

Armenian Jewellers Foundation

Geneva, Switzerland

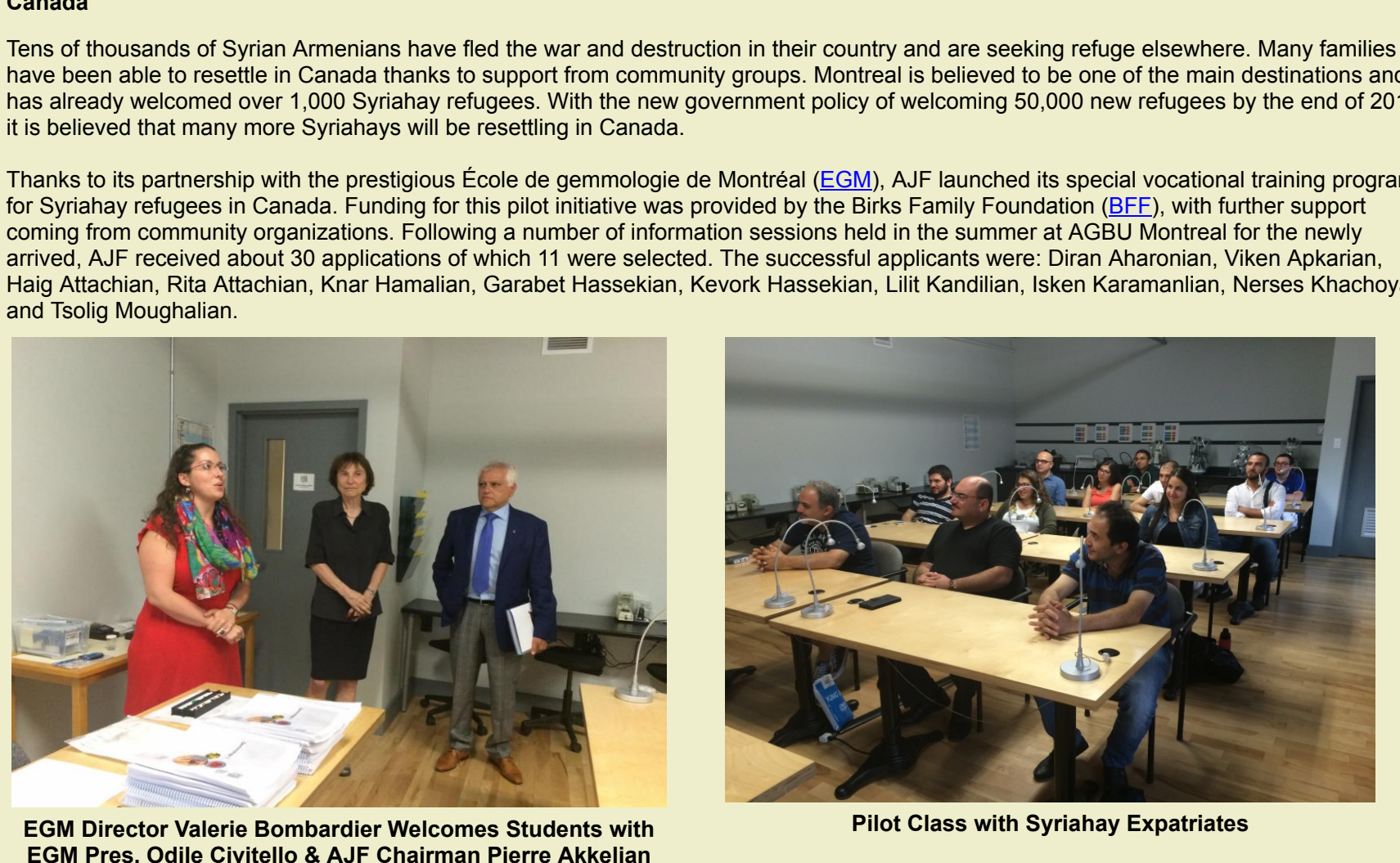
Advancing the Heritage of Armenians in Jewellery

Geneva, December 2015



25 GRADUATES EMBARK ON NEW CAREER THANKS TO AJF'S SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

The jewellery trade is part of our national heritage and a source of pride. Our mission is to perpetuate this significant segment of our cultural tradition both by informing the world about the immense contributions made by Armenians to the art of jewellery and promoting talented young Armenians in becoming the next generation of industry leaders. AJF's ambitious scholarships program has, to date, funded 25 students who have successfully completed their studies both in Armenia and abroad, and are now embarking on their new careers.



The Class of Syrian Armenian Refugees at the École de Gemnologie de Montréal

Canada

Tens of thousands of Syrian Armenians have fled the war and destruction in their country and are seeking refuge elsewhere. Many families have been able to resettle in Canada thanks to support from community groups. Montreal is believed to be one of the main destinations and has already welcomed over 1,000 Syrian refugees. With the new government policy of welcoming 50,000 new refugees by the end of 2015 it is believed that many more Syrians will be resettling in Canada.

Thanks to its partnership with the prestigious École de gemnologie de Montréal (EGM), AJF launched its special vocational training program for Syrian refugees in Canada. Funding for this pilot initiative was provided by the Birks Family Foundation (BFF), with further support coming from community organizations. Following a number of information sessions held in the summer at AGBU Montreal for the newly arrived, AJF received about 30 applications of which 11 were selected. The successful applicants were: Darian Aharonian, Viken Apkarian, Haig Attachian, Rita Attachian, Knar Hamalian, Garabet Hasekian, Kevork Hasekian, Lilit Kandilian, Isken Karamanian, Nerses Khachoyan and Tsoli Moughalian.



EGM Director Valerie Bombardier Welcomes Students with EGM Pres. Odilie Civitello & AJF Chairman Pierre Akkelian



Pilot Class with Syrian Expatiates

AJA Montreal honoured the first class of 11 Syrian students during a networking event on November 18 where AJA members representing manufacturing, retailing and wholesaling companies shared their knowledge and experiences with the Syrian Armenian jewellers who resettle in Montreal.

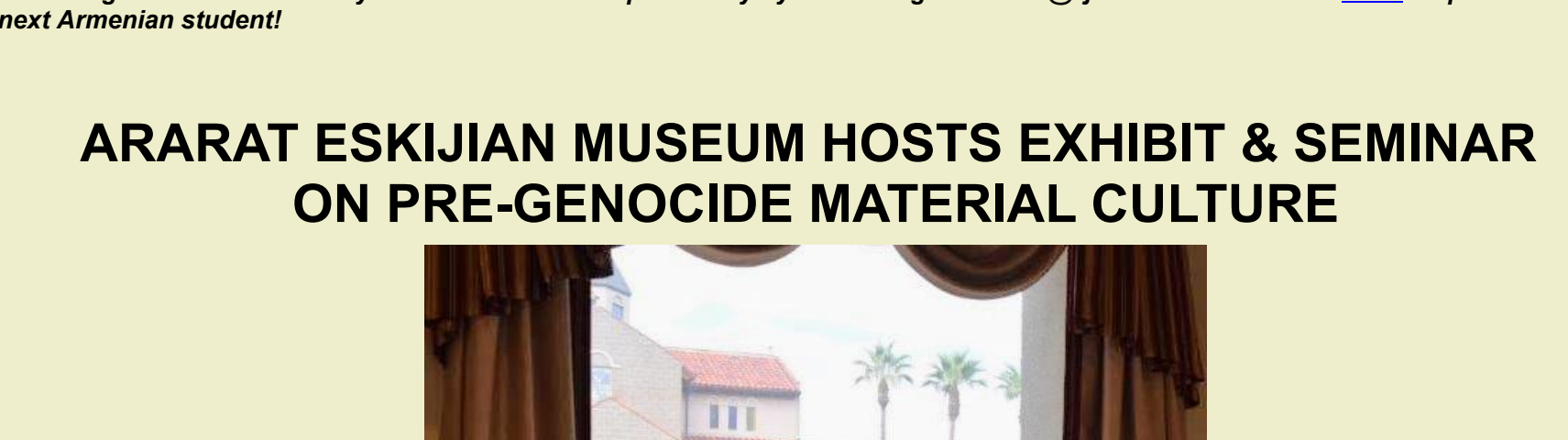
EGM also celebrated its special program with AJF during its annual awards ceremony held on November 25. During the event, AJF chairman Pierre Akkelian presented the Treasures of Western Armenia album as a token of appreciation to Jonathan Birks, former President of CJA and President of the Birks Family Foundation. Mr. Birks gave a passionate speech about the success of EGM and the value of reaching out to refugees during trying times. Syrian Armenian students were honored by the speakers for their hard work, which prompted EGM Academic Director Chandra Horn and Melisende Diamonds owner Mr. Harout Ohanessian to fund a complementary hands-on Diamond Grading course.

On October 11, AJF's Hrach Kaspas participated in the education forum organized by the key refugee services NGO Hay Doun (see [The Gazette article](#)) where AJF presented its educational programs to almost 80 Syrian students.

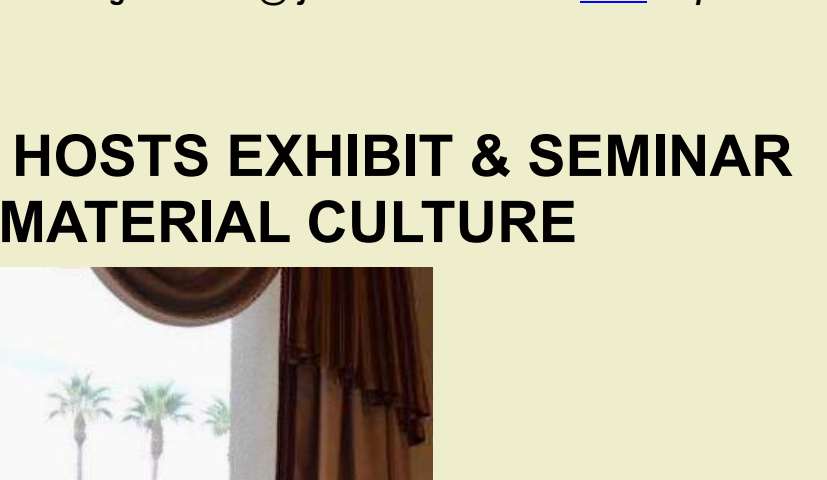
As refugees continue arriving to Canada (see story in [The Globe and Mail](#)), AJF is receiving requests for new scholarships in 2016. Talks are currently underway with EGM, as well as funding partners to accommodate the increase in demand. A call for applications has already been issued.



AJA Montreal Hosts AJF Students And Other Syrian Armenian Jewellers



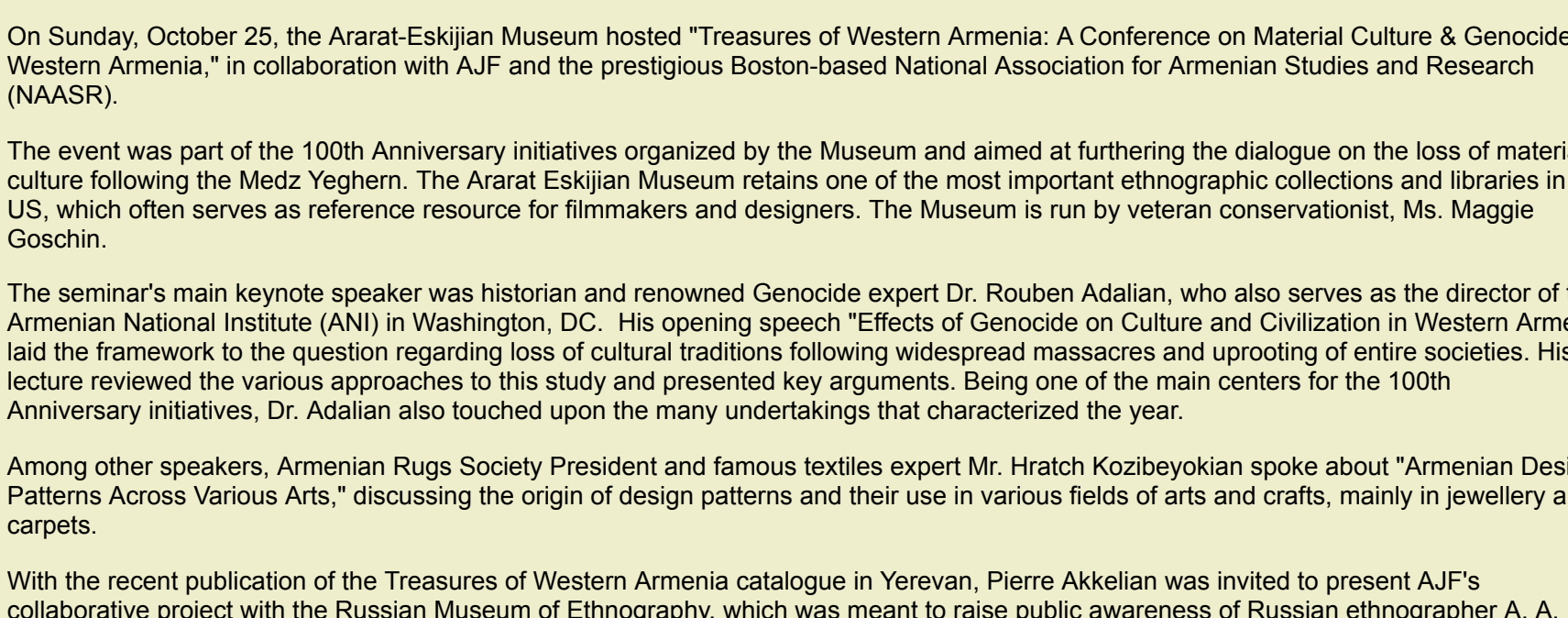
Hay Doun President Nayiri Taviani with H. Kaspar



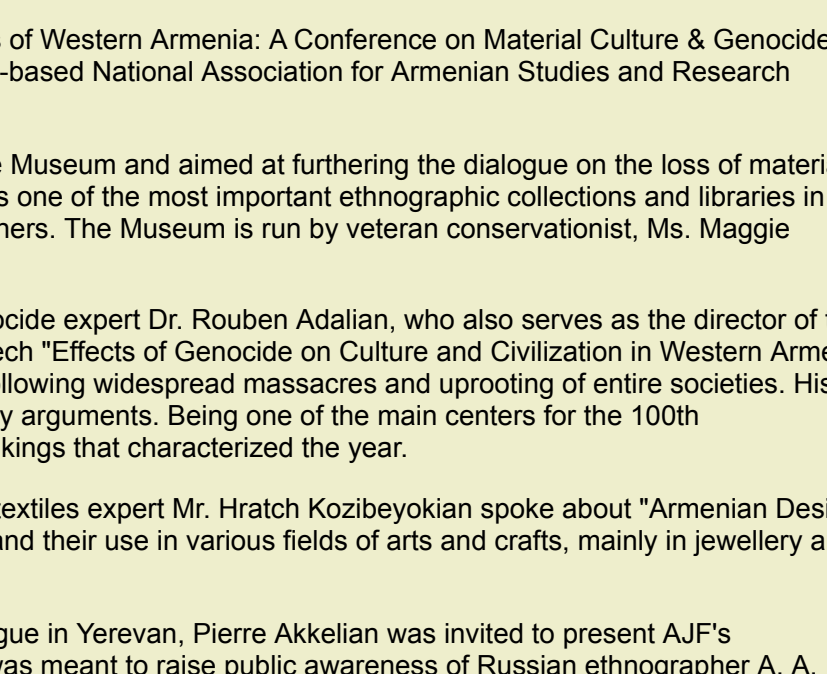
L. To R: D. Aharonian, H. Kaspar, Chandra Horn, P. Akkelian, J. Birks, H. Malo, O. Civitello, K. Hasekian, J. Yeramian

Armenia

The pilot program was launched in the fall of 2014 thanks to an agreement with the Armenian Geological Laboratory and Academy (AGLA). The agreement until now supported gemological training for 14 students over three full-time intensive sessions. Grants came from various communities such as the Syrian Armenian refugee community, residents of small villages, Artsakh, and the Diaspora.



AGLA Director Dr. Artur Zanginyan Presenting Diplomas To Syrian Graduates



Marina Sargsyan With Dr. Artur Zanginyan

Join the Armenian Jewellers Foundation mission to celebrate efforts by and build on the Armenian jewellery tradition and innovation to sponsor the next generation of industry. You can make an impact today by contacting us at info@ajf.foundation or click [here](#) to start the next Armenian student!

ARARAT ESKIJIAN MUSEUM HOSTS EXHIBIT & SEMINAR ON PRE-GENOCIDE MATERIAL CULTURE



Baby Crib From Western Armenia at Museum Exhibit, Overlooking Armenian Retirement Center

On Sunday, October 25, the Ararat-Eskijian Museum hosted "Treasures of Western Armenia: A Conference on Material Culture & Genocide in Western Armenia," in collaboration with AJF and the prestigious Boston-based National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR).

The event was part of the 100th Anniversary initiatives organized by the Museum and aimed at furthering the dialogue on the loss of material culture following the Medz Yeghern. The Ararat Eskijian Museum retains one of the most important archaeological collections and libraries in Armenia, which often serves as reference for Armenian film makers and designers. The Museum is run by veteran conservators, Ms. Magritte Goschian.

The seminar's main keynote speaker was historian and renowned Genocide expert Dr. Rouben Adalian, who also serves as the director of the Armenian National Institute (ANI) in Washington, DC. His opening speech "Effects of Genocide on Culture and Civilization in Western Armenia" laid the framework to the question regarding loss of cultural traditions following widespread massacres and uprooting of entire societies. His lecture reviewed the various approaches to this study and presented key arguments. Being one of the main centers for the 100th Anniversary initiatives, Dr. Adalian also touched upon the many undertakings that characterized the year.

Among other speakers, Armenian Rugs Society President and famous and their expert Mr. Hrach Kozibekian spoke about "Armenian Design Patterns Across Various Arts," discussing the origin of design patterns and their use in various fields of arts and crafts, mainly in jewelry and carpets.

With the recent publication of the Treasures of Western Armenia catalogue in Yerevan, Pierre Akkelian was invited to present AJF's collaborative project with the Russian Museum of Ethnography, which was meant to raise public awareness of Russian ethnographer A. A. Miller's expedition and collection of historic items used by ordinary people in Western Armenia as the genocide was taking place in 1916.

Mr. Akkelian shared not only the brief history behind the painstaking efforts by Miller and his team in collecting objects representing Western Armenian daily life, but also the story about how the Armenian Jewellers Foundation learned about these artifacts and the expedition photos which were kept mostly unseen and unpublished in the Russian museum's storage rooms for 95 years. AJF funded the impressive catalog in time for the centennial commemoration of the Armenian Genocide, and thanks to the Foundation's efforts and publishing, the Russian catalog is now in St. Petersburg and will exhibit the entire collection for the very first time.

During a reception in the Deukmejian Banquet Hall, guests viewed historical artifacts, jewellery, and Armenian costumes from their respective regions, all from the ethnographic collection of the Ararat-Eskijian Museum.



AJF ADVANCES ITS HERITAGE PROGRAM

AJF has been steadily developing its heritage research initiatives. In recent months, it has conceptualized the proposed academic seminar and is in discussion with potential partners for its realization. It has also been in discussions with researchers from various countries who are expected to deliver new articles shedding light on Armenian jewellery history in various parts of the world. A new comprehensive research plan is also in development for the coming 3-4 years.

AJF is also in discussions with author Osep Tokat to publish a new edition of the Armenian Master Silversmiths catalogue. Aside from its critical presentation of master jewellers, this important resource contains a valuable bibliography and a section on various Armenian jewellery communities in the Diaspora. AJF will also be publishing digital versions of its previous publications.

On October 19, AJF's Pierre Akkelian and Hrach Kaspas met with the President of Carnegie Corporation Dr. Vartan Gregorian to discuss the foundation's long-term approach and to obtain guidance. Dr. Gregorian expressed his appreciation of AJF's mission as well as his support of AJF's projects.



Pierre Akkelian, Dr. Vartan Gregorian and Hrach Kaspas

PATRONS NEWS

AJF is proud to announce that a number of organizations renewed their pledge to support its programs and several new sponsors have joined its patrons' ranks. We wholeheartedly thank the following for their contributions over the past several months:

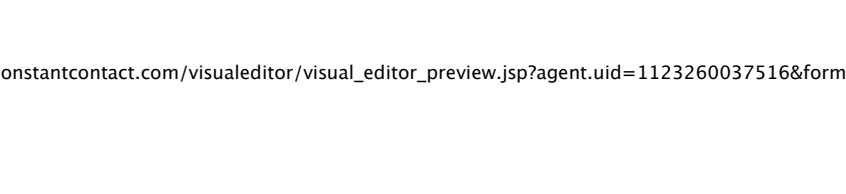
Canadian Jewellers Association, Jewelers Mutual Insurance, AJA of Ontario, Invesa Financial and Insurance Services, École de gemnologie de Montréal, Melisende Diamonds, Mr. Alfred Boghossian, Dr. Apo Papagian (Montreal), Mr. Habib Malo (Montreal), Mr. Levon Yapparian (US), Mr. Harout Khachatourian (Beirut), the Urin family (Los Angeles), Mr. Dorian Avedian (Montreal), Mr. Harout Missiryan (Beirut) and Ms. Sylvia Minassian (Los Angeles).



CJA President David Ritter Presents a Check to Pierre Akkelian in the Presence of Quebec Jewellers Corp. President Habib Malo and AJA Montreal Chairman Levon Yappas



H. Kaspar and AJF Advisor Shira Karagoz(right) with AJA Ontario new Chairman Apel Camgozlu and former Chairwoman Sevan Titzian



Jewelers Mutual's Andy Kirsch with H. Kaspar



Pierre Akkelian, Habib Malo, Hrach Kaspas

Vartan Sirmakes, President and CEO of Franck Muller, is preparing to celebrate his company silver jubilee in high style. According to Gregory Pons of Bijoux Magazine:

"Product innovation is not at rest for the "Master of Complications", with watches as contemporary as the Vanguard, and "off the track" as the Backswing. The production facilities are running at full and new jobs are advertised at Genhoh, where a new factory is being built (...) in order to regroup the existing workshops scattered today in the Geneva countryside, to create the "versatiles of watchmaking" - in Vaud style - which has always been a dream at Franck Muller. The facilities will be ready for the silver jubilee, the first quarter century anniversary of watch manufacture, in 2017..."

AJF is proud to be associated with Franck Muller, which is producing a special limited series celebrating the Armenian Alphabet exclusively for the foundation's Gold and Silver Patrons. Only 38 gold watches will be made, one for each letter of the Armenian alphabet. This syncretism of master watchmaking tradition and contemporary design dedicated to the Armenian Culture has been made available thanks to the generous contribution of Mr. Vartan Sirmakes.

JOIN OUR PATRONS CLUB AND OWN YOUR UNIQUE FRANCK MULLER WATCH TODAY

Only 38 each in Gold and Steel are being produced, each dedicated to One letter of the Armenian Alphabet.

Limited edition FRANCK MULLER watches dedicated to the Armenian Alphabet

The Armenian Jewellers Foundation (AJF) was created to advance the heritage of Armenians in jewellery. AJF's mission is to undertake historical research, document present-day success stories and ensure the transfer of knowledge to a new generation of professionals. The Foundation counts among its trustee members some of the most reputable industry leaders. AJF is based in Geneva, Switzerland.

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