Press Release

Ilustrious Illuminations II: Armenian and Georgian Christian Manuscripts from the Eleventh to the Eighteenth Century
--- Exquisite manuscripts from the Caucasus

March 30, 2017

After the first display of Western manuscripts from the McCarthy Collection at The University Museum and Art Gallery (UMAG) of the University of Hong Kong (HKU) in 2015, a second exhibition “Ilustrious Illuminations II: Armenian and Georgian Manuscripts from the Eleventh to the Eighteenth Century” will be presented from March 31 to June 11, 2017. For the first time in Hong Kong, this exhibition will display an exquisite selection of bound volumes, prayer scrolls and illuminated leaves illustrating the Christian Gospel from the Eastern Mediterranean.

An opening ceremony of the exhibition was held at UMAG today (March 30, 2017). Officiating guests included Collector of the McCarthy Collection Mr Robert McCarthy and Director of UMAG Dr Florian Knothe.

Armenian illustrated manuscripts are some of the most lavishly decorated codices of the Christian churches from the Middle East. The Gospels are paramount among these, primarily because of the Armenian community’s respect for the sacred texts, revering them in the same way that Greek and Russian Christians regard holy icons. Such texts were carried into war by Armenian rulers and individual copies of the Gospels were often given sacred names and believed to hold miraculous powers.

Few Armenian manuscripts predate the Middle Ages. Individual examples of manuscripts from the seventh century are among the earliest known. Since the eighth century, Arab domination within Armenia largely suppressed Christian artistic expression, and no work is known prior to the end of the Caliphate in the mid-ninth century. Although a few manuscripts survive from the later ninth and tenth centuries, extant Armenian illustrated manuscripts are not common until the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Examples from these early periods begin the exhibition’s chronological display, introducing the tradition of teaching the Gospel through both word and image. The show is then complemented by a set of Georgian Gospel leaves illustrating the Evangelists.

The UMAG is grateful to Robert McCarthy for his generosity in sharing these many fine works with the general public.

Details of the Exhibition
Period: March 31, 2017 (Friday) to June 11 2017 (Sunday)
Opening Hours:
09:30 – 18:00 (Monday to Saturday)
13:00 – 18:00 (Sunday)
Closed on University and Public Holidays
Venue: 1/F, Fung Ping Shan Building, UMAG, HKU, 90 Bonham Road, Pokfulam
Tel/Email: (852) 2241 5500 (General Enquiry) / museum@hku.hk
Admission: Free
Website: http://www.umag.hku.hk/en/
About University Museum and Art Gallery of the University of Hong Kong (UMAG)
UMAG was founded in 1953 as the Fung Ping Shan Museum. It was originally established as the Fung Ping Shan Library in 1932 in honour of its benefactor. For more information on UMAG, please click here.

Media enquiries
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<table>
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<th>Images</th>
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| ![Image](https://goo.gl/H6Xdm0) | Gospel with Two Eusebian Canon Tables  
Armenia, Crimea, c. 1300  
Tempera, gold and ink on paper  
300 x 240 mm | 《載有兩個優西比烏經文對照表的福音書葉》  
亞美尼亞，克里米亞，約一三零零年  
蛋彩、泥金與墨水，紙  
300 x 240 公釐 |
| ![Image](https://goo.gl/H6Xdm0) | Bust Portraits of Eusebius and Carpianus  
Anonymous  
Western Armenia, Khndrakatar Monastery, 1584  
Paper  
180 x 130 mm | 《四福音書 - 優西比烏以及加比安尼胸像》  
匿名  
堪德拉卡塔爾隱修院，西亞美尼亞，一五八四年  
紙張  
180 x 130 公釐 |
| ![Image](https://goo.gl/H6Xdm0) | Book of Psalms – David Holding a Musical Instrument Called a K'amantcha  
Scribe Arak’el of Gegham T’vantch Village in the Karin/Erzurum Province, AE 1045 (1596)  
Parchment  
120 x 86 mm | 《詩篇集 - 大衛手持樂器卡曼查》  
突雲茲村，嘉林/艾斯倫省，  
亞美尼亞曆一零四五（公元一五九六年）  
犢皮紙  
120 x 86 公釐 |
| **Small Psalter - Prophet Isaiah Holding an Open Scroll**  
| **Scribe Yovhannes Erets**  
| **Turkey, Constantinople, AE 1084 (1635)**  
| **Parchment**  
| **75 x 53 mm**  

| 《小型詩篇集 - 先知以賽亞手持打開的捲軸》  
| 君士坦丁堡，土耳其，  
| 亞美尼亞曆一零八四年 (公元一六三五年)  
| 犢皮紙  
| **75 x 53 公釐**  |