26th Geneva Watch Exchange
As global auctions take center stage, a must-see back-to-basics

Renowned as a must-attend event during the international watch auction circuit, this exchange is seen as a "first love" by die-hard collectors. Carmelo Armeli, its soul and founder, is a famous expert…

Iceberg, Sunday, November 8, 2026
8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. +41 79 831 70 83)

Nicknamed "*the counterfeiters' nightmare*," **Carmelo Armeli**, founder of the Geneva Watch Exchange, will once again—for the 26th time—fuel the most extreme buying frenzy in the heart of Geneva. Exhibitors and enthusiasts alike confirm that incredible deals are made there, against a backdrop of unlikely finds and watchmaking history.

Rare expertise, a return to fundamentals
During the rest of the year, Carmelo Armeli's prestigious clients, those who turn to his appraisal firm Arcar (founded in 2018), are in fact auction houses and private collectors, ranging from the most discreet to the most renowned. For Carmelo Armeli is a man with a vast network, a generous, altruistic, and passionate authority in these matters.



For example, and to name just one company, after 31 years at Rolex, he remains one of the most feared counterfeit hunters to this day. He knows better than anyone where to look when a watch claimed to be authentic, sometimes even by highly regarded watchmakers, harbors minor alterations that could illegitimately drive up the bidding price.
Like many of his peers, Carmelo Armeli began his career, on the side, by traipsing through the authentic and colorful flea markets here and abroad. In Geneva, this tireless treasure hunter is still right at home as a key figure in the scene, often sought out for advice as well.

Authentic vibrancy and a must-see
Even though it's listed in capital letters in the calendars of the most sought-after buyers, the Geneva Watch Exchange remains human-sized. It reflects its founder: incredibly accessible, both in terms of price per square meter and trustworthiness of the exhibitors. Every year, it attracts a select clientele, boasts an astonishing level of customer loyalty, and demonstrates a rare level of

SGAH, Bourse Horlogère Genève | Rte de Meyrin 95b CH-1219 Châtelaine-Geneva | Switzerland
carmelo.armeli@horlogerie-suisse.com – Mobile +41 79 831 70 83
PRESS OFFICE: @TRP Public Relations Cabinet info@TheRightPlace.ch

profitability. Those in the know confirm it: real deals are made there, and genuine knowledge is exchanged...

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Organizing institution
Held twice a year, in the spring and fall, the event (launched on November 16, 2008, under the patronage of Oswaldo Patrizzi) follows the schedule of Geneva's watch auctions. The Geneva Watch Exchange, organized by an independent and financially self-sufficient organization with a cultural focus, the Geneva Society of Watch Enthusiasts (SGAH), founded on Aug. 8, 2008, is all the more legitimate given that the Geneva area is a hub of Swiss horological Terroirs. "*You'll find not only watches from the 19th to the 21st century, but also spare parts, accessories, jewelry, tools, and literature for sale or exchange...*" explains Carmelo Armeli, president and founder.
Contact: sgah.geneve@gmail.com

"We also conduct on-site expert appraisals. We cater to collectors from around the world who come for the auctions, as well as local collectors and dealers,"
Carmelo Armeli

Carmelo Armeli, an unconventional expert
As a teen, he spent "discovery days" exploring careers as a photographer, pastry chef, cook… and radio and TV repairman. Then he did an internship at Universal Geneva! He considered applying to electrical school, but there were only 24 spots, and he was the… 25th! So he fell back on his Plan B: watchmaking school. He became a watchmaker and restoration specialist. With his Federal Certificate of Professional Competence (CFC) in hand, and then, four years later, his watchmaker's diploma, he spent two years furthering his training to earn a diploma as a Microtechnology Engineer. In 1984, he was hired by Rolex in Geneva to work in the watchmaking laboratory. There, he held four different positions: "*After the R&D department, I worked in the Manufacturing and then Quality departments before moving on to the Sales department, specifically within the after-sales service, where I helped establish the workshop for restoring vintage watches and developed methods for identifying counterfeits*…" In 2018, he founded ARCAR Genève, his vintage watch appraisal and consulting firm.
Email address: carmelo.armeli@horlogerie-suisse.com

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