

WATCHES AND JEWELRY

## Fabienne Lupo departs Swiss watch lobby Fondation de la Haute Horlogerie

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Fabienne Lupo. Image Fred Merz / Lundi13

By MICKEY ALAM KHAN

Fabienne Lupo, longtime president/CEO of the Fondation de la Haute Horlogerie, the august Swiss body for the world's leading watchmakers, is leaving after shepherding the organization through many changes.

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FHH board member Emmanuel Perrin, who heads Richemont's watch division overseeing A. Lange & Soehne, Baume, Baume et Mercier, IWC, Jaeger LeCoultre, Panerai, Piaget, Roger Dubuis and Vacheron Constantin will temporarily assume Ms. Lupo's responsibilities. The Geneva-based FHH recently had to cancel its annual watch fair over the COVID-19 restrictions on gatherings, but instead launched a spiffy digital portal for watch industry insiders, collectors, press, retailers and the public.

"After 15 years of an exciting and passionate journey, which has recently reached new heights through the creation of a second watch fair in Geneva in collaboration with new partner brands, it is time for me to develop new projects," Ms. Lupo said in a statement.

"I leave the foundation knowing it is more sounder than ever before, thanks to the unwavering support of its founders and partner brands," she said.

"Now installed in the city center in the Arcades des Arts, formerly known as the Pont de la Machine, the Fondation de la Haute Horlogerie organizes thematic and cultural exhibitions to promote Fine Watchmaking.

"Watches & Wonders has become a truly global ecosystem, both physically and digitally, offering events around the world.

"Moreover and most importantly, Watches & Wonders is the reference in fine watchmaking fairs [previously SIHH] for the entire international watchmaking community (professionals, media, collectors and final clients), allowing Geneva to affirm its position as a cornerstone for Swiss watchmaking."



*Crowds at SIHH 2019. Image credit: Watches & Wonders Geneva*

## Digital transformation

Audemars Piguet, GirardPerregaux and the Richemont Group founded **FHH** in 2005.

Now, the membership includes watchmakers A. Lange & Shne, Audemars Piguet, Armin Strom, BOVET, Breitling, Bulgari, Carl F. Bucherer, Cartier, Chanel, Chopard, Christophe Claret, Chronomtrie Ferdinand Berthoud, DeWitt, GirardPerregaux, Greubel Forsey, Grnefeld, Hautlence, Herms, H. Moser & Cie, HYT, IWC Schaffhausen, Jaeger-LeCoultre, Kari Voutilainen, Laurent Ferrier, Louis Vuitton, MB&F, Montblanc, Officine Panerai, Parmigiani Fleurier, Piaget, Ressence, Richard Mille, Roger Dubuis, Romain Gauthier, Speake-Marin, TAG Heuer, Ulysse Nardin, Urwerk, Vacheron Constantin, Van Cleef & Arpels, Zenith.

Many FHH members were already under threat from the Apple Watch's growing popularity with younger generations, although established members innovated and stayed close to collectors.

Ms. Lupo was the face of Swiss watchmaking in these years of digital transformation and rapidly evolving consumer behavior.



*Emmanuel Perrin*

Mr. Perrin, in his statement, thanked Ms. Lupo on behalf of the FHH for her tenure and the development of the foundation.

"Fabienne has made Watches & Wonders the key meeting point for exceptional savoir-faire, creation, and innovation of the finest watchmakers," Mr. Perrin said. "Throughout her tenure as president, Fabienne has made remarkable achievements.

"The Carr des Horlogers has brought together the best of independent watchmakers and workshops," he said.

"Innovation has been given an even greater role with the SIHH Lab. SIHH Live has positioned the fair as the Think Tank of the profession.

"The digital transformation of the fair has accelerated with the launch of the watchesandwonders.com digital platform in a context marked by physical fair cancellations due to COVID-19. She has also planned the opening of the fair to the public with the creation of the Watches & Wonders "Geneva in the City" program, a true festival of watchmaking in the heart of the city for all audiences, which should have taken place in April 2020.

"In doing so, Fabienne has continually promoted the culture and savoir-faire of fine watchmaking around the world through exhibitions, publications, forums, digital tools and training programs developed by the FHH.

"We would also like to thank Fabienne for having created a strong and talented team that will continue to support the foundation in its future developments."

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