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NOV. 2011

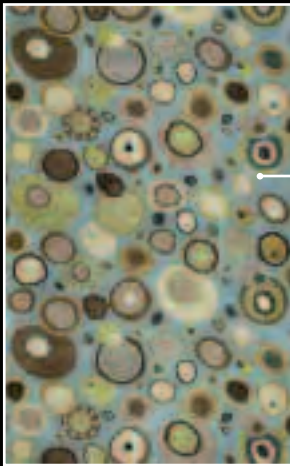
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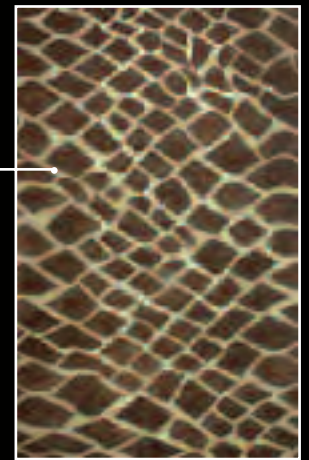
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On the cover:

From the fashion world to furniture and home décor, modernized Ikat patterns are everywhere. The new Milano collection from Sphinx offers these sophisticated motifs in soft, subtle colors for a unique fashion statement in a traditional or casual setting.



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Observations

By Leslie Stroh

Our online version is growing daily, both in content and in readership.

Our goal is to provide content to our readers daily online, and in depth monthly in print.

Returning soon is the Rug News Archive of past articles and issues in a searchable format.

The searchable format lets someone, including me, search by key word or phrase.

Last month, during the Home Fashions Market, Mohamed Sabry (Sabry Rugs) showed me a design printed on a nylon base fabric. He also showed me a BCF Polypropylene rug in the same pattern. He then said that the printed nylon rug was price competitive with the machine woven BCF Polypropylene rug. As I understand it, the real cost variation is the grade of the nylon base fabric.

Using www.rugnewsanddesign.com I put in the phrase "printed nylon." Five hits came up: Dalyn, Orian, Sabry, and Concord Global for rugs, as well as American Green printed carpet tile. Like speed dating, this is speed "Walking the Market."

At trade shows, our goal is to have the bulk of new introductions from exhibiting companies online by the end of the second day. Before the end of any show we attend, you see what we see. And what we see is usually what the vendor is introducing as new.

WHAT'S NEW is a new section in www.rugnewsanddesign.com that allows our advertisers to post press releases, product pictures, videos, personnel changes, etc directly to the web. In the run-up to a market, we get a lot of material after the magazine is on press, so this will give our reader access to new information as it becomes available.

We live with the reality that the rug business and trade shows depend upon What's New, and yet the vast majority of retailers are not attending trade shows, probably for economic reasons.

Between the in-depth coverage of the print publication (also available online) and the very current product updates in "Walking the Market" we look forward to providing our readers with complete coverage of the rug business, and product availability.

For production reasons this was written before the High Point Market, but we already know of two major product introductions at January market. We expect more. The industry is adapting to economic circumstances. High end knotted vendors are creating middle market flatwovens. We have already seen evidence of growth in printed rugs in a fiber, nylon, that many brick and mortar retailers understand.

The supply and price conditions of tufted rugs seem to have eased somewhat, due basically to a lack of orders in July and August. Wool and cotton are off their 12 month highs, but don't expect price reductions as most manufacturers were not able to capture the cost increases from before the highs. There is no reason to believe the supply of weavers for knotted rugs is increasing. Basically the supply of knotted rugs continues to decline, although there are some suppliers in producing countries who have managed to keep more of their weavers, thus increasing their share of market. Keeping weavers generally means wage increases.

Indoor/outdoor rugs have achieved enough market share that it has become its own category in the Americas Magnificent Carpet Awards in Atlanta in

continued on page 15

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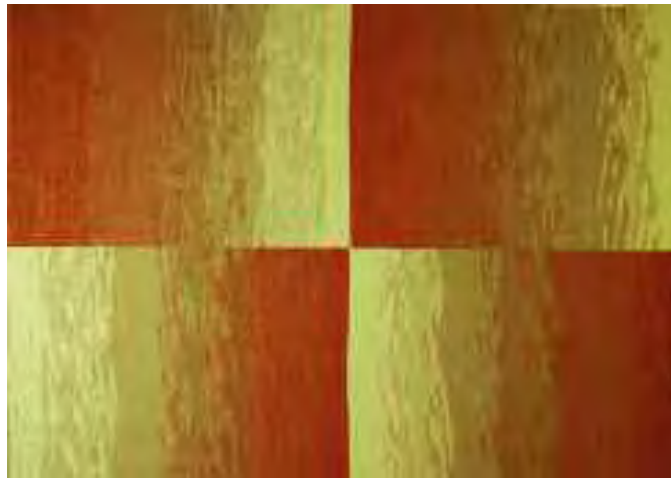


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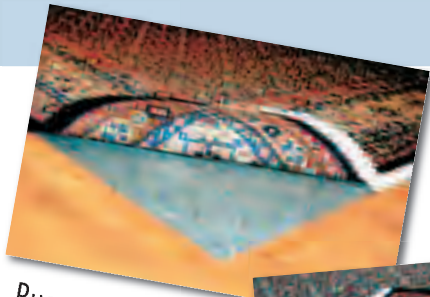
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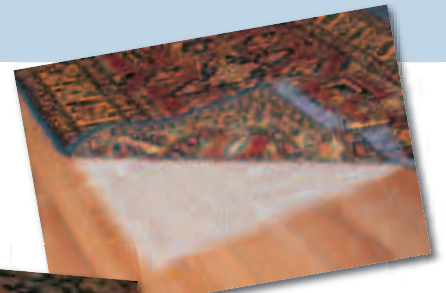
Rug on Hard Surface



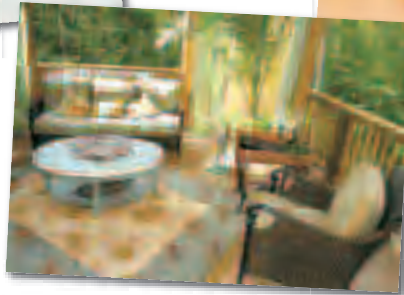
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Observations

continued from page 8

January. Disclosure: *Rug News andDesign* is a presentation sponsor of these awards. As presentation sponsor I get to smile for a picture at the beginning of the evening, I think. The awards ceremony will be on Friday night, rather than Saturday as it was in the past.

The basic difference between outdoor and not outdoor rugs is outdoor rugs cannot be made with a jute or cotton weft. They have to be all synthetic fiber that does not rot. Jute and cotton rot. The other way to look at outdoor rugs is easy-care making them useful for porches, family rooms and kitchens.

As we understand it, the outdoor rugs will be displayed and promoted separately during the Atlanta AmericasMart market.

Further in the magazine, we have a spread on the re-opening of the Islamic Department's wing in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in NYC. Part of that spread is showing a late 16th century carpet which was produced very similarly to modern jacquard weaving and inkjet printing. I know this is a radical position to take, but I will explain. Before check paper, or ruling checks by hand on full scale paintings of rugs in Kerman in the early 20th century, the instructions to the weavers on loom came in the form of a scroll called a talim. Somebody read the scroll knot by knot to the weavers from one side to the other, one line/row at a time.

Both jacquard weaving and digital printing produce product one line/row at a time. Instead of a reader and some weavers, you

have a database and electronic instructions. It is faster, but the design is produced the same it was way in the 1500's.

It is the details that are different. The best measure of the difference is the size of a circle with a smooth curve. If it has steps like an over-enlarged picture on a computer screen it is pixilated, and the viewer will not see a smooth curve.

With rugs the smaller the circle or curve that is not pixilated the tighter the construction. When you see a rug like the one in the Met spread which is huge with tiny details you are looking at a rug with a lot of labor, hence costing a lot of money. (That is by the way where the modern knotted rug industry is heading. It only makes sense to make high quality when you pay high wages.)

In terms of modern jacquard production, the bigger the curve, the lower the quality, the faster the production, the cheaper the rug. With printing, the printing quality is fixed at machine capacity, but the quality of the base, and its impact on design definition, determines the price.

The important thing to remember with rugs, the smaller the details with good definition the higher the price relative to similar products. With wallpaper which is a surface design, it is the opposite. Small print rollers are cheaper to make than large. Small designs are easier to do DIY than large. Large wallpaper designs require either silk screens or digital printing which at the moment is relatively expensive. There is no reason to

think that digitally produced wallpaper will not cost about the same amount as digitally produced rugs, and similarly the price will reflect the cost of the base.

We mention wallpaper because consumers have difficulty working pattern with pattern. With a focus on color, they often overlook the relationships between scale and pattern. Understanding these relationships will keep experienced designers in business for years.

Shaw Living Opens Sears - 406 St Or eS

Shaw Living is in the process of placing 96 two by three foot rugs from their running line in 406 of the 900+ Sears stores. That is a 38,784 rug sample order plus displays.

This is building the brand with product placement. This initiative follows a program launched in 2010 with HGTV which encompassed broadloom, hard-surfaces, and area rugs. The HGTV initiative also included a social media promotion for the brand on Shaw's facebook page, which saw an increase in "likes" from 2,000 to over 40,000 during the 30 day promotion. Previously Shaw Living created an Interactive Area Rug Kiosk launched in 330 flooring stores which featured a personal introduction and invitation from Kathy Ireland to the consumer to shop for their perfect rug.

Sears stores have access to 18 creels (color creels really define the different rug lines in the machine woven field), 5 to 12 sizes for each line, in which the largest rug available is a 12' x 15'.

continued on page 20

New At The Metropolitan



above: Reception Room (Qa'a), dated A.H. 1119/A.D. 1707. Syria, Damascus.

Wood (poplar) with gesso relief, gold and tin leaf, glazes and paint; wood (cypress, poplar, and mulberry), mother-of-pearl, marble and other stones; stucco with glass; plaster ceramic tiles, iron, brass. H. Antechamber 22 ft. (671.6 cm); seating area 19 ft. 11 in. x 16 ft. (5.17m), L. 26 ft. 2 in. (7.9 m), W. 16 ft. 8 in. (5 m). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of The Hagop Kevorkian Fund, 1970 (1970.170).

Image © The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



By Leslie Stroh

The 19,000 square foot new galleries for the Department of Islamic Art opened at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, NYC, November 1st, 2011.

Designer Showcases are all about showing furnishings in context. So are rooms in a museum. Many people can have a 26' x 16'8" room, but when you add a 22 foot ceiling height, and details as did the merchant in Damascus who built this room, you have museum quality.

The Metropolitan Museum is filled with rooms of many periods. One of the features of most of them is ceiling height. Even the Frank Lloyd Wright room which looks like it has a low ceiling has a high center ceiling.

left: The Ballard Ottoman Prayer Carpet, ca. 1575-90. Probably Turkey, Istanbul. Silk (warp and weft), wool (pile), cotton (pile); asymmetrically knotted pile. L. 68 in. (172.7 cm) W. 50 in. (127 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The James F. Ballard Collection, Gift of James F. Ballard, 1922 (22.100.51). Image © The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

BBVA Damasco Room, Dar al-Usul, 1707

- (1) The lighting was the *gawana* from Istanbul, it shone and waited on the flowers of the night.
- (2) There is a *qawana* from Istanbul, it shone and waited on the flowers of the night.
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Translated by Professor Wheeler M. Thackston, retired, Harvard University.

Image © The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

Museum of Art



above: Detail: Length of Fabric, ca. 1565–80. Turkey, Bursa. Silk, metal-wrapped thread; lampas (kemha). L. 48 in. (121.9 cm) W. 26–1/2 in. (67.3 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Purchase, Joseph Pulitzer Bequest, 1952 (52.20.21). Image © The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

Galleries for the Art of the Arab Lands, Turkey, Iran, Central Asia, and Later South Asia is the long and official name for the galleries curated by the Islamic Department. These galleries represent a lot of new thinking, and a lot of new objects on display. The fabric, the prayer rug, the main carpet shown overleaf are most directly related to weaving, and represent the historic origins of rugs.

While the designs may have changed, the ingredients for fine weavers or other crafts have not. The Damascus room in the upper left was created in 1707. The Courtyard shown in the lower right was created in 2011. Master craftsmen, using traditional materials and techniques built it in place at the Met. The courtyard is as authentic as the room.

right: View of Patti Cadby Birch Court June 2011. Built on location by a team of craftsmen from Fez, Morocco. Image © The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

Online, you can click [here](http://rugne.ws/metmoroccan), or enter <http://rugne.ws/metmoroccan> to see the two minute Met video on constructing the Moroccan Court. Hopefully the Met will put in a small kiosk so that visitors can see both the finished product and the process.

Creating requires skills acquired through practice. The Moroccan artisans who created this courtyard acquired those skills by perspiration and talent. Earning a living as an artisan means that there has to be an appreciation of the time it takes both to learn and to do.

The text and translation shown next to the Damascus room is newly translated, but more importantly gives a context to the person who built the house. As script, it was a picture, and as text, it was a word picture that is in the context of the period and the culture.

When you look at the decorative tiles below, you are looking at applied geometry.

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New At The Metropolitan Museum of Art



above: *The Emperor's Carpet* (detail), second half of 16th century Iran. Silk (warp and weft), wool (pile); asymmetrically knotted pile, 24 ft. 11 in. x 11 ft. 1 ½ in. (759.5 x 339.1 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1943 (43.121.1). Image © The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.
continued from page 17

This late 16th century carpet (late 1500's) preceded Mughul carpets of similar design. Think about how this newly restored carpet was woven from the designer's and weavers' perspectives. The carpet is 24 feet 11" long and 11 feet 1 ½ inches wide. First you have to imagine a design, and all the design elements. Then you have to translate them into weaving instructions line by line, or row of knots by row of knots. At say 20 rows to the inch that is six thousand rows of knots that have to be described. Before, check paper, instructions were given by using a *talim* that a reader read out to the weavers, linearly, starting each row at one side going to the other. Meanwhile the weavers had to beat by hand the rows of knots uniformly. There were probably four/five weavers on a massive loom, two on the borders, and two or three in the center, and they all had to work together. One of the limitations of the *talim* is that it can only be used for one size.

Even if these colors and design do not work in a contemporary setting the amount of labor and the quality of craftsmanship make this a standard by which later rugs are to be judged. 🌟

Merida Offers Textural Wool Collection

This fall Merida is unveiling a wool rug collection that is full of dimensional texture and grew out of their Fall River design studio. This made-in-Massachusetts line primarily uses natural, undyed wools and takes on a raw organic feel. The new constructions are in fashion-forward gray and off-white tones, so popular today in the marketplace. With the new collection, Merida is offering custom color capabilities, so designers can put their individual handprint on each of the twelve patterns.

A constant request for floor covering is that it be soft underfoot, particularly in bedrooms and bathrooms. Merida Meridian carries a lovely selection of wool and sisal blends that are made in Belgium in neutral heather colors. The Cortina Collection has a chunkier weave, while the Tournai Collections have a tighter weave. Jute rugs too tend to be soft, since the fibers themselves are smooth. The Bengal Collection of 100% jute is woven in India on semi-automatic looms. The undyed shades of brown jute reveal the fiber's natural variations and give the collection a hand crafted appearance. All natural fiber rugs (plant based as well as animal based such as wool) are organic materials and thus have a natural tendency to absorb moisture. This can be a great benefit, meaning they are powerful allies in fighting humidity and insulating your home.



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Observations

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Sears customers will have the ability to touch, feel and see the 2' x 3' samples, and buy at Sears with Shaw providing in-stock delivery. Rugs ordered online and in the store will be drop shipped to the consumer. Made in the USA is the slogan that means quicker delivery.

What was left unsaid in the description of this new project is the quality of customer service and warehouse logistics needed to make a project like this work. Shaw has an excellent reputation in both those fields. This brings us to one of our favorite points, it is not just product that sells rugs, but process that supports a retailer with in-stock and on-time delivery that is part of the business when every sale is important to the retailer.

NO r eeN Seabr OOk Mar ket iNg: CuSt OM CuSt OM

At the very high end of custom rug making there are firms that specialize in what we would call custom custom. The designer comes in with an idea for a client, and the vendor has to create the design, colors, yarns, weave and finish. There are few people who can do that at either the custom level, or at the manufacturing level. However at least 80% of what is considered custom is custom sizes, or replacement colors by number in a standard quality.

Mike Marcy has in-house designers, lots of weave structure and quality samples (over 100 by my eyeball count—and I didn't know that there was that much variety in Nepal) and a knowledge of rug factories and production built up over the years.


Disclosure: I say years, because when Marcy came into the rug business, I was his first employer, and he was a salesman with a territory, who knew nothing about rugs.

When I talk to people who really know rugs, we end up talking about arcane details only of interest to people who want to understand the nuts and bolts details of what makes great rugs. There are always differences of opinion, and I am still learning.

Currently Marcy is on a campaign against uncrossed weaving in Nepal, for two reasons: one, it weaves faster and cheaper, but two, and to him most importantly, it is not a fabric in the usual sense of the word. If you use uncrossed and cut it to fit as broadloom it will unravel before your eyes. As an area rug that isn't going to be cut, I can see the issue, but I can also understand the price logic of using an uncrossed weave.

Since 99% of our readers probably don't know what I am talking about, think of a shirt or dress fabric. The long way of the cloth there is a warp, and across the cloth there is a weft. In the simplest plain basket weave the weft goes over and under successive warps and the

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Designer Faudree at Antiques Show

Tulsa designer Charles Faudree is shown here signing his latest tabletop book, "Details," at the First Annual Quail Run Antiques Show this October. In this, his fifth book, he emphasizes the importance of the choice of the small items and accessories, which define the room or home's character and personality.

Faudree is well known for his love of Country French styles, decorated with impeccable taste. He mentioned that he often uses antique Oushak rugs, as their subtle shades of color perfectly complement the furniture and accessories chosen. When more neutral floor covering is needed, he will occasionally use a sisal, or sisal/wool blend.

Capel Teams With Genevieve Gorder, HGTV Star

A new rug line, featuring four collections of flat-woven styles, was debuted by Capel Rug at High Point Market this October. The new Genevieve Gorder line is an extension of Capel's New Style Point of View concept and is seen as soulful new rugs. The line encompasses a range of classic themes and global inspirations, from indigenous patterns, and Moroccan tilework to her own ancestral heirlooms. Gorder appears in television shows like HGTV's "Dear Genevieve" and "Design Star." Gorder was one of the original designers on TLC's hit TV series, "Trading Spaces." Her work has been featured in many major publications, and she has appeared numerous times on "Oprah," "The View," "Today," and CNN.

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No

To continue our photographic-video documentaries on rug making, we attended the Qinghai Tibet Carpet Show on the edge of the Tibet plateau. Some buyers from the United States joined us. After the exhibition in the capital of Xining, we traveled to Northern Qinghai (Tibet), along the Silk Road, bordering Inner Mongolia. We filmed the Tibetan nomads tending and migrating with their herds of yaks and the spongy longhaired sheep that produce the highest quality wool for Tibetan, Nepalese and Chinese carpets. We drove endlessly through breath-taking green lush valleys and snow capped mountains of 16,500 feet stopping occasionally at local monasteries to film, visit the friendly local monks and have hot butter yak tea.

Along the way, we found nomadic Tibetan shepherds, some with migrating families, on horseback





REAL TIBET

Nomads – Sheep – Yaks – Rugs

by Paul & Tammy Shaper

and motor cycles, herding their flocks over the plateaus and valleys while criss-crossing modern paved roads. Fast moving semi trucks appeared often and had to carefully negotiate around and through these herds. During summer pastures, nomads tend to live in lighter white canvas tents though some remain in their more permanent hand woven, black yak hair tents. There is an estimated 2 million Tibetans that practice some form of nomadism in China. They live off their cattle, which provide meat, yogurt, and cheese as well as fibers for their clothes, tents and beautifully woven saddlebags.

(To be continued)

© Paul & Tammy Shaper are photographers, designers and filmmakers dedicated to the education and promotion of oriental rugs.

www.orientalcarpets.com



andDesign: Custom Custom: Continuing

By Sarah Stroh

Earlier this year, I wrote about custom rugs. Since then we have heard in the marketplace that the demand for custom is growing. This is not surprising, as most advertising promotes individualism and products that can be adapted to fit your personal needs/wants. From a practical perspective, *Rug News andDesign* thinks custom sizes and replacement colors are about 80% of the custom market, and custom custom about 20%.

There are a growing number of designers who are producing their own rug lines and marketing them. There are also small rug companies that focus on the artistic differences of each rug. These groups of companies might have limited production capability and small quantities but they are reaching out to the high end client who wants something unique and different. Think of it as a limited edition rug. The lady next door is unlikely to see another one like it.

We are also hearing the growing need for rugs over the size of 10'x14'. In many cases, designers and their clients are looking for oversize rugs that are carried in stock. Due Process Stable Trading Company, an advertiser, has what *Rug News andDesign* believes is the largest selection of

oversizes in the market.

Noreen Seabrook Marketing, mentioned in this issue in *Observations*, was founded in 1995, and focuses exclusively on custom custom, and produces in Nepal.

Kooches Rug Company, founded in 2003, produces in Nepal both stock and custom. They use vegetable dyes and hand processing. In the custom area. They are seeing a growing attraction to silk. Kooches has the ability to make custom knotted and woven carpets up to 25'x40'. When asked about the price of a custom rug, their response was the client is not shocked by the price and that price was not an issue.

Asha Carpets, based out of Brooklyn, NY, really seems to have the pulse on what custom is all about. They strive to "to fully explore and exploit the visual and tactile benefits that texture adds to the overall character of a hand-woven carpet." They are "using the qualities of the antique as inspiration in creating a new interpretation of the carpets art for the 21st century." They work strictly with showrooms, like the D&D building in New York City, that carry samples. Asha Carpets are known to produce large rugs with their biggest loom at 30' wide. They rarely see a repeat size for a rug but believe the typical/popular oversize rug range is 14'x20', 15'x25' and 20'x30'. Asha Carpets said that in the last year they produced thirty rugs that were larger than 10'x14'.

Lapchi Carpets are hand-woven in silk and wool. While I did not have the opportunity to talk to

them personally, I was taken in by their marketing statement, "modern carpet culture, fresh thinking uniting centuries old tradition creating custom made carpets for contemporary interiors." They certainly have taken to working with designers and clients to make individual carpets. They carry standard size in the showroom for immediate purchase and can make any hand-woven in any size and shape.

Robin Gray is a lifelong contemporary quilter, weaver and fiber artist. These skills are seen in Robin Gray Design rugs., located in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Robin Gray Design has been around since 2004. She believes in creating works of art for the floor. Gray has collected textiles from around the world and works with artisans in India and Nepal. They carry some stock in select showrooms. Custom rugs can be anything from wall to wall or as small as 2'x4'. Most of her designs would fall under contemporary style. Gray takes into account the green minded client by using low-impact dyes. Rugs can be made in wool, silk, cotton, hemp or viscose.

Wool & Silk Rugs, founded in 2010, have a wonderful selection of designs from the 16th-17th century, 30's-40's Art Deco to original designs. They are very custom friendly and can make a rug up to 35'x50'. They work "hand-in-hand with dealer and designer customs that include wall-to-wall applications." The rugs are made in Nepal. They are seeing most of their clients going custom.

This is an ongoing series about companies more or less focusing

Lif eSt yLeS: Company C



on the custom rug client. They have the ability to make oversize rugs. They position themselves in front of designers. Their selection is like standing in an art gallery of paintings. They target the individualism we all strive to express. Each of these qualities makes them unique and different from what has been the traditional avenue of designs nationally distributed from a continuity program.

Finding the pack of needles in the hay stack is not

easy. However, to find the needle I get to remove layers of hay and in the process find new innovative rug companies to share with you, see new pieces of floor art to share with you, and continue to learn alongside you about how the rug industry is changing.

For examples of rugs from the above mentioned companies, please visit www.walkingthemarket.com, and enter either the "name of the company" or the word "custom" in the search facility at the upper right. ☼

Observations

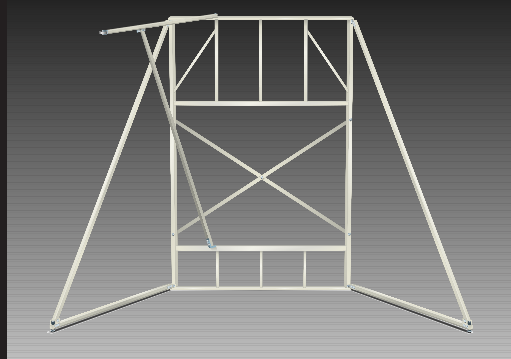
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next row of weft goes under and over successive warps, alternating like that for the length of the fabric. Everything else is a detail.

In an uncrossed Nepalese weave the wefts do to not go over and under (crossing) but stay parallel between two layers of warps, with half the warps on one side, and half on the other, held in place by the knotting process of the pile. Crossed weaving does give greater dimensional stability to the rug, but in a tightly packed rug, the underlying uncrossed weave does not affect the apparent dimensional stability nor is it visible.

In Persian knotting there is a technique called jufti knots. Jufti knots use four warps instead of two meaning half the knotting. And since rugs are picked up at the edge, the borders were often woven regular, and the ground jufti. Jufti weaving has never been eliminated, but once weavers get into a bad habit, they tend to continue.

To see what we see, please visit www.walkingthemarket.com, or www.rugnewsanddesign.com. ☼



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When and how do you choose your floor covering?

Of course a lot depends on the job and what needs to be done. It isn't often that I start with a totally blank canvas but must incorporate certain furniture items, area rugs and other accessories into the space. I like to use sisal and layer it with an old rug with character. If the rug is perfect, I am not interested. I like things to look as if they have been there for a while and are well loved. I don't want it to look new. It needs to look slightly worn and faded. If it is a reproduction it must look somewhat old. The color of the rug depends on the room and the fabric theme in the room. And price, of course, is important, old at a good price.

What about custom?

I will purchase a custom rug to fit the room, because of features in the room, such as a hearth or unusual shape. Myers Carpet in Atlanta has a lot of stock and are quick to get me the rug I need in the size I need. They are very professional and helpful. As I said I like to layer with sisal, and they can supply that quickly.

What about catalogs?

I get ideas from catalogs. Living in the area that I do, which is somewhat remote, catalogs are inspirational. I do look at catalogs like The Pottery Barn, Restoration Hardware and Williams-Sonoma for ideas.

How important is being "green" to you?

Not at all. Of course, most of my purchases, which are wool or sisal, are already "green."

What markets do you attend?

I really don't go to any markets.

“ I like to use sisal and layer it with an old rug with character.” ”






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What markets or design centers do you attend?

We shop all over. We are lucky to have incredible rug dealers here in Chicago, for both newly made rugs and antique rugs, but we will resource in New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco and other cities as required to find just the right piece.

Do you have a favorite style or fiber?

For myself, I prefer Oushaks, Soumaks, Sultanabads and Tabriz antique rugs. There is just something soft, beautiful and understated about these types of antiques. Wool is always the preferred fiber, however, I do love cotton Kilims in the right setting.

Do you often purchase a custom rug?

We do specify custom-made rugs when appropriate. The choice between antique and new is always client determined. As beautiful as antique rugs are, some clients just prefer newly made.

How important is being "green" to you?

I think "being green" is important. Certainly selecting an antique rug has an element of "being green" to it, no?

What is your balance between the purchase of new and antique rugs?

I think it varies at any given time. Because our firm is Client driven, the balance between antique rugs and newly made rugs is constantly changing.

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