



FRANCE: THE LAST GOLDBEATERS

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No-one among the Dauvet really remembers when the sound of the hammer first became a regular feature of family life. It all began when one of the family ancestors, perhaps in the Middle Ages or perhaps under Louis XIII, received a "gold-beater's concession". Now, his descendants maintain the long family tradition by the shores of Lake Geneva. The last goldbeaters in France - out of 5,000 in the 18th century - the Dauvet cling to their craftsmanship. Their employees match the precision of modern machines and their gold leaf is the thinnest object made by human hand: one tenth of a micron thick.

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