

10 Questions

LARTA event creates a Marylebone souk...

LATE April heralds the season of Islamic auctions in London and some specialist dealers have sensibly capitalised on the resulting influx of buyers to the capital by starting *The London Antique Rug & Textile Art Fair (LARTA)* three years ago.

This small event of 11 dealers is that rare thing, a British fair devoted to rugs and textiles, and it runs this year from April 19-21 at The Showroom in Penfold Street – a 'Marylebone souk' just off Church Street, itself an enclave of antiques dealers.

All things woven are on display, from Europe, Africa and across Asia and dating from all periods up to the 20th century.

Prices range from a few hundred pounds to over £45,000, although many pieces are at the more affordable end of the spectrum, from decorative textile fragments priced in the low hundreds of pounds through kelims pitched at around £600-2000 to some of the more recently produced traditional rugs priced in the low thousands.

There are three new exhibitors: **Gallery Nomad** from Berkhamsted; **Galerie Arabesque** from Stuttgart who will bring Eastern sculpture and ceramics alongside textiles; and third-generation London dealer **Alex Zadah** of Carltone Ltd, with textiles and early carpets.

Joss Graham, one of the founding exhibitors of *LARTA*, will also return after missing last year, bringing Indian works and flatweave textiles and rugs.

Marcus Voigt Textiles (London), **Owen Parry** (Wales), **Anthony Hazledine Oriental Carpets** (Cotswolds), **Andy Lloyd** (Bath) and **Aaron Nejad** (London) are among the regular dealers.

There is also an invitation-only preview evening on April 18 (tickets available on request via the *LARTA* website) and a book signing on Saturday April 20 from 4-7pm with **Robert Chenciner**, author of numerous books on the textiles and cultures of the Caucasus including his latest, *Dragons, Padlocks and Tamerlane's Balls*, an autobiography that draws in art and cultural history.

www.larta.net

Above right: this fragment of a silk Chinese dragon, dating from the early 1600s, is priced at £1500 from **Galerie Arabesque** at *LARTA*.

Right: also at *LARTA*, **Gallery Nomad** will ask £1495 for this c.1900 black, orange and white wool kelim rug, measuring 6ft 2in x 4ft 9in (1.88m x 1.44m) and signed *TM*, from Bessarabia, which is now southern Romania.



HENRIETTA SPENCER-CHURCHILL Interior designer and patron of CADA, London and Woodstock

www.spencerchurchilldesigns.com



1. How long have you been dealing?

I am not an antique dealer as such but have always had a passion for antiques and use them a lot in my projects and enjoy finding the right piece for each project.

2. Do you do any fairs? The CADA fair at Blenheim will be my first antique fair but being a member of CADA and on home territory it made sense to be involved.

3. What was your first job? I have always been in interior design and studied at the Inchbald school of Design and afterwards worked for Diana Hanbury at the Tarrystone who also had a great eye for antiques.

4. What has been your best buy and biggest mistake? Although I love furniture, some of my better buys have probably been paintings, especially watercolours which I collect. My biggest mistake is buying things abroad and forgetting about the cost of getting them home.

5. What is your dream object? I love sculpture as it can be so tactile and I am a three-dimensional person but don't own much myself.

6. What is the biggest threat, in your opinion, to the trade at the moment? Too many fakes and copies, whether at the top end of the market or lower down from China etc.

7. Any advice for those starting out in the trade?

Buy what you like and pieces which are practical as well as decorative.

8. Alternative career? Detective.

9. Favourite book? Any history of architecture or design, preferably 18th century.

10. Cat or dog? Definitely dog.

If you are a dealer and would like to be featured in 10 Questions email annabradly@atgmedia.com

...and more textiles on show in the West End

THIS column seems to be taking on a bit of a textiles theme this week.

While *LARTA* gets under way in Marylebone (see story above), **The Fleming Collection** in Mayfair continue their tapestry exhibition, called *Finding the Unicorn – Tapestries Mythical and Modern*, from April 17 to June 1.

The show is based around seven tapestries recreating the *Hunt of the Unicorn* (1495-1505) series, that are now in the Cloisters Museum in New York but originally hung in Stirling Castle. These have been woven by the West Dean Tapestry Studio as part of the £12m refurbishment of the 16th century royal apartments at Stirling Castle in Scotland.

This daunting project is now nearing completion after 12 years and one of the tapestries, *The Unicorn is Found*, woven over three and a half years by three West Dean weavers, Caron Penney, Katharine Swales and Jo Howard, is the centrepiece of the show.

It also includes the design for the last tapestry in the series, a tapestry by Henry Moore, an installation illustrating how a Tracey Emin painting was translated into tapestry and other work by West Dean tapestry studio which will be for sale (see picture above right).

■ Meanwhile, at Somerset House on the Strand, London, **Christopher Farr**

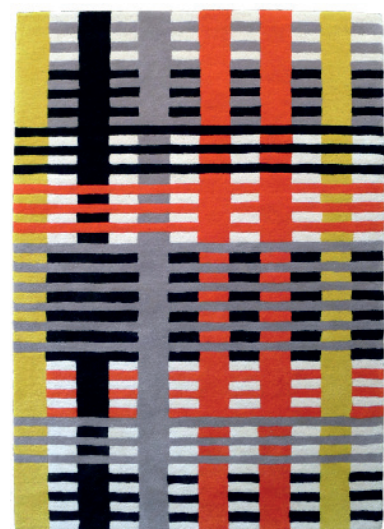


Above: *Artemis*, 2012, woven at West Dean's tapestry studio by Pat Taylor. The cotton warp and worsted wool weft tapestry, 3ft 10in x 5ft 11in (1.18 x 1.81m), is for sale in the **Fleming Collection** tapestry show, priced at £9900.

will celebrate 25 years of dealing in and creating rug designs with an exhibition called *Editions: Contemporary Rugs for Collectors* from May 2 to June 30 in the Great Arch Hall.

For this show, Christopher has collaborated with designers and artists and their estates to produce limited edition rugs from original paintings and textile designs by the likes of William Scott (1913-89), Terry Frost (1915-2003) and Sandra Blow (1925-2006).

Prices range from £650-1000.



Left: *Study Rug* by Anni Albers (1899-1994), initially designed in 1926 as a cotton and silk wall hanging, now made into a hand-tufted rug, wool rug in an edition of 150 by **Christopher Farr** in association with the Josef and Anni Albers Foundation. The rug, on view in Farr's show at Somerset House, is available in two sizes – 3ft x 5ft (91cm x 1.52m), priced £450, and 4ft x 6ft (1.22 x 1.83m), priced £750.