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New Foundation Celebrates Underrepresented Culture, Arts, and Heritage of Azerbaijan and the Caucasus



Washington, D.C. July 1, 2010 An ancient Eastern crossroads with a fascinating culture all its own, the country of Azerbaijan has been little known outside of the Caucasus region. The Karabakh Foundation, a new U.S. non-profit organization, celebrates the culture, arts, and heritage of Azerbaijan and the Caucasus.

Through the Karabakh Foundation's diverse public programming, Americans will come to appreciate the magnificent Karabakh school of carpet weaving; the influential poetry of Muslim women such as renowned 19th-century poet Khurshidbanu Natavan; the lyrical mugham style of music and haunting sounds of the Azerbaijani tar (string musical instrument); the architecture of the ancient city Shusha; and the site of the Azykh cave, which is one of the earliest human settlements in the world.

Armchair travelers will find themselves drawn into the products of Azerbaijan's golden ages. From ancient times to the periods following the 19th- and 20th-century oil booms, Azerbaijan and its capital of Baku have inspired and hosted great talents.

Through academic exchanges, the Foundation is crystallizing and adding to the body of knowledge about the underrepresented accomplishments in this part of the world. The Foundation is nurturing academic and artistic communities dedicated to continuing these superb traditions. In the educational arena, the Foundation has planned public programs, school expositions, exhibitions, performances, and other outreach experiences designed to enhance public perceptions.

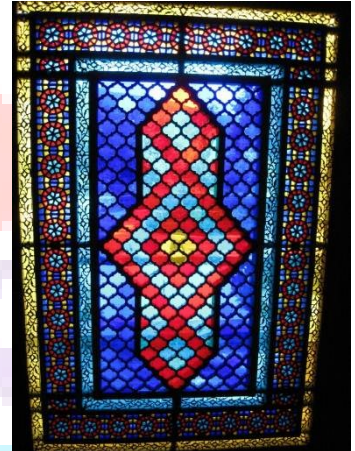
Creative partnerships with other cultural groups and academic institutions will reach individuals with special interests in areas such as art, literature, poetry, music, foodways, and heritage in general. Specially designed school and youth group programs will heighten regional awareness among youth. College students will benefit from Foundation programs via on-campus programs. The Foundation emphasizes dialogue between presenters and participants.

The Foundation places a special emphasis on textiles, aiming to extoll the wealth of the Azerbaijani carpet tradition. Even many rug collectors are not aware of the huge percentage of "Oriental rugs" that are actually Azerbaijani in design and origin.

Audiences are already writing in to praise the Foundation's Web site, a burgeoning online museum of Azerbaijani culture. Aiming to serve as a major resource center, www.karabakhfoundation.org appeals to scholars as much as to schoolchildren.

As those in the United States come to understand Azerbaijan, the two national allies will find more opportunity for dialogue. Understanding and friendship between peoples are the Foundation's ultimate aim.

Audiences should look for Karabakh Foundation programs on the Web at www.karabakhfoundation.org and in their own communities.



About the Karabakh Foundation

The Karabakh Foundation seeks to increase awareness and understanding in the United States of the cultural heritage and traditions of the country of Azerbaijan, the Caucasus area, and the Karabakh region of Azerbaijan. While coalescing significant artistic and scholarly talent, the Foundation is nurturing a new generation of artists and scholars toward important accomplishments.

The Foundation serves as a dynamic facilitator and clearinghouse raising the public profile of Azerbaijan, its Karabakh region, and the Caucasus region in general. Main activities include preserving and disseminating cultural content via archival collecting, public programs, publications, exhibitions, speaking forums, international collaborations, scholarly exchange, artistic sponsorship, and related venues.

Foundation support comes primarily from Khazar University, the first private university in Azerbaijan and one of the country's leading institutions of higher learning. Additional information about the Karabakh Foundation may be found at www.karabakhfoundation.org.

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