of School Adam Oliver and Turkish Director Nilhan Çetinyamaç. This year's commencement speaker was Hakan Binbaşgil RC 79, CEO of Akbank. In his speech he encouraged the graduates to follow a career that they are passionate about. He also recommended that they not be afraid to fail, question ideas and share their views, and that they be multi-disciplined and keep learning



Social distancing did not diminish the celebratory mood of the event



Commencement speaker Hakan Binbaşgil RC 79



Student speaker Hüseyin Emir Bilgin



Faculty speaker Sinan Tümtürk

and renewing themselves. He added that they should leave room for chance in life and know the value of time. Binbaşgil concluded by giving a special thank you to the faculty who have provided a world-class education. Also addressing the students and their families were Turkish teacher Sinan Tümtürk, and students Elif Gencer and Hüseyin Emir Bilgin. When it came time to awards and diplomas, the usual hugs

and handshakes were missing but the enthusiasm and congratulatory sentiments were shared in abundance by RC administration, teachers, level deans and counselors.

Yiğit Şen, who connected from Hong Kong where he is at university, said, "After a tiring quarantine period, the first major event for me was the ceremony. It certainly felt so good to be back with my friends and to be there

on stage, albeit in a virtual way. It was weird, to say the least, especially when they called my name during the diploma ceremony as I waved and smiled. But as a person who spent the majority of his journey at RC in the IT department or Mr. Türkoğlu's (CTO) office, I believe this was the perfect way for me to say goodbye to my school and my friends, and it created some wonderful and lasting memories."



Yiğit Şen joined via video from Hong Kong. He was one of a handful of students who had started university abroad when graduation took place.

Where is the Class of 2020 Now?

Out of the 220 graduates of the Class of 2020, 48% have chosen to continue their education in Turkey. Of the students who took the 2020 YKS exam (university entrance exam), 116 were successfully placed into Turkish universities. 28 of these students were accepted to both Turkish universities and universities abroad. Out of 43 students who applied to universities abroad for financial aid, 33 have been awarded financial aid from the colleges they were accepted by.

UNIVERSITY NAME	TOTAL
United States of America	57
Boston University	2
Bowdoin College	1
Brown University	1
California Institute of Technology	2
Case Western Reserve University	1
Claremont McKenna College	1
Colgate University	1
Connecticut College	1
Dartmouth College	1
Emory University	3
Georgia Institute of Technology	2
Grinnell College	1
Hamilton College	1
Harvard University	1
Lafayette College	1
New York University	5
Northeastern University	1
Northwestern University	1
Pratt Institute	1
Sarah Lawrence College	1
Smith College (Women's College)	1
Stanford University	4
Tufts University	2
University of California, Berkeley	3
University of California, Los Angeles	1
University of Chicago	3
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign	3
University of Michigan	2
University of Richmond	1
Vanderbilt University	1
Villanova University	1
Washington University in St. Louis	1
Williams College	1
Yale University	4

2020 Overseas University Placement Results

220 students



220 students

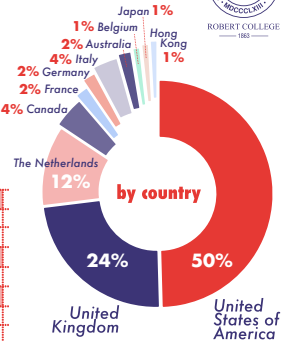
of students who applied abroad 136

of students who were accepted 133

of students who matriculated 115

The Netherlands	13
Amsterdam University College	1
Eindhoven University of Technology	1
Erasmus University Rotterdam	4
Technical University (TU) Delft	4
Tilburg University	1
University of Twente	1
VU University of Amsterdam	1
United Kingdom	27
Architectural Association School of Architecture	1
Durham University	1
Imperial College London	4
King's College London	2
Queen Mary University of London	2
The University of Nottingham	2
University College London	6
University of Edinburgh	1
University of Glasgow	1
University of Leeds	3
University of Manchester	1
University of Oxford	2
University of Warwick	1

Australia	2
University of Melbourne	1
University of Sydney	1
Belgium	1
Katholieke Universiteit KU Leuven	1
Canada	5
Concordia University - Montreal	1
McGill University	1
University of Toronto	3
France	2
UIAA	2
Germany	2
CODE University of Applied Sciences	1
Jacobs University	1
Hong Kong	1
HKU of Science and Technology	1
Italy	4
Bocconi University	3
University of Bologna	1
Japan	1
Nagoya University	1



Scholarship Earned

(Per year)

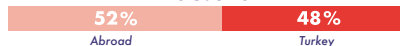


USD 2.65 Mio

UNIVERSITY NAME	TOTAL
PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES	56
BOĞAZİÇİ UNIVERSITY	16
İSTANBUL UNIVERSITY	16
İSTANBUL UNIVERSITY-CERRAHPAŞA	5
İSTANBUL TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY	4
MIDDLE EAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY	3
MARMARA UNIVERSITY	2
KOCAELİ UNIVERSITY	2
HACETTEPE UNIVERSITY	1
YILDIZ TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY	1
MİMAR SİNAN FINE ARTS UNIVERSITY	1
TRAKYA UNIVERSITY	1
HEALTH SCIENCES UNIVERSITY(İSTANBUL)	1
MANİSA ÇELÂL BAYAR UNIVERSITY	1
DİCLE UNIVERSITY	1
YALOVA UNIVERSITY	1
PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES	60
KOÇ UNIVERSITY	22
YEDİTEPE UNIVERSITY	12
SABANCI UNIVERSITY	6
BAHÇEŞEHİR UNIVERSITY	6
İSTANBUL BİLGİ UNIVERSITY	3
ÖZYEGİN UNIVERSITY	3
İSTİNYE UNIVERSITY	3
İHSAN DOĞRAMACI BİLKENT UNIVERSITY	2
ACIBADEM UNIVERSITY	1
KADIR HAS UNIVERSITY	1
BEZMİ-ÂLEM VAKIF UNIVERSITY	1

2020 Turkish University Placement Results

220 students

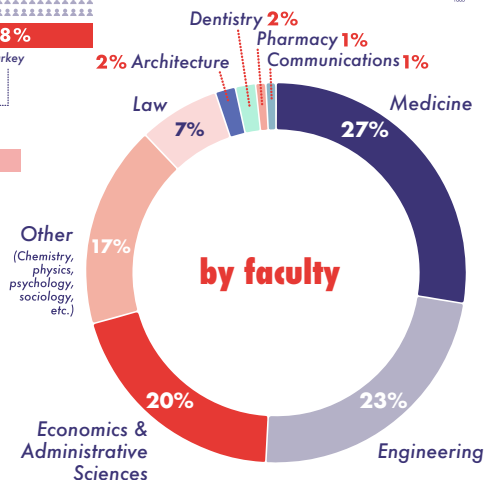


41 students*



ranked in top 1000

* in their own study area



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A DIAMOND IS FOREVER

Open and Shut Case



Preps get to know the campus during orientation, which took place outdoors

What students and teachers have longed for most during the pandemic is the chance to be together in the classroom again. This fall, students started to come back to campus, beginning with Lise 12s who were preparing for university exams, followed by the Lise Prep students and Lise 9s. Plans were in place to have the Lise 10s and 11s return after fall break in November, but at the start of the break the government announced that in-person lessons would stop and classes would continue online. At the time this magazine went to print, schools remained online.

Life on campus has changed since the previous issue, which focused on how RC adapted to the pandemic. The RCQ now takes a look at how Robert College prepared for students



Students safely enjoy the Ibrahim Bodur Library balcony



Signage in the RC Commons, as around campus, serves as a reminder to social distance



Stickers in busy places such as staircases direct people in order to minimize contact



Masks and hand sanitizer are available at stations around campus

to come back, and how lessons and activities are being held. Preparations for a variety of scenarios have allowed the school to adapt quickly, as the situation around Covid-19 changes.

Creating a Safe Learning Environment

With the health and safety of the community a top priority, several changes were made around campus over the summer that would make it safe to be together in anticipation of students returning to school in the fall.

Welcoming New Families to the Community

Getting the campus ready for large numbers of people began over the summer during Lise Prep registration. To hard to make sure families could sign their children up safely,

To make the universal Covid mantra of masks, social distancing and hand washing as easy to follow as possible, the school made several changes around the campus.

registration took place outdoors, with families waiting in the Maze and administrative procedures taking place in the adjacent parking lot. To minimize crowding, one parent was allowed on campus. Everyone was required to wear masks, and stickers and signs reminded people about social distancing. Mask and hand sanitizer dispensers were placed around the registration area.

9 rooms upgraded

60 liters hand sanitizer used per week

192 hand sanitizer dispensers

5241 stickers and signs around campus

21 larger safer teaching spaces created by combining smaller rooms and offices

17 outdoor teaching areas

10 new residential rooms added

400 motors installed so windows can open automatically

685 new books (955 copies) added during distance learning

2963 eBooks circulated during distance learning (1599 in the 2.5 years prior to distance learning)

At the beginning of each school year, Lise Prep students go through a special orientation to help them get to know the campus and the school, as well as meet their teachers and bond with their classmates. This year's activities were unique in a few ways. Students normally see each other for the first time during orientation, but this year they had "met" each other online when classes started in September. Their first real life meeting took place at a one-day event with half of the class sections coming to campus on October 8, and the remaining classes on October 9. Residential students arrived a couple days earlier for



Students enjoyed meeting up with classmates in the fall

Residential Life orientation. Students toured the campus and took part in team building activities on the Plateau.

Mind the Gap

To remind everyone to maintain a safe distance, signs and stickers have been placed on the floors and walls around campus. There are stickers on seats in areas such as Suna Kırış Hall and the RC Commons to remind people to sit apart. Clear signage is placed outside of rooms noting the maximum number of people allowed inside at any given time.

In addition, ventilations systems in areas such as the İbrahim Bodur Library, Nejat Eczacıbaşı Gym, the Murat Karamancı Student Center and

the RC Commons are set to circulate 100% fresh air, and air conditioners and fans were disabled.

To make the universal Covid mantra of masks, social distancing and hand washing as easy to follow as possible, the school made several changes around the campus.

One of the most important steps to protect against Covid is hand washing, and to ensure people could keep their hands germ-free, additional sinks have been placed around campus, in addition to the number of hand sanitizer dispensers being increased. Automatic sensors have been placed on the bathroom doors, toilets,



Additional sinks have been installed around campus

sinks and paper towel dispensers. In addition, people can grab a fresh mask at one of the mask dispensers placed at various locations.

Classrooms for the New Normal

To ensure classes could continue safely, renovations were made to 29 rooms around campus to allow for a minimum of one meter between students / 50m² per class for 24 students. Some offices were relocated so that the office space could be combined with smaller classrooms. Plexiglass dividers have been placed on teachers' desks and in labs, studios and the library to provide protection



Lise Preps get to know the Faralyalı Trail during orientation



Signage shows how many people can safely be in a space at one time



Transparent panels in the art studio provide safe spaces for students to create

when sitting in groups for longer periods. The classroom environment has been transformed to be as touch-free as possible, with motion-sensor lights, and remote-control window openers. The school also used this opportunity to upgrade classrooms that were scheduled to be renovated in the next couple of years.

Hybrid Learning

The 2020-21 academic year began online, and the distance learning

experience has been enhanced based on best practices gained during the spring semester. In addition, protocols have been prepared which allow for in-person classes, distance learning and hybrid lessons. Students began returning in October, but with some students not being able to come to campus, teachers were faced with a new learning style: hybrid lessons, in which some students were physically in the classroom and others joined online.

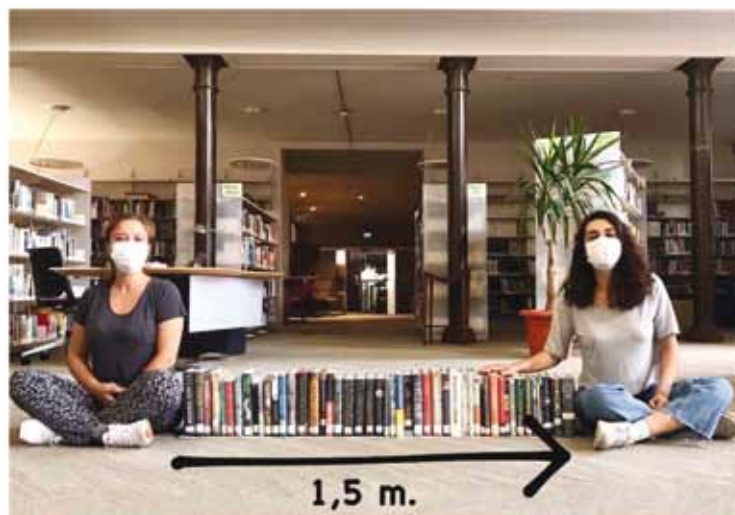
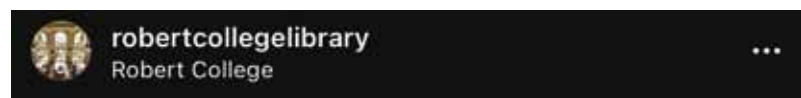
English teacher ilkay Sevimli summed up what all teachers are feeling when she recently spoke with the Bosphorus Chronicle reporter Ali Telek L10: “For me, the most difficult transition is not having that collective laughter. We all smile and laugh, but because you are muted we don’t hear it, and I miss that. I really miss having the face-to-face authentic classroom environment, where you get to hear each other, speak, and laugh at the same time.”

Classes Are by the eBook

The İbrahim Bodur Library is one of the most loved spaces on campus, and not just as a study space, but for the thousands of books. Classes often go to the library for research, and students check out books not only to read for projects, but for pleasure as well. Fortunately, RC has been investing in its eBook and online reference collections, so students can access resources from home. “We’ve added Ideal Online for Turkish journals and the National Theatre Collection database of drama to our already rich collection of databases, and eNewspapers and eJournals,” says head librarian Cara Keyman. “Usage has increased especially



Turkish teacher Aydemir Doğan leads a L12 hybrid class



What is the library like in the new normal? Their Instagram account shares tips and book suggestions.

for The Economist, The Financial Times and New Scientist.” New policies were implemented for Covid, including books being quarantined for 72 hours after being returned, reducing the number of people using the library to comply with social distancing regulations, encouraging students to not touch books but to search the online catalogue first and having a different entrance and exit because of the one-way staircases in Gould Hall. The RC Library also launched an Instagram page (@robertcollegelibrary) to connect with the students about the Library, online resources and services.

Cyrus Carter, who teaches English for Economics, centers his classes around business-related reading. Students read an article in one class and then write a response in the next. “It was easy to transfer into the e-world,” he says. “This semester, students are reading articles from our Flipster collection including but not limited to Forbes, Bloomberg Businessweek and MIT Tech Review. They can also choose articles from our subscription to The Economist (a favorite among our students) or longer readings from the Financial Times.”

A New Kind of Lab Experiment

Who can forget the excitement of science lab experiments – using

Lessons Are Designed Differently

Lise Prep teacher Ana Shaw shares her experiences with hybrid learning.

The thought of going hybrid was daunting, but if you put aside the technical and educational implications of moving to this teaching medium, the first thing that stood out for me was how rewarding it was to see students in person and the pleasure on their faces to be physically in school. Day one was spent being totally thrown by the heights of students. I had made assumptions from the zoom boxes of how tall students were and was proven completely off by this. It led to some amused surprised faces all around, especially when a student noted, “You are the same size as me Miss!”

My RC 25 Prep students have been so patient and resilient online when technical issues befall them or us, and this continued with hybrid learning. The successes we had as a class were due to a supportive environment that was contributed to by everyone. My desire was to uphold our joint commitment to be a community of learners together and so, of those that were able to have face-to-face lessons, students would volunteer to be part of the “zoom squad” and join the students at home online to help share their views and for break-out room discussions. On the smart screens I would use the split screen to show both the slides and the students on the zoom sessions so they were part of

our community.

The lessons that I designed for face-to-face/hybrid learning needed to be different from online learning to not only utilize the school spaces, but also to avoid replicating the online learning experience and instead, create opportunities to allow for socially distant group activities. For example, we had a successful lesson in the Commons with Mia Pamuk, the head of English Language Learning, working with us also to ensure we had effective group activities designed in socially distanced spaces that we could both walk around and monitor and support. We had a less successful lesson on the Plateau, which is safer but proved challenging to hear online students.

The students are disappointed that they are not able to see each other at school, but have taken it in stride. I am trying to find ways to replicate some of the enjoyment of being together and to allow some time, (after class or the start of the lesson) for students to chat to each other in breakout rooms where they can self-select, as they would do if they were in the classroom before I got there.

Also, when students are not unmuting and sharing, the nodding along, smiling, laughing and thumbs up to indicate they are listening are truly appreciated!

special equipment, learning by doing, and working together in groups? With social distancing, lab work seems to be all but impossible, but

RC teachers have found creative ways to help students observe and discover in safe environments.



Students in the Folium in front of Sage Hall, one of 17 outdoor learning spaces



During a hybrid chemistry class students in the lab collaborate with classmates who are online

During hybrid learning, Prep science classes were able to do labs by working individually, such as a density lab where there was enough equipment for each student to have their own materials at their desks. In the Lise 12 classes that were on campus, students were able to do hands-on labs individually while social distancing, with students who were not physically at school watching online and taking notes. For the classes that did not have enough equipment, half the class did the lab and the other half worked on classwork. The next lesson they switched and completed what had not been done the day before.

With students currently doing distance learning, work in the lab continues. "In the science department we have tried our best to do lab activities online," says department head Stuart Arey. "Often it is a demonstration we do live if possible or a video we have made or found on the internet. To help students focus more on the video, we have been using Edpuzzle, which allows us to imbed questions into the video for students to answer. This is often followed up with paired work in class which is completed in virtual breakout rooms. The teachers have filmed themselves doing the lab and collecting data, or have the students read the measurement from the video. Students then create data tables and graphs to be analyzed."

Physics students have made their own motion videos to analyze projectile motion, plotting data points to make

data tables and graphs that can be analyzed. Teachers have also used the Phet simulations to model relationships with motion, force, electricity and momentum. Modern Physics is doing virtual labs, and analysis of previously collected data.

Electronic equipment has been sent to students, and they are doing the electrons circuits at home. In chemistry, teachers have done some activities that can be done at home, such as separation techniques.

Flexibility Is Key

When math teacher Emre Firat took on the new Dean of Curriculum role, he could not have fathomed how many adjustments he would need to make to classes. But during the first weeks of the fall semester Firat had to make changes almost weekly to accommodate students on campus and ensure they have the safest

learning environment. "Each decision brought on another challenge to solve," he says.

When planning the 2020-21 school year, to minimize traffic, they decided to switch to a homeroom system - where students stay in the same classroom as much as possible and the teachers rotate in and out. In addition to enlarging some of the classrooms, the Heritage Room and parts of the Ibrahim Bodur Library have been organized to be used as classrooms.

"In the beginning it was problematic for teachers because they had to disinfect the room before they left, possibly take a break and get materials from their offices, then disinfect the next room, all within 10 minutes," says Firat. Distance was also an issue. For example, he had one class in Gould, the next class in Woods and then a class in Mitchell, with his office in a different building.

When students began returning to campus, the rooms were switched around so that LPs, L12s and L9s - the first classes to come back to campus - could have the biggest rooms, while also trying to keep teachers' movement at a minimum. The registrar's office also helped teachers book empty rooms for online classes.

Throughout all of this, the schedule was only changed once, from 80 minutes to 60 minutes. At the time of print, Firat and his team were looking how to make classes, which are



Prep students work individually on a physics lab



Spacing out in the library is now considered a good thing!

currently online, shorter and to create one common lunchtime. The goal is to reduce screen time, while ensuring that all of the curriculum is covered.

When asked about how students will be graded, Emre Firat says that last spring most of the curriculum was covered when they started online classes, and as it was the first time the whole country was doing distance learning, there was more leniency. For the fall semester, RC students will be graded based on formative assessment (quizzes, essays and reflections with feedback given by teachers) and summative assessments



Precautions in the busy canteen area allow students to safely grab a snack or a light meal



Fewer students per table and assigned seating ensure students can dine safely

(exams, performance assignments and projects).

How did teachers and students react to the frequent adjustments? "Everyone is aware of the changes and understands that they need to be made, so they have been flexible and adapted quickly," says Firat.

Boarding in the Time of Covid

The RC residences are home to nearly 1 in 5 students during the school year, but their cozy living quarters needed to be more spacious due to Covid. As part of the renovation, 10 new bedrooms were created by using the

A Brief Return to Campus

Lise 12 residential student Mertcan Tufan talks about returning to RC in the fall.

What had you missed about being on campus?

After an unexpected “holiday” turned into months-long social isolation, what I missed most were my friends. As a residential student living far away, the campus doesn't just mean school but it also means being with them. So it was great to reunite with my friends and my teachers.

How was it returning to the boys' residence?

The first few months of my last year in Bingham didn't go as I thought they would. The conditions were much different now due to the pandemic. However, we were aware of the seriousness of the situation, so we had to quickly adapt to the new normal and the rules that came with it. Unlike the previous years, very few of the students came back to the residence, so the ambiance wasn't the same as before.

What did you like about being back in class in-person?

Although it was nice to be back in class in-person, I had some concerns about my health since it was obligatory for the residential students to attend in-person classes. Fortunately, we didn't have any positive cases in our grade thanks to the precautions taken by the school and the students.

So far, how is your senior year different than you imagined it would be?

When I was a prep student, I looked up to the seniors. I would dream about the day we would go to the Islands, which became a tradition for the seniors. Although we can't organize monthly senior activities right now, I hope that we'll be able to have the senior day in May. Amid all the uncertainty, I still think we'll have the chance to do some of the things we've been waiting to do for four years.

How are you adjusting back to distance learning?

After attending the in-person classes for a month, I got used to face to face learning. So switching back to online learning was a struggle, especially since I was back home in a different learning environment. It was hard to fully concentrate all the time. However, now that I'm getting used to it, I believe that I can do my best while enjoying the comfort of my home.

How is the University Prep going, from starting out in person to now being online?

I would prefer being in-person rather than online since it is easier for me to ask questions. It's exhausting to face the screen for a long period of time after having to attend online school classes. However, I think it is worth it considering that I'll be studying at a good university next year.



Different areas around campus, such as the RC Commons, have been transformed into learning spaces



English teacher Sarah Corder has a one-on-one discussion with a student

common areas such as the lounges and study hall, and beds were removed from existing rooms and placed in the new rooms to minimize crowding.

A Different Dining Experience

One of the busiest spaces on campus, the Murat Karamancı Student Center went through some adjustments to create a healthy dining environment for everyone. When students were

on campus, the lunch periods were divided into intervals by section to reduce crowding. Students have assigned seats which are distanced, where they eat every day, which helps with contact tracing should an illness occur. The lines may not have totally disappeared, but the students appreciate being able to grab a delicious hot meal and sit in their reserved spot.



A photography student shoots foliage on campus

Doing More Virtually

The Gastronomy Club (GC) is one example of how activities are taking place online. The RCQ asked the head of the club Soykan Baş L10 how they've managed to adjust.

What does your initiative do?

Our initiative brings together people who have an interest in food and aims to create a community among these people. In our daily lives, we have a lot of things to worry about, but we hope that when an RC student, faculty, or staff joins in one of our events, he or she will be relieved of these struggles. In an academically challenging school like Robert College, our foremost purpose is to give people joy.

What are you doing online that you wouldn't have been doing if you were meeting face to face?

We have events almost every two weeks. If we were in school we would not be able to organize these many events because people spent a lot of hours in traffic, so they barely had time to finish their homework/duty at home. Moreover, it wouldn't be possible to bring together 50 people who are doing a Brownie recipe at the same time. It is amazing to have so many people doing the same thing together; people had missed doing things together, and this event allowed them to do just that.

What would you be doing if you were meeting face to face?

We would be going to face-to-face workshops, preparing food in school events such as FAF, Battle of the Bands, organizing a Gastronomy Summit, and trying to convince the school to build a kitchen for us in school.



Clubs, Teams and Initiatives Move Online

RC wouldn't be the same without its co-curricular activity program, which gives students the opportunity to further explore their interests, gain hands-on experience and bond with their classmates. While having to move the 130 clubs, teams and initiatives online has brought up challenges, students have also been creative and come up with new activities that they normally would not be able to do when meeting face to face.

Members of the RC Theatre Company turned their screens into their stage, and have written an original TV series that includes a news parody, a game show parody, a Socrates trial and a whodunnit podcast. Theatre director Jake Becker, says although being online poses its challenges, the students are learning similar skills to when they meet in person. "They are still learning orchestration of characters. Developing an understanding of comedy has been a side benefit; I'm amazed at how well they're able to do the parodies." When asked about the types of drama activities they



An art student focuses on a project

do, he says that the warmups are the same, including song, dance and improvisation. "Kids need to be active both physically and mentally, which

they are not always getting in the classroom," he says. "They are learning by doing, because RC Theatre has always been hands-on."

Another area that seems nearly impossible to do online is sports. Davor Rimac, coach of the boys junior varsity basketball team and boys varsity tennis team has kept players active with drills and exercises they can do at home. Videos he has filmed in the gym help demonstrate the moves they need to do. The basketball team also had a former NBA Euroleague player as a guest speaker in the fall. "Sports are really affected by the pandemic, but hopefully soon we will be able to start to train again," says Rimac. "Until then, we try to make the best of it, while not requiring too much extra screen time."

RC students and teachers have creatively adapted to the ever-changing circumstances throughout the pandemic. Many of the new techniques and skills will likely continue to be used to enhance the learning experience when in-person classes resume. ■



Prep students with Community Involvement Program Coordinator Elif Sönmez (third from the left)

Annual Giving Kickoff Goes Global



Institutional Advancement Director Monika Mraz thanked class agents for their efforts in the 2019-20 campaign



Harvard professor Dani Rodrik RC 75 joined from Boston

A record-breaking year was cause for celebration at the 2020-21 Annual Giving Kickoff event on November 8, 2020. Held for the first time online, class agents, high level donors and RC Trustees from around the globe came together to applaud a successful 2019-20 campaign and launch annual giving for 2020-21.

This year's keynote speaker was Dani Rodrik RC 75, Ford Foundation

Professor of International Political Economy at Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government. Rodrik spoke of the political and economic landscape around the world. Discussing the polarization that is happening in many countries, he said, "I think we will need fundamentally new strategies, fundamentally much more inclusive economic policies and, beyond economics, a way of bridging cultural divides. We need more institutions like

Robert College that I believe does and can inculcate these kinds of values."

Head of School Adam Oliver gave an update on how RC is navigating through the pandemic. Noting that the school will overcome current challenges as it has overcome many other hardships in its long history, he said, "We have great teachers and workers, great leaders, and great supporters. You and your assistance in the many forms it takes will never be more important than across the 2020-21 academic year." He added, "Our thanks are extended also to our Class Agents for the work they carry out each year which literally keeps Robert College breathing."

Newly appointed Director of Institutional Advancement Monika Mraz shared her initial impressions of the school, saying, "I have quickly learned that at the center of it are our students – what an exceptional collection of young adults dedicated to getting their best education but who couldn't accomplish nearly as much



Head of School Adam Oliver welcomed attendees

LEVEL of PARTICIPATION**1) RC 76 Class Agents:**

Nedim Ölçer
Yasemin Palanduz Kahya

2) RC 91 Class Agents:

Beste Ortaç
Cüneyt Soydaş

3) RC 00 Class Agents:

Zeynep Kayhan
Alara Orhon Özşeker
Esra Yalçınalp

4) RC 98 Class Agents:

Oral Bozyiğit
Zeynep Baylan Dirikcan
Baki Kantaşı

5) RC 93 Class Agents:

Can Önen
İrem Kızılviranlıoğlu Önen

6) RC 90 Class Agents:

Okan Atilla
Aysan Sinanlıoğlu
Sarmpezoudis
Mete Tuncel

7) RC 89 Class Agents:

Mert Tarlan
Zümrüt Alp Yalman

8) RC L12 03 Class Agents:

Onur Eren
Ayşen Nergiz
Cem Oğuzhan

9) RC 88 Class Agents:

Arif Akdağ
Aslı Berkol
Mehmet Cemalcılar
Gülin Yenigün Yücel

10) ACG 69 Class Agent:

Nur Şener Edil

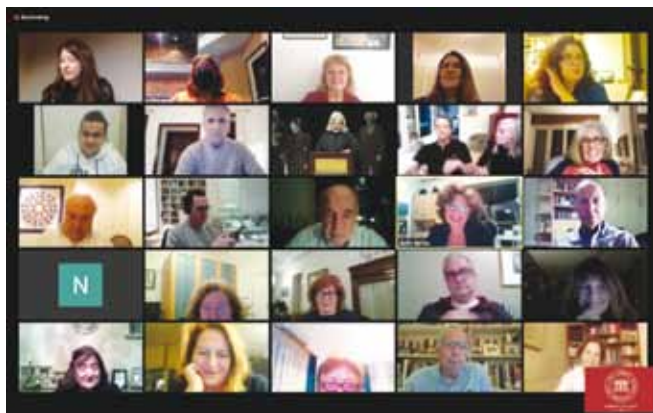
as they do without the support of those who travelled these halls before them – and that is all of you. Our alumni are a robust group who give back through scholarships, time, and expertise to create RC's world-class legacy. You know that to succeed in anything, a helping hand can ease the way and you offer that to our students."

Following Dani Rodrik's speech, Monika Mraz recognized the award-winning class agents whose exceptional work made the 2019-20 campaign one of the most successful ever, with a record-breaking 2702 participants, raising a total of \$1,880,000.

Robert College is grateful for the support of alumni and friends who made this accomplishment possible, and for the dedicated Class Agents who brought their classes together to make this an outstanding year.

To see the 2019-20 Honor Roll, visit
website.robcol.k12.tr/en/giving/honor-roll

To make a gift to the 2020-21 Annual Giving Campaign, visit
giving.robcol.k12.tr



Class agents, high level donors and RC Trustees from around the globe joined via video

**LEVEL of GIVING****1) RC 86 Class Agents:**

Meltem Tarhan Kayhan
Özlem Özbek
Kazım Uzunoğlu
Zeynep Yalım-Uzun

2) RC 89 Class Agents:

Mert Tarlan
Zümrüt Alp Yalman

3) RC 94 Class Agents:

Özen Bozçağa Bezirci
Nevra Eker Güryel

4) RC 93 Class Agents:

Can Önen
İrem Kızılviranlıoğlu Önen

5) RC 95 Class Agents:

Melis Alemdar
Fulya Çanakçı Güçlü
Memet Ünsal

6) RC 88 Class Agents:

Arif Akdağ
Aslı Berkol
Mehmet Cemalcılar
Gülin Yenigün Yücel

7) RC 91 Class Agents:

Beste Ortaç
Cüneyt Soydaş

8) RC 87 Class Agents:

Burak Pekcan
Aylin Barlas Sarıcı
Gaye Erkuloğlu Tabağ

9) RC 90 Class Agents:

Okan Atilla
Aysan Sinanlıoğlu
Sarmpezoudis
Mete Tuncel

10) RC 78 Class Agents:

Semih Aksu
Selma Şaşmaz Somer
Haluk Şardağ
Doğan Şenocak

RC Stands Up Against Bullying

When not dealt with specifically, bullying can become part of an institutional culture. Over the years, the RC Counseling Office has done extensive work with students about bullying and cyberbullying, in line with MEB guidelines. To complement this, Student Dean Margaret Halicioğlu and Counseling and Well-being Head Erkan Uğuzalp have recently developed an anti-bullying policy for Robert College. With the policy in place, they wanted to build on existing preventive measures with an annual event focused on raising awareness about bullying.

"All research shows that bullying is a very common challenge for high schools regardless of their backgrounds. A responsible school takes preventive measures whether or not bullying is a common problem in order to make sure that the school's culture embraces non-violent communication," says Uğuzalp. "Currently cyberbullying is our focus with risks increased during the pandemic and the 'new



A livecast hosted by RC counselors was one of the activities that took place during a week that focused on bullying awareness

normal'. Cyberbullying can be much more detrimental than other types of bullying to a student's well-being

since a) it has almost no limits - it can get to you anywhere, anytime, b) hundreds of aggressors may gang up on a vulnerable student very easily on social media platforms, and c) people feel depersonalized with the illusion of anonymity online and act in much crueler ways when online."

Held the week of November 30, 2020, and coinciding with the bullying awareness activities around the globe in November, RC's events were themed #RCUpstanders, encouraging everybody to speak up when faced with bullying. Uğuzalp provided training to all grades on bullying dynamics and introduced the anti-bullying policy. RC counselors Selin Şen and Pınar Keskiner held an instagram livecast titled "Zorbalık: Susmak ya da Susmamak" (Bullying: To Speak or Not to Speak) for the whole community. There was also an Odd Socks Day to celebrate diversity, a poster competition, a short film competition and a list of bullying-themed books that was curated by the İbrahim Bodur Library.

Back to School

This fall, Nilgün Oktay Orhan RC 95 joined Robert College as a member of the Student Affairs and Lise Offices. With years of experience in relationship management roles, working with students and parents was a natural transition. "I'm pleased to be able to use my qualifications and past experience to contribute to various projects in our valuable RC environment, and fulfill the mission of giving back to our home, RC," she says. "I feel lucky to be close to the RC academic community. Words cannot describe how excited I feel to be working with RC students."

After 18 years in finance and marketing planning functions at international and national companies, Nilgün first



Nilgün Oktay Orhan RC 95

returned to RC in 2014, as member relations manager at the Robert College Alumni Association (RKMD). In the last five years, she was part of the alumni office at Boğaziçi University.

When asked about coming back to campus at this unique time, she says, "Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, students were able to come only for some restricted days. Meeting with parents and teachers through Zoom surely isn't the same as being together in person. As an RC family, we are open to challenges and can adapt to changes smoothly. But this doesn't change the fact that we are eagerly looking forward to seeing them all on campus!"

NE YAPABİLİRİZ?

İyiliğe giden yolculuğumuz işte bu soruyla başladı.

Sürdürülebilir bir gelecek kurmak için yıllardır hep kendimize sorduk, ne yapabiliriz?

Ardından yeni sorular, yeni çözümler, sıra dışı fikirler ve
hep daha yükseğe koyduğumuz hedefler geldi.

Dünya kaynaklarını daha verimli kullanan teknolojiler, üretim süreçleri ve
doğaya faydalı ürünlerle hep daha iyisi için durmadan çalışıyoruz.

Yıllardır yeniliği aşkla tasarlayan Arçelik olarak biliyoruz ki sorumlu üretim ve
sorumlu tüketim anlayışıyla, el ele verip dünyayı hep birlikte iyileştireceğiz.

 **arçelik** / *iyiliği aşkla tasarlar*



Robert College Joins SDG 13 Climate Action Challenge

Excerpt from the article on Medium by İpek İnci Özyiğit L9, edited by Barış Yazıcı L12



Students and faculty were encouraged to take action for the climate at the SDG 13 Challenge Insight Day

Robert College Social Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Creativity Office (RCSEIC) launched its first online event, SDG 13 Challenge Insight Day, on October 24, 2020. RC faculty, students, and staff got together to gain insight into and develop a trans-disciplinary understanding of the climate crisis by listening to experts working on different aspects of the issue. The event was an introduction to a much bigger organization: SDG 13 Challenge - an eight-month design thinking program for Robert College students, faculty and staff who want to develop projects on SDG 13: Climate Action.

Aybike Oğuz, head of Social Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Creativity presented the UN Sustainable

Development Goals and pointed out the urgency. SDGs are a collection of 17 interconnected goals which are designed to be a blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all. RC will work on SDG 13 this year because the climate crisis is the most urgent one of those goals. In Ms. Oğuz's words, we will be working on "one piece of a bigger ecosystem".

Co-heads of Environmental Education, Dünya Önen RC L3 03 and Stephen Holz presented their vision of Environmental Education at RC. Ms. Önen emphasized that, "There is not only one solution to stop this crisis; the key is collective responsibility and effort from each of us." Mr. Holz presented three key long-term goals of the environmental movement at RC.

- **Empower:** equipping everyone with the adequate knowledge to positively impact the planet.
- **Create:** making sure that the RC campus is using zero waste, zero energy and that it is an ecologically sustainable place.
- **Share:** creating a message to share with the RC community, our country and region.

Ms. Oğuz ended the event by inviting RC faculty, students, and staff to form teams and participate in the SDG 13 Challenge to develop a project to take action for a sustainable world.

You can read the full article on RCSEIC's Medium account at rcseic.medium.com

New Endowed Scholarships Established

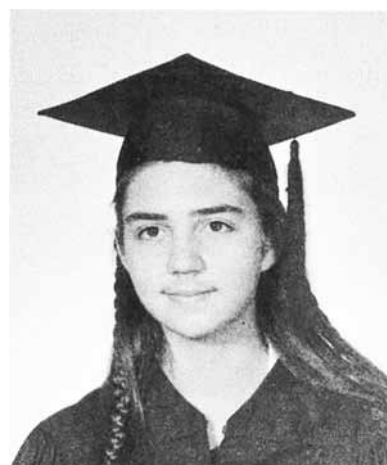
Endowed Scholarship Honors RC Parent

As a thoughtful gesture to honor their mother, Aslı Sözen Yeh RC 88 and Elif Sözen Kohl RC 85 have established an endowed scholarship named after Lâle Sözen.

"Lâle Hanım was a well educated chemical engineer when she was young," says son-in-law Richard Yeh. "In later life, she and Kemal Bey took an interest in, and sponsored the educations of, several less fortunate young women from the Çanakkale area. We discussed the idea of endowing a scholarship at RC last autumn; she approved."



Aslı Sözen Yeh RC 88



Elif Sözen Kohl RC 85

The family felt it was an appropriate time to name this scholarship after her and to mention her daughters Aslı and Elif who are her connection to the school. Lâle Sözen subsequently

passed away in May 2020, after the scholarship was established.

The gift was made through CAF American Donor Fund which allows

people who file taxes in both the UK and US to have a greater philanthropical impact by helping them claim the maximum relief in both countries.

Leaving a Legacy for Future Generations



Ergin Kök RC ENG 55

After graduating from RC Engineering in 1955, Ergin Kök went to the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign where he got his master's. He moved to Los Angeles and worked for Parsons Corporation until his retirement, and also worked on projects in Mexico City and Jeddah. Kök married Irene Neuman and they had a son, Erol, and a daughter Yasmin. Although he stayed in the US, his heart remained in Turkey.

In the fall of 2020, he donated the proceeds of the sale of his home in Istanbul to establish an endowed scholarship. "I hope this gift will allow students to have the same experience I did," he said.

His brother Yüksel Kök RC ENG 64 added, "We have always loved RC and believe in the power of education to change lives."

Establishing an Endowed Scholarship

Scholarships have the power to change lives. By establishing an endowed scholarship at Robert College, you can provide a transformative education to a bright student in need. There are several ways you can make your gift, including through CAF and planned giving. To discuss options, contact Mehveş Dramur in the Institutional Advancement Office at mdramur@robcol.k12.tr

CIP Expands Impact with Online Projects

Pandemic-induced school closures, curfews, and travel restrictions have not kept Robert College students from being involved in the community. In fact, the pivot to online Community Involvement Program (CIP) projects since March 2020 has brought innovations in project focus and implementation, the

opportunity to work with new partners across geographic and cultural divides, the flexibility of meeting times, and a reduction in the ecological footprint of projects. Most importantly, online CIP projects have enabled students to stay connected with their peers, teachers, and communities beyond RC at a time of social isolation. In addition to the

following projects, CIP ran six ongoing projects in the fall semester, and six online projects during the semester break. Online projects have been so successful that CIP will continue to offer them even when we can resume face-to-face projects. Here is a highlight of some of our new CIP projects from autumn 2020.

Drawing Our Dreams

Pamir Yayman L10 dreamed of doing a tree-planting project in his family's hometown of Hatay to aid in the recovery from recent forest fires. Instead, he had the opportunity to develop the seeds of creativity in students from Koyunoğlu Middle School in Hatay by sharing his passion for caricature. With 12 RC students, RC librarian Gözde Zengin Dilli as advisor, and training from the Ankara Karikatür Vakfı, Pamir led an online project during fall break whereby students learned caricature techniques to draw and share their ideas and dreams. Pamir discussed the challenges and rewards of working online:

"During the project, we encountered more than one problem beyond our control, such as a broken projector, a computer with no sound, power outages, quarantine, etc. Still, we did not allow these to demoralize us. We completed the project successfully. "We were very happy to see that the children were also satisfied with the project. The theme of our project was "dreams". Throughout the project, we showed children different drawing techniques and taught the intricacies of the cartoon. Finally, the children drew their dreams with what they have learned.

"We were all very happy while listening and seeing the dreams of the children. We finished our project with emotional speeches and emphasizing how important it is to follow dreams."



During the Drawing Our Dreams project, children learned different drawing techniques

"Going Viral" International Online Magazine



Lise 12 students Deniz Ece Aydın and Semiha Bilge Önoğlu brought a global community of youth together to share their experiences of the pandemic through RC CIP's first international online magazine. With an editorial team of eight RC students and guidance from advisors Angela Shockley and Stephen Shifflett, original stories and artwork were collected from students at RC and international schools in the US, (Cape Henry Collegiate) UK (Felsted School) and Romania (Transylvania College). The magazine was published at the end of August, and the project culminated in an online launch event in September, with plans for a second issue in the works.

Songs Must Go On



Members of the RC Singers give hope to children through song

A member of RC Singers, Beliz Soyak L10, wanted to share her passion for music with kids who do not have access to voice training. With 10 RC Singers members and advisors Koray Demirkapı and Berna Adatöz, Beliz led an eight-week online voice training workshop for 24 kids from NGOs Çimenev and Açık Alan Derneği. According to Beliz, “The pandemic has been forcing us to bring a pause to our lives. I held on to music and

singing in lockdown. An email calling for online CIP proposals gave me the idea of initiating a project where I could put music and interacting with children together - even if it is online. With the help of the CIP Office, we identified 9-12-year-old children from institutions, and formed a group of students from RC Singers. We spend two hours each week with these children who are interested in music, and work on improving their singing

techniques, theoretical and music culture knowledge. Providing these children an opportunity to hold on in the quarantine, especially through music, makes me feel purely happy. Smiling together with the children, although virtually, has become one of the things that keeps me going in these tough weeks. As in ‘The Show Must Go On,’ from Queen, life and music should also definitely go on, giving its name to our CIP project: Songs Must Go On.”

English Tutoring

Lise 11 students Aras Karlıdağ and Metin Şahin originally planned to facilitate a week-long summer English practice program at a middle school in Sivas. With the shift to online projects, they quickly adapted their curriculum with the help of their advisor İlkey Sevimli, implementing two eight-week online after school programs with kids from the Atlas Association in Istanbul and Koyunoğlu Middle School in Hatay, thus expanding the reach and scope of their project. According to Aras and Metin, “We all kept learning how to teach something online in an effective way. It was not like a typical school lesson and thus a new experience for all of us, including the children. There were lots of games and interactive activities that made it more fun than a typical face-to-face class. The eagerness of the children to join each session and their sadness when the project came to an end were proof of it being fun for them.”

Arts & Sciences CIP in a Box

Lise 10 students Kerem Ege Öktem and Nil Özçevik led a six-week program of interactive online arts and science activities from the end of summer through October with Syrian kids from the NGO Small Projects.

From November to the end of December 2020, Kerem and Nil led a second iteration of the project with kids from Atlas Derneği with the help of their advisor Liz Molton.

This project piloted our new “CIP in a Box” model, whereby all the materials needed for project activities were sent to the participants through our partner organizations. The kids made small battery-powered boats, decorated canvas bags with their own designs, did simple science experiments, played games, and had many opportunities to expand their creativity and curiosity.



Materials to create colorful canvas bags were part of the CIP in a Box



A Social[ly Distant] Summer at Bizim Tepe

During the window when people were able to socialize over the summer, the Alumni Association ran the summer camp for children, as well as a movie night. Although we wished we would have had more time to spend together, we had fun times and made great memories at this summer's events.



Bizim Kamp 2020

This year's Bizim Kamp was a chance for kids ages 4 to 8 to socialize with peers in the fresh air while enjoying fun, engaging activities. The program included arts, yoga, drama, dance, reading, STEM and of course swimming. To ensure participants' safety, group size was limited to 10 children. Kids had a wonderful summer in the great outdoors doing things that were physically, socially and mentally stimulating, in an environment where health and safety were a top priority.

The Pictures & The Drinks

We held the first event of a delightful party series that offered the outdoor cinema experience on September 10, 2020, at Bizim Tepe poolside. The most famous movie that comes to mind when the water theme is mentioned, Jaws was screened at the event, where our guests could enjoy the movie on sun loungers or chairs by the pool, or

in the pool. Cocktails suitable for the concept were served all night long.

Our aim was to meet our graduates and quench their longing at an unforgettable open-air event in September, when all activities were reduced due to Covid-19 restrictions in the city, and therefore, we took

all security measures and limited participation to 100 people.

Only The Pictures & The Drinks Vol. 1 took place and regretfully, we could not perform the second and third film screenings of the series due to the decision by the Ministry of Health to stop all gatherings.



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Jan Nahum RA 67 Receives Sabanci University's First Honorary Doctorate

Sabanci University awarded their first-ever honorary doctorate to industrialist Jan Nahum at a ceremony on October 26, 2020. Güler Sabancı, Board Chair of Sabancı Holding, recognized Nahum - a member of the Sabancı University Board of Trustees - for his contributions to education, industry and academia-industry cooperation, saying, "One of Jan Nahum's most important characteristics is that he can foster cooperation. With Jan Nahum now as a representative of both the business world and the academy we will continue to develop our work further."

Nahum said, "It is a great honor that such a university should give me the title of first honorary doctor. I would like to thank everyone who has deemed me worthy of this."



From L to R: Event moderator Fuat Keyman, Sabancı Holding Board Chair Güler Sabancı, Jan Nahum RA 67 and Sabancı University Rector Yusuf Leblebici

Speaking about his career Nahum stated, "I fought hard to make the Turkish automotive industry competitive with the world. Not renouncing my dreams, I worked hard for them, even ready to resign, if necessary, to realize them. I, too, have experienced failures, as well as success. If you want to avoid failure while on the road to success, inevitably you distance yourself from

success. It is important not be afraid of failure and to learn from failure. It is necessary to make strong connections between the new and the old and the inexperienced and the experienced."

Jan Nahum was also awarded an honorary doctorate in 2013 from Okan University for his contributions to the transportation sector.

Gülru Necipoğlu RC 75 Elected to the British Academy

Gülru Necipoğlu, Aga Khan Professor of Islamic Art and Architecture and Director of the Aga Khan Program in the Department of History of Art and Architecture at Harvard University, has been appointed to the British Academy as a Corresponding Fellow in the discipline of History of Art and Music.

Necipoğlu has received this lifetime accolade not only because of her internationally renowned and vast body of work in areas such as Ottoman and Mediterranean architectural history, pre-modern Islamic art and architecture, and visual culture of history and science, but also because of her previous awards and titles and the sheer number of brilliant students she has educated who have gone on to become academics



Gülru Necipoğlu RC 75

around the world. She is the first Turkish fellow of the Academy in its 118 years. Corresponding Fellows are elected as a mark of the highest scholarly distinction.

Necipoğlu claims her experience at RC influenced her academic career greatly: "I was a successful science major, but being exposed to the humanities at

RC changed my outlook and helped develop my intellectual curiosity for the arts and humanities in a deep way. My teachers provided superb advice about appropriate colleges in the US for pursuing my passion for the arts with a BA degree, which would combine studio arts and art history with philosophy and anthropology. The final choice was excellent: Wesleyan University in Connecticut. This broad combination of fields eventually evolved into my decision to focus on art history in graduate studies at Harvard. RC played a huge role in my intellectual development with its curriculum exposing us to a wide range of disciplines. I was awarded the RC Literature Prize, upon graduating, showing my interest in creative writing which proved so useful throughout my career.

Jale Parla ACG 64

Receives Prestigious Literature Award



Jale Parla ACG 64

Jale Parla was recognized for her success in bridging academia and literature, her original analysis of Turkish literature and her contribution to literature in education as a literary critic through the 2020 Erdal Öz Literature Award. After

graduating from ACG, Parla studied comparative literature at Robert College. Subsequently, she did her PhD in comparative literature at Harvard University. She is currently a professor of comparative literature at Bilgi University.

The Erdal Öz Award was established by his family in 2008 to commemorate Erdal Öz's legacy. Although Parla did not know Erdal Öz personally, she was well aware of his significant place in Turkey's intellectual life as a poet, writer, publisher, social activist and a pioneer in various cultural enterprises. Parla says, "Besides the honor of receiving an award that bears the name

of such a person, I am also heartened by the fact that the jury that gave this award recognized the contribution of someone from the field of literary criticism, a field that certainly needs all the institutional encouragement that it can possibly get."

When asked about the influence ACG and RC had in shaping her career, Parla states, "The humanities formation provided by a wide range of course electives in literary, historical, sociological, and philosophical subjects in the curricula of ACG and RC inspired me with pursuing my studies in the discipline of comparative literature."

Bülent Sankur RC ENG 70

Recognized for Lifetime Achievement

IEEE (The Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers) Turkey recognized Bülent Sankur for his work on signals processing. Sankur spent his teaching and research career at Boğaziçi University over the last 44 years. In between he has had positions at the University of Ottawa, Delft University of Technology, Télécom Paris and Istanbul Technical University.

Sankur's research is focused on signal and information processing and their applications to industrial design, health and security problems. Some of the areas he has addressed include information security, watermarking and hashing; human-computer interfaces and various biometric modalities; image and video processing with computer vision in focus; and 3D shape analysis. He has also initiated and supported Turkish conference

series and summer schools, and hosted and chaired various workshops and conferences at the international level. In addition, Sankur has been involved in the development of Turkish scientific and technical terminology during the last four decades. He is presently leading a group of several hundred experts in the scientific terminology and dictionary project of the Academy of Sciences. Among all these achievements Sankur believes his most valuable contributions to be his thesis students: "I consider myself lucky to have had such brilliant students."

Regarding his years at RC, Sankur says, "I still have very fond memories of those 'innocent years' on the campus. At that time, the whole college had fewer than 700 students, approximately 1/17th of today's Boğaziçi University. In a sense, everybody had a chance to meet and



Bülent Sankur RC ENG 70

know everybody else. The education I received at RC was the essential core on which I could build my career. I still remember with gratitude our professors: Nedim 'Baba', gregarious and fatherly; Ferize Hanım, elegant and dedicated; Necmi Tanyolaç, authoritarian but with a vision; Haldun Gürmen, gentlemanly and witty; and Kemal Halıcı, knowledgeable and considerate."

Emine Fetvacı RC 92 Appointed to Calderwood Professorship

Prominent scholar Emine Fetvacı has been named Boston College's Calderwood Professor in Islamic and Asian Art. Fetvacı's work focuses on the arts of the book in the Islamic world, as well as Ottoman, Mughal and Safavid art and architecture.

"The Islamic world includes a rich variety of historical, aesthetic, and cultural traditions which I examine in my teaching. One way of engaging with this variety is by examining cultural interactions among the various groups within the Islamic world, as well as their relationships with their neighbors in Europe and the Far East," says Fetvacı. "By exploring the rich history of the Islamic world in my courses, I hope to instill curiosity and excitement about Islamic art



Emine Fetvacı RC 92

among new generations of Boston College students. Equally important, my research and publications will enhance the department's already impressive research profile."

One cultural interaction that Fetvacı is researching at the moment is the creative exchange between the Ottomans and the Mughals, which

she discovered while preparing her last book on an exquisite album made for Ahmed I. "I am exploring mostly the book arts, but of course there were other important media, such as textiles, which fed into a constant flow of goods across the Indian Ocean."

Fetvacı's love for art history happened by chance at RC during Lise 3. "At that time, a class needed at least six students in it, and five of my closest friends were asking Mrs. Atakan to teach them art history. They talked me into being the sixth. I enjoyed that class so much that I took more art history classes at Williams and eventually majored in it. So this all began with Nancy Atakan's engaging teaching and the inspiration she provided."

Deniz Tortum RC 08 Wins Awards for Latest Film

Deniz Tortum's film *Maddenin Halleri (States of Matter)*, which had its global preview at the Rotterdam Film Festival and Turkish premier at the 57th Antalya Altın Portakal Film Festival, has won three awards so far: Best Film and Best Director at the Accessible Film Festival, and Best Documentary at Altın Portakal. When asked what inspired him to make this movie, Tortum states, "I grew up in a family of doctors. My father has worked at Cerrahpaşa for most of his career. In 2015, there were rumors that Cerrahpaşa was going to be demolished, so I started shooting this film as an impulse to archive. I wanted to make a film about life in the hospital, a film that attempts to understand the psyche of the healthcare workers and



Deniz Tortum RC 08

explores the hospital from multiple perspectives - doctors, nurses, patients, cats, buildings."

Tortum's previous film was *Anatolian Trip* (co-directed with Can Eskinazi).

It follows an amateur psychedelic rock band embarking on a self-organized concert tour in Turkey. His next project is called ARK, and it explores the relationships between the history of computation and the climate crisis.

Tortum remembers fondly the freedom RC provides and its support of the arts: "In film-making no one tells you how to shape your career or what the next step is. You need to create your path constantly and that requires being comfortable with autonomy. I was able to delve deep into photography and filmmaking at RC; having access to a darkroom was really invaluable. I learned many fundamental skills there."

Ayşe Erkmen ACG 70ex

Recognized with Sculpture Award

The 2020 Ernst Franz Vogelmann Sculpture Award was presented to Ayşe Erkmen on July 17, 2020, at the opening of her exhibition *Eins, Zwei, Drei* at the Vogelmann Art Gallery in Heilbronn, Germany. She was lauded by the jury as an extremely imaginative and versatile representative of contemporary art with a broad concept of sculpture. "This prize means a lot because it is not just an art prize but a sculpture prize, I am the first woman to get this prize and because it gave me the chance to have a big exhibition as part of the prize," said Erkmen.

Known for her site-specific works which are displayed for a limited time, Ayşe Erkmen's creations often "disappear" when an exhibition is over. For her the artistic goal is not to create



Ayşe Erkmen ACG 70ex

a product or object, but a temporary state with minimal interventions, which demands perception and remains as a memory. She reflects the specific features of a place in its respective context: sometimes historical-institutional, sometimes social-cultural. For example, "On Water", a jetty connecting the

riverbanks at Münster's inner harbor which she prepared for Skulptur Projekte 2017, gave visitors the feeling of walking on water, while also drawing attention to sociological and urban planning problems.

When asked about upcoming projects, Erkmen said, "Because of Covid-19 most exhibitions are being cancelled or postponed. My exhibition in March in Ichihara, Japan will be installed by the curators without me being there. In March I will also have an exhibition in Berlin at Galerie Barbara Weiss. An exhibition in Fremantle, Australia has been cancelled. I am working on a project for Winterthur, Switzerland and Baden Baden, Germany, as well as a public art project for Museum COS Denmark.

Sertaç Yeltekin RC 87 Hosts

Stüdyo Singapur at Ekotürk Channel

Sertaç Yeltekin is a true global citizen. He studied in the United States, worked in banking and management consulting while raising a family in Italy, and has been in Singapore since 2017 working in asset management, venture building and advisory. Yeltekin was approached in May 2020 to offer commentary on Asian markets by Ekotürk, Turkey's first national channel focused solely on economic news. After a few months, Yeltekin suggested that the channel's management host a news and commentary program titled *Stüdyo Singapur*, live from Singapore.

The format is based on short chats with Turkish entrepreneurs, academics, businesspeople, and Turkish diplomats on themes that have relevance for



Sertaç Yeltekin RC 87


Turkey and Asia. Yeltekin and his guests have discussed themes such as US-China tensions, China's role in Southeast Asia, the vaccine economy, the blockchain revolution and the impact of the pandemic on women's employment. İpek İlkkaracan RC 85, Ebru Debbağ RC 87 and Esat Şibay

RC 87 have been among his guests. Yeltekin says, "A hobby became a full-fledged passion now that we reached the 17th edition of the program."

When asked about RC's impact on his life, Yeltekin describes it as "indelible": "RC was not an easy place to fit in initially, but I had wonderful friendships and a few great teachers over the years. I am still surprised that we read *Animal Farm*, 1984 and *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* in our classes – all 'subversive books' for that period. One teacher that I think helped me, taught me and mentored me the most was Betsy Göksel. I am so grateful to her and to many people that I met in my RC years who helped me become who I am."

The Fine Arts of the Robert College Experience

What better way to say good-bye to a challenging year than remind ourselves of the inspiration and consolation we can find in the fine arts? This issue of the RCQ is dedicated specifically to visual arts: How it was embedded in the educational fabric of RC historically, how it enriches the RC experience currently, and those in the RC community who help us find meaning in art, be it through their creations, lessons, philanthropy, or therapy.



ACG Prep art class in the mid-1950s



The foyer in Suna Kırac Hall is the main exhibition space for student art, such as these self-portraits from the Lise Prep Arts class

Art education at RC in the early years is sadly not well documented. A rudimentary art section at ACG's Üsküdar campus existed in the beginning of the 20th century. In the 1911-1912 Annual Report, the assistant librarian reports that there are 506 books on useful arts and 185 books on fine arts and 1682 books on literature and observes that "various departments are only scantily supplied with literature on their subjects," suggesting that art was part of the curriculum then.

According to the Annual Report of the 1912-1913 school year, an Art Club was established that year and had 12 members. The purpose of the club was "to encourage and stimulate those students who had artistic talents and tastes." They met twice a month and held discussions on topics such as "Art and Morality, Tolstoy's Views on Art, Turner and Impressionism, and Artistic Enjoyment." The club exhibited the drawings and paintings of its members at the end of the school year, reportedly "arousing great

interest in the College community." In the 1926-1927 Annual Report, the presence of the Art Club is noted once again. Similarly, in the reports from the 1930s and 1940s, there are mentions of Hobby Clubs which included art and drawing.

By the 1950s, the art scene at RC was vibrant on both campuses. There were two art studios on the ACG campus and a gallery on the Bebek campus. Indeed, a Turkish arts revival started at RC in those years. Nuri Çolakoğlu



Alumni fondly remember their art teachers, including (from L to R) Gül Ilgaz, Can Maden and Neriman Polat, who taught at RC in the 1990s and 2000s



A class in the ACG art studio

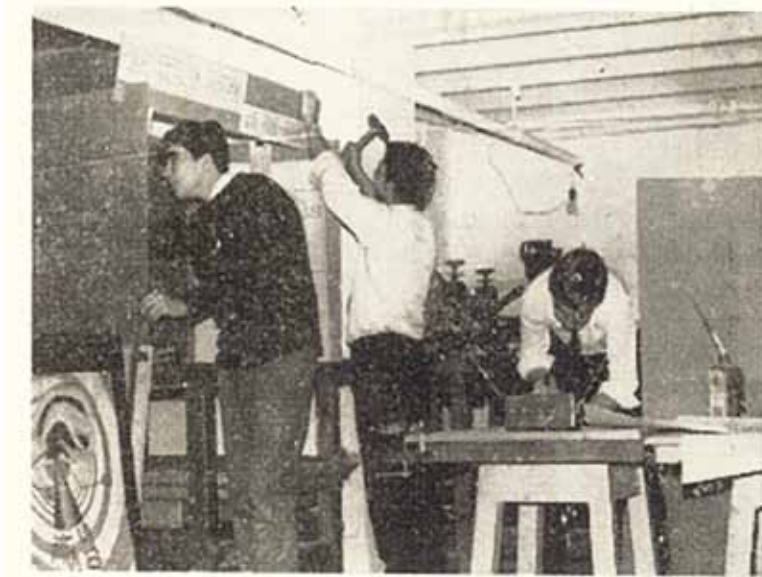
RA 62 recalls: "When Özer Kabaş RC 57 was appointed director of the Social Hall between Washburn Hall and Dodge Gym, he quickly converted the entrance level from the football field into an art gallery, where many famous painters and sculptors held exhibitions. The close friendship with Yaşar Kemal of faculty members Mark Austin and Hillary Sumner Boyd, the great talent behind RC Theatre, helped turn this place into an artists' hub in Istanbul, which at the time lacked concert halls and theater spaces."

A similarly vibrant atmosphere prevailed at ACG. Nuran Terzioğlu ACG 65 takes us back to that time: "During middle school, we were encouraged to do group work. We learned about materials, freedom of expression, and sharing. We used to melt glue in a bain-marie, add in pigments, and make our own paint. We would smell the melting glue, as we ran excitedly up the stairs to the studio. We would recycle old newspapers and create papier-mâché. We made puppets, created a puppet theater and wrote our own texts. We learned to make models and plans. We painted on butcher

paper- all this variety in just middle school. Although the hours allocated to art decreased in high school, we had a wonderful Creative Art elective offered by Ms. Lee."

ACG art teachers Ms. Stevens and especially Ms. Lee play a big role in the recollection of the alumni of that period. Apparently, both were motorcycle-riding, extraordinary women! Semra Özümerzifon ACG 70 recalls how Ms. Lee "made us notice the unusual formations or cracks on ancient walls, the textures and colors that appeared on them, or the facades of old buildings where the layers of paint had fallen off revealing the color underneath. She made us aware of things we normally would never have paid any attention to at all." Nuran Terzioğlu also remembers how Ms. Lee would invite Humanities professors from RC Yüksek to give art history lessons.

Those who were students in the 1950s and 1960s emphasize the general atmosphere at RC as being very open and diverse. According to the Bosphorus, in March 1968 there was a meeting between ACG and RA, and the Academy Student Councils decided to "regularly invite ACG girls interested in art to the Academy campus where they could make use of the Art Studio facilities." Jale Erzen ACG 62 fondly recalls: "Almost everyone and the whole atmosphere on campus were very encouraging for all those who were interested in the arts." Students were exposed to film, theater, music, literature, and art. The cross-disciplinary nature of teaching was also noteworthy. Orhan Taylan RC 60 recalls how his English teacher Mr. Gillard encouraged him and a friend to create a puppet theatre. The same teacher also organized a poster competition. Nuran Terzioğlu depicts the many inspiring activities that took place: "Tomris Uyar was responsible for İzlerimiz magazine. The Literature Club events were very popular. James Baldwin was a guest at one of these events. English teacher Dorothy iz would stage a Greek tragedy every year at the Assembly Hall, and usually Çiğdem Çizakça (later Kağıtçıbaşı)



Students work in art studio to finish projects on time.



RA students practice their drawing techniques

would play the lead. The library on the top floor of Gould Hall would be full of classical music and theater records. We could listen to Richard Burton recite Shakespeare on our earphones, while looking at the Bosphorus. Susuz Yaz, which won the Golden Bear Award at the Berlin Film Festival, held a premiere at our school.”

Nuran Terzioğlu puts this atmosphere into a unique perspective: “The school gave importance to culture, along with good education and offered alternative choices for students to explore. Today’s visual arts is all about this diversity, free thinking, conceptual searching, and interactive approaches. And all of it was present at RC from

very early on.” RC 92 graduate Tamer Tamar’s words show that this atmosphere and this set of priorities were cultivated for years to come: “Robert College gave me a blueprint to decode culture and history while our inspiring campus became my canvas of geometry and light. As a documentary photographer, I get to apply these learnings to my personal projects.” The words of Sema Merzifon ACG 70 resonate today, as they did in the past: “Located on a beautiful campus, with magnificent buildings and facilities, endowed with qualified faculty and full of extracurricular activities, RC was, and is, well equipped to educate and prepare its students for a cultivated and enlightened life. The

feeling of freedom reigned along with an awareness of responsibility which was conveyed by the school.”

Teaching Creativity: RC Teachers Who Are Artists

How fortunate for the RC community that art teachers often were and are also themselves artists. Seniye Fenmen is one such artist. She taught at ACG from 1961 to 1968. Semra Özümerzifon ACG 70 recalls, “Ms. Fenmen introduced us to Turkish painters showing us their works. She was an accomplished painter herself. She taught us ceramics and gave us elementary knowledge on colors and painting. She made us draw and paint portraits of our fellow classmates. I remember her telling us how we should exaggerate facial characteristics to achieve an expressive portrait. She had us make small sculptures by cutting tin plates. At the end of the year, she picked one of the tin sculptures, had it enlarged and placed it in front of Gould Hall. She was an enthusiastic, encouraging person. Her influence was very strong on many of us.”

Maria Sezer, Can Maden, Neriman Polat, Nancy Atakan, and Gül Ilgaz are all remembered by the alumni graduating in the 80s, 90s and 2000s as artists and teachers who impacted their artistic development and career choices. Bihter Adalı RC 02 remembers how the art department responded



Nancy Atakan with members of the Art Club in 1993



RC 90 grads Leyla Demirel and Yeşim Çavuşoğlu created an immersive experience by filling Marble Hall wall to wall with their paintings and sculptures for this exhibition in 1990



Art teacher Maria Sezer helps students create an anatomical model

to the devastating 1999 earthquake: "As part of the recovery efforts, art therapists from Israel came to train mental health professionals and art educators to use the healing power of art in treating the survivors who were experiencing shock, loss and traumatic stress. Gül Ilgaz, Neriman Polat and Can Maden were in the training, and later methods of art therapy were blended in the art curriculum to enhance creativity and overcome hindrances in self-expression. The idea of art being a healing force was really new in those days. As soon as I finished my BFA, I knew I would pursue a graduate degree in art therapy, and I did."

Gül Ilgaz, a contemporary artist who taught at RC from 1990 to 2004, says the art studio became a home

away from home for many students: "Often they would stop in just to chat or to work voluntarily. We built strong relationships. One of my clear memories is working with Sibel Horada RC 98 in 6th grade for her yearly homework project. I suggested she go to the Art and Sculpture Museum to select work she liked. Sculpture particularly appealed to her. She made a ceramic sculpture for her project, but the work became big, fragile and impossible to transport to school. One weekend I visited her home, had tea with her mother and evaluated her work. This project influenced her later decision to study art at a higher level. Today, I am very proud to see her as an excellent hardworking artist and a colleague with whom I can share ideas."



RC students learn to make art out of everyday items, like these masks made from cardboard

Elif Uras RC 90 says her interest in art was ignited at RC: "I had my first experience with clay in the art studio; there was even a wheel. We had great art teachers - Nancy Atakan and Maria Sezer - who have great careers as artists. They've been very inspiring throughout my journey, and I still see them and follow their work." Duygu Aytaç RC L12 03 recalls Aydın Ungan's photography club and being in the dark room for the first time as a pivotal moment in her life. Hale Güngör Oppenheimer RC 00 emphasizes Gül Ilgaz's support: "It was thanks to her that I discovered I had a passion for art. To this day, we are in touch and follow each other's projects." Güngör Oppenheimer, like many others, credits RC for helping her choose her artistic path: "The last few years at RC played a very crucial role. If it hadn't been for the art studio, photo lab and library I had access to at RC, who knows if I would have had a chance to feed my artistic curiosity and choose art as my profession."

The atmosphere, facilities and teachers did not just influence future artists. Interior architect Müge İkizler RC 88 states: "Looking back, I appreciate how RC encouraged creativity. In middle school, there was a waste bin design contest that I won for two years in a row. When we stopped having art classes in Orta 3, I moved away from paint, mosaics, and the wonderful art studio, until I chose art as an elective in Lise. Ms. Sezer made me realize that I had 'an eye' and that my strong suit was creativity. That's how I became an architect."

After all, art is not just for artists, and creativity can permeate every aspect of life - a stance that RC has firmly taken throughout the years.

A historical stroll through the decades brings us to now. The art studio these days is on the ground floor of Sage. How is art being taught today? Where does it fit in with extracurricular activities? How are students motivated? RC teachers tell all.

21st Century Art Program at RC: A Conversation with Alex Downs, Art and Music Department Head; Photography Teacher

"Kids need visual training that suits the time and the tools to be critical consumers of their own visual world."

How has the art program developed over time at RC?

20th century art was about skill-building: drawing techniques, dark room procedures, working with clay, camera mechanics and so on. These are still important to teach, but because students can now do many things digitally with the press of a button, knowing these skills becomes less of a priority, and instead concepts become more important in 21st century art programs. For example, editing a photo in a digital dark room means selecting different buttons. You can also undo your work and try other things. More important now is knowing when to use different techniques and what the options are, understanding yourself as an artist and the statement you're making with your edits. We now talk more about ideas in the classroom because skills are enabled by new technologies. The world we live in is much more visual



Margaret Halicioğlu (left) leads a hybrid Creative Arts class

than it was twenty or thirty years ago. On our phone we see thousands of images each day. Previously students did not have such a deluge of images. Visual literacy becomes critical: how do we give RC students the tools they need to be critical consumers of all visual media? Students still do hands-on art projects, but they are learning other things as well.

Through which classes is art taught currently?

All prep students take LP Art, which is counted as part of their overall English grade. Creative Arts is a

special course for LPs that is ungraded and counts as mandatory LP club hours. We also offer classes for the three AP portfolios: Drawing, 2D Art & Design and 3D Art & Design. These are recommended for Lise 12s, but some L11s take them as well.

What is the role of studying art for students in such a competitive environment as RC?

In the prep year students find out art is something they can study. It is the first time for many of them that they are evaluated and graded in an art class, and the first time it's not a fringe



Art Department Head Alex Downs helps students learn photography techniques for different types of cameras



Ceramics is one of students' favorite classes

activity but a core one. They realize they need to put in effort. Visual art is becoming a career option for a growing number of students. Areas like architecture and marketing all require visual proficiency. We've gone from the margins to the center along with science, math, engineering and history. Former Department Head Merrill Hope-Brown really pushed the department to get there.

What types of artistic output can students experiment with?

Engraving/press/wood block, digital printers, painting and ceramics are just some of the things they can experiment with. We continue to expand the opportunities in both technical and historical/traditional arts. Why not have a student design a work, 3D print it then try to recreate it in ceramics? Kids need visual training that suits the time and the tools to be critical consumers of their own visual world. The students also create their own shows, like the annual student exhibition around campus.

What type of feedback do you get?

Students say the most important things they acquire from art classes are design-thinking skills. Methods and protocols are used in class for looking at work. Learning how to look carefully and assess is also what alumni say made a difference: These are essential skills for doctors and engineers, too.

Asrın Sevinç RC 19 recently wrote me the following about an experience she had at university: "I especially wanted to write to you after an instance in my Reading and Composition class on Film. We were supposed to analyze two minutes of a movie in terms of techniques. I found myself writing this essay in about 2 hours, while it took my friends days to complete. My professor was very impressed by my analysis and gave me an A++. The photography class at RC had a

very important impact in my life and the way I look at things. Although I hadn't noticed it back when you would take us to Sanayi Mahallesi for the photoshoots, looking back, I highly appreciate the way you pushed us to carefully look around us and see the unseen, even when it was pouring with rain!"

How are art lessons done during the pandemic?

Art kits were sent to all the Lise Preps in portfolios, so they could start their classes from home on the first day of school. The portfolio could fit A-4 size works and contained several types of paper, colored pencils, graphite pencils, a brush and a ruler. There are also videos on how to do some of the projects.

Art is now part of their lives rather than something they do at school. Photos are taken at home, and students are interacting with their family members more. They are also working with materials they would have thrown away and are learning that a material used for one thing may also be valuable for another thing – repurposing.

Demikan Aşetey RC 76 Art Competition

An annual student art competition sponsored by the Class of 76 in memory of their classmate Demirkan Aşetey who was an art enthusiast has been held each year since 2002. Students' submissions are reviewed by a panel of judges who are members of the art world and they are often alumni. First, second and third-place winners receive cash prizes.



From L to R: Members of the Class of 76 Nedim Ölçer, Yasemin Palanduz Kahya and Coşkun Arkun with Demirkan Aşetey's father Halis Aşetey at the ceremony in 2012

A Student-led Celebration: The RC Fine Arts Festival

A landmark date for arts on campus is 1983, when the Student Council started the Fine Arts Festival, an event that brought students from different schools to RC, to share their achievements in visual arts, music, and theater. Mete Adan RC 83, Student Council President at the time remembers: "I attended the Fine Arts Festival in Cairo with the RC Music Club. I was inspired by it and thought our school was the only one in Istanbul that had the facilities and could bring such an event together. We invited 17 foreign language private schools like Alman Lisesi and Galatasaray. Over 10 schools accepted our invitation. It was a weekend event that stretched over two days. Activities were planned all around the school - in the gym, at the Maze, in the Bubble. Döner kebab and fries were sold to raise money. I saw RC as the one school other private schools looked up to, and I wanted to share our facilities, so that art and emotions could be exchanged." Thirty-seven years later, the Fine Arts Festival has gone through some changes, but is still as vibrant a part of RC as ever.



Students look forward to the Fine Arts Festival each spring

The Creative Arts Course: A Conversation with Maria Sezer and Margaret Halicioğlu

What is the Creative Arts course?

MS: Creative Arts is a course where prep students have the chance to learn to express their ideas through an art form on chosen topics during a 2-hour course each week. Students rotate each quarter of the year to experience a different art form: music taught by Margaret Halicioğlu, 2-D art taught by Celeste Pierson, drama taught by Jake Becker and 3-D Art taught by me.

MH: It is interdisciplinary, thematic, and non-graded. The students work for about 6 weeks and then come together for a sharing. The emphasis is on process rather than finished product.

How did it start? Why did you develop it?

MS: It started in the 1980s. I decided that our students should have some basic knowledge of art history when they graduated from middle school. Soon I asked our music teacher Jerry Kent to join me during the art history lectures and talk about music from the same period. Later, this method

evolved into cooperation with dance and drama. We called it 'combined arts' at that time. Later Margaret Halicioğlu joined and then Doryne Narin, and since then many others have taught in this course.

What themes are covered?

MH: Recent themes have been Money, Rituals, Evolution, and Protest. Since it is not an MEB course, the themes are up to the teachers. Each one of the four teachers chooses a theme for the year. Taking "evolution" as an example, in Music, they "evolve" the Finale from Beethoven's 9th symphony, e.g., make a Turkish version of it by changing the time signature to five beats in a bar, playing the melody on glass bottles.

What do you aim for students to get out of it?

MS: To learn to explore ideas through the arts and to be able to express themselves through the arts, acquire different language skills than what is used in regular subjects, work in groups, and to create a respect and understanding for the arts in general. **MH:** Students can take risks because there are no grades attached. They are encouraged to be courageous and show something about themselves.

Özlem Akçakuş Art Scholarship

Since 2006, the Class of 97 has been raising funds to send art-oriented RC students to summer art workshops all over the world, in memory of their classmate Özlem Akçakuş. Özlem was an art lover and it was only fitting that her friends and family chose to honor her memory this way. Every summer several RC students are awarded funds to study at prestigious institutions with acclaimed artists and teachers. Over the years, more than 30 students have benefited from RC 97's generosity. The list of destinations includes California, London, Maine, Tuscany, New York City and the south of France.



Özlem Akçakuş RC 97

Street Art:

A Conversation with Club Advisor Narciso Argüelles



A project simulating stained glass installed on a plexiglass divider

There are many art-related clubs at RC, such as Art & Archeology, Art Club (a foundation for AP Art classes), Ceramics, Graphic Novel Club, RC Photography Society and Street Art Club. RCQ spoke with Narciso Argüelles, the advisor for one of RC's newest clubs.

What is the aim of the Street Art Club?

The name "on paper" is Street Art Club, but we call it a crew - Street Art Crew or RC Street Art Crew. The aim is to make art that engages the RC community and the outside community in an artistic sense. The art will often be installation art or site-specific, as opposed to plop art, where someone plops an art piece on a wall or the floor of a gallery or location. Instead, we aim to make a connection to the location and work with the environment. The work can be fabric like flags or knit pieces on light poles. It can be light projections like video or lasers. The artwork can be spray paint (legal). It can also be works on paper that are wheat pasted on walls.

How did you decide to create this club?

I have always been fascinated with

street art. I have done murals on my own and with students back in the US. I did a large exhibit of my street art in Tulsa, Oklahoma a few years back, called *Heaven Spots*. One of the first things I noticed when I travelled around Istanbul was the graffiti. I thought it would be a good way to have RC be part of the community.

What are students learning and doing?

We started with a little bit of history

and vocabulary. Having a scope of what is included in this art form helps with the art making process. We spoke about techniques. It is about using regular art skills as the foundation and building off of that. For example, most of the students already know how to use pencils, pens, and markers. How can we use those skills and make graffiti lettering? Currently they are designing stencils. We learned about British artist Banksy. For now, the students are using the school for their site-specific art environments (installation art), but the goal is to get them out into the city with donated walls or temporary places to showcase the work. The eventual goal is to visit places like Spain and the UK, where street art has a greater role in society and history, as part of a learning trip and to make art. Think of us as Art Ambassadors.

How do club activities continue from home during the pandemic?

For now, the students design the work, send it to me, and I construct it or execute the idea. I am taking on the role of an art fabricator. When the work is installed the artist's name goes on it, not the fabricator. We are working on stencils now. Next up is wearable art.

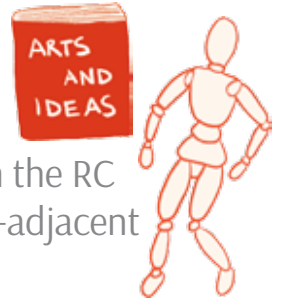


Street Art Club advisor Narciso Argüelles with one of his murals



How to Let Art Bloom

RCQ asked our alumni for their recommendations to those in the RC community who aspire to be artists, who want to work in art-adjacent fields and who simply want to meet other art enthusiasts.



Jale Erzen ACG 62

Draw, draw, draw, analyze, and try to understand the art of all times and cultures.

Elif Uras RC 90

Be curious, see a lot of art, make a lot of art.



Orhan Taylan RC 60

It is mainly hard work that makes a successful artist. A young person considering becoming an artist, should never go into teaching art for the sake of a salary, or any other kind of work, because that is what kills creativity. One has to face long years of a penniless life and hard work, at the end of which it is impossible not to become a successful artist.

İrem Kaneli RC 89

Perhaps everybody is born as an artist but only some die as an artist. So never forget how you were when you were a child. Keep your mind curious, innocent, unrestrained and spontaneous, don't get too scared of life, and stay playful. Nature is the greatest master to learn from by careful and patient observation and experimentation.



Balca Ergener RC 98

When you are disillusioned with the art world, it is good to keep thinking about art's possibilities, a very open field you can experiment in and collaborate with others.

Hale Güngör Oppenheimer RC 00

If you have a genuine interest in art, it comes with a kind of thirst that drives you. It is strong and undeniable. I would recommend a lot of googling and following artists that are interesting to you on social media because we now have the privilege

of following their creative process. There's so much to learn from how others think and create. Also, once in art school, really invest time and energy into making connections with fellow students and professors. I promise you that those same people will show up again in your professional life. Try different techniques and media before settling on things that are most exciting to you. If you find something that remotely excites you, go after it.

Burcu Yüksel RC 02

Get as much experience as possible through internships and part-time jobs, so you can discover your passion. It's not about selecting a period to focus on but understanding if you work better in a fast-paced commercial setting or within a big team and organization; or do you prefer a small one where you get to wear different hats.

Ulya Soley RC 09

To those who are considering the curatorial field: There are so many different approaches to curatorial thinking, and every curator builds their own practice, as they meet and work with different artists or institutions. Even the title "curator" has been challenged, and some curators prefer other titles such as drafter or mediator. It is also very common for artists to curate, and there are many curatorial collectives.

Duygu Aytaç RC L12 03

This is adults' best kept secret: when a young person stands their ground, grown-ups stand no chance. All it takes is a no to their no. That said, it is very true that most artists and writers live financially humiliating lives unless they come



from family wealth. The consolation is that if you really need it, art tends to stick around. As for the actual practice, maybe this: don't try to prove intelligence through art, you will end up with neither.

Yasemin Bihter Adalı RC 02

Those considering art therapy should know that it takes a good five years post-graduation before you develop your skills to practice art psychotherapy, and it is a very enjoyable path if you enjoy the process of self-study. Start your personal therapy as soon as you are called to; being on the other side of the therapeutic relationship will be your best teacher.

Esra Eczacıbaşı RC 07 and Cem Yılmaz RC 07

Be open and curious! Go out and meet the many inspiring figures in the art world; they can really broaden your perspective. Connect with fellow art enthusiasts, allow them to challenge you intellectually, and look to build meaningful relationships in this sphere that will enrich your life. Istanbul Modern is a great starting point, as it provides a wide range of programs that all aim to encourage an active participation in the arts.

Gülşah Mursaloğlu RC 08

Being an artist often necessitates having a side-job to financially sustain your practice, and this can easily divert one's focus. I believe this is the prominent difficulty in this line of work. The other important thing is to have a peer community of artists you can count on. It is extremely valuable for artistic growth to find peer communities you participate in and which in turn nurture you in a non-hierarchical environment, giving genuine and helpful feedback.

RC Alumni in the Arts: A Wide Range of Disciplines

RC alumni who are artists or work in art-related fields share their experience and their work, as well as give some advice to budding artists.

Nuran Terzioğlu ACG 65

“I want people to feel that art is part of daily life and something to be shared.”

Directing galleries and curating exhibitions since 1983, Nuran Terzioğlu is the founder and owner of Galeri Apel, a fixture in the Turkish art scene since 1998.

What have been the different phases of the art scene in Turkey?

The history of contemporary visual arts in Turkey does not go far back. In the 1980s, there was a burst of gallery openings. I started out at Tanbay Sanat Galerisi in Ankara. I loved the gallery world from the start; it enabled what I wanted to achieve.

In the 1990s, international exhibitions and events provided momentum to the art scene. We founded SANART (Türkiye’de Görsel Sanatları Destekleme Derneği/ Society to Support Visual Arts in Turkey) at this time, and our first sponsor was Osman Kavala RC 75. With SANART, academic and artist Jale Erzen ACG 62 started international symposiums, and we had our first international exhibition



Nuran Terzioğlu ACG 65



An installation from RC art teacher Maria Sezer's solo show *Su Yürüdü / Saprising* at Galeri Apel in 2016

in 1992, *Earth and Fiber*, my first curatorial work. The Istanbul Biennial soon became one of the most important biennials in the world.

The 2000s was the brightest decade in art, a “Lale Devri.” The preparation to launch modern museums created a buzz in the art world, as well as friendly competition. When we launched Galeri Apel in 1998 in Galatasaray, there was no other gallery there. Soon Istanbul Modern, Salt Galata and Borusan Sanat changed the face of Beyoğlu. Many galleries came to Tophane, and the Tophane Art Walk started. There was cultural tourism, and a lot of foreign attention. Turkish artists became more visible internationally. I was invited to create exhibitions in Japan and Europe. The attack on galleries in Tophane sadly ended this period.

After 2010, art became more commercial. Beyoğlu changed. The

tourist profile changed. Fairs and auctions came to the fore. New occupations emerged; art dealers and consultants began to dominate. Some artists churned work out to meet the demand of auctions. Some collectors launched galleries. Whatever capitalism brought, it brought it to the art world as well. I tried my hand at fairs, but did not enjoy it.

At Apel, many personal exhibitions have been the artists’ first. I have curated over sixty exhibitions at Apel and abroad. I want people to feel that art is part of daily life and something to be shared. Some of the titles of my exhibitions are: *Komşu* (Neighbor), *Çarşı Pazar* (Marketplace), and *Vitrin* (Shop Window).

As for today, art is online. I believe we will see the effects of Covid on art. Staying home makes one read more, think more, and feeds one’s curiosity. There is no escape from nature.

Elif Uras RC 90

“Women having agency as producers and consumers outside the domestic sphere, and challenging the patriarchy are important issues for me.”

World-renowned for her paintings and ceramics work, Elif Uras is based in NYC, where she currently has a residency at the Museum of Art and Design.

Your work is heavily engaged with issues of gender and class. Why do you find yourself drawn to these issues?

I believe art should be rooted in our current social reality. Having a background in economics and law, I have always been sensitive to issues of fairness and equality in terms of gender and socio-economic status. The trajectory of women in a modernizing

traditional society like ours is an important parameter of progress. Women having agency as producers and consumers outside the domestic sphere, and challenging the patriarchy are important issues for me.

What attracted you to ceramics after painting?

I don't consider ceramics independent of painting. Renowned California ceramic artist Peter Voulkos said, “Clay is just thick paint, and paint is nothing but thin clay.” I started working with ceramics because I wanted to paint on ceramic surfaces instead of canvas.



Elif Uras RC 90

In a way my work is a cross between sculpture and painting.

Can you tell us a bit about your residency?

I've been researching the Anatolian mother goddess sculptures from the Neolithic era and trying to deconstruct the myth of the goddess from a feminist perspective. The residency started in February 2020. I was spending one day a week at the museum studio, interacting with the museum audience, having studio visits and using the production facilities like the kiln. When the building closed in March, it was disappointing missing out on the physical interaction and the studio environment.

But having regular Zoom meetings and online studio visits through the program forced a much-needed structure on my practice, as well as providing a sense of community through my fellow residents and other participants of public programs. Now, the museum has re-opened and I'm happy to be back there.



The Groomers, 2019

Can Göknil ACG 66

“Contemporary artists feel a responsibility to raise awareness about issues of our time.”

A renowned artist, who has created paintings, sculptures, and art objects, Can Göknil is also a prolific writer who has written and illustrated children's books and story collections.

How do you think the arts scene has evolved in Turkey over the years?

Fundamental values of the artistic expression changed rapidly, as every facet of life immersed into computer technology. Artists now use technology instead of conventional tools of photographic art or artist's materials such as paints, brushes or pencils. They choose to design using computerized images, utilizing cell phone photos or readily available imagery. Sometimes art is construction or installation using discarded materials.

Contemporary artists feel a responsibility to raise awareness about the social, political, psychological and ecological issues of our time. Speed has become their norm for expression because they are not interested in creating long-lasting art objects. The aim of the artist is to raise awareness related to contemporary problems one after another.

Today's art can be just a book displayed as an art object, or even a single word or a sentence spelled out in neon lighting. A piece of sewing referring to an idea or a short amateurish video can be art or a live body/artist sitting silently in front of an audience for a length of time, a practice called “performance”. In many cases the purposes of these shows are not clear, and this leads to confusion for art lovers, gallery goers, collectors, art historians, and even other artists. Exhibitions nowadays are often organized by curators who determine the theme for the exhibit and choose the best fitting art works. To summarize: Curator's aim, artwork, artist, media, public. I find this chain of priority faulty and uninspiringly dull.

How about children and art?

My experience in art education has been directed to children because I believe in an early start. For the last 47 years I have been writing and illustrating children's books. Picture books are an introduction to art and

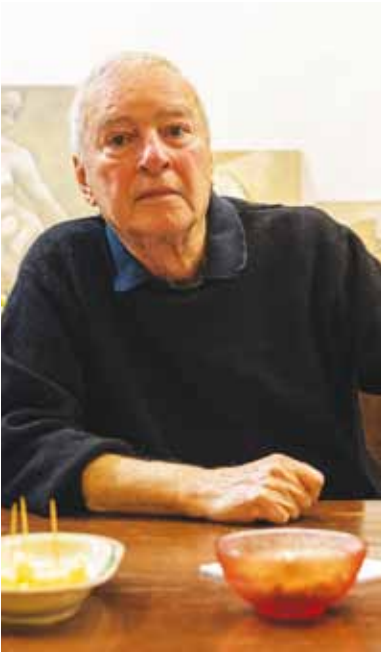
literature which is essential for healthy mental development. For me, it is a lot of fun to draw and paint children-friendly pictures for big themes like empathy, tolerance, loss, friendship, cultural differences, family and love.



Can Göknil ACG 66 at her retrospective exhibition in 2018 with her sculpture *Düşgücü / Imagination*, 2010

Orhan Taylan RC 60

I “I generally start with a certain feeling and try to depict that feeling.”



Orhan Taylan RC 60

A member of a highly artistic family, Orhan Taylan is a painter and sculptor. He is a graduate of the Fine Arts Academy of Rome and is based in Istanbul.

What inspires you and what are the main themes of your work?

It is not what you are inspired by, nor the themes, that count in art. It is the artistic language you are using. Whatever you do, it is how you do it. I developed, in time of course, a form of

painting parallel to the poetry and the folk songs of my country. I generally start with a certain feeling and try to depict that feeling, and the theme can be anything to give form to that feeling. My work is that of a modern metropolitan artist and has little to do with the peasantry of Anatolia.

Your mother, Seniye Fenmen ACG 39, taught at ACG from 1961 to 1968. Can you tell us a bit about this legendary teacher?

My mother was an aristocrat, descendant of the renown Mithat

Pasha, the Ottoman prime minister. She was an intellectual. Among her close friends were prominent poets and novelists of the time. She spoke French, German and English. She was an esteemed painter, a ceramic artist and a pianist too. She would accompany her singer friends on the piano, in concerts. Quite a number of women artists have told me that they had my mother as their art teacher at ACG, and they had been very much influenced by her.



Adsız, 2020

Semra Özümerzifon ACG 70

“This is no time to be timid.”

Having studied painting with ACG teacher Seniye Fenmen, and at Necdet Kalay's atelier and the Geneva Fine Arts Academy, Semra Özümerzifon has been working on sculptures in Istanbul.

Art as a life path - what are your views?

Art is fulfilling and challenging. It enables artists to discover their true selves. It also demands a lot of perseverance, reflection and determination to cultivate talent, to develop a distinctive language of one's own to express one's feelings, thoughts, wishes, critical views, resistance or revolt.

The current art scene encompasses so many approaches and concepts. Boundaries of different disciplines are blurred, and traditions looked down upon, but intellectualism and innovation are always welcomed, in fact, demanded. This situation can seem to be too demanding and daring for prospective artists, but it also offers them a liberty of expression, an opportunity to be more flexible and bolder. This is no time to be timid. They have to defend their art, insist and assert themselves

What is the appeal of olive trees and fishing nets to you?

I depicted dervishes for a long period. With my exhibition of dervishes at the State Fine Art Gallery right across from the Mevlana Mausoleum in Konya, I felt the theme of dervishes had reached its term. About the same time, I moved from Geneva to Istanbul. Walking one day, I came across fishing nets on the shores of the Bosphorus. They had such a strong impact on me with their lush colors and rich textures. I started experimenting with the nets. I worked them in layers of different colors forming heavily textured soft compositions and incorporated iron construction to form soft sculptures. This recycled material also conveyed



Semra Özümerzifon ACG 70 creating her net sculpture, Bereket

its own message: the story of the fishermen, their toil, the deep seas, problems of sustainable fishing, encapsulating so many existential aspects of our times.

My engagement with olive trees started with the urge of expressing my sadness when an olive grove was tragically uprooted in Soma. My first

olive tree sculpture was a lamentation commemorating this event. Many drawings of obliterated olive trees followed. Sixty of these drawings were collected in a book - *Mühür Gözlüm* (see RCQ 49, p. 50) which included a short novel by İzzeddin Çalışlar written especially for this event.

irem Kaneli RC 89

“The physics courses at RC with a lot of experiments certainly inspired me as an artist.”

Based in the Netherlands, Irem Kaneli has been working with Dutch artist Stijn Smit since 2007. From their collaboration a third artist has emerged: Kaneli & Smit.

What does it mean to be a collaborative artist?

In the contemporary art world based on personal autonomy and signature, most painters are very individualistic and work alone. I always wanted to challenge this idea, seeing a lot of potential in creating together. Using landscape and the natural forces acting upon it to create landscape paintings and land art is the core of our collaborative work.

From the beginning of our collaboration, we started painting with local clay on canvas. Since 2009, we've been working on Ebb & Flow Paintings, a series of works created in the tidal zone exploring and portraying the DNA of the Dutch landscape in the blueprint of the sea; literally working together with its tides. So, it's not only a collaboration with another artist but also a collaboration with the sea and the forces of nature. With each tidal movement of the sea, clear flood lines appear on the painting: The painting is like the landscape itself where we stand locally, created with the influence of fluidity and



Irem Kaneli RC 89 (center) and Stijn Smit (right) pose with the geologist who helped them collect ancient soil for their Pyramid of Schokland

unpredictability. A self-portrait of the sea made on our initiative paying utmost attention to the “genius loci” spirit of the location.

We're strongly convinced that creations of human beings are also a part of nature. Anticipating the unexpected is our essence. Collaboration with each other including nature is not a being, but a continual becoming where incidents meet, coincide, and depart at the same time.

What inspires you?

Nature and its transformational power inspires me. I was always attracted to the sense of space and light of the northern countries. Having studied advanced physics at RC and being curious about tidal forces magnified the appeal of the Dutch landscape and the North Sea. To be near the sea, the blue thread of life that connects all with no distinct borders, and trying to grasp what seems ungraspable fascinates me.

We use a lot of scientific information and resources to create our artworks. We use weather maps and tidal graphs daily and also create our own tidal graphics. Our fascination is to capture the traces of seemingly invisible physical forces. Therefore, our projects are on the verge of science and art.

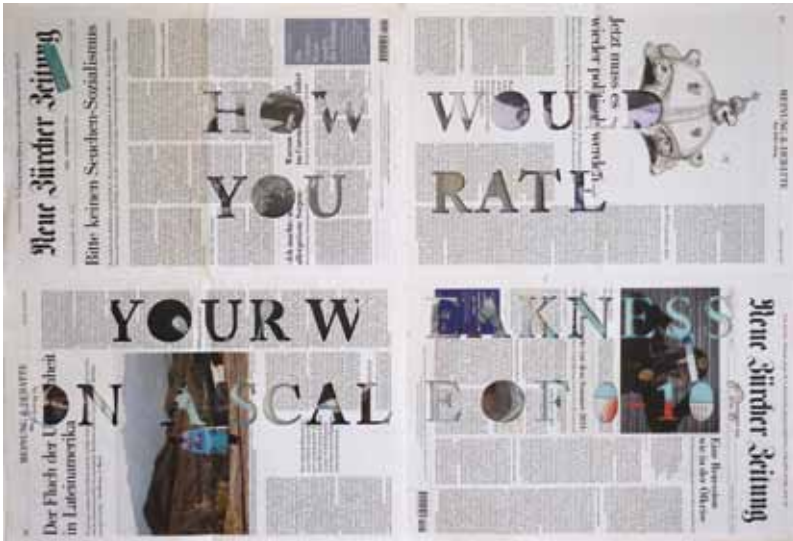
The physics courses at RC with a lot of experiments certainly inspired me as an artist. In all science and art courses, the freedom to experiment with a lot of available materials and devices, the presence of enthusiastic teachers, and studying on that beautiful green campus were a joy.



Turning Tide - Water Panorama, 2018

Balca Ergener RC 98

“Looking for feminist solidarities is a driving force for me.”



Untitled, 2020



Balca Ergener RC 98

Living and working in Zurich, Balca Ergener's works include photographic series, collaborative book projects, collective writing performances and installations with textual and visual elements.

Why do you work with different media?

I used to work mainly with photography. Recently I have become interested in language and looking for methods that can help us escape habitually constricted ways of using language. I am exploring different ways to engage with this work, from collective performances to silkscreen printing. I work with different media

with an interest in the everyday and a search to defamiliarize it and reflect upon it.

Which artists' work do you follow?

I am inspired by research-based works on social and political matters that I learn from; by works questioning our relationship with time, language and ideology; by works that communicate commonalities obscured by the mainstream, building poetic solidarities between the artist(s) and viewers. I follow many artists who make such works in Turkey and elsewhere, many of them women, as looking for feminist solidarities is a driving force for me.

Do any memories stand out from your time at RC?

I remember the art history classes taught by Maria Sezer, or when Gül Ilgaz gave us interesting assignments, like making an installation with random objects. My favorite memory is that she, maybe together with dear Neriman Polat, showed us how to make linoleum prints using remaining flooring material from the new studio. Also, discussions on literature, film and social issues with people like Robert Sugg, Phillip Esposito and Rebecca Weeks. Reading and watching what they assigned, opened up many paths which I followed.

Ulya Soley RC 09

“I was drawn to curation because it allows one to join many different conversations.”



Ulya Soley RC 09

A contemporary art curator and writer based in Istanbul, Ulya Soley is currently working on her next curatorial project at Pera Museum, an international group exhibition about taste and kitsch.

What are the qualities needed in a curator?

Curation is not only about exhibition making, but it is more so a mode of thinking. As Swiss curator Harald Szeemann puts it, “The curator has to be flexible. Sometimes they are the servant, sometimes the assistant, sometimes they give artists ideas of how to present their work; in group shows they are the coordinator, in thematic shows, the inventor.” It is also a critical position as the curatorial gesture

opens a critical space. I was drawn to curation because it allows one to join many different conversations, shift contexts, mediate various relationships, or witness exciting moments of art making. I’m especially interested in post-internet art as well as feminist and queer thinking.

How has RC influenced you?

RC has definitely shaped my interest in what is contemporary, whether it be works of art, fiction, poetry, theatre or music. RC motivated me to pursue my interests even though they are in seemingly unrelated fields, which in turn encouraged me to pursue curatorial practice as a career. Most importantly, I made great friends with whom I am still experiencing, producing or thinking about art.



Deniz Tortum RC 08 and Kathryn Hamilton, ARK, 2020, 2 channel video, installation view from the exhibition *How Shall We Dress for the Occasion?* curated by Ulya Soley
Photo credit: 601Artspace, New York / Etienne Frossard

Duygu Aytaç RC L12 03

“Tension, warmth, and color inspire me.”

Duygu Aytaç started taking photographs at RC, and never stopped. She is currently compiling her recent work under the title *Bonkör*.

Why do you prefer photography as your medium?

I think photography lends itself to complexities and ambiguity so well, and you're still grounded by a semblance of the real world that stops you from being only in your own head.

What inspires you, and what are the main themes of your work?

Tension, warmth, and color inspire me. Memories, too. When I lived in Turkey, one major theme was the presence of men. My impression is that Turkish and American societies both have a real faith in the beauty and honesty of men. Sometimes I

think it's due to militarism, which ironically is very cruel to men and anything but honest. Nowadays my eye wanders more to group dynamics, and the need to be part of a society, as well as its difficulties.

How has RC influenced you in your art?

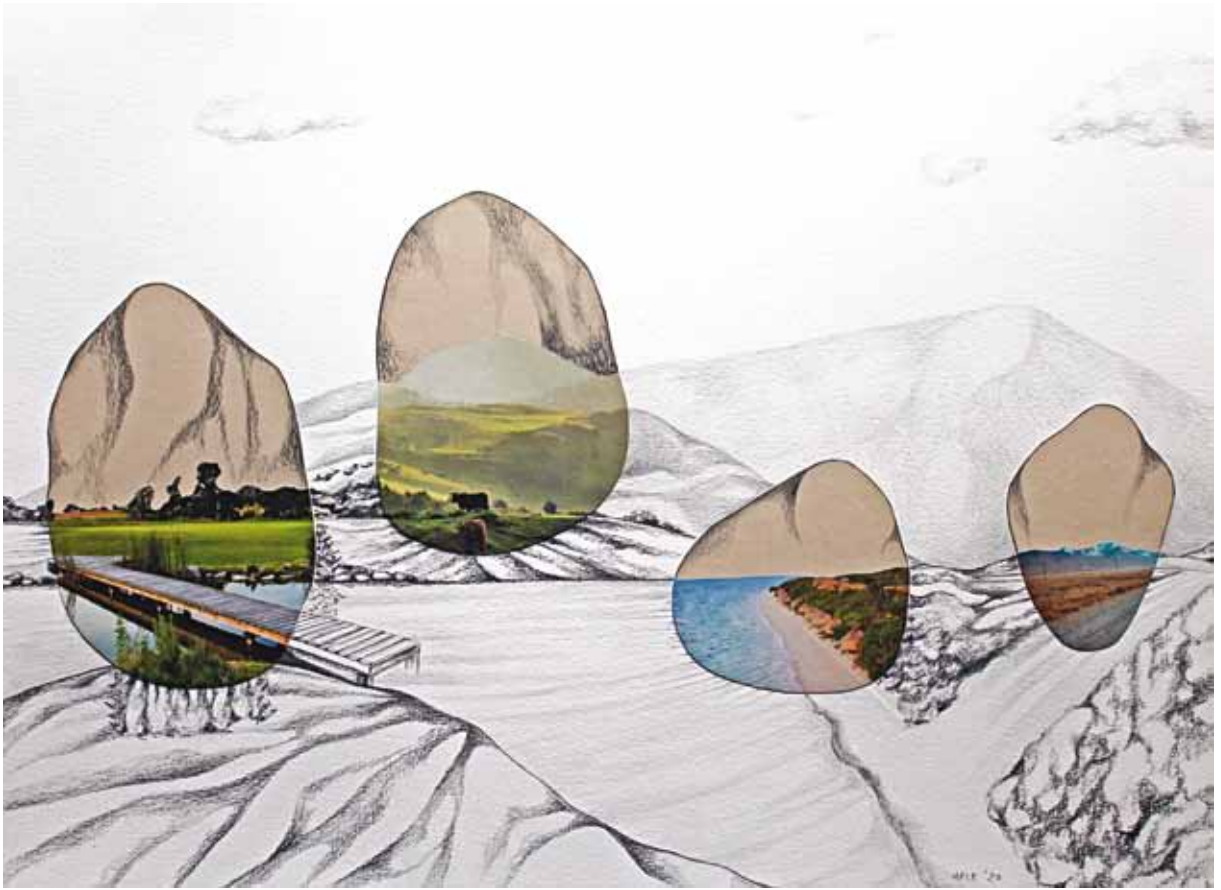
In so many ways! Aydın Ungan's photography club. Contemporary artists like Gül Ilgaz, Can Maden and Neriman Polat being our high school art teachers - what a privilege. Listening to Ayla Kartal's tangents about life, literature and Alzheimer's or watching a movie in the AV Center for an elective run by Jennifer Sertel. And most of all, meeting a small group of impossibly smart, art-loving peers who for some reason agreed to be my friends.



Duygu Aytaç RC L12 03



Y en los montes, monte soy, 2018



Lineup II, 2020

Hale Güngör Oppenheimer RC 00

“If you have a genuine interest in art, it comes with a kind of thirst that drives you.”

Residing in Stockholm since 2010, Hale Güngör Oppenheimer creates mixed media work and installations.

Why are you interested in domesticity and in-between spaces in your work?

Having constantly moved from one country to another starting at four years old, I found that I could create some kind of stability and an alternative home through my works quite early on. The in-between spaces and imaginary landscapes I create through my works are a fruit of my relocations. These relocations have always been voluntary moves, and I, in fact, feed from being neither here nor there.



Hale Güngör Oppenheimer RC 00

How has RC influenced you in your art?

I remember art classes with Gül Ilgaz very clearly. She has supported me since the beginning of my career, and it was thanks to her that I discovered I had a passion for art. To this day, we are in touch and follow each other's projects and exhibitions and even managed to have a coffee together here in Stockholm last year. The last few years at RC played a very crucial role in me choosing the path I chose and immersing myself more into the creative world. If it hadn't been for the art studio, photo lab and library I had access to at RC, who knows if I would have had a chance to feed my artistic curiosity and choose art as my profession.

Bihter Yasemin Adalı RC 02

“Art is a great way to overcome stuckness.”

Managing a dual career as an interdisciplinary artist and an art therapist, Bihter Yasemin Adalı recently had an exhibition titled *Pantry of Good Feelings / İyi Hislerle Dolu Bir Kiler*.

What is art psychotherapy?

Artmaking engages your creative intelligence and intuition, both of which we underutilize in our everyday living. It is difficult to get in touch with one's creativity and intuition through speech as they involve non-linear modes of thinking; yet it is exactly because of this non-linear quality

that they offer unique solutions to the challenges we are confronted with.

When an individual seeks art therapy, there is often a feeling of helplessness that accompanies the life challenge. They have made many attempts at changing their situation, but none of these strategies have helped. Art is a great way to overcome stuckness. As you get to express your troubles in ways other than talking, you untangle your mind and body from the unproductive rhetoric around your issues. It sometimes does not help to talk about them. In fact, it



First Vessel, 2011



Bihter Yasemin Adalı RC 02

may be counter-productive to talk because sometimes the same words add to your burden, create boredom and disinterest.

Through creative output, you may find ways to externalize your feelings and be freed from their emotional weight. Furthermore, when you externalize your feelings - by making a sculpture of your guilt or a mask of your anger - you have the opportunity to gain insight through a different point of view.

Has RC influenced you in your career path?

At RC we took a career test. My results suggested being a dance/movement therapist, a nurse and an art educator. So, I was really pointed at the right direction.

Why was your recent exhibition titled *Pantry of Good Feelings / İyi Hislerle Dolu Bir Kiler*?

My work is a response to the human mind's inherent tendency to remember and be preoccupied with negative life experiences, more than positive ones. Witnessing this as a psychotherapist led me to the idea of making a pantry of good feelings, so they are as accessible, when there is suffering and chaos.

Gülşah Mursaloğlu RC 08

“My RC friends are still the most reliable sources for me. I turn to them for feedback, insight, collaboration.”



Gülşah Mursaloğlu RC 08

Based in Istanbul since 2017, Gülşah Mursaloğlu creates installations.

Why do you prefer installations as your medium?

My practice investigates materiality and human and non-human temporalities. I spend a lot of time in the studio, experimenting with materials, observing how they react to my actions, to time and to various encounters with other materials over long periods. Since the works derive from these relationships and encounters, I prefer not to focus on singular objects, but rather on lots of objects/materials that form a network of events by coming together, constituting a microcosm. Installation is a medium that allows for this specific kind of dynamism and external influence.

What are the main themes of your work?

Earlier on, my work dealt with questions that pertain to daily systems we surround ourselves with, and the failure of these systems. Since 2018, I've been working on a body of work that investigates human-made devices and materials we use to manipulate time and duration, and recently I worked on a project in which I researched the changing temporality of the potato, departing from its history since the 16th century to its current transformation into bioplastic.

How has RC influenced you in your art?

Aside from the fine art classes which provided me with the right environment to explore materials instead of stressing technical abilities, RC's influence in my work is palpable in the friendships I made there, the community I have built during those years. After 11 years, these friends are still the most reliable sources for me; I turn to them for feedback, insight, collaboration and problems that I can't resolve on my own.



An Operator with Measured Endeavors, 2018

Zeynep Özler RC 98

“The Kale Design and Art Center will be an interdisciplinary production and meeting point.”

Passionate about design and art owing to her years at RC and excited about enabling people to connect through design and art, Zeynep Özler is the Corporate Communications Manager at Kale Group and Program Director of Kale Design and Art Center (KTSM).

What and where is KTSM?

KTSM is situated at Karakoy. Once Kale Group's first headquarters, it is the new space in the arts scene, and it has made significant progress in its first year as an interdisciplinary production and meeting point. The Center so far has hosted fourteen design and art workshops and four interdisciplinary meetings along with design competitions. It aims to provide a hub for those who believe the world will be a better place through art and design, as well as for students and new graduates. Also, through physical and online exhibitions, KTSM aims to acknowledge both established and new generation ceramic artists as well



Zeynep Özler RC 98

as showcase examples of co-creation between local makers, artisans and artists, highlighting sustainability. The upcycling project attracted attention, and there is more to come. There will also be digital talks on design, architecture and art with inspiring speakers.

Why did Kale Group create KTSM?

Kale Group stands out not only with its pioneering activities in its main areas of operation, namely ceramics

and building materials but also with its innovative and circular social impact projects and continuous support of art and culture. I am proud to work for a purpose-driven company that is people-centric, and for a leader, Kale Group President and CEO Zeynep Bodur Okyay, who is committed to creating sustainable value in all areas of life.

We dream of KTSM as a hub, where people from different walks of life or disciplines come together to co-create. We also envision it to be a meeting point for social entrepreneurs, who are impactful actors in shaping the future. We want them to exchange ideas as well as dreams. At this center we mirror our roots, the values that make us who we are. As one of the first Kale offices, we have preserved İbrahim Bodur's office as a museum hosting memories. For KTSM to be a living space, we need your engagement and energy. Please walk with us.

Burcu Yüksel RC 02

“Art plays a powerful and proactive role in affecting change.”

Currently the director at Gaia Art Foundation in London, Burcu Yüksel previously had her own consultancy company in old masters and contemporary art.

What is the Gaia Art Foundation's mission?

Gaia Art Foundation is a young, private initiative dedicated to supporting and to facilitating exchange across art, ecology, science and technology. We don't have an exhibition space or collection, so collaboration with artists, curators and organizations is key. Art plays a powerful and proactive role in affecting change, and we believe it is our responsibility to work together across different disciplines on projects that have the potential to inspire and engage with audiences in a positive way.



Burcu Yüksel RC 02

You are an expert in both old masters and contemporary art. How did that come about?

I ended up working in both thanks to my mentors. I was encouraged by them to not give up one or the other, but to keep on doing what I feel passionate about. While working with old masters, I kept active in contemporary art through my engagement with patron groups and committees and became a member of AICA Turkey, conducting

interviews for Turkish media with artists and art professionals such as Marina Abramovic, Gilbert & George, and Anselm Kiefer.

How do you view the contemporary art scene in Turkey?

I love the energy and dedication. Support of artists, curators and writers are essential for any art scene to thrive, and most of that responsibility falls on private individuals and initiatives in Turkey.

How has RC influenced you?

It equipped me with the confidence and courage to stand on my own ground and find my path. The alumni network provides great support, which I particularly benefited from when I first moved to the US and later to the UK.

Esra Eczacıbaşı RC 07 and Cem Yılmaz RC 07

“Genç Modern aims to bring together young professionals interested in the arts and involve them in Istanbul’s dynamic art community.”



Esra Eczacıbaşı RC 07



Cem Yılmaz RC 07

Alongside their successful and busy careers, classmates Esra Eczacıbaşı and Cem Yılmaz founded Genç Modern to help cultivate love for art and art patronship.

What inspired you to start Genç Modern?

In 2013, there were no arts membership programs for a young audience. Many of those around us were interested in learning more about modern art but had no means to meet fellow art enthusiasts and build meaningful relationships with artists, curators or collectors.

Furthermore, young artists shared their disappointment about the lack of visibility and opportunities for them in Turkey’s contemporary art world.

What’s the aim of the group?

Genç Modern aims to bring together young professionals interested in the arts and involve them in Istanbul’s dynamic art community. It provides a platform through which members meet with artists, curators, collectors and supporters of art to further their understanding of modern and contemporary art. It is the ignition

point for members to enter the contemporary art sphere. As an affiliate of Istanbul Modern, Genç Modern’s mission is also to increase the visibility of talented Turkish artists at the start of their careers and create opportunities for them in the contemporary art world.

How has Genç Modern evolved over the years?

Genç Modern has become a community throughout the years. Genç Modern is now a powerful network through which members support each other as they connect with the art community at large.

How has your education at RC influenced you?

Our education at RC taught us to welcome new experiences and embrace opportunities that push us out of our comfort zone. At RC, we cultivated a strong desire to explore, learn and grow. This is evident in conversations among ourselves, where we constantly discuss how we can further improve the program and foster new experiences. Ultimately it is this openness and curiosity that led us to start Genç Modern.

So Many Artist Alumni, So Many Different Worlds to Explore

There are simply never enough pages in an RCQ issue to cover the accomplishments of all our alumni, and never more so than in the Fine Arts Issue. Here is a list of some of the ACG, RA, and RC members in the art world, for those in the RC community who want to make an artistic exploration.

Abidin Dino RC 33ex
Seniye Fenmen ACG 39
Yıldız Moran ACG 51ex
Ömer Uluç RC 53
Özer Kabaş RC 57
Ergün Çağatay RC 58
Tomur Atagök ACG 59
Orhan Taylan RC 60
İpek Duben ACG 61
Ferhan Taylan Erder ACG 61
Gül Derman ACG 62
Jale Erzen ACG 62
Sedat Pakay RA 64
Nazan Erkmen ACG 65
Suzy Hug Levy ACG 65

Nuran Terzioğlu ACG 65
Can Göknil ACG 66
Betül Aydıner ACG 69
Semra Özümerzifon ACG 70
Fatma Tülin ACG 70
Eti Behar ACG 70ex
Ayşe Erkmen RC 70ex
Serdar Arat RC 73
Gülnur Geriş RC 78
Şebnem Diler RC 88
İrem Kaneli RC 89
Ali Kazma RC 89
Elif Uras RC 90
Tamer Tamar RC 92
Balca Ergener RC 98

Sibel Horada RC 98
Elsa Ers Brosh RC 00
Hale Güngör Oppenheimer RC 00
Hayal Pozantı RC 00
Hande Varsat RC 01
Yasemin Bihter Adalı RC 02
Burcu Yüksel RC 02
Duygu Aytaç RC L12 03
Çağla Cömert RC L12 03
Kayansel Kaya RC L12 03
Merve Elveren RC 05
Gülşah Mursaloğlu RC 08
Mehveş Lelic RC 09
Ulya Soley RC 09
Aslı Uludağ RC 09

A Passion for Her School

By Oya Erenli Sezer ACG 69

Over the years, Nimet Ebussuutoğlu Erenli ACG 43 proudly shared her memories of her days on the Arnavutköy campus while her daughter Oya Erenli Sezer ACG 69 wrote them down. The following excerpts portray the ACG of the 1940s.

When my mother Nimet was at the end of her 98 years of life, she thanked her parents and her dear College for the excellent education she received. Her neurologist commented that her profound education

supplied intellectual reserve for her mental capacity in her old age. I sang “Alma Mater” to her in her half unconscious state, while she responded with a smile and tried to join me with difficulty. My mother’s was a passion for



Nimet Ebussuudoğlu Erenli (second from left)
with classmates at graduation in 1943



Three generations of alumni. From L to R: Didem Sezer Manecolo RC 90, Nimet Ebussuudoğlu Erenli ACG 43 and Oya Erenli Sezer ACG 69 at Homecoming in 2013

her school. She wanted her children to have the same experience and being alumni for three generations was her pride: Nimet ACG 43, son Hayri RA 65; RC YÜK 69, daughter Oya ACG 69 and granddaughter Didem RC 90.

Nimet came from a traditional Ottoman family, descendent of Ebussuud Efendi, Sultan Suleyman's head of Islam. The family followed age old traditions, but at the same time shared the excitement of the new Turkish Republic. With the suggestion and insistence of a relative who studied at ACG, her father Nuri Ebussuudoğlu went to inspect the school. He was convinced by Miss Summers and believed that his daughters Ayşe and Nimet could get a good education here. Nimet started ACG in 1937, discovering a totally modern world, full of discoveries that would shape her world view and help her reach her full potential. She found herself among very valuable young women with whom she shared lifelong friendships.

"I was deeply affected by my school; if I hadn't studied there, my life would be different. It opened my eyes to the world, I learned to deal with life and gained self-confidence," she always said. Together we collected her school paraphernalia - pictures, letters from

teachers, awards - and she donated them to the school archives. She also told me a lot of memories about her teachers, and school life between 1937 and 1943.

Miss Summers, the headmistress, had a very dominant personality. She was feared, yet respected. English Prep teacher Miss Dumble won their hearts. She used to tap the desk with her ring to bring the class to order. My mother had contact with her for many years after graduation, and Dorothy Dumble came to Istanbul to see her "old girls" several times. Years later, she sent this ring to Nimet to be commemorated in our family; granting her wish, Nimet's great granddaughter is wearing this ring now.



ACG Prep Volleyball Champions in 1938-39

Mr. Estes, her music teacher, left quite an impact on Nimet. She was in the Music Club, meeting on Wednesdays, singing classics from a green book. "On Wings of Song" by Mendelssohn was her favorite piece. After graduation she got married and moved to İzmit where my father was working. When she would feel the burden of a totally different life with two small children and house chores, she would take her green book and sing classics she learned at Music Club. That would give her happiness and bring her back to reality; memories of ACG were like therapy for her.

Her friend Fikret Şenes had a beautiful voice. Mr. Estes would make his five fingers parallel to represent the musical scale and show the place of the notes. Living in Barton Hall, he would sometimes invite the club members to his house to sing as a chorus.

Nimet owed her beautiful handwriting to the calligraphy teacher Mr. Çerçiyân who also was the creator of Atatürk's signature.

Among her unforgettable teachers was also the famous Turkish literature teacher Faruk Nafiz Çamlıbel. She could recite his "Han Duvarları" poem even in her old age. Hüseyin Pektaş, another literature teacher, was very strict, but admired Nimet's intellectual capacity. She attracted his attention



Nimet Ebussuudoğlu Erenli (right) with President John Scott Everton and Mrs. Everton at ACG Graduation in 1969

with her second-hand literature book from her older brother. Hüseyin Bey asked whether this book used to belong to Ebussuud Efendi, as it looked rather ancient! Rauf Seymen, who wrote the famous geography book used by generations (even we used it) widened their knowledge of the world. Her world literature book was so valuable for Nimet all her life, that she would open pages, read Tagore (Bülent Ecevit RC 44 translated his poems) and tell me about the Indian literature

they studied in Senior class. The poem "Time you old gypsy man / Will you not stay / Put up your caravan / Just for one day?" was her favorite and she recited it at their 50th Reunion. "Don't borrow tomorrow's sorrow" was her motto in life.

Nimet got interested in sports in this new environment with her wooden tennis racket. She also was the ping-pong champion in Orta School. Being a representative for Kızılay in

her classroom and the President of the Student Council in Senior class prepared her for social activities in later life. When the Senior class performed the play *Electra*, Nimet had the excitement of being on stage as one of the chorus members. In the dining halls, mealtime was quite a ceremony. They would all dress up and follow the table manners while Mösyö Tanaş served with dignity. Since one teacher would sit at each table and serve the meal, they would have a chance to have friendly conversations with her. Being a boarding student, Nimet had the privilege of enjoying the school grounds, especially the Plateau. After dinner, coffee was served at the Blue Parlor for the Seniors where sometimes teachers residing at school would also join them. Occasionally, Nimet played the piano, while her friends danced.

Before I started ACG, I went to Charter Day in 1965 with my mother where *My Fair Lady* was being performed. I was mesmerized by what I saw and longed to be a part of this world. Fortunately, ACG became my second home after graduating from English High School for Girls. Even though times had changed, I breathed the same air as my mother, even shared some teachers. Attending my graduation in 1969, and my daughter Didem's



Nimet Ebussuudoğlu Erenli with Miss Dumble in 1938



Classmates on the Plateau in 1942



Charter Day in 1943

graduation in 1990 made my mother extremely proud and reminiscent of her formative years on the same paths we all trod.

In 1969 my graduation ceremony from ACG and my brother's from RC Engineering were one day apart. Mother was so excited that she told the then President Mr. Everton that she was "the mother of the year".

The hills of Arnavutköy have deep roots in the three generations of our family. What started with her at ACG in 1937 has infused our genes and shaped us all into self-sufficient, confident individuals with solid values and a passion for learning. Thank you mother, for leading the way and may you rest in peace. ■

Anlatılan sizin hikâyeniz.
Kökleriniz, göçüp geldiğiniz şehirler, aileniz, hatıralar, mutluluklar...

BuBelgeselBenim



Anılarınızı konuşalım, güncel çekimlerimizi fotoğraflarınızla, belgelerinizle buluşturalım.

Geçmiş geçmişte kalsın, film gibi hayatların bir de filmi olsun.



Atmaca from Hikmet Hükümenoğlu RC 89

Combines Personal and Public Histories

Contributed by Seda Çaykara Şen RC 96

Hikmet Hükümenoğlu's latest novel *Atmaca* (Can Yayınları) re-confirms his place among the best of the contemporary Turkish writers. Hükümenoğlu has previously published five novels and a story collection. His novel *Körburun* won the prestigious Atilla İlhan Literature Award in 2017.

Atmaca is a novel about the anger and pain of growing up and about our times. Hükümenoğlu tells the story of Ömer from his high school years into university and adulthood. However, while following Ömer through different life stages, the novel also gives a brief history of Turkey from the 90s



onwards - a very spot-on recap. Especially for those born in the second half of the 1970s, the story will feel very familiar in many ways, with all the cultural references. The novel inspires the re-watching of old favorites and putting on a song or two while reading. Interestingly, Hükümenoğlu states, "Apart from some of my favorite books and movies that Ömer also likes a lot, there isn't anything autobiographical in the story. At first I was planning to write about the psychology of siblings but the story evolved into this." His strong characters, vivid storytelling and intimate and fluent writing style make one crave for more to come from Hükümenoğlu.

Lale Deliveli Alp RC 98

Writes Book for Expecting and New Moms



A US and Turkey qualified lawyer, Lale Deliveli Alp wrote *Toplantıdan Doğuma* (From Meeting to Birth; Ceres Yayınları) for moms-to-be and new moms. Having become a mother recently, Lale found herself reading lots of books on pregnancy, birth and first year of baby's life. She took copious notes and combined them, while waiting for her son Afşin Agah's

birth. She was sharing these notes with her pregnant friends and new moms, which led her husband Afşin to suggest that she publish them. Hence, the notes turned into a book combining her experience as well as her research.

In *Toplantıdan Doğuma*, Alp covers many topics ranging from what to

eat before and during pregnancy to the importance of reading books for babies, baby activities moms can do, baby's monthly progress and balancing work and motherhood. She also lists many references on different sleep methods, feeding and routines of babies. She tries to give mothers ways to find the best methods for themselves and their babies.

RCQ asked Alp how she manages her career and motherhood: "My life and priorities changed after Agah was born. My meetings started to be scheduled according to his sleep and eating routines. We even started going to meetings together (at least for some clients). You learn to adapt to your new life and suddenly it becomes so normal that you sometimes wonder how you lived before. Motherhood is a great but different and difficult journey. I always remind myself of one of my favorite quotes by Şems-i Tebrizi which I included in my book: "If you think 'My life will be upside down' don't worry. How do you know down is not better than upside?"

Two New Poetry Collections from Gül Özseven RC 86

Gül Özseven continues to publish books of poems written in English. *The Shyness of Beginnings* (Olympia Publishers, London, 2019) and *Untold Before Memorabilia* (Cinius Yayınları, 2020) are her latest. *The Shyness of Beginnings* is an eclectic anthology of poetry looking at life, love, loss, expectation and disappointment through a series of short poems. A journey of modern-day issues that affect all women, young or old, the book is accessible to those both new to poetry and those with a more intimate knowledge of this genre. *Untold Before Memorabilia*, on the other hand, displays Özseven's calm and confident voice in romantic poetry. Özseven wrote the first draft of most of the poems in *Untold Before Memorabilia* before the pandemic hit the world, but she started working on them again during the lockdown:

"Molding and reshaping the poems kept me going in those unprecedented times." There is usually a female perspective in the poems, but the insights of daily life are unisex.

Özseven claims little things inspire her, "like somebody's birthday present, or how a man eats his dinner, or what a young woman wears to a classical music concert and with whom she goes there. I want the readers to identify with the person telling the poems in both of the books, and to relive the moments told in the poems with 'Her' (My literally invented character). Maybe 'She' will take the readers' minds from the monotony and sadness of their present lives." Özseven foresees purely pandemic inspired poems to appear in her future work and hopes the future brings happiness to us all, in a Covid-free world.



Ömer Eğecioğlu RC 72

Publishes Compilation of Classical Music Articles

Ömer Eğecioğlu is a faculty member at the Department of Computer Science at the University of California at Santa Barbara, a Pacific coast town, where he has been living since the mid 1980s. In addition to his scientific contributions in mathematics and theoretical computer science, he has published articles on classical music. He recently decided to compile his music-related articles and musings. To this end, the first of a series of books titled *Tarihten ve Günümüzden Klasik Müzik Yazıları-I* (Writings on Historical and Contemporary Classical Music I) was published by Müzik Eğitim Yayınları in July 2020. An amateur cellist himself, Eğecioğlu says "I wanted to share my take on curious and historically important musical events, people and places with classical music lovers."



When asked about the relationship between music and science, Eğecioğlu says, "The music work, which is outside of my real work, is an outlet that makes me look at life in a slightly different way. It is enriching to feel not locked up in a role that is one-dimensional. I think it is significantly more rewarding

to spread your interests and do things in a way that fulfills a variety of your passions. These passions are different for each of us, but I feel that what is most necessary is beginning with developing passions."

Eğecioğlu regards RC as the most important aspect of his education: "I had excellent teachers and I learned a tremendous amount from them. I made a lifelong friend in mathematics teacher Grady Hobson, a free spirit if there ever was one. I have always felt proud to be a member of my class, to be associated with these extraordinary people. They say that your friends are the family you choose, indeed, among my best friends today, are the friends I made during my RC years."

Riva Düvenyas Şalhon RC 88 Publishes Essay Collection

Riva Şalhon's first book, *Tek Satırlık Entel* (One Line Intellectual; Doğan SoLibri), is a collection of her essays previously published at Şalom newspaper.

The germination of the book goes back 12 years: "The chief editor of Şalom newspaper offered me a column, after having observed my endless enthusiasm to express opinions about even the tiniest discrepancies in life. He warned me though, in advance, that I should be less critical and less sarcastic about



political issues. Keeping this in mind, I am trying ever since. I thought this year was a great time to collect some of my essays in a book. Most essays are timeless, and (believe it or not) mildly written."

The title refers to Şalhon's observation of a type of person, the know-it-all with just a basic grasp of a subject but nonetheless who goes out of her way to impart her wisdom. Şalhon credits her RC education and her curiosity for books and art for the content of the collection.

Ezgi Emel RC 10 Shares Life Lessons Through Children's Books



What began as a story book based on chess has grown into a prolific writing career for Ezgi Emel, who recently published two books with important lessons for readers.

Potanın Yıldızı Ben Olmalıyım! (I Have to Be the Basketball Star!; İnce Kitap), is the fifth book in Emel's values education series (see RCQ 54, p. 48). It follows the story of Zorba Bora, a notorious school bully. He is also a talented basketball player hoping to qualify for the school's basketball team. The book illustrates how being a bully is not in the best interest of bullies themselves.

Kirli Çamaşırlar Çamaşır Makinesine Karşı (Dirty Laundry vs. the Washing Machine; İnce Kitap) follows three main characters: Kapşonlu which is a popular clothing item and is tired of getting worn and washed again and again, Yer Bezi which is a cleaning cloth that used to be a metal band's promo t-shirt, and Tek Çorap which is a single sock who lost his partner years ago in a washing machine

accident. Yer Bezi and Tek Çorap are jealous that they never get to be washed in the washing machine. These three characters team up to break it. The story has also underlying themes of water consumption and the climate crisis.

Emel says, "I was inspired to write *Kirli Çamaşırlar* because I love reading naive children's stories with an anarchy theme. It's important to show children how they don't always have to be content with what they are offered, and they can question authority and change the status quo. I hope to inspire kids to find the courage to change things they want to change and make this world a better place, as well as enjoy the journey."

Eray aylı RC L3 03

Offers a Multidisciplinary Approach to Climate Change



In his work, academic Eray aylı is involved in anthropology, geography, architecture and art criticism, and studies the visual and spatial policy of violence and disaster. His latest book *İklimin Estetiğı* (*The Aesthetics of Climate*; Everest Yayınları) examines

the issue of human impact on the environment from a fresh angle. aylı explores the ethical and political implications of the thesis that all of humanity is both the victim and the culprit in environmental disasters and climate change, focusing on architecture and the arts and specifically on aesthetics that is their common denominator and that materializes both ethics and politics. He argues that neither the responsibility for nor the effects of environmental disasters and climate change are distributed evenly across humans.

When asked what inspired him to examine this subject, aylı says, “The current state of the world! But also how many perspectives that seem to acknowledge the seriousness of global warming approach the topic simply as a technical question rather than engaging with its profoundly political character arising from the

social, economic, racial, and gendered injustices that underpin it and that therefore need grappling with.”

aylı began using an interdisciplinary approach in his work during his PhD at University College London, which was a joint project between the Architecture and Anthropology departments, while also teaching at the Art History department. This approach began in high school. “RC drew students from different walks of life and most classes and teachers encouraged critical thinking,” states aylı. “The latter inspired us to not take anything at face value.”

Among RC teachers who inspired him were contemporary artists Gül İlğaz and Neriman Polat who explored politically charged issues in their artistic practice.

Selva Mısırlı Bayındır RC 80 Releases Two New Books

Selva Mısırlı Bayındır describes herself as someone who has continued learning beyond formal schooling, and she has compiled what she has gleaned from the myriad trainings she attended and journeys she took in two new books: *Selva'nın Mucizelerle Yaşam Kitabı* (*Lifestyle Book of Selva's Miracles*) and *Hayatını Upgrade Et* (*Upgrade Your Life*), both published by Kitapyurdu Doğrudan Yayıncılık. *Mucizelerle Yaşam Kitabı* invites people to believe in miracles. In *Hayatını Upgrade Et*, Bayındır offers the techniques and rituals that have helped her upgrade her life over the years. Both books have an accompanying blog, with videos,

guided meditations, and music accessible through the QR codes on the books' pages. Bayındır's father's death was the threshold for her to get in touch with herself and to try and increase her awareness in life: “I am addicted to learning and exploring new things. I've been writing since my childhood. I believe I express myself better by writing.” About her books, Bayındır states, “These topics represent my way of life and my way of responding to life. I've participated in many workshops since 2000, and I guess I've managed to combine them all and come up with something that is unique to me. Simple, fun and with no rules!”



Autism in the Workforce:

Nevra Eker RC 94 Spearheads a Transformation

The Eker family established an exemplary project with the support of Tohum Autism Foundation called Autism in the Workforce. The project aims to reintegrate individuals with autism to society, thereby eliminating their families' concerns regarding their future.

Nevra Eker explains how the project started: "Andros Corporation has been our business associate since 2006. Jean-François, one of their directors, has a son with autism who is now 30. Individuals with autism are in desperate straits especially after their parents, mothers and fathers grow old. If they are unable to work, they become desperate for state assistance. This situation causes suffering for the parents: 'What will my child do after I die? Is he/she able to look after himself/herself?' Out of this concern and anxiety, Jean-François started a project in Andros to demonstrate that the adults with autism can actually work in a factory environment, assisted by job coaches. A total of 12 adults with autism started work at Andros in 2016, with a preparatory timeline of 4-5 years. In addition to providing employment, Andros established an environment where these employees can all live together during the weekdays and reinforce their development processes. With this model they were able to acquire certain abilities, skills and competences to live on their own.

"When our partner Andros told us about this project, we, as Eker, visited their facilities, reviewed the environment they had established and the risks and challenges they encountered and started to think how we could gradually implement this model at Eker. We established a plan



Eker currently employs eight individuals with autism at its factory, under the supervision of three job coaches

with our project leader and prepared a program to adapt a certain number of individuals with autism for the working environment at the factory within 3-4 years. We started the project in 2018 with one autistic employee. Currently, we have eight individuals with autism working at our factory under the supervision of three job coaches. Job coaches promptly produce solutions and assistance for the challenges and distresses these individuals encounter at the factory. This model highly contributes to their development and their engagement in life, enables them to have self-confidence and guides them to becoming self-sustained freestanding individuals. Particularly in designing the workstations of the autistic employees, their adjustment period, supervisor and job coach training, we have had great consulting and support from Tohum Autism Foundation. Such know-how about autism is absolutely essential for the project to succeed."

The Eker family intends to increase the number of autistic employees to 12, but their bigger ambition is for

the project to become a model that can be implemented within numerous enterprises and facilities in Turkey. The number of individuals with autism both in Turkey and worldwide is ever increasing, and the unemployment rate for autistic individuals is 99.9%. Yet individuals with autism have a wide spectrum of different competencies and skills, and essentially there are no obstacles for them to work, as long as they are accompanied by well-trained job coaches.

Eker outlines the bigger goal as follows: "We want to ensure that this model guides all institutions in both the public and private sectors and becomes widespread and sustainable. We work with the public authorities to implement state support for the salaries of work coaches. We also plan to work with them to create incentive schemes that ensure the wages of business coaches are covered by the government. We hope that we will be able to integrate more individuals with autism into business life through this project and see this project become widespread across Turkey."

Senem Başyurt RC 88

Champions Equal Opportunity in Education

Senem Başyurt has a BSc in Industrial Engineering from Boğaziçi University and an MBA from the University of Exeter. She worked in investment banking and in advisory for over 20 years. The turning point in her career came when she assumed the role of Darüşşafaka's Secretary General, thus transitioning from the corporate to the non-profit world.

Darüşşafaka strives to ensure equality of opportunity in education for talented children who have lost their fathers or mothers and have limited financial means: "We aim to provide them with care and a bright future. We provide top level secondary education to nearly 1,000 children, selected through examinations across Turkey. We also give university scholarships. We work to transform the talent of each student into a valuable resource of the future. Darüşşafaka is also a home to our students as a boarding school. The ties between the graduates remain tight throughout life, and the graduates call themselves brother and sister, regardless of their graduation year." Başyurt believes Darüşşafaka's vision is similar to RC: "Founded in the same year, both institutions provide a different perspective to their graduates, make them think big and out of the box."

As the Secretary General, Başyurt's main duty is to ensure the sustainability of Darüşşafaka, both financially and operationally: "I am responsible for fundraising for and running the whole operation, which includes the school and the four elderly homes we provide our donors. Darüşşafaka has a large operation base with nearly 700 employees; and I always feel the responsibility in spending the funds entrusted to us by our donors

in the best way possible. I am also accountable for ensuring that the units within the organization adhere to the relevant laws, regulations, procedures, principles and by-laws of the Darüşşafaka Society."

Başyurt made the switch to the non-profit world because, after many years on the corporate side, she wanted to give back to society: "As a parent, I can see the gap in opportunities provided to children from different backgrounds and that it has widened since our childhood. I witnessed how good education and actualization of talent can transform an individual, and how this transformation is contagious. I wanted to be part of it! Each year, we visit the homes of all our candidate students for financial audit; then I see those quiet children a couple of years later, totally radiant – it is the ultimate motivation for me."

When asked about the challenges she faces, Başyurt states, "Equality begins by being aware of opportunities;

therefore, our first challenge is to notify all qualifying candidates about our exam. We try to reach everyone and run a big campaign each year to announce our exam. Then the main challenge is collecting the funds we need. Yet despite these challenges, their dreams, effort, and all their hard work make us so proud."

Başyurt credits RC for teaching every student individualism in an unselfish way: "Our Orta Principal Ms. Dabanovitch played an important role in my life. I can still see her with someone's 'not fitting the rules' socks in her hand. She was keen to make you understand it was your choices that lead to consequences. She taught us that discipline was not punishing someone for faulty actions, but respecting others. Thanks to RC, I follow my dreams, am confident of my abilities and aware of my drawbacks. I learned that being deeply rooted does not hold you back from what you want to do in life; it provides the springboard to it."



Senem Başyurt RC 88 with Darüşşafaka students

The Vibrant World of Contemporary Art

Melih Fereli RC ENG 70 is a pivotal figure in the Turkish art scene and is Arter's Founding Director. RCQ had the opportunity to ask him about all things art and Arter.

How was Arter created and what is its mission?

Arter was opened in 2010, as a subsidiary of the Vehbi Koç Foundation (VKV), with the aim of providing a sustainable infrastructure for producing and exhibiting contemporary art. VKV is Turkey's first private foundation, with operations in education, healthcare, art and culture. VKV's involvement in contemporary art goes back to 2005, when I was invited to write a critical report on the Foundation's cultural activities in general, revising priorities and flagging new opportunities, which culminated in a new strategic plan with a strong focus on contemporary art. Since then, many key steps were taken in this respect, all of which were significant in rendering the Vehbi Koç Foundation a major actor in the world of contemporary art.

The opening of Arter at its venue on İstiklal Street in May 2010 indeed marked an important moment in this series of steps and was a clear sign that the Foundation's support for and efforts in the field of contemporary art were going to continue. Arter was announced as a preparatory testing ground, a platform for learning and exploration towards the actualization of the museum-scale building that would also accommodate the collection and entail a much broader and more comprehensive content that we would carry into the future. At its building on İstiklal Street, Arter presented 35 solo and group exhibitions between 2010 and 2018 with accompanying publications, talks, performances and workshops; and provided support for the production of 183 artworks in the framework of its program.



Melih Fereli RC ENG 70

We are proud to have opened Arter's new home in Dolapdere in 2019, which also marked the 50th anniversary of the Vehbi Koç Foundation. Arter's new building, designed by Grimshaw Architects, London, is conceived as a versatile space that offers multi-layered possibilities to discover, enjoy and engage in a closer dialogue with art. The building consists of physically intersected spaces in a strong visual dialogue with the city. Spread on six floors, the galleries feature varying volumes, ceiling heights and a high degree of flexibility.

At its new home, Arter celebrated its 10th anniversary this year and continues to be a sustainable, vibrant cultural hub. It strives to make art accessible to larger audiences through exhibitions drawn from its own collection as well as curated exhibitions of non-collection works. One of Arter's missions is encouraging contemporary artistic production

across all disciplines from music to dance, theatre to sonic arts, film to literature. Arter's Learning Program presents processes and activities that aspire to interpret our times through art. Arter presents publications that aim to enhance and stimulate conversations around contemporary art. Through its bilingual (Turkish and English) publication policy, Arter aspires to contribute to the production of knowledge in the field and to the writing of art history by encouraging original research and commissioning new texts.

Are there other inspiring museums like Arter in the world? Which museums did you draw examples from when creating the original Arter on İstiklal and the new space?

There is a whole host of museums around the world offering exciting programs that draw large crowds. Arter has not really been modelled on any particular contemporary

art museum; during the process of writing its mission and preparing the architectural brief, we conducted a lot of research and found that institutions with a long history were facing infrastructural difficulties in addressing the changing demands of audiences.

Events designed around exhibitions appeared to be the formula for increasing visitor frequency, but sizeable investments needed to be made in providing the necessary spaces with the appropriate technical infrastructure to meet the requirements of such projects. As you know, I am not a museologist; my background in classical music and festival management has turned out to be an advantage in writing the architectural brief for Arter, which now operates more like a vibrant cultural center across many disciplines, while boasting a great collection conceived on an international basis, from which we curate exciting exhibitions.

What sort of activities is Arter hosting during the pandemic?

Arter organized many online events as part of its current exhibitions. Our new online gatherings “Show and Tell from Home” invited each participant to share a personal narrative around an object or work of art present in their home.

In addition to our Interpretation Events in Turkish, we’ve hosted some crucial international online events as well. Organized on the occasion of two of our current exhibitions, *Rainforest V (variation 3)* and *KP Brehmer: The Big Picture*, three online panel discussions in the last months brought together associates and collaborators throughout the world. It was a great pleasure to have a vibrant dialogue around contemporary art together with nearly 200 people in each of these events.

Arter’s Workshops for children and adults, Contemporary Art Seminars, Movement Workshops, and Online Guided Tours also continue online. During the pandemic Arter presented

an online exhibition titled *Altan Gürman: A Pioneer of Contemporary Art in Turkey* and more than 160 works from its collection via Google Arts & Culture. Between April and July Arter’s curatorial team also presented two online selections of video works from the Arter Collection titled #playathome on arter.org.tr

Our monthly Lunch Time gatherings with our neighbors and visitors had to be suspended due to safety concerns during this period; however, we are always delighted to see some familiar faces participating in our online events, broadening the meaning of being a neighbor.

Is there anything new that you’re doing that you plan to continue after the pandemic?

We’ll probably continue designing special online events with international participants after the pandemic is over, as technology has enabled us to reach wider audiences. Otherwise, we hope to return to a degree of normalcy in physical space and resume concerts and performances.

How do you think the art scene in Istanbul has changed over the past 25 years?

Istanbul’s contemporary art scene achieved a major leap forward with the fourth edition of the Istanbul Biennial in 1995, curated by René Block, when I was director general of IKSİ. Further noteworthy developments were the founding of Istanbul Modern (2004) and the impressive transformation of the Sabancı Museum following the appointment of the “great dame of museology” Dr. Nazan Ölçer as its director. Galleries flourished and Contemporary Istanbul came on the scene as Istanbul’s first art fair.

Economic downturn and political upheavals halted Istanbul’s rise to stardom; despite the lull that we’ve experienced, a fairly steady pace of growth was resumed since 2010 after Arter entered the scene with reenergizing determination to make a difference. Our new building and visionary program across disciplines



Arter moved to its new home in Dolapdere in 2019

put Arter into international limelight, only to be curtailed by the adverse effects of the pandemic. More and more artists from Turkey gained international recognition in the limelight of their shows at major institutions.

I believe, during the next decade the Istanbul art scene will witness the rise of new museums and the differing institutional discourses on museum programming.

What is your advice to RC students who want to study art and build careers as artists or in art management?

The path to success and happiness is quite arduous; passion, perseverance and patience are needed beyond a good education, ideally followed by a “master-student” relationship. Thinking out of the box, making an effort to discover what your heart’s real desire is, and what will make you happy; at the end of the day, “achieving happiness” is our ultimate goal in life!

MVP Sophomore Helps Bring Home the Gold

In the summer of 2020, Lise 10 student İpar Özay Kurt helped lead the Turkish national volleyball team to victory, winning the European Volleyball U19 Championships in Zenica, Bosnia-Herzegovina. For her excellent teamwork and as the top scorer of the tournament with 28 points, the outside hitter was chosen MVP.

The RCQ asked her how she and her teammates prepared for the tournament amidst the pandemic. “We got ready with a two-month-long camp,” İpar said. “Before that, we were doing core exercises without a volleyball at home.”

İpar and the team had to quickly savor their success before facing their next challenge. “After we played the final game, because of the league matches and club training we immediately returned to Istanbul. We are training for at least three hours a day because we are playing in the Turkish league right now.” The next tournament for the national team will be the U20 World Championship



İpar Özay Kurt L10 with her teammates at the European Volleyball U19 Championships in 2020

taking place in the summer of 2021. Meanwhile, İpar is playing in the CEV Champions League and the Misli.com Sultans League.

RC girls volleyball coach Aslı Temel says, “İpar has been a great role model for our team. For the first time ever, in 2019, the RC girls volleyball team made it to the Turkish Championship semi-finals. Like all team members, İpar played a big part in this. She is able to manage her professional volleyball life

and her lessons at RC really well.” İpar, who has been playing volleyball since she was eight, credits RC with helping her to balance her academics with her training program. “My RC experience taught me to work in a very organized and disciplined way. It helped me a lot during my busy schedule,” she says.

As for her future, İpar says she hopes to graduate from a prestigious university, after which she intends to play volleyball professionally.

The Numbers Add Up for Lise 9 Math Whiz

When Hilmican Söğütlü L9 was still a Prep student, he received a gold medal at the TÜBİTAK National Science Olympiad in math. In September he represented Turkey at the TÜBİTAK Young Balkan Mathematics Olympiad.

“I actually wasn’t aware of my interest in math until my family entered me in a math contest,” says Hilmican. “I got a gold medal, and a scholarship from the school that had organized the contest. They had Olympiad lessons and that is how I started my journey in math.” His Olympiad teacher helped him to prepare for the national TÜBİTAK exams. There are also two-week long camps where participants study from 9 am to 9 pm. “We were completely



Hilmican Söğütlü L9

dedicated to learning and this helped us to multiply our knowledge a lot,” says Hilmican.

“At RC, I gained lots of confidence and ambition and this helped me to study as much as I could,” says Hilmican. “I am also glad that RC congratulated me when I returned. I genuinely appreciate this and it has motivated me a lot.”

While taking math classes at RC, Hilmican is also studying for the Olympiad competitions. He plans to take the Istanbul Science Olympiads and TÜBİTAK exams. “This is extremely significant for me because I entered the high school level just this year so this will be my first competition at this level,” says Hilmican.

Buğra Sükan RC 88 Becomes Chief Direction Officer at Dunapack Packaging

Buğra Sükan was recently promoted to chief direction officer (CDO) of Dunapack Packaging, an Austrian corrugated packaging firm, with operations in 11 countries. As CDO Sükan manages operations in Turkey and Romania, spanning six factories, and 1500 people. He also champions human resources for the whole group.

Sükan says RC taught him how to balance his strong drive for achievement and what is really

important in life: love. “My mom Zafer Sükan was the dean of Üsküdar American Academy for Girls, so I grew up close with RC faculty members, especially Ayfer Yeniçağ,” says Sükan. “Both were role models of self-made Turkish women shaping us with the way they handled our families, the authorities, teaching, and their home lives, even after they were long gone.”

Buğra Sükan lives in Istanbul, is married and has two daughters.



Dost Öngür RC 89 Shares Expert View on Oprah

Dost Öngür is a psychiatrist in Boston, Massachusetts and professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School. He works with people with psychotic disorders such as schizophrenia and bipolar disorder, and conducts brain research to develop better treatments for these conditions.

He was recently featured on Oprah’s Book Club in relation to the recently



released book *Hidden Valley Road* and he spoke with Oprah Winfrey about schizophrenia and its effects on families.

He is married and has two teenage boys. Look him up if you are ever in Boston, he would love to hear from you.

RC 93 Grads İrem Önen and Sirma Ataç Helps Students Find Right Universities



RC 93 alumni İrem Önen and Sirma Ataç

Through the many years that they worked in banking, human resources and software technology, and also on the alumni admissions committees

of Duke and Princeton, RC 93 grads İrem Kızılviranlıoğlu Önen and Sirma Sevand Ataç observed the diverse ways that educational paths can lead to career paths and that a one-size-fits-all approach will not work for coming generations. They decided to bring together their personal experiences to provide counseling services to students planning to study abroad for college and founded Kolektif Education.

“In today’s rapidly changing world, it will be critically important to best understand the individual talents

and passions of each student and to address their unique needs and objectives,” say İrem and Sirma. “Our approach is ‘student-centric’; we believe that each student has the necessary skills and intellectual curiosity to be successful in the area that they are passionate about.” Kolektif Education works in partnership with leading college counseling companies and provides specialized services for college admissions. Learn more: @kolektifeducation

Toygun Yilmazer RC 96 Wins Award For Bizim Tepe Event Posters

Toygun Yilmazer missed movie theaters so much during the pandemic that he began organizing outdoor movie screenings, starting in Büyükaada, then Bodrum and finally at Bizim Tepe. As a communications industry veteran, Yilmazer spearheaded The Pictures & The Drinks concept at Bizim Tepe (see p. 28). Little did he expect to win an award for his efforts. "During my 20 years at TBWA\Istanbul I have always worked with the creative team in the agency. This time, I was on

my own," explains Yilmazer. "I came up with the concept, naming and layout ideas and worked with a very talented illustrator, Olgun Kaşıkçı, to turn them into posters. I was surprised that we won a Silver Apple at the Crystal Apple Awards in the Visual Communication Design/Poster category. I feel proud that I brought an award to the RC alumni with my first project. I hope we can continue with this concept in 2021."



Love in the Time of Coronavirus for Yasemin Ağırđır RC 01 and Tolga Aktan RC 00

Yasemin Ağırđır RC 01 and Tolga Aktan RC 00 bumped into each other on November 17, 2019, at Homecoming, almost 20 years after they graduated in 2001 and 2000. They were married in a socially distanced ceremony in Istanbul exactly one year later, with only close friends and family by their

side. They are currently enjoying their happily-ever-after quarantine days and hope to celebrate their marriage with lots of dancing when the pandemic is over. Yasemin is the marketing manager for Metro Turkey and Tolga is head of the FX desk at ING Bank.



Yasemin Elçi RC L3 03 Takes Art Career Global

Yasemin married Mustafa Ergün and moved to Luxembourg in 2019. Since then she has been working on freelance projects in Turkey and in Luxembourg. She gives art advisory to private clients and writes for several publications such as the Luxembourg Times and Artsy. Since May 2020, she has been hosting a radio show on art in Luxembourg. She was also a jury member for the 2020 Central and Eastern European Film Festival in Luxembourg.



Wedding Bells for Pınar Ziyadanoğlu RC 12 and Emre Cezairli RC 10



Pınar and Emre met six years ago and got married in Istanbul on September 26, 2020. Pınar is a doctor in internal medicine at Haseki and Emre is a partner at asset management firm Istanbul Portföy.

Başak Aygün RC 13 and Erhan Aykut RC 06 Tie the Knot

Başak and Erhan met at a Homecoming years ago and their relationship started on a wonderful summer day in 2017. After two years of dating, Erhan proposed to Başak in the romantic city Prague in 2019. Their wedding was on September 4, 2020 in Istanbul, in the presence of their loved ones and many classmates from RC. Başak is a lawyer in a major law firm and Erhan works as an investment banker at Deutsche Bank.



Do you have news to share with the **RC Community**? Send a short write-up along with a photo to rcq@robcok.k12.tr

RC Grads Make a Slam Dunk with Chember



Chember founders, clockwise from top left: Alper Kızıloğlu RC 18, Aytağ Turanlıoğlu RC 18, Batu El RC 18, Begüm Ortaoğlu RC 18, Ömer Ekin RC 19, Ege Çavuşoğlu RC 18, Efekan Bahçivanoğlu RC 18 and Bora Demiral RC 18

Chember is a mobile app co-founded by eight RC alumni to connect basketball enthusiasts with streetball communities around them. The co-founders are RC 18 grads Bora Demiral, Ege Çavuşoğlu, Aytağ Turanlıoğlu, Begüm Ortaoğlu, Batu El, Alper Kızıloğlu, Efekan Bahçivanoğlu, and RC 19 grad Ömer Ekin. Chember was released in September 2020 and gained 10 thousand users in just three

weeks. They currently have around 15 thousand users from four different continents (North and South America, Asia, Europe). Chember allows users to find available courts, keep track of personal athletic data, and create or join streetball games.

“The struggles we faced with the streetball experience in different parts of the world brought us together

and we became a great team,” says Bora Demiral. “We are here to shape and ease the streetball experience regardless of one’s background.” The Chember team hopes to inspire kids in Anatolia who don’t have the necessary base to follow their dreams and get involved with sports. They aim to uplift the basketball experience and community first in Turkey, and then the rest of the world.

University of Chicago Recognizes RC Teachers



English Department Head Jason Leiter



Chemistry teacher James Butterworth



Overseas college counselor Burçin Arslan

Three Robert College teachers received the Outstanding Educator Award from the University of Chicago this fall, and were honored during an online ceremony on October 21, 2020 featuring the university's President Robert Zimmer, Provost Ka Yee C. Lee and Trustee Greg Wendt.

Chemistry teacher James Butterworth, who was nominated by Mükerrerem Tüfekçioğlu RC 20, says, "Working with RC students is very rewarding. They are very receptive and highly intelligent with a wide range of interests and

perspectives. I am learning new things from them all the time."

"I aim to make the classroom a space of playful risk and experimentation," says English Department Head Jason Leiter, who was nominated by Su Doğa Karaca RC 20. "If a student fails and tries again, or thinks but then thinks more deeply, then I feel satisfied that I have done my job well."

Arda Kural RC 20 nominated overseas college counselor Burçin Arslan who says, "I believe our

impact on a student's learning can last beyond school and for me this recognition was a reminder of that." Arslan adds, "RC students are not afraid to raise their voices. They are initiators, and not only leaders but also great team members. I feel blessed and beyond proud for having the opportunity to work with such an amazing group of students."

The accolade is bestowed on educators who have made a difference in the lives of newly admitted students to the university.

Sinan Tümtürk's PhD Dissertation Examines Perception of Private Schools

Turkish teacher Sinan Tümtürk received his PhD from Marmara University's Institute of Educational Sciences, Department of Educational Management in November. His dissertation looked at the organizational reputation of private schools in Turkey. He argued that while competition between private schools is increasing, the reputation of foreign private schools remains strong and they serve as an important example for newer schools.



Pinar Kadioğlu Sparks Children's Curiosity

RC's Education Technology Coordinator Pinar Kadioğlu has co-authored *Steve Jobs Gibi Yap (Do It Like Steve Jobs)*; Beta Kids) with Havva Kinay. The RCQ asked her about the book.

What is the book about?

It's about thinking differently, the mysterious power of curiosity, the doors opened by questioning, the ability to stay on track, resilience and the creativity that comes as a result of all these.

What do you hope young readers will get out of it?

While writing about the inspiring life story of a passionate leader and the simple but magnificent design process of Apple products, we also prepared technology and design activities. It is an interactive book in which children will watch inspiring videos, answer challenging questions to discover themselves, code computer algorithms and design animations. While doing all these, we give children the message, "You can do it too," inspired by Steve Jobs.



What else are you working on?

Before the global pandemic, I was planning and designing learning environments that use technology. The logic of my job did not change much after the pandemic, but the medium and needs did. The pandemic forced us to make massive adjustments to the way we learn

and teach. In this critical period, I'm reshaping how people identify with school technology, showing how to navigate effective distance learning and empowering teachers to adopt this new learning environment. In a time when so much is unknown, small and manageable adjustments can go a very long way.

Jonathan Stanyer Gets Published

Former RC English teacher Jonathan Stanyer has been busy writing while teaching in Saudi Arabia. His reflections on Istanbul over the years was published in June on yabangee.com. He's also completed an anthology of ghost stories that is soon to be published in the UK.

in the Middle East. My Turkish wife teaches in Istanbul and our 12-year-old son attends school there," says Stanyer. Regarding his book, Stanyer says he has had many paranormal experiences throughout his life and wanted to turn some of the experiences into short stories.

"Why Istanbul? I lived and worked there for 16 years and hope to return after my current contract expires

Since leaving RC in 2008, Stanyer has worked in Dubai and the UK, as well as at Darüşşafaka.



Suna Kırac ACG 60

By İpek Cem Taha RC 85, Robert College Trustee



The Robert College Community is deeply saddened by the passing of Suna Kırac. Her alma mater will always remember her fondly for her dedication as a Trustee and her generous commitment over the years. Her legacy lives on through the

Suna Kırac Hall, a favorite spot on campus where RC students are able to showcase their creations in music, theatre, visual arts and dance.

Suna Kırac, who passed away on September 15, 2020, was an

exceptional businessperson and a visionary civil society leader with many contributions to the educational and cultural spheres in Turkey. Her legacy in the areas of education, youth, cultural heritage, science, and the international visibility of our country will continue to bear fruit long after her life. Kırac had been receiving treatment for ALS, a motor neuron disease whose first symptoms were noticed in 1996.

Born in Ankara in 1941, Suna Kırac was the fourth and youngest child of Sadberk Hanım and Vehbi Koç, after Semahat Arsel, Rahmi Koç and Sevgi Gönül, who all studied at ACG and RC. Suna Hanım's interest in education sprouted from a very young age, and her conviction about the transformative power of education was strengthened in the American College for Girls, today's Robert College, where she completed her middle and high school education. From a very young age, Suna Kırac worked alongside her



Suna Kırac (bottom, center) with her classmates in the late 1950s



Suna Kiraç ACG 60 (center) with fellow RC Trustee Feyyaz Berker RC ENG 46 (left) and RC Board Chair Rodney Wagner (right) at the RC Building Campaign Award Evening at Bizim Tepe in 1989

father and in 1963 became one of the first five board members of the newly founded Koç Holding. By 1980, she had become the Vice Chairman of Koç Holding, and a leading businesswoman of her generation.

Suna Kiraç was a long standing and committed RC Trustee, serving on the Board between 1989 and 2002. The education, principles and friendships from her ACG days were transformative for her, as depicted in her 2006 book *I Have Ideals That Will Last Longer Than My Life*. At ACG, Suna Kiraç was a dynamic member of the student body, and as a residential student, was active in the Drama Association and the Classical Music Club as well as being on the of managing editors of *Campus News*.

Suna Kiraç has been the guiding hand in the establishment of many educational and cultural institutions such as Koç High School, Koc University, Educational Volunteers Foundation of Turkey (TEGV), Pera Museum and the Istanbul Research Institute. The Suna and İnan Kiraç Foundation, founded by Suna Hanım with her husband İnan Kiraç and daughter İpek Kiraç in 2003, has become one of the leading institutions of our country, operating in the fields of education, culture, and arts. In the field of neuroscience, Suna and İnan Kiraç Foundation Neurodegeneration Research

Laboratory (NDAL), which started its work in 2003, is currently operating within the Koç University Hospital.

Kiraç's dedication to RC is openly reflected in her quote about her philanthropic commitment: "I give because having graduated from ACG, I sincerely believe that Robert College is a school that provides the best education in Turkey and the Middle East, developing students with healthy minds and strong characters."

We honor and respectfully remember Suna Kiraç, who famously said, "Economic difficulties will be overcome, political crises will be resolved, but it is not possible to restore a society whose children have not been cultivated."



She will remain an inspiration for the RC community and beyond. Suna Kiraç is survived by her husband İnan Kiraç and daughter İpek Kiraç. May she rest in peace.

From Her ACG 60 Classmates

A woman of distinction; bright, capable, caring and dedicated to fulfilling the responsibilities that were put on her by her birth and position and the ones she espoused to in her mind and heart, passed into her eternal life.

We mourn for her loss but celebrate who she was. Suna Kiraç invested her talents and energy in business, social progress and her beloved subject: education. Service to her country became stronger and prominent in her life goals as she matured. In that she also was realizing her father Vehbi Koç's vision and legacy.

In her private circle of family and friends she was a most loyal and caring friend. Amid her busy life she always had time to be deeply concerned about the lives of her friends and give her presence and support.

She rests in our hearts with admiration for the woman she has been, and love for the friend she will always be.

Contributed by Çiğdem Selişik ACG 60

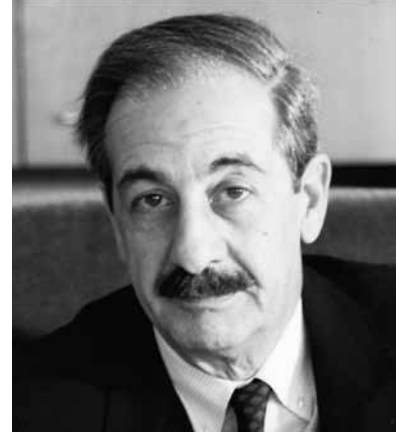
Erdoğan Zabcı RC 46

Erdoğan Zabcı passed away on June 21, 2020. He was the son of Mahmut Nedim Zabcı, Member of Parliament from Malatya, and Sabiha, the daughter of the Ottoman calligrapher Osman Tevfik Yalman.

Erdoğan was a person of angelic disposition and a very artistic lively personality. He was a witty, amusing, and an extremely creative person. His poetry was published in İzlerimiz, the RC literary magazine; his rooms in Hamlin Hall were filled with his colorful, highly original paintings. If

he had so wished he could have gone on to a celebrated artistic career. He spent many years as an important executive at Tatko where his kind, reliable and effective personality was greatly appreciated.

Erdoğan was a happy family man, deeply attached to the late Nevhiz Göver Zabcı ACG 46 and his three daughters, late Nilgün Zabcı RC 73, Neslihan Zabcı Erdal RC 75 and Fatma Nigar Zabcı, and two granddaughters, Leyla Cömert and Nil Cömert.



Kamil Malik Görgün RC 46



Kamil Malik Görgün passed away on November 2, 2020, at the age of 95 in Istanbul. After graduating from RC he studied business administration at Nebraska University. On his return, he went back to his hometown Adana and established a trailer manufacturing factory, which was the first one in Turkey at the time.

Following his marriage to his beloved wife Sevim Görgün they moved back to Istanbul where he initiated the establishments of several coating

factories. He had a genuinely entrepreneurial spirit and was widely appreciated for his new ideas and industrialism. He always remembered his friends and life at RC with great love and appreciation. He was also an outstanding poet and a witty speaker. He will be much missed by his family and friends.

Contributed by his daughter Nur Ünal

Mübeccel Uz Versan ACG 46

My mother Mübeccel Uz Versan passed away on December 10, 2020. She had a wonderful life living in exciting countries, meeting interesting people and loving every moment of it. She spoke four languages and being a diplomat's wife matched her outgoing character. Her father Dr. Behçet Uz was Minister of Health and mayor of Izmir. Her husband Veyssel Versan was Turkish Ambassador in several countries such as Spain, Sweden, Indonesia, Hungary and France.



Her brother Ethem Uz RC ENG 46 and Mübeccel had memorable years attending their beloved College. When my father retired and returned to Turkey they lived in Vaniköy. My mom would look from her balcony across the Bosphorus and talk about her ACG years. We were able to tour the College grounds one spring day. She was delighted. I will miss her tremendously.

Contributed by her daughter Belkis Versan Kalayoğlu RC YÜK 71

Ahmet Şeci Edin RC 47

Ahmet Şeci Edin died peacefully at home on November 19, 2020, surrounded by family. He is deeply mourned by daughters Leyla Aktay RC 72, Belkis Emory, son Rifat Edin, brother Osman Edin RC 57 and families. Preceded in death by wife Şirin and son Esat Edin RC 78, he is survived by four grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

After earning an MBA from Illinois, he joined a textile company in Turkey. Subsequently, he founded successful businesses in IT and Real Estate. He was proud to serve on the RC Board of Trustees for many years.

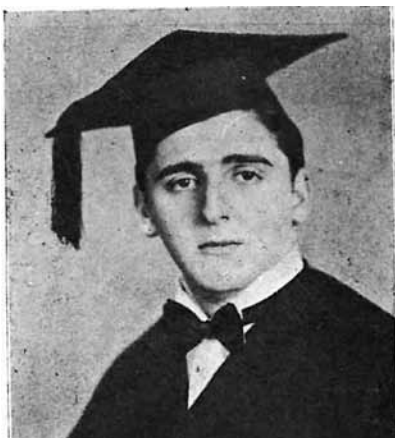
A visionary whose countless interests ranged from filmmaking to sailing, his quiet charm was infectious. His kindness was as remarkable as his determination. What he pursued, he pursued primarily for others, particularly family and friends. His legacy of how to live a productive and worthy life endures, through generations of his successors in Turkey and North America.

Contributed by Leyla Edin Aktay RC 72 and Belkis Edin Emory



Selim Benardete RC ENG 49

Born in Istanbul, Selim Benardete very peacefully ended his beautiful journey on April 24, 2020 at his home in Manhattan. He is survived by his loving wife of 66 years, Luna; his children, Steven (wife Judith) and Nancy (husband Jacky); and his grandchildren, Alina, Mario, and Emma. He will be remembered as a loving and devoted husband, father, and grandfather; the founder of Benartex; and an active and generous philanthropist.



Mustafa Akşin RC 50

Mustafa Akşin passed away on September 30, 2020. A graduate of RC and Ankara University Law School, he joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, serving as the Turkish ambassador to Kenya, Syria and Yugoslavia. He was Turkey's permanent representative to the United Nations.

His breadth of knowledge on foreign relations, politics, language, history and economy extended far beyond the scope of his work. A consummate model of responsibility and good sense, he served as an example of decency and modest refinement.



Seventy years after his graduation, when his grandson requested to borrow a copy of Shakespeare's plays from his student days, he surrendered the red bound volume, but only with a polite admonishment: "Please return it when you are done."

The book, as it turned out, could not be returned. Mustafa Akşin's legacy is carried on by his loving family, his peers and the RC alumni community, of which he was a proud member.

Contributed by his grandson Alp Karaesmen RC 21

Jose V. Çiprut RC 54

Dr. Jose Çiprut passed away in Israel on March 25, 2020. He has been spending time between Italy and the US since he lost his wife in 2008, with frequent visits to Israel where he held seminars and wrote to various papers. After graduating from RC, Jose went on to study industrial technology in England and international business in Germany. He engaged in technological teaching, industrial production, international marketing, industrial business management and new process/market development, in the Near East and across Europe, prior



to returning to academia in the US. He was married for 45 years to Josie Rivka Çiprut, and had no children. He is survived by his cousin, Suzan Selya Çiprut and her family, by his close friend and hostess in Italy, Caroline Olivieri Munroe and by a handful of classmates. He will be missed, by many whose lives he touched with his eloquently written essays and letters.

Contributed by classmate Ahmet N. Taşpınar RC ENG 56 in collaboration with Suzan Selya Çiprut

Manolya Kural ACG 55

Manolya was a gentle and fragile member of the Class of '55. She lived her life well in her own way. She traveled a lot. We will miss her deeply. Rest in peace dear Manoş.

Contributed by her ACG 55 classmates

Metin Çulha RC ENG 55



Metin Çulha passed away in his Arnavutköy, Istanbul home on August 20, 2020. He was 87 years old. Metin received his MS in Electrical Engineering from the University of West Virginia in 1959 and returned home to Turkey the following year. Following his military service Metin worked at NASAS for 16 years, before forming his partnership in KEMAS where he worked until his retirement.

He married Nuray Çulha in 1977, with whom he shared a harmonious life for

43 years. The couple had no children, but they were culturally and socially very active, attending classical music concerts, traveling and swimming. Metin was a loyal attendee of his classmates' social activities, where he was most welcome for his gentlemanly behavior and warm smile.

A kind and generous person, Metin was a dearly loved member of his class. He is survived by his wife Nuray and his sister Mualla.

Esin Aka Atıl ACG 56

Dr. Esin Aka Atıl passed away in Arlington, VA on February 20, 2020. Esin was an art historian who organized numerous exhibitions and published many books on Islamic artistic traditions of Mamluk and Ottoman art. She was the author of hundreds of articles, and she organized numerous exhibitions on Islamic art, the most famous one being *The Age of Sultan Suleyman the Magnificent* in (1987), which was received in major capitals of the world with great success.

She earned BAs in literature, drama, and in applied arts and art history. She attended the University of Michigan, where she received her MA in European art and PhD in Islamic art. In 1969, Esin joined the Smithsonian Institute as curator of Islamic Art, a post which she held for fifteen years.

A caring and generous person, Esin was dearly loved by her friends. She is survived by her husband, Taskin Atıl RC 54.



Ergül Aybay RC 58

Ergül Aybay said goodbye to a deeply saddened crowd of fans and lifelong friends on July 29, 2020. He was surrounded by his many loving friends in the best setting he could have wished for. Our beloved Aybay, my sweetheart and lifelong partner. You may have been trying to hide it but there was not one person on this planet who could not see your beautiful gentle soul behind that loud roar of yours. Adults or children, it did not matter. We all saw through you and loved you genuinely for the man

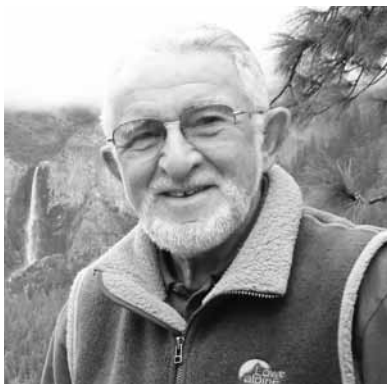


you are. Thank you for your wisdom and your ability to make us laugh. You were our rock and always will be.

Gentle, reliable, brutally honest and always fun. A man of principle deeply tied to his values and never compromising from his truth. We will sorely miss you.

Contributed by Ayşe Kerimoğlu ACG 67

Julius Surkis RC ENG 58



Julius Surkis passed away in Santa Cruz, California on October 10, 2019. He graduated from RC with a degree in civil engineering. An ardent scout and classical music enthusiast, Julius also acted in many RC Players productions. Moving to the US, he earned a master's from Michigan State then moved to the New York area. He received his PhD from Brooklyn Polytechnic in computer science in 1971 and was a professor at Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey for 25 years.

Julius was a passionate outdoorsman. He was happiest in nature, working his garden, skiing, hiking, kayaking and sailing. In 1998 he retired and moved to California to be near family. Julius was a beloved teacher, good friend, devoted husband to Angela, loving father of Judith and Rachel and grandfather of Oliver, Henry and Leila, all of whom survive him. We miss him every day.

Contributed by Manfred Bormann RC 58

Oya Kayacık ACG 59 ex

Inspiration, dedication and love: those who were lucky enough to have crossed paths with Oya Anne will have seen what true love looks like. She dedicated her life to caring for the children at Kasımpaşa Children's Home: A simple sentence which cannot capture the amount of love, kindness or hardship that went into such dedication.

She knew what her children needed and was there to make sure, in the gentlest way possible, that they got it.



She guarded and guided her children very kindly and thoughtfully, and she loved them very dearly. To her, giving was a matter of love rather than merely an act of kindness or compassion, and her doors were always open to those who thought alike.

Oya Anne, many generations have been inspired by you. Thank you on behalf of everyone whose lives you have touched. Farewell.

Contributed by Asli Salarvan RC 98

To share news of a deceased RC community member please send a notice in English of no more than 150 words to bonayozman@robcol.k12.tr

Longer notices will be edited due to space restrictions.

Please include a high resolution (minimum 700 x 700 pixels) photo of the deceased.

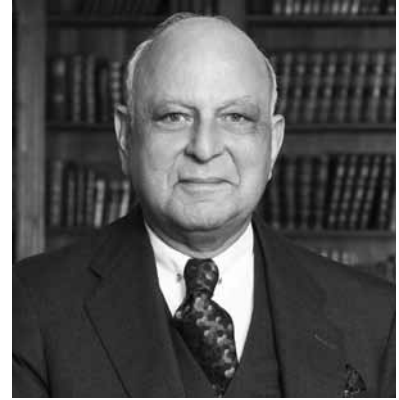
Nemir Kırdar RC ENG 60

Nemir Kırdar passed away at the age of 83 on June 9, 2020. Known as the father of private equity globally, he founded alternative asset manager Investcorp, which he led for more than three decades, and undertook landmark acquisitions of Gucci, Tiffany & Co. and Saks Fifth Avenue.

He was born in Iraq in 1936. He studied engineering at RC, before moving to the US and attending the College of the Pacific in California. Kırdar championed

cultural exchange and built economic ties between the Middle East and the West. At the University of Oxford, he backed the construction of a new Middle East center; at Georgetown University, he chaired the advisory board of the Center for Contemporary Arab Studies for more than a decade.

In 1967, he married Nada Adnan Shakir. She survives him, in addition to his two daughters, Rena and Serra; two brothers; and three grandchildren.



Ömer Turgay Göksel RC ENG 60



In 1949, a chubby boy leaves his hometown Gaziantep for RC and manages the bank shop in Theodorus Hall. Eleven years later, as a young mechanical engineer, he leaves RC for a master's at Purdue University, stints at the Aerospace Research Laboratories as a research associate, his doctorate at Liverpool University and teaching at METU.

Ömer returned to his hometown in 1973 to establish METU's Department of Mechanical Engineering. He nurtured it as it grew into the Faculty of Engineering, serving intermittently

as chair and dean. Eventually, as vice-president, he saw his pet department become Gaziantep University.

To us his schoolmates Ömer was an easy-going, reliable, sincere friend, loved by many. To Gaziantepites he was a true son and revered citizen. He will be remembered affectionately by all.

Ömer retired in 2006 and passed away in August 2020. He is survived by his wife Seylan.

Contributed by Mustafa Pultar RC ENG 60

Emine Yazıcıoğlu Gedik ACG 62

Emine, who belonged with angels rather than ordinary mortals like us, must have been dropped to our planet by mistake from heaven above.

She touched our hearts making us better people, and her environment a better place to live. She was gentle, merciful, generous, ageless and fun, yet so very strong not to yield to the undeserved adversities and tornados of life which she endured with a philosophical outlook, gracefully and



patiently. There never was a perfect soul and friend like her.

She joined her late husband Arda Gedik RC 59 and son Mehmet, in September 2020, leaving behind her heart-broken friends of all ages who miss her very much. Those of us who were lucky to know her will cherish her memory in our hearts. Emine is survived by her elder son Namık Gedik, and grandson Örsan Gedik.

Erol Kaspi RA 62

Erol's charming and jovial expression bore the traces of his prankishness from his early years. He didn't talk much about his RC years, but he loved getting together with his classmates. Childhood friends are special: even if they hadn't seen each other for 20-30 years, they would chat as if they had dined in the school's cafeteria the day before.

He brought joy and spirit to any table he joined and any conversation that he participated in. However, as a father, he tried to define the

boundaries of mischief for his own children and cited his personal experiences while doing so.

Perhaps not many RC students will know him, but the school buildings will always remember that Erol Kaspi had studied here.

He is survived by his wife Korin Bugi Kaspi, and his sons Moris Cem Kaspi and Rona Kaspi.

Contributed by Rona Kaspi



Semih Şinik RA 62



Semih Şinik passed away in Los Angeles on June 13, 2020, after a brief illness. Semih first went to the United States in 1958 as an American Field Service (AFS) exchange student. After graduating from Robert Academy in 1962, he returned to the US where he studied mechanical engineering and worked at Eastman Kodak in Rochester, NY. Semih later moved to Los Angeles. In 1992 he established his own company specializing in high-speed cameras.

At Robert College Semih was popular among his classmates for his

friendly, easygoing and fun-loving personality. Semih excelled in sports and was a regular player on the RC soccer and basketball teams. He visited Turkey regularly and enjoyed strolling in his beloved Bebek, dining out with his friends, and vacationing in Southern Turkey. Semih is survived by his wife, Stasia, three sons, and six grandchildren. His younger brother Merih Şinik RA 64 passed away in 1982.

Contributed by Sabri Sayarı RA 62

Ahmet Tankut Akalın RA 62

Tankut Akalın passed away on December 6, 2020.

Tankut and I were both born in Eskişehir on May 10, 1944. We first met at Eskişehir Maarif College in 1955. I came to RA in 1959, he came in '62 and joined us in our senior year. We shared the same room.

Tankut was a quiet, hardworking, industrious and a very determined person. He went onto a very active business career as a top officer of



F. Akkaya & S. Türkeş, and later had a freelance consultancy firm in Libya, Saudi Arabia, Emirates and Turkey.

He loved sea sports, sailing, fishing, reading, classical music, motorcycling and traveling. He is survived by his wife Sibel, his daughter Ezgi, sons Mehmet and Orkun and a grandson. I will surely miss my twin brother a lot.

Contributed by Hüseyin D. Akarlı RA 62

Oya Kiliç Karaçay ACG 69

Our classmate Oya Kiliç Karaçay passed away on May 17, 2020. After graduation she married civil engineer Ali Karaçay and lived in Ankara ever after. Her artistic ability flourished in oil painting; her pieces of art still adorn the walls of Ankara Tennis Club. Being a well-advanced bridge player, she participated at tournaments. She was devoted to Aslı's daughter

Malaia and even wrote a book for her, *Malaia*, almost a biography.

She lost her husband three years ago. She is survived by her son Turgut, her daughter Aslı and granddaughter Malaia.

Contributed by Oya Erenli Sezer ACG 69



Selime Sezgin ACG 71 Sr.



The lovely, energetic, radiant, brilliant and loving lady suddenly passed away peacefully at her home in Istanbul on April 24, 2020. She was a graduate of the English High School for Girls and the American College for Girls. Selime received her bachelor's, master's and doctorate degrees from Boğaziçi University.

She was Department Head at İTÜ, Bahçeşehir and Bilgi Universities. As professor, mentor and colleague for thousands of students studying at all levels in business administration and marketing, she taught until the last

day of her life, as had been her wish. Deeply loved and admired by far-reaching circles of friends, relatives, students and colleagues, may she rest in peace. Our deep condolences to her only son, her pride Selim, her brilliant grandson Deniz, and daughter-in-law Nihan. Her precious dogs Hero and Joy must have been puzzled and distressed at her sudden disappearance. We will remember her forever.

Contributed by Ümit Bilge Samanlı ACG 71 Sr., her forever loving friend

Ayperı Serdaroğlu Okur RC 72

A vibrant RC graduate and an ardent advocate, Ayperi Serdaroğlu Okur wore her RC ring until she passed away on July 6, 2020 in Bodrum, the city she loved as her second home, where engagement in research and writing at the Architectural Library were her joy.

Born in 1953 in Istanbul, Ayperi joined ACG in 1968 and continued her education with a BS in architecture from METU and a PhD from MIT. Thereafter, she contributed to the establishment of the Lean Institute

in Turkey as a dedicated researcher and writer.

Yasemin and her son, Ömer gifted her with twins, Ada and Tuna as grandmother to add to her keen interest in sports, poetry, and painting. We, her cousins, shocked and left in sorrow with our beloved's sudden march to eternity, adored her amazing multi-disciplinary talents and successes.

Contributed by her cousins



Esat Ali İz RC 72

Thoughtful, gracious and handsome Ali was a true Paşa. Endowed with natural tact, his unique gift to his friends was always to please and never to impose. He fought his illness with the same magic blend he met any adversity; stoic determination, sense of duty, and lightness of being.

After graduating from the English High School for Boys and RC, Ali received engineering degrees from Michigan and Columbia. Next he moved to Vermont and had a long and successful career at GE, building power plants overseas and then in



mergers and acquisitions. At his next stop in NY, he founded a private equity firm focused on alternative energy. He split his time between NYC and the Ocean Reef Club community in Key Largo, FL.

Devoted husband of Debbie, father to John and daughter Tibby whose wedding last summer was a great joy, Ali leaves behind many friends and family mourning his sudden loss to pancreatic cancer.

Contributed by Roni de Toledo RC 72

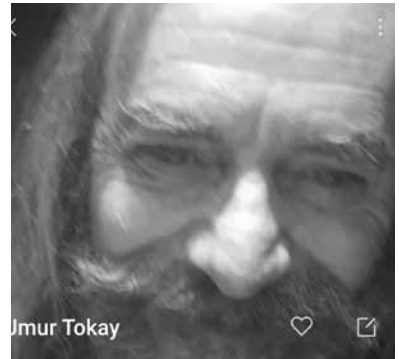
Umur Tokay RC 76

Umur Tokay passed away at a relatively young age, leaving all of us who had known him in deep sadness. Full of joy and humor during his RC days, and even in his BU computer programming years, after his graduation he disappeared on an unknown quest of his own without any notice to his friends. Except for the closely involved, no one had heard from him for nearly 40 years. I managed to find him a couple of

months ago, and gave him a call. He sounded very weak, and he promised that he would call back as soon as he recovered - but he never did.

For all of us who crossed his path of life, his memory will be kept alive and he will be remembered for all the friendship and joy he had offered us. Let your soul rest in peace, dear friend.

Contributed by Derya Gün RC 76



Nezih Çobanlı RC 76

Dear Nezih'cim, when we first met at Bingham Hall in 1972, we were like small birds with almost no feathers. We shared the same dorm, classes and many, many things during the next four years. Then for many years though being still in contact, we tried to cope with the storms of life. I think we did. But it seems that we still cannot realize how life is merciless! Every time, we read this chapter from the beginning. Again and again, but



it does not help much. Please do not forget our RC 76 Kadıköy Group on Fridays from wherever you are. We shall meet again anyhow.

Our dear friend, Nezih passed away on November 30, 2020, due to a heart attack. We will carry his memory all along for the rest of our lives. RIP.

Contributed by Osman Tüzün RC 76

John Chalfant



Former Headmaster John Chalfant died peacefully on September 20, 2020. He was instrumental in implementing the merger of RC and ACG in 1971, and became the first headmaster of the co-ed high school.

John Chalfant first came to Istanbul in 1955 where he served as an English teacher at Robert Academy for a year. An accomplished athlete, he was also a coach at RA, and played basketball for Fenerbahçe. He left to pursue his master's at the University of Pennsylvania and was a teacher and coach at schools in the US before heading to Athens College as a Fulbright appointee in 1962. The following year he stayed on as assistant headmaster of the boarding department, and spent a year teaching history in the university division of Pierce College, in Athens.

In 1965 Chalfant returned to Robert College and became the principal of Robert Academy and special assistant to the President. As head of the Academy in 1970-71 Chalfant was part of a merger review committee composed of representatives from RA and ACG who oversaw its implementation, which included moving physical assets from Bebek to Arnavutköy and making space on campus for an additional 400 students. It also meant preparing a

curriculum for the blended schools, while "attempting to bring a coherent educational philosophy to this forced integration of two very different programs," he wrote in RCQ Issue 8. He added, "Each institution was unique and each was both successful and proud. Each had its cadre of superb teachers. Each wished to protect its qualities. The trick was to bring about a state of mind that saw the merger as an opportunity, not as a disaster. They made the best of the situation and a new RC began to emerge combining the best elements of the two schools."

John Chalfant served as the first headmaster of the co-ed Robert College until 1977. He went on to both establish and serve as headmaster at the Sultan's School in Oman, and the Koç School in Istanbul. He was the headmaster of Üsküdar American High School from 1992-93, and the educational coordinator at SEV American Schools in Turkey from 1994 to 2000. He is survived by his wife of 64 years, Nona.

Homer Byington

RC Trustee Emeritus Homer Byington passed away on February 10, 2019. An international banker, he spent much of his career at Bankers Trust Company, and later worked at European American Bank. Byington joined the Robert College Board of Trustees in 1983. He was a dedicated member of the finance committee, and remained on the RC Foundation

board until he became a Trustee Emeritus in 2002.

RC Trustee Emeritus Jim Maggart said of Byington, "He was generous with his time and ready to help in any way he could. His comments in board and committee meetings were always insightful while often given with a touch of humor."



Alexander Ammerman



Alexander Ammerman was a Greek hero and good friend who was loved by everybody who knew him. Very tragically he died on January 10, 2020, just ten days after turning 45.

In 2003, when we first met at Robert College, Alexander was 29, starting his march up an ever-erupting volcano. He was a tragic, loveable, and brilliant man; something about his inner soul made everyone love him; he was also an aristocratic, highly educated scholar, teacher, and exceptional writer. He could be

posh, humble, dismissive, sharp, and sometimes so slow that you could think he'd missed the point; but he never did. I took the time to know him well and stayed friends after he left RC in 2007.

I visited his summer house in Panormos by the Ionian Sea and now Alexander is buried there; so very sad, but so very fitting for a modern-day Greek hero.

Contributed by former RC English teacher Philip Gee

Maria Paul

Maria Paul, passed away on June 25, 2020, in Florida. She was born in Germany and immigrated to the US in 1949. She studied foreign languages at the University of New Hampshire and taught German at RC in the late 70s and early 80s. She received her master's at Harvard Graduate School of Education, where she met her husband. Maria held positions in the international student office at the University of North Carolina



and the Duke University Law School Alumni Office. She enjoyed healthy cooking and Taoist Tai Chi. Maria had a generous spirit and her life was filled with grace and gestures of kindness that added value to all of the communities of which she was a part. She is survived by her loving husband of 31 years, Jim Paul; her son, daughter, and son-in-law; three grandchildren, a nephew and his children, and her beloved dog.

Armine (Minnie) Tüygil Garwood



Armine Tüygil Garwood was born in 1926. Her mother Armen was matron and head of the dormitory for girls for decades and her father Kaspar made history for the longest service to RC - 55 years - as student, teacher and librarian. She attended RC Community School (RCCS) and graduated from the Austrian School. She graduated from the American Hospital School of Nursing and was sent to Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston for a year of graduate work. She returned

to Rumelihisar to marry Professor David Garwood of the RC Humanities Department and raise three children. She worked in the libraries of RCCS and Boğaziçi University, in schools in the US and with a researcher in Maryland as well as in London, England. She chose to spend her final years in Istanbul where she passed away peacefully at the age of 94.

Contributed by her daughter Victoria Garwood

DeWaine C. Silker



DeWaine C. Silker died at the age of 91 in LaCrosse, WI on November 4, 2020. He and his wife Norma spent 69 loving years together before her death in 2017. DeWaine was a college wrestler and was a member of the NCAA championship team. He refereed high school football for ten years in the 1970s and was a starter for high school track meets for thirty seasons in Southern Minnesota, but his real love

was wrestling. DeWaine took his family to ACG in Istanbul where he taught mathematics from 1966-1969. He also taught mathematics for the University of Maryland at US military bases in Turkey. DeWaine loved his family, the thousands of students that he educated, his church and high school wrestling. He also loved every job he held. Put simply, he liked to work and he admired hard, productive work.

Evan Fotos

Evan Fotos died on November 21, 2020, at the age of 98, in Istanbul. Fotos first taught mathematics at RC from 1949-50 while on a fellowship from the Middle East Institute.

After serving in the US Department of State in Washington, he returned to RC in 1953 where he was a math teacher, as well as the Social Hall director and a member of the Faculty-Alumni Relations Committee.



Fotos left RC in 1956 and served in the US Foreign Service undertaking several assignments.

Upon retiring, he taught at Washington's Benjamin Franklin University. He was a member of many associations that supported cultural understanding and awareness of global affairs.

Leman Yolaç Fotos

Leman Yolaç Fotos died on November 17, 2020, at the age of 98. She was born in Sivas, Turkey. Upon receiving her BA from Ankara University, Fotos joined its teaching staff. She earned an MA at Edinborough University and a PhD at Ankara University. The Rockefeller Foundation awarded Mrs. Fotos a grant for a semester of special post-doctoral study in the US which included periods at Yale, Indiana and Catholic University. Following her marriage to Evan

Fotos, Leman Fotos taught English translation at ACG from 1954 to 1956, where she was also an advisor for the student publication *The Spectrum*. She left in 1956 to accompany her husband on foreign assignments. She served as the principal of the American International School in Damascus. Fotos taught Turkish language classes at the Department of State's Foreign Service Institute where she also co-edited a Turkish reader, which is still in use.



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*“Kadın eliyle anne
hassasiyetiyle...”*

Funda Özer Baltalı, RC' 79

