



# View from the Fringe

Newsletter of the New England Rug Society



Vol. 20 No. 2 November 2012

[www.ne-rugsociety.org](http://www.ne-rugsociety.org)

## November 11 Meeting: Three Collectors, a Dozen Pieces

Our November meeting will feature three NERS collectors, each of whom has chosen four favorite pieces to exhibit. The meeting—on Sunday afternoon, November 11, at John Collins's new gallery in Newburyport—will begin at 2 p.m. with refreshments and an opportunity to view the mini-exhibition. At 2:30, the three exhibitors will join in an hour-long panel discussion, moderated by Ann Nicholas, of their rugs and textiles, their thoughts on collecting, and their how-I-got-it “war stories.” After the panel, attendees will get to re-view the exhibition and talk with the panelists about the individual pieces on display.

The three presenters are Ed Berkhoff, Lloyd Kannenberg, and Richard Larkin. Ed, attracted to the somber and dignified colors of Baluch weavings, began collecting them in 1993. Ten years later he shifted to South Persian saddlebags and chantehs. Lloyd became interested in rugs in 1980, during

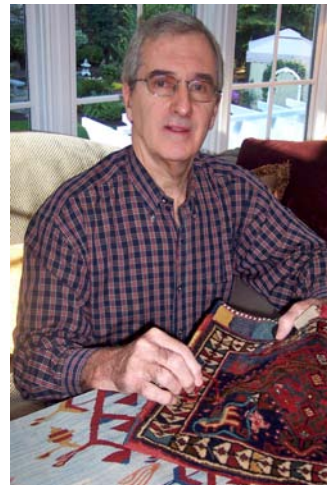


**Ed Berkhoff**



**Lloyd Kannenberg**

a sojourn in the Caucasus and a “side trip” to Central Asia. In 1995 he began collecting Transcaucasian pile rugs, but his interests have since expanded to include other areas and types of weaving, including textiles. Rich caught “rug fever” in 1966 while living in Riyadh, where the rug souk



**Richard Larkin**

was one of the few sources of public entertainment. He began acquiring South Persian and Baluch weaving, but over the years his interests, like Lloyd's, have broadened.

The meeting is an opportunity to see what three NERS collectors regard as their choicest acquisitions and to hear them share their collecting observations and adventures.

## November 11 Meeting Details

**Day and Time:** Sunday afternoon, 2 p.m.

**Place:** John Collins Gallery, 40R Merrimac St.

(Brown's Wharf), Newburyport, MA, 01950

### Directions:

From the south, take I-95 North (towards NH) to exit 57 (MA 113, W. Newbury/Newburyport). Go left on MA 113 East towards Newburyport for about 3 miles (road will merge into High St.). Turn left at Green St. stoplight (sign for downtown Newburyport) and go 0.2 mile to stoplight at Water Street. Continue across Water Street into Municipal Parking Lot.\* The Collins Gallery is on the first floor of Brown's Wharf, the large brick building to the left of the parking lot as you face the water.

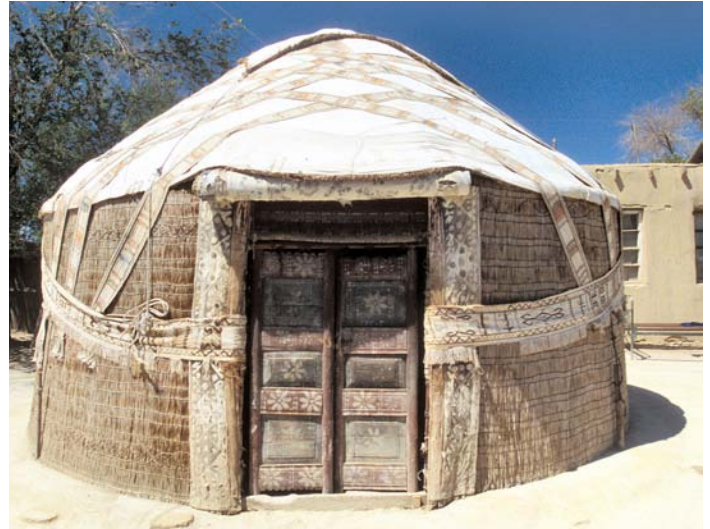
From the west and Merrimac Valley, take I-495 to I-95 South; from I-95 South take exit 57 and follow directions above.

\*There is a nominal fee for parking in the Municipal Lot.

## September Meeting Review: David and Sue Richardson on Qaraqalpaq Yurts



**1. Richly decorated yurt in Moynaq, a former Aral Sea port, painted by ethnographer Boris Adrianov in 1946.**



**2. Small yurt in the yard of a house in Moynaq, photographed by the Richardsons in 2005.**

On September 28, at First Parish in Lincoln, English researchers David and Sue Richardson kicked off the NERS season with a talk on the Qaraqalpaq people, focusing in particular on their yurts and yurt decorations. The Richardsons' presentation was but one product of an intensive fourteen-year study; they've also just published a substantial volume, *Qaraqalpaqs of the Aral Delta*, with far more material than they could possibly cover in our meeting.

David started the session, beginning what would be a tag-team style of delivery, with him and Sue switching frequently as presenters. David commented that some of the areas inhabited by Qaraqalpaqs were among the toughest in Central Asia, and he jokingly lamented, "Why on earth didn't we pick Bali?" He went on to answer his own question: "Sue and I both fell in love with Qaraqalpaq textiles."

David explained that the Qaraqalpaqs are a Turkic people who speak a language similar to Qazaq. Genetically, though, they are most similar to Khorezmian Uzbeks. From what is known of their history, in c. 1550 they occupied the valley of the Syr Darya (in what today is Kazakhstan), but over the next two hundred years they were driven south and west due to attacks by Mongols and others, with the largest numbers winding up in the Zerafshan region in modern-day southern Uzbekistan, and in the Aral Delta in Qaraqalpaq Province in western Uzbekistan. The rest of the talk focused most heavily on the Aral Delta Qaraqalpaqs.

Through most of the nineteenth century, the Qaraqalpaqs suffered under the brutal domination of the Khivans. The Russian takeover of Khiva in 1873 improved conditions for the Qaraqalpaqs and led to a rebuilding of

their economy and a blossoming of their culture, including a rebirth and growth of textile making. Under the Russians, the Qaraqalpaqs were semi-nomadic, moving their yurts seasonally on bullock carts or even watercraft. For textiles of this period, Qaraqalpaqs primarily utilized local plant fibers like reeds and bulrushes, with goat hair the predominant animal fiber. Cotton and other animal fibers had to be obtained from outside sources, though the Qaraqalpaqs eventually learned how to cultivate cotton in the Aral Delta. They were masters of natural dyeing, relying largely on local dyestuffs, except for indigo, which was imported from British India.

The Richardsons introduced Qaraqalpaq yurts by contrasting them with those of the Turkmen. Turkmen yurts were richly decorated inside but plain outside. Qaraqalpaq yurts, on the other hand, were decorated both inside and out. They have remained relatively unchanged over time **(1)**: showing a drawing from 1874 and several photos from 1928, the Richardsons noted that the Qaraqalpaq yurt looks very similar today, although now it is used recreationally rather than as a primary dwelling **(2)**. Because of the comparative poverty of the Qaraqalpaqs, even after their 1873 "liberation," many of them lived solely in yurts until the 1950s.

The Qaraqalpaqs used a number of bands, both outside and inside the yurt. These were woven by women, using a simple, horizontal *o'rmek* loom. A number of different techniques were used for yurt bands, including plain or striped weave, supplementary weft patterning (*bes keste*), warp-float patterning (*terme*) **(3)**, warp substitution (*g'ajari*), discontinuous knotted pile (*shalma*), and





**3. Terme (warp-float patterned) band, detail.**

continuous knotted pile. There were six primary types of bands, differentiated by their position and function as well as their decorative technique. *Aq qurs* were typically fastened outside over the top of the yurt, and were woven in white with patterns created with supplementary weft. *Qizil qurs* were red bands that adorned the inside of the yurt; three to five such bands would be interlaced to create a place of honor for guests. So-called Turkmen *nag'is qurs* were long, thin bands that were wrapped around the roof members of the yurt frame to keep them in position with correct spacing. According to the Richardsons, these *nag'is qurs* sometimes included in-woven dates, and examples were created up through the 1960s, '70s, and '80s. The *qizil basqur* was a very wide, heavy band wrapped on the outside of the yurt frame, at the point where the roof members met the vertical members of the side, again to keep the structure in place. Finally, *qazaq ala basqurs* and *aq basqurs* were two types of primarily decorative bands. The *aq basqur*, like the classic Turkmen tent band, had a white, flatwoven ground and discontinuous pile decorative motifs, many of them similar to those on Turkmen tent bands. These designs were typically created with symmetrical knotting on alternate warps, though a small number of *aq basqurs* were woven with full pile.

The Qaraqalpaq yurt was also adorned with a number of decorations, inside and out. The *sirtqi janbaw* (4) was a band on the outside of the yurt, sloping downwards from the point in the rear where the vertical and roof members met until it reached the middle of the door opening on the opposite side. It was similar in structure to the *aq basqur*, with a white, flatwoven ground and designs created in pile.



**4. David showing a *sirtqi janbaw*.**

*Sirtqi janbaws* had a decorative fringe, hanging down on the lower side of the band. The *ishki janbaw* was a similarly constructed band, also hung in a comparably sloped fashion, but on the inside of the yurt. Other bands, called *ishki beldew*, also decorated the yurt interior.

The door of the yurt had a number of practical and symbolic functions, reflected in the different decorations used there. Immediately around the door on the outside was a surround called the *shiy esik*, with designs on a flatwoven ground; the ram's-horn motif was commonly used to repel the evil eye. Flanking the door surround were panels called *shiy o'n'ir*. The Richardsons showed pictures of several examples with ram's-horn motifs in pile on flatwoven grounds, and of a later style with the design made from colored triangles and other shapes of appliquéd fabric. The doorway itself was covered with a reed screen, with wool wrapping to create pattern; this door screen was called *shiyqayiw*. At the lower part of the door was a woven cover called *suwag'ar*, designed to prevent water from coming in.

Above the door on the inside was another woven piece called *esikqas*, meaning "brow of the door," which utilized amulets to protect the yurt inhabitants. The Richardsons presented a material and structural analysis of a typical *esikqas*, and also outlined four different designs that were used for these pieces. Of the four designs, they believed one to have been native to the Qaraqalpaqs and the other three inspired by or borrowed from border designs of Turkmen and Uzbek weavings.

The Richardsons then turned to storage bags used in the yurt. Many were of a type called *shalma kergi* (5), with a decorated face and a plain back (backs are almost always



**5. Traditional Qaraqalpaq storage bag (*shalma kergi*), made to hang from the inside wall of the yurt.**

missing from *shalma kergis* seen today). The face has a warp-faced cotton ground, with designs in pile. Tassels typically dangle from the sides, and knotted fringe hangs from the bottom. Designs are often native to the Qaraqalpaqs, but a number of motifs are drawn from Turkmen groups, particularly the Yomut and Tekke. Many *kergis* with Turkmen designs have full-pile faces.

Another major type of storage bag was the *qarshin*, shaped like an open-topped box (similar to a Shabsavan mafrash), with a pile face and plain-weave sides, back, and bottom. The Richardsons outlined five designs and gave statistics on their frequency, from 41 percent for the most common of the five down to 2 percent for the rarest. Again, a number of the designs had clear Turkmen counterparts. Sue asked rhetorically when the design borrowing took place, and commented, “That’s the six-million-dollar question.” She noted that the Chodor were driven out of the Aral Delta region in 1811, so some of the design transfer must have occurred before that.

The final section of the Richardsons’ presentation focused on mats, rugs, and carpets. Among the larger items, Qaraqalpaqs produced a type of flatwoven carpet called *alasha* (“multi-colored”). *Alashas* feature many adjacent strips, with the design vocabulary used in Qaraqalpaq bands. In some instances, the *alasha* was created by sewing the strips together. Some of the examples the Richardsons showed were completely flatwoven, and others had pile designs on a flatwoven ground.

The Richardsons then turned to knotted-pile rugs and carpets. They noted first that producing knotted-pile pieces doesn’t appear to have been traditional for the Qaraqalpaqs, and that relatively few were woven. Ironically, the Soviets in the early twentieth century wrote a lot about Qaraqalpaq carpets, misattributing virtually all of them. A carpet illustrated as Qaraqalpaq by Bogolyubov in 1909, for example, was more probably made by Uzbek or Turkmen groups in the Nurata/Samarkand region; according to David, the Russians reported such pieces as Qaraqalpaq because they encountered them in a Qaraqalpaq district and didn’t tend to record who actually produced them.

The Richardsons nevertheless could illustrate several types of true Qaraqalpaq pile weaving. In the Savitsky Museum in No’kis, housing the largest collection of Qaraqalpaq items in Qaraqalpaqstan, are pile rugs and carpets many of which have designs that are clearly simplified derivatives of Turkmen motifs. For instance, the Qaraqalpaqs had their own coarser version of the *tauk nuska* gul used by Chodor, Igdyr, Yomut, Arabatchi, Ersari, and Kizilayak weavers; all of these Turkmen tribes were in the Khorezm area, making the interchange understandable. David also hypothesized that the carpet/design combinations may have been the result of intermarriage, with the weavers learning technique from Qaraqalpaq relatives and design repertoire from Turkmen relatives.

There were, however, Qaraqalpaq pile rugs produced using non-Turkmen designs. Again, the Richardsons showed





#### **6. Sue showing an intact *qızıl kiymeshek*.**

several examples, many with hooked and ram's-horn motifs. David also spoke about another researcher, Ag'inbay Allamuratov, who recorded that large Qaraqalpaq carpets were being woven in the better-off Qaraqalpaq regions, with five or six Qaraqalpaq girls sitting in a row to create them.

Following the presentation and a few questions, there was a show-and-tell, with a number of Qaraqalpaq items the Richardsons had brought, along with samples from NERS members' collections. There were several different yurt bands, including an *ishki janbaw*. The Richardsons had brought two *esikqas*. They also had a *qarshin* with a few raspberry-colored silk knots, plus a couple of fragments of much older (perhaps early nineteenth-century) *qarshins*. At their request, members had also brought fragments of a Chodor and a Yomut main carpet, each with the *tauk nuska gul*, to contrast with Qaraqalpaq renditions of the same design. Finally, there were a number of *kiymesheks*, or women's headdresses. *Kiymesheks* have highly decorative embroidered fronts, which in most cases have been separated from the rest of the headdress, but there was one complete example that used Bukharan ikat for the back **(6)**.

The Richardsons' session covered a tremendous amount of material in a short time, but those who want to learn still more on the Qaraqalpaq people and their weaving should get a copy of the speakers' *Qaraqalpaqs of the Aral Delta*, or check out their informative, in-process website, [www.qaraqalpaq.com](http://www.qaraqalpaq.com). Our great thanks to David and Sue for selecting key information and woven examples from their fourteen-year-long project and sharing them with us!

*Jim Adelson*

## Rug and Textile Events

### **Future NERS Meetings (Spring 2013)**

Mar. 1, 7 p.m., location TBA: DeWitt Mallary,

"Weavings of the Baluch"

Mar. 22, 7 p.m., location TBA: Sarah B. Sherrill,

"Twilight of a Tradition: Bakhtiari and Qashqa'i Weavings"

Apr. 12, 7 p.m., A Night at the MFA,

"Caucasian Rugs from the Rudnick Collection"

May 19, noon, Picnic at Gore Place

### **Exhibitions**

Peter Pap Oriental Rugs at New York Design Center, 200 Lexington Ave., 11th floor: "The Mae Festa Collection," Nov. 2–26.

Peabody-Essex Museum, Salem, MA: "The Invention of Glory: Alfonso V and the Pastrana Tapestries," through Dec. 31.

The Textile Museum, Washington, DC: "The Sultan's Garden: The Blossoming of Ottoman Art," through Mar. 10, 2013 (see p. 11).

### **Auctions featuring rugs**

Skinner, Boston, Nov. 10 (Oriental Rugs and Carpets)

Rippon-Boswell, Wiesbaden, Nov. 24 (Major Autumn Auction)

Grogan and Co., Dedham, Dec. 2 (The December Auction)

Grogan and Co., Dedham, Jan. 20, 2013 (Fine Oriental Rugs and Carpets)

### **Shows and fairs**

San Francisco Tribal and Textile Arts Show, Feb. 7–10, 2013

### **Music of Ottoman Turkey**

In January 2013, the Cambridge Society for Early Music (CSEM) will sponsor five performances by Dünya, an early-music cooperative devoted to reviving the varied musical currents that swirled around Istanbul from the sixteenth century onwards. Six performers will sing and play numerous remarkable instruments, some reconstructed from early miniature paintings, in a program drawn from such varied sources as a manuscript by a seventeenth-century sultan's Polish music director; popular, courtly, and religious music from East and West; and Ottoman music transcribed by European travelers. Performances are as follows:

- Thursday, Jan. 24, 7:30 p.m., First Religious Society, Carlisle
- Friday, Jan. 25, 7:30 p.m., Congregational Church of Weston
- Saturday, Jan. 26, 7:30 p.m., Salem Athenaeum
- Sunday, Jan. 27, 4 p.m., Ascension Memorial Church, Ipswich
- Monday, Jan. 28, 7:30 p.m., Christ Church, Cambridge

Tickets are \$30 (seniors \$25) and will be available at the door or may be purchased through CSEM ([www.csem.org](http://www.csem.org)).

## October Meeting Review: Jon Thompson on Late Mamluk Carpets

The October 5 meeting, held at ALMA, marked the fourth appearance of Jon Thompson (see (2) on p. 10) as NERS speaker. This time, Jon presented his views on late Mamluk carpets. Indicating that the historical background is critical to understanding the origin of these carpets, he started with a map of the Islamic Near East in the 1470s, showing the major political players at the time. The Mamluk sultanate included Egypt and extended northward through the eastern Mediterranean to modern-day Syria. Mamluk sultan Qaytbay, recruited as a slave from the Caucasus, had risen by his own skill to lead a period of Mamluk revival and artistic expansion. The Ottoman sultanate, then ruled by Mehmed II “the Conqueror,” held control over Anatolia and southeastern Europe, including most of the Balkan peninsula. Venice was a major maritime power, with extended territory on the east coast of the Italian peninsula. The Timurids, led by Sultan Husayn Bayqara, still ruled a considerable empire from their capital in Herat. Finally, the Turkic-speaking Aq Qoyunlu (“White Sheep”) Turkmen, led by Uzun Hasan, controlled eastern Anatolia and western Iran.

The Venetians, threatened by growing Ottoman power, sought to have Uzun Hasan and the Turkmen attack Mehmed from the east, thereby diverting Ottoman attention from further advances into Europe. But at the 1473 battle of Bashkent, the Ottomans defeated the Turkmen, altering the political landscape and balance of power and benefiting the Mamluks by eliminating one of their rivals. The Mamluks flourished for the next forty years, until Ottoman Sultan Selim I, having defeated Safavid Shah Isma‘il in 1514, conquered the Mamluk Empire in 1517.

As for Mamluk carpets: when they were first identified as a specific type at the start of the twentieth century, there was considerable uncertainty about their source. Wilhelm von Bode, writing in 1901, called them “Damascus carpets,” based on Venetian inventory accounts that use that name. In 1937, Swedish scholar and collector Carl Johan Lamm wrote about several groups of carpet fragments—one of the groups being Mamluk—found at Fustat, Egypt. In 1938, Kurt Erdmann published a paper that, based on documentary evidence, attributed Mamluk carpet production specifically to Egypt. In 1957, Kühnel and Bellinger’s *Cairene Rugs and Others Technically Related*, a catalogue raisonné of the Mamluk collection of the Textile Museum, supported Erdmann’s attribution, while adding pieces to the puzzle by distinguishing and linking several groups of carpets. An additional advance in knowledge came in 1965 and 1966, when the Textile Museum and the Metropolitan Museum of Art acquired, respectively, a carpet fragment and an entire



**1. Mamluk blazon on a fragmentary carpet in the Bardini Museum, Florence. The Textile Museum’s blazon fragment was once part of the same carpet.**

carpet with Mamluk technical and design features and blazons specifically associated with Mamluk royal office during the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries (1).

This half-century-plus of scholarship led to the categorization of four types of carpet production during the late Mamluk sultanate and afterwards: 1) carpets with clear Mamluk technical features and specific, identifiable Mamluk emblems, plus others technically very similar but without blazons, produced during the Mamluk rule; 2) carpets with Mamluk technical characteristics, but produced in Egypt after the fall of the Mamluk sultanate in the early sixteenth century (these are the most numerous of the four types, and Jon recommended that they be designated “Mamluk-style” or “post-Mamluk” carpets); 3) carpets produced in Egypt from the mid-sixteenth century onward, with technical characteristics similar to the Mamluk and post-Mamluk types, but with designs appealing to Ottoman customers (these are known as Cairene carpets); 4) transitional carpets displaying design elements associated with both Mamluk and Ottoman preferences, presumably coming from a period of design change.





**2. “Pre-Mamluk” carpet, argued to be fifteenth-century Aq Qoyunlu, in the Chehel Sotun Pavilion, Isfahan.**

According to Jon, it makes sense that Mamluk carpet production did not end abruptly when the Ottomans conquered the Mamluk sultanate, because the Ottomans tended to allow artists and artisans to continue working relatively unhindered in the territories and cultures they ruled. A major question remains, however: since carpet production at the end of the Mamluk reign and into the Ottoman period is markedly different from any earlier carpet and textile production in Egypt, how did the Mamluks attain the knowledge and skill to create such sophisticated weavings?

There exist a group of carpets with Mamluk design features but technical differences in colors, wool quality, and spinning; these are the same carpets for which Charles Grant Ellis, believing the group to be later derivatives of Mamluk carpets, coined the label “para-Mamluk.” Jon argued that evidence from European paintings of the time (for instance, a 1501 painting in Udine Cathedral) indicates that these carpets were actually made prior to Mamluk carpets, and suggested the name “pre-Mamluk” to reflect their earlier date. These “pre-Mamluk” carpets differ from what we know of Ottoman, Timurid, or Mamluk carpet production of the time, but do have

a connection with Persian weaving, as evidenced in particular by a prayer carpet in the Chehel Sotun Pavilion in Iran. Jon conjectured that such Persian weaving could have been the product of the Aq Qoyunlu Turkmen then in power, and that, perhaps in the late fifteenth century, Sultan Qaytbay brought Turkmen artisans to a newly established court-sponsored weaving facility in Cairo, to augment and improve the carpets that were being produced in Egypt at the time. The pre-Mamluk carpets made in Turkmen Iran in the late fifteenth century likely reached the Venetians and Florentines through Damascus, causing them to be labeled “Damascus carpets.” Carpets with Mamluk blazons represent the early production from the new court weaving facility. Over much of the sixteenth century, new designs and colors appeared, culminating in the carpets in Ottoman taste referred to as “Cairene carpets.” According to this theory, Mamluk carpets didn’t just spring up without precedent, but were the result of carpet weaving expertise imported from Turkmen Iran and then modified in Egypt to reflect evolving style preferences and markets.

Lacking Mamluk or pre-Mamluk carpets in our collections, NERS members couldn’t hold our typical show-and-tell after Jon’s presentation. What followed instead was a lively set of questions, some of them expressing a fair degree of skepticism, from the audience. One questioner thought it highly unlikely that the Venetians, given their experience and extensive trading facilities in Damascus, would have been unaware that the carpets they were obtaining there had actually been woven in Iran. Another pointed out that the interior motifs of the mosque lamp depicted on the Chehel Sotun prayer rug resemble the cups featured in Qaytbay-period Mamluk blazons and asked if design influence might have proceeded in the opposite direction. This questioner also objected to Jon’s contention that cloudbands on a singular Mamluk prayer carpet in Berlin are strictly Persianate in their “unknotted” form, and cited similar examples in fifteenth-century Ottoman bookbindings, frontispieces, and Ushak carpet borders. So, as Jon himself acknowledged, more research and discoveries will be required to either confirm or supplant his theory. In any case, our considerable thanks to him for sharing his findings and ideas on a subject not previously explored in an NERS talk. And additional thanks to ALMA for yet again providing our meeting venue.

*Jim Adelson*



## Eighth Annual Sartirana Textile Art Trade Fair, Lomellina, Italy



**Members of a rug society from northeastern Italy visit Sartirana on the last day of the fair.**

"My pieces sell themselves," the venerable dealer said when I asked him why he was headed for the outdoor café, abandoning his display booth at the eighth annual Sartirana Textile Art Trade Fair at La Pila, held between September 13 and 16 in a twelfth-century castle in Lombardy Province, northwestern Italy. I shrugged, told him I'd join him for a *doppio* in a few minutes, and climbed the stairs from the inner courtyard up into the keep of the ancient castle.

Twenty-six reputable European dealers (see [www.lapilasrl.it/en/amasts-eng/sts/sts-exhibitors.html](http://www.lapilasrl.it/en/amasts-eng/sts/sts-exhibitors.html)), brought together yet again by Alberto Boralevi of Florence, had gathered to present the kinds of woven and knotted textiles one normally sees only in museums and the homes of the truly fortunate. Nestled in rice fields during the mid-September harvest, the castle provided the ideal ambience for displaying rare old rugs, trappings, and embroideries.

On each of the four days, approximately three hundred visitors wove their way through the exhibition, taking advantage of the store of knowledge of dealers including Mirco Cattai (Milan), Mohammed Tehrani (Hamburg), Alain Emir (Lyon), Nairy Vrouyr (Antwerp), Bertram Frauenknecht (Istanbul), Herbert Bieler (Vienna), and Werner Weber (Zürich).

How often does one get to handle a seventeenth-century star Ushak, and then turn around to find a two-hundred-year-old Konya prayer rug on display and for sale? Everyone has his favorites, but I was torn between fragments—a beauty from the Sivas area, and two mounted sections of a Malatya pile rug with lots of cochineal and indigo.

The bad news? The more ambitious dealers know full well an antique rug or trapping doesn't sell itself. The good news? I found two lovely pieces I needed to have, which also fit, neatly folded, into my carry-on bag. I went downstairs





**Top left: Fragment of a Tekke chirpy (Mohammed Tehrani).**

**Left: Fragments of a Malatya Kurdish rug (Alberto Boralevi).**

**Above: Konya-area rug (Mollaian Farzin).**

to the café, paid the wise dealer who had greeted me earlier, and ordered up my first double espresso of an inspiring weekend at Sartirana de Lomellina.

*Kolya von Somogyi*

*Editor's note:* Kolya, who lives near Vienna, recently joined NERS. Our sole member outside the United States, he has graciously agreed to send occasional reports and photos of events in Europe for publication in *View from the Fringe*. Welcome, Kolya, and thanks!

## Photo Sources

p. 1, top to bottom: Richard Larkin, Ed Berkoff, Lloyd Kannenberg; p. 2, David and Sue Richardson; p. 3, Yon Bard; p. 4, David and Sue Richardson; p. 5, Yon Bard; pp. 6–7, Julia Bailey; pp. 8–9, Kolya von Somogyi; p. 10 (figs. 1–2), Daniel Shaffer; (figs. 3–4), Julia Bailey; p. 11, The Textile Museum.



## 2012 Textile Museum Symposium: “Ottoman by Design”

The fortieth annual Textile Museum Fall Symposium and attendant festivities took place between October 11 and 13, commencing with a Thursday-afternoon on-site celebration of the incipient construction of the new Textile Museum and George Washington University Museum **(1)**. That evening, at a reception held at the Turkish Embassy, the George Hewitt Myers Award was presented to Walter B. Denny, the well-known professor and rug scholar, who is co-curator (with Sumru Belger Krody) of the current Textile Museum exhibition, “The Sultan’s Garden: The Blossoming of Ottoman Art” (see p. 11).

On Friday, three NERS members on the TM Advisory Council (Julia Bailey, Ann Nicholas, and Judith Smith) joined colleagues for a day-long meeting that featured discussion of the new museum building on the main GW campus in Foggy Bottom, a new conservation and storage facility at a satellite campus in Virginia, and an ambitious inaugural exhibition slated for the fall of 2014. A well-attended TM-members’ reception followed in the evening.

Saturday’s sold-out symposium filled a comfortable auditorium on the GW campus. Sumru Krody introduced the speakers: Walter Denny on the legacy of the Ottoman floral style, Amanda Phillips on Ottoman velvet cushion covers and their evolution, Jon Thompson on the sources of various “alien” motifs that made their way to Ottoman textiles **(2)**, and Warren T. Woodfin on Ottoman silks featuring Christian imagery. Thomas Farnham moderated the concluding panel, at which the four speakers deftly and often humorously answered attendees’ questions.

On Sunday, back at the TM, a curators’ tour of “The Sultan’s Garden” preceded the presentation of the Joseph V. McMullan Award to German collectors and Volkmann-treffen-organizers Christian and Dietlinde Erber **(3)** and a lively show-and-tell, led by Michael Seidman **(4)**, that allowed symposium attendees to share exhibition-related textiles from their collections. NERS member Jeff Spurr **(4)** was among the designated commentators on the origin, age, and design of the examples shown.

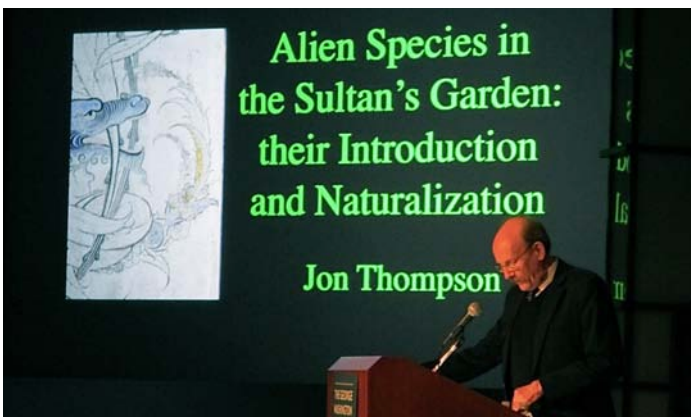
*Julia Bailey*



**1. Sumru Krody and Walter Denny, exhibition curators, at the construction site of the new Textile Museum.**



**3. McMullan Award co-recipient Dietlinde Erber at the show-and-tell, holding an Ottoman-inspired Epirus panel.**



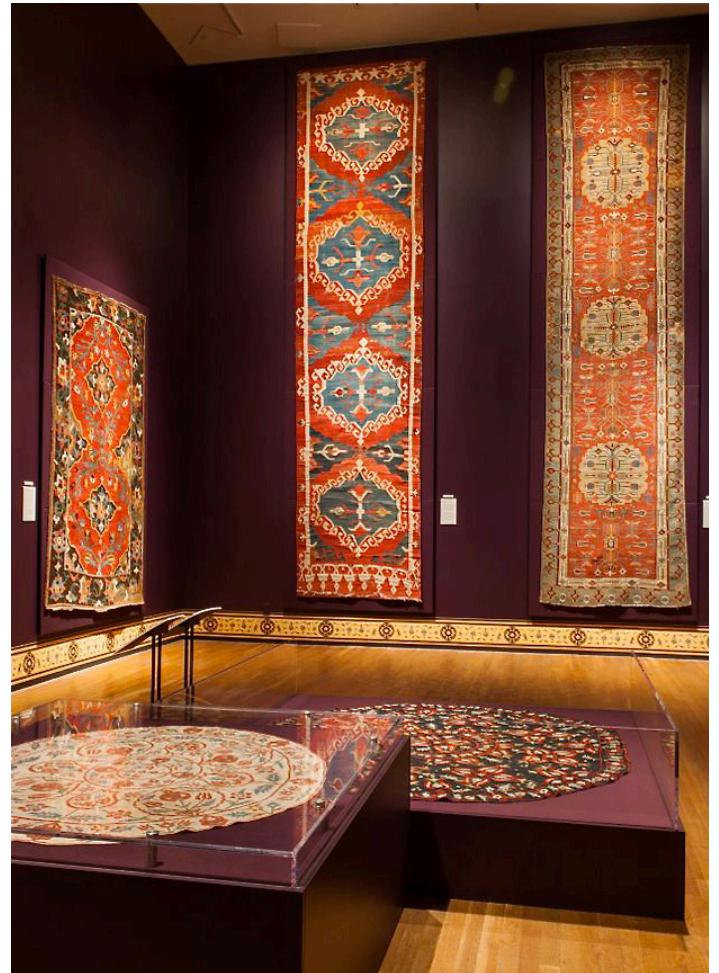
**2. Jon Thompson begins his symposium presentation.**



**4. Pre-show-and-tell: Michael Seidman, Michael Franes, Jeff Spurr, Cheri Hunter, and two Ottoman covers.**



## Highlights of “The Sultan’s Garden: The Blossoming of Ottoman Art”



**Contributors to this issue:** Julia Bailey (editor), Jim Adelson, Yon Bard, Ed Berkoff, Lloyd Kannenberg, Richard Larkin, Ann Nicholas, Kolya von Somogyi

**Distributor:** Jim Sampson

**NERS 2012–13 Steering Committee:** Jim Adelson, Robert Alimi, Julia Bailey (co-chair), Yon Bard, Louise Dohanian, Joel Greifinger, Mark Hopkins, Lloyd Kannenberg, Ann Nicholas (co-chair), Jim Sampson, Jeff Spurr

**If you haven't already done so, please renew your NERS membership now! You can pay online using a credit card: go to [www.ne-rugsociety.org/NERS-paypal.htm](http://www.ne-rugsociety.org/NERS-paypal.htm) and follow directions. Alternatively, you can mail your check, payable to NERS, to our Charlestown address (see the box opposite).**

**The New England Rug Society** is an informal, non-profit organization of people interested in enriching their knowledge and appreciation of antique oriental rugs and textiles. Our meetings are held seven or more times a year. Membership levels and annual dues are: Single \$45, Couple \$65, Supporting \$90, Patron \$120, Student \$25. Membership information and renewal forms are available on our website, [www.ne-rugsociety.org](http://www.ne-rugsociety.org); by writing to the New England Rug Society, P.O. Box 290393, Charlestown, MA 02129; or by contacting Jim Sampson at [jahome22@gmail.com](mailto:jahome22@gmail.com).



**The New England Rug Society**

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