



...Culture, arts, & heritage of Azerbaijan & the Caucasus

For Immediate Release

Contact: Athena Smith

info@karabakhfoundation.org



June 9, 2011 Washington, D.C.— Sponsored by the Karabakh Foundation, Azerbaijani cultural achievements—from mugham music to folk dances to carpets—featured prominently in the Outdoor Festival/Celebration of Textiles at the Textile Museum in Washington, D.C., on June 4.

Azerbaijanis attending the event expressed sheer joy at witnessing this cultural extravaganza in Washington, D.C.'s lovely Dupont Circle neighborhood. One of the world's foremost specialized art museums, the Textile Museum holds the Outdoor Festival/Celebration of Textiles every year in conjunction with the Dupont-Kalorama Museum Walk weekend. The event brings hundreds of visitors to ten museums housed off the National Mall.



Complementing the exhilarating color and sophisticated rhythms of the performances were sights of glorious Azerbaijani rugs, accompanied by knowledgeable Foundation "explainers" interacting with visitors. At the Karabakh Foundation booth next to the stage, a Foundation display introduced U.S. visitors to Azerbaijan's significant role in the design and production of many of the world's "Oriental carpets." Children colored outline drawings of various rug designs and learned to distinguish Azerbaijani designs from those originating elsewhere.



Playing Azerbaijani mugham for the crowd was the world-renowned Imamyar Hasanov. The music served as its own calling card, clearly mesmerizing guests, both young and old.





Performing Azerbaijani dances were the stellar Azerbaijani Students dance group, Kardelen Turkish Dance Ensemble, and Nomad Dancers. Dances ranged from "Qizil Laledir Adim" ("My Name is Red Tulip") to the "Raghse Daf," or "Drum Dance." Many visitors new to Azerbaijani culture flocked to the stage during breaks in search of better understanding of these startling "new" cultural traditions.

"A feast for the senses" was how one American visitor described the extravaganza of music, dance, and textiles.

Saturday's event represented an early milestone of the Karabakh Foundation's Azerbaijani Rug Initiative. The Foundation is building a community of rug experts and aficionados to shed light on Azerbaijan's great accomplishments in the world of Oriental carpets. A long-range initiative, this Foundation effort seeks ultimately to give proper attribution to rugs that should be labeled "Azerbaijani." Many rugs that should be considered Azerbaijani, through twists of history, are categorized in showrooms and museums as "Oriental," "Persian," "possibly Caucasus," and the like.





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. Support also comes from the U.S.-based Allaverdy Foundation. Additional information about the Karabakh Foundation may be found at www.karabakhfoundation.org.

###