



# View from the Fringe

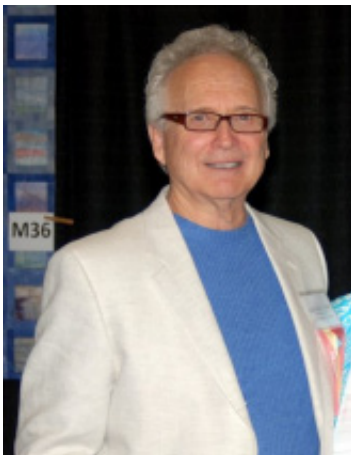
Newsletter of the New England Rug Society



Vol. 25 No. 1 September 2017

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

## September 22 Meeting Preview: Quilts at the MFA



### Gerald Roy and Jennifer Swope

The first NERS meeting of the 2017–18 season will offer a welcome return to the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. In the study rooms of the department of Textile and Fashion Arts, assistant curator Jennifer Swope and quilt collector extraordinaire Gerald Roy will display and discuss American quilts from the MFA's collection and Roy's private holdings.

Jenn Swope graduated from the Winterthur Program in American Culture at the University of Delaware, and was a curator at Historic New England before coming to the MFA in 2002. Most recently, she co-authored *Quilts and Color: The Pilgrim/Roy Collection*, the catalogue of an exhibition that opened at the MFA in 2014 and traveled to the Oklahoma City Museum of Art and the San Diego Art Museum.

Gerald Roy originally trained as a painter at the School of the Worcester Art Museum, at California College of the Arts, and at Mills College in Oakland, California, where he and his late partner, Paul Pilgrim, made their home until the late 1990s. Together, the two created a renowned American quilt collection and were leaders in the quilt revival of the last quarter of the twentieth century. In 2014, the MFA exhibited highlights of their collection of pieced quilts in the above-mentioned *Quilts and Color*. Now living in New Hampshire, Gerry remains an active collector and is a member of the MFA's Textile and Fashion Arts Visiting Committee.

### September 22 Meeting Details

**Time:** 7:00 p.m. (program begins—please be prompt!)

**Place:** Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

**Directions:** <http://www.mfa.org/visit/getting-here>

**Parking:** Valet parking is available at the Huntington Entrance (see **Entry**, below). Or park in the open surface lot or the garage, both off Museum Road.

**Entry:** Use the **Huntington Entrance** (on Huntington Avenue, the side of the Museum facing the T).

**Admission:** MFA members should present their membership cards just inside the Huntington Entrance. A Steering Committee member will distribute complimentary tickets to NERS attendees who are not MFA members.

**Meeting place:** **Textile and Fashion Arts Study Area**, second floor (floor plans and guidance from Huntington Entrance will be provided).

**Note:** There will be no reception. Members are encouraged to arrive early and enjoy dinner or drinks in one of the MFA restaurants.



**"Field of Diamonds" mosaic quilt (detail), American, ca. 1860, formerly Pilgrim/Roy Collection, MFA 2014.1862**

## October 20 Meeting Preview: Tom Farnham on Fredrik R. Martin



### Tom Farnham and the subject of his talk, Fredrik R. Martin

On October 20, at the Durant-Kenrick House, Newton, Tom Farnham will present "Fredrik Robert Martin, the Missing Man."

In 1910, at the time of the Munich exhibition *Masterpieces of Mohammedan Art*, Fredrik R. Martin was perhaps the most distinguished historian of Islamic art in the western world, a consequence in large part of the brilliance of his *A History of Oriental Carpets before 1800*, a work that is still regarded as one of the pillars in the field of carpet studies. But within a decade after the close of the exhibition, Martin had lost his luster, had become a "missing man." Given his idiosyncrasies, Martin's fall from favor was perhaps as predictable as his ascent to prominence had been unanticipated. How he achieved and then lost distinction will be the theme of the talk.

Tom Farnham spent his professional career teaching American history, initially at the University of North Carolina and later in the Connecticut State University system. His interest in carpets and textiles was ignited by his research into the life of Charles T. Yerkes, one of the so-called robber barons of the later nineteenth century, and an unlikely but significant carpet collector. The result was a paper about the Yerkes Collection delivered at ICOC in 1993 and subsequently published in *HALI*. Since then, Tom's particular interests have been the provenance, dealers, and collectors of classical carpets; he is co-author of *The Carpet and the Connoisseur: The James F. Ballard Collection of Oriental Rugs*, published in 2016. He last spoke to NERS in 2010.

### October 20 Meeting Details

**Time:** 7:00 p.m.

**Place:** Durant-Kenrick House, 286 Waverley Ave.  
Newton Centre, MA, 02458

**Directions:** From Boston and east, take Mass Pike to exit 17 and follow signs for Boston/Newton Centre, making a U-turn over the Pike. At Newton Centre sign, go RIGHT on Centre St. for 0.1 miles. Go LEFT on Franklin St. for 0.3 miles. Turn RIGHT on Waverley and go 0.2 miles. House is on LEFT.

**From Rt. 128 and west,** take Mass Pike to exit 17, turn RIGHT onto Centre Street and follow directions above.

**From Watertown Square:** Take Galen Street (Rt. 16) toward Newton Centre for 0.4 miles. Continue to Washington St. toward West Newton/Newton Centre, making a U-turn over the Pike. At Newton Centre sign, go RIGHT on Centre Street and follow directions above.

**Parking:** On Kenrick Street. Parking places at the end of the Durant-Kenrick House driveway may be used for dropping off people or supplies, but **NOT for parking during the meeting.**

**Food:** Provided by members whose names begin with **H** through **P**. Please arrive before 6:45 to set up, and plan to stay afterwards to clean up.



**Martin silk-pile carpet (detail), Mughal, 2nd half 17th c., now David Collection, Copenhagen, inv. no. 5/2010**



## April 21 Meeting: Yon Bard on His Collecting



### 1. Joel Greifinger introducing honoree and speaker Yon Bard

At our April 21 meeting, at First Parish, Lincoln, the New England Rug Society honored longtime member Yon Bard, whose presentation on his Turkmen collecting revisited selected moments—particularly early ones—in his quarter-century with NERS (1).

Yon began his talk by acknowledging that his audience had already seen many of his pieces, whether at previous meetings or on exhibition at the second Boston ACOR. He then defined his terms and methods: by “This piece is great,” he would mean “I like it very much”; “This piece is unique” would indicate “I know of no others.” He would use the designation “Ersari” rather than the more recent but lengthier “Middle Amu-Darya Valley.” He would provide no age estimates; in his opinion his collection included “nothing worth carbon dating.” Finally, he would show almost no Yomud *chuvals*, since he’d given us a mini-talk on them last year (see pp. 9–13 of the May 2016 *View*: <http://www.ne-rugsociety.org/newsletter/fringe-v23n4-05-2016.pdf>).

Yon’s next segment, titled “The Road to Turkomania,” described the twists and turns of his early collecting. He’d been a collector—of stamps, airplane magazines, and other esoterica that caught his fancy—since childhood. His parents’ apartment in Tel Aviv, where he grew up, had a number of rugs, although Yon didn’t know much about them. He showed a photograph of his mother and his wife, Dora, in front of the one rug his mother had kept when she came to America: a mercerized-cotton copy of a Ghiordes prayer rug (see p. 6 of the March 2011 *View*:

<http://www.ne-rugsociety.org/newsletter/rugl184a.pdf>).

When he and Dora got married, they decided that they needed rugs for the floor. Their first purchases (one was a Pakistani Baluch) were from hotel auctions. While walking along Newbury Street in Boston, Yon was smitten by, and eventually bought, a silk Qom rug. On a subsequent trip to the Southwest, he acquired a Navajo Yei rug.

Then Yon visited a Caucasian rug exhibition at Gregorian Oriental Rugs in Newton Lower Falls and discovered old rugs. Coincidentally, his employer, IBM, offered him a generous early-retirement package; Yon decided that he would spend the money to assemble a Caucasian rug collection. But after a classmate introduced him to Rosalie Rudnick and he saw the Rudnicks’ holdings, Yon concluded not only that he couldn’t afford great old Caucasian rugs, but also that he and Dora didn’t have the space for them.

A dealer named Tabak sold Yon his first Turkmen piece, a *chaval* that Erik Risman later described as having characteristics attributed to an Ersari subtribe, the Ali-Eli. Red had always been Yon’s favorite color, and a red-ground Yomud *asmalyk* pictured in Elena Tzareva’s *Rugs & Carpets from Central Asia* (pl. 74) cemented his affection for Turkmen. He began traveling to New York for Sotheby’s and Christie’s auctions but soon realized that the best material was available from private dealers. In 1993, he toured Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

Having shared his “road to Turkomania,” Yon then showed slides of some of his favorite pieces, highlighting





## 2. Yon's "whimsical" Tekke main carpet

their distinguishing aspects. He started with a Tekke main carpet, which Vermont collector Wells Klein, whose health was failing, had agreed to part with (2). The carpet had large main guls and *gurbaghe* secondary guls; the weaver had rendered the outer guls a little larger than their inner counterparts. But the most unusual feature was an evolving set of tertiary motifs between the secondary guls. These tertiary motifs were present in only part of the carpet, and their design varied in each row they inhabited (3). Yon attributed their variety to "the whim of the weaver." Similarly, in the border, there was what he termed a "playful" variety of motifs between the octagons.

Next he showed a pair of "animal-tree" Tekke *ensis*. The first example was typical (he pronounced it boring),



## 3. Varied motifs linking secondary guls

but the second had a greater color range and a less common design. A Yomud *asmalyk* with a distinctive rendition of the bat/bird motif in the main border followed. Then came a Yomud tent band fragment depicting a bridal procession that, extraordinarily, appeared to include a camel being born (4). More Yomuds followed: a *kap* (small bag) with the *ak su* design more often seen in *torbas*, and a *kepse-gul chuval* originally from the Straka collection (pl. 8 of *The Oriental Rug Collection of Jerome and Mary Jane Straka*).

Yon next showed a Tekke *chuval* with many atypical design features, including oversized main guls and the use of white cotton across the center (see <https://tinyurl.com/ybkzc459>, cat. 9). An Ersari *chuval*



## 4. Yomud tent-band fragment with bridal scene (detail)





5. “Super-*chemches*” on a Yomud *chuval*

exhibited a so-called internal *elem*, consisting of a deliberate design irregularity approximately a third of the way up from the bottom. (Shiv Sikri had first identified this feature on Baluch rugs; Yon noted that it was also common to Turkmen pieces of many types.) Three Tekke examples followed—a *mafrash*, a colorful *khalyk* in three pieces, and a *torba* with particularly appealing wool. Regarding *khalyks*, Yon said it was unclear how such articles were used; he had once heard that they were chest decorations for camels, but that didn’t make sense given that a camel doesn’t really have a chest.

Yon then introduced two thematic “mini collections.” The first was a quartet of “three-gul” *chuvals*. A Salor example was knotted completely in wool, with no silk. A Saryk piece was, according to Yon, “a little too elaborate to have much age.” Then came a Tekke. The last of the four—the only one with *chuval* rather than turret guls—was an Arabatchi.

The second “mini-collection” featured what Yon dubbed “super-*chemches*.” Several Turkmen tribes use the *chemche* motif for secondary guls; “super-*chemches*,” in Yon’s terminology, have extra diagonal elements. His examples were an Ersari (possibly Ali-Eli) *chuval*, a Yomud *chuval* (5), and a Tekke *torba*.

Turning from actual Turkmen weavings, Yon termed one of his related interests “cyber-restoration.” His first example was a Salor *chuval*, whose image Yon had constructed from two separate halves, one formerly in Jon Thompson’s collection (sold at Sotheby’s, New York, Dec. 16, 1993, cat. 60) and the other having belonged to Jack Cassin (illustrated in Jack Cassin and Peter Hoffmeister, *Tent Band, Tent Bag*, pl.



6. King Eider

5). Next was his digital reconstruction of a fragmentary Tekke *torba* belonging to Doug and Julia Bailey (see <https://tinyurl.com/ybkzc459>, cat. 15, for both the fragment and Yon’s reconstruction). Finally, he showed a digitally reassembled Tekke mat, of which he owns three separate pieces.

With the disclaimer, “I’m not a student, just a collector,” Yon devoted the subsequent part of his talk to pieces that he considered enigmatic. His first example (see <https://tinyurl.com/ybkzc459>, cat. 3) has no identified analogues and an unknown function. His second oddity was a carpet fragment with an otherwise unknown design of stepped diamonds.

His Turkmen collecting, Yon announced in conclusion, has reached its end game: over the last four or five years he has acquired only two pieces. He displayed his most recent acquisition, a tent-band fragment, said to be Saryk, with small figures of horses and riders.

So what does he collect instead? “Ducks,” he announced, proudly showing his close-up photo of a rare and spectacular King Eider (6), which birders had spotted among hundreds of Common Eiders swimming on the Cape Cod Canal. Seeing and photographing that bird, he said, was “at least as good as acquiring a Salor.”

Our great thanks go to Yon—not only for sharing with us his Turkmen weavings and his anecdotes and observations about collecting them, but also for his long service to NERS (including fifteen-plus years as editor of this newsletter). May he find many more rare ducks!

Jim Adelson



## May 13: Peter Pap Hosts NERS at His Dublin Gallery

On Saturday, June 13, thirty NERS members and their guests gathered at Peter Pap's gallery in Dublin, N. H. (1), where Peter had mounted *Artful Weavings*. The exhibition (which continues through September) features Afshar rugs and bags (2) from the collection of John Corwin, supplemented by tribal and village pieces from Bruce Baganz, William Price, Wendel Swan, and the Thomas Cook family. The array on view—some two hundred examples—includes rugs, bagfaces, horse trappings, a tent-pole cover, and a camel's headdress displayed on its own custom-made, papier-mâché camel's head (3).



1. Peter Pap's Dublin gallery, housed in a renovated farmhouse built ca. 1830

2. Afshar salt bag, Corwin Collection 3. Miscellaneous offerings, including a camel's head covering, probably Luri



After treating us to lunch, Peter gave a brief autobiographical account of his relationship with carpets. He introduced the architect Dan Scully, who explained how, twenty-five years ago, he and Peter had transformed what was originally a farmhouse (and more recently housed offices of *Yankee Magazine*) into a gallery space suited to rug display (4).

Peter then led an extensive tour of the pieces in the exhibition (5), focusing on their designs and using related examples to determine relative age (6). Our thanks to him and his staff for hosting us so informatively and enjoyably.

Julia Bailey



4. Peter introducing himself, the gallery, and the show, while architect Dan Scully (atop the steps) waits to speak  
5. The tour continuing in an adjacent room 6. Comparing Afshar "tulip" designs

# Chairman's Report for the 2016–17 Season

## Leadership

Following a period of transition, Steering Committee members have settled into their various roles over the course of the season. Julia Bailey continues to edit and produce our newsletter, which regularly draws praise and admiration from both NERS members and the broader rug community. Jim Adelson—now our officially titled Recording Secretary—skillfully reports on speaker presentations, while Jeff Spurr, Lloyd Kannenberg, Yon Bard, and Ann Nicholas provide additional newsletter contributions. Yon is our meeting photographer. Jim Sampson manages our finances, keeps the membership rolls, and distributes newsletters and other announcements. Jeff posts upcoming meetings on Rugrabbit. Richard Belkin brings the lights and screen, and Richard Larkin supplies the coffee. Ann remains our representative on the board of ACOR. As NERS Chairman, I manage the speaker program, arrange meeting venues, and operate the digital projection equipment. Jeff and I alternate introducing speakers at the meetings.

We thank Louise Dohanian, who has retired from the Steering Committee, for her years of service. We're happy to announce that Kia Shahin has joined the committee in Louise's stead. Finally, we're most grateful to Martha Brooks for her continuing administration of the NERS website.

## Meetings and speakers, 2016–17

Meetings during the past season once again saw a mix of scholarship, history, reminiscence, and collector enthusiasm. In September, at First Parish, Wendel Swan gave a broad and informative introduction to Swedish folk weaving, excellently illustrated with photos and examples from his collection. October's meeting, also in Lincoln, featured a wide-ranging, wide-screen presentation by Michael Franes on the oldest known rugs and textiles, most of them unpublished. In a moving event at Grogan and Company in November, Mitch Rudnick spoke in personal terms about his wife, Rosalie, and the assembling of their rug collection, starting in 1983. Back in Lincoln in February, Jeff Spurr focused his scholarly acumen on prayer rugs, expanding on his introduction to the 2002 NERS online exhibition *Prayer Rugs and Related Textiles*. In March, at the Durant-Kenrick House, Newton, DeWitt Mallary gave an overview of Jürg Rageth's recently published reassessment of Turkmen studies, *Turkmen Carpets: A New Perspective*. Mallary, who edited the book's English translation, focused on Rageth's

methodology, explaining his arguments by highlighting a few exemplary pieces. Our April meeting, in Lincoln—the latest installment of our popular Collector Spotlight series—continued the Turkmen theme; it featured the inimitable Yon Bard reflecting on his journey into the enveloping world of Turkomania. The May picnic, held once again at Gore Place, Waltham, concluded the season in bright sunshine, with the customary moth mart and a post-lunch show-and-tell.

## Finances and Membership

Our finances remain sound; we once again ended the season with a budget surplus. We added eighteen new members, bringing our total membership to 120. Joining (or rejoining) us are **Elizabeth Kessin Berman, Charles J. Edwards, Michael Franes, Jean Hoffman, Brian Hollenbeck and Selena Dittberner, Martha McEntee, Margie Hopkins, Mary Kay Mattiace, Işın Ösaksoy and Maple Stoleki, Paul Rak, John Tippet, Taylor Van der Mandele, Chuck and Theresa Wagner, and Robert Waldman.**

We continue to be one of the largest and most active American rug societies. True to our name, the great majority of our members hail from New England (with every state represented). But some of us are from farther away: New York (four), Texas (three), and even one in the United Kingdom.

Special acknowledgment is due to our Supporting and Patron members, whose “above and beyond” generosity has helped maintain our financial health. Supporting members for 2016–17 are **John Clift, Jean Hoffman, Barbara Kaslow, Ann Nicholas and Richard Blumenthal, Richard Larkin and Martha Brooks, Sharon and Len Soltzberg, Selma Newburgh, and Klaudia Shepard.** Patron members, who support NERS at the highest level, are **James Adelson and Debbie Sheetz, Julia and Doug Bailey, Richard Belkin, Louise and Buzz Dohanian, Jeremy and Hanne Grantham, Michael Grogan, Lloyd and Susan Kannenberg, Lena and Charles Nargozian, Mitch and Rosalie Rudnick, Beau Ryan, Julian Taibi, Susan and Michael Zellmann-Rohrer, and Alan Varteresian.** Thank you all.

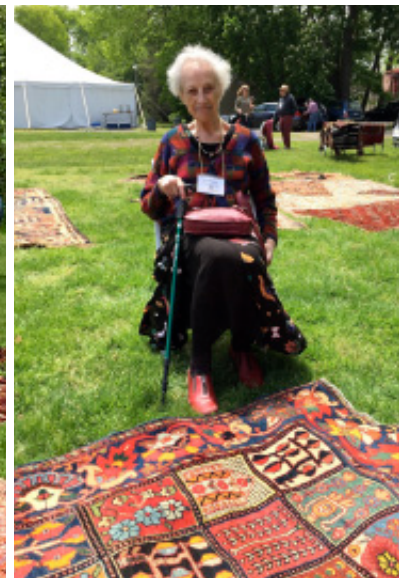
In conclusion, for the Steering Committee, I'd like to extend to every NERS member our warm thanks for your support during the past season. We hope that, during the year to come, you'll attend as many meetings as you can, consider volunteering to help organize activities, and continue to offer the encouragement, enthusiasm, and constructive ideas so necessary to keeping our society vital and rewarding.

Joel Greifinger



## May 21 Meeting: Annual Picnic

Fair skies prevailed for the 2017 NERS picnic. A well-supplied moth mart attracted so much interest **(top and center)** that members only reluctantly quit shopping to eat their lunches. A sunlit show-and-tell followed **(bottom, and pp. 10 and 11)**.

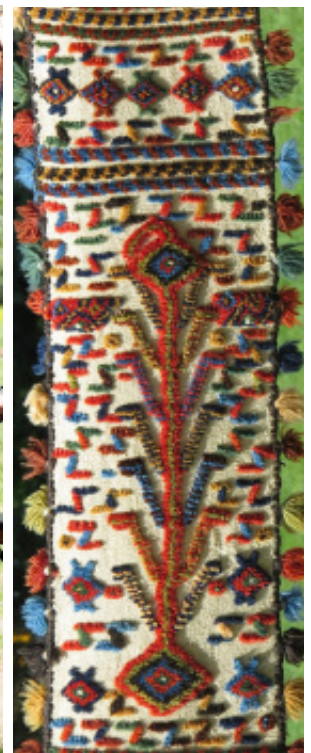




**Top row:** Arabachi *chuval* face; Baluch *khorrjin* face

**Middle row:** Ersari *jollar* (long panel); modern sumak rug, Shiraz (detail showing central medallion)

**Bottom row:** Ferahan *wagireh* (sampler); Makri rug; detail of a Qashqa'i flatweave-and-pile band (ex-Rudnick Collection)

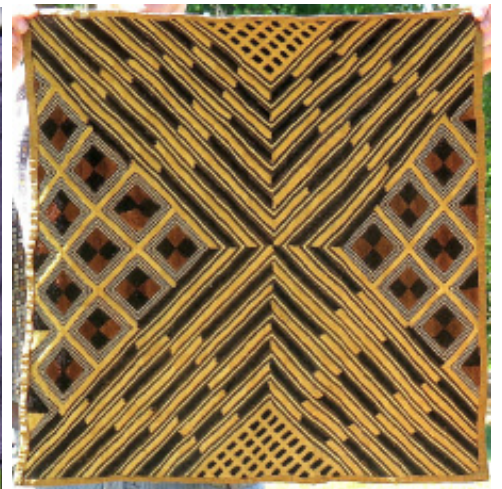




**Top row:** Kuba (eastern Caucasus) *kelleh* with Afshan design and Kufic border

**Middle row:** Front and back of an intact pair of Azeri (South Caucasus) kilim-and-brocaded *khorjin*

**Bottom row:** Swedish *jynne* (cushion cover), dated 1803, wool twist-stitch embroidery on linen; detail of a mid-20th-century Tuareg woman's blouse with silk embroidery on conjoined indigo-dyed cotton strips; Kuba kingdom (Republic of Congo) raffia pile-and-running-stitch square, probably Shoowa people, 1925–50





## From the Back of Beyond: An East Turkestan Fragment



**1. East Turkestan fragment with *besh-gul* (five-flower) field design**

If you are like me, one of the inducements for collecting oriental rugs is the lure of the exotic: the remote, mysterious East! Well, there is hardly anywhere more remote or mysterious than East Turkestan: the forbidding Takla Makan desert, the Silk Routes that skirt it north and south, the living and dead oasis towns that dot those routes. And yet the rugs attributed to three of the oasis towns—Kashgar, Yarkand, and Khotan—are much less collected and studied than those of other areas more accessible geographically and politically. As far as I know, there is only one book devoted exclusively to East Turkestan rugs, Hans Bidder's *Carpets from Eastern Turkestan* (Tübingen, 1964), and that was published a half century ago.

I suppose there are reasons for this relative neglect: reliable first-hand information about the production of these rugs is scarce to nonexistent; a great many of them are in ruinous condition; the attractive ones can be quite expensive; and in any case they do not fall easily into the “tribal” or “village” categories currently popular with many collectors, including yours truly. But still—how could you pass on a colorful remnant, however battered, should the opportunity present itself? (Explaining it to your long-suffering spouse is another matter altogether.)

And so here is about half an East Turkestan rug dating perhaps from the early to mid-nineteenth century **(1)**.





**2. East Turkestan silk carpet, sold for £36,000 at Sotheby's, London, on Oct. 12, 2005 (lot 122)**

It is almost certainly a budget version of silk rugs with the same "Persianate" *bash-gul*, or five-flower, pattern (**2, 3**). Its "lotus" main border is a doubled version of a border found in earlier East Turkestan "coffered-gul" rugs (**4**). The foundation is all undyed cotton, with depressed warps and three weft shoots between knot rows. The knots are asymmetric, open left.

The variety and saturation of the colors is unusual for similar East Turkestan rugs (compare, for instance, *HALI* 85 [Mar.–Apr. 1996]: 95, fig. 11; and *HALI* 135, Special Anniversary Edition supplement [July–Aug. 2004]: 68, fig. 22). The size of the original rug—6' 6" wide by maybe 12' long—



**3. East Turkestan silk-carpet detail illustrated (as Khotan) in Bidder, *Carpets from Eastern Turkestan*, pl. XVIII**



**4. Detail of Bidder's illustration (pl. XI) of a "coffered-gul" silk carpet with "lotus" main border**

is consistent with what Michael Franses refers to as a dais cover ("Fengruan Rutan: Silk Pile Covers from Western China," in *First Under Heaven: The Fourth HALI Annual* [London, 1997], pp. 84–107).

Bidder, Ulrich Schürmann (*Central Asian Rugs*, Frankfurt-am-Main, 1969), and others have attempted to assign East Turkestan rugs to particular towns; for example, Schürmann says that the design of this piece is characteristic of Kashgar weaving. Further, he assigns to Kashgar any rug with an all-cotton foundation, as well as all silk rugs. But George O'Bannon ("Rugs of East Turkestan: Khotan, Yarkand or Kashgar?," *Oriental Rug Review* 11, 6 [1986]: 16–23) finds no consistency



among the attributions of these scholars. Murray Eiland Jr. contends that nearly all East Turkestan rugs were woven in the Khotan oasis ("East Turkestan Rugs Revisited," *HALI* 85 [1996]: 99–103), while Franes seems comfortable with the traditional attributions. Confronted by these contending giants, I take refuge in the Scotch verdict: *not proven*.

Floral rugs like this fragment are not held in highest regard by some East Turkestan aficionados. For example, Werner Grote-Hasenbalg (*Der Orientteppich: Seine Geschichte und seine Kultur*, Berlin, 1922, vol. 1, p. 209) can barely suppress his gag reflex in commenting on these "Herat" rugs: "Besides the Kashgar carpets mentioned thus far, are found those in which the Persian influence strongly asserts itself. Thus fig. 126 [5] shows a rug that, with its flower-filled rhombs, is a misunderstood copy of the Persian Herati pattern. The little floral clusters that frequently fill the entire field in East Turkestan and occasionally Chinese rugs are based on a late Persian example. These Persian intrusions do not at all fit in with the character of [East Turkestan] carpets, and therefore [the carpets that feature them] are among the least attractive . . ." [my translation].

Certainly there is no doubt that the floral design is Persianate. Both Franes and Hans König ("Beziehungen zwischen den Teppichen Ostturkestans und Moghulindiens," in *Festschrift für Peter Wilhelm Meister* [Hamburg, 1975], pp. 32–40) make a cogent case that this design—even the five-flower motif itself—is a descendant of the Herati pattern, not "misunderstood" but rather refracted in stylized form through a Mughal prism. An example of this line of descent is a magnificent millefleur carpet, formerly in the McMullan Collection and now in the Metropolitan Museum (6). Its formalized floral array is an uncanny prefiguring of the treatment of the flowers in the East Turkestan example.

Grote-Hasenbalg's objection that the all-over floral elements, unlike other patterns found in East Turkestan rugs, are "intrusions" is undermined by his own descriptions of the baker's dozen of examples in his color plates. Every motif in those rugs he likens to or derives from a Buddhist, Chinese, or even Kyrgyz model; these are no more indigenous to the Tarim Basin than are motifs of Persian or Mughal origin. They all arrived via the Silk Route, the archetype of a commercial artery



**6. Mughal millefleur niche carpet, Kashmir, 2nd half 18th century. Metropolitan Museum, 1970.302.7**

that is also a conduit for the migration of peoples and ideas. We can therefore in good conscience enjoy the thrill of the exotic that this fragment provides.

#### Technical Details

*Dimensions:* about 6' 6" x 6' 6" (original length maybe 12').

*Foundation:* undyed cotton warp, Z6S (machine spun?), undyed cotton weft, Z4S (hand spun?), moderately depressed warps, 3 weft shoots between knot rows.

*Pile:* wool, loose Z2S. Knots asymmetric, open left. Knot density 6 vertical/inch x 7.5 horizontal/inch = 45 knots/sq. inch = 700 knots/sq. decimeter.

*Colors:* wine red, pink, lemon yellow, saffron yellow, green (two shades), blue-green, light blue (two shades), dark blue, brown (11 in all).

*Selvages:* mostly missing; where present, plain interlacing over 3 warps (outer) and 2 (inner).

*Ends:* missing.

Lloyd Kannenberg



## Remembering John Collins



**John with former NERS member Ed Berkhoff at the 2014 San Francisco ARTS show**

As NERS members are aware by now, John Collins, Jr., passed away on July 26, at the age of 68. John was an internationally known carpet expert and dealer specializing in antique Persian weavings. He had a particular fondness for Bijar carpets and South Persian rugs and trappings, about which he wrote and lectured extensively.

His focus session on Bijars at the first ACOR, in 1992, was truly memorable just for the number of huge carpets—weighing hundreds of pounds—that he pulled out to show as examples. Over the years, he had galleries in Newburyport, Boston, and Watertown. A very supportive member of NERS, he gave many talks and graciously opened his various galleries for our meetings.

Beginning in 1987, John put together a series of landmark exhibitions and sales of South Persian weavings. He made it a point to offer material affordable at all collecting levels, as a way to develop and educate new collectors. He was always extremely generous with his time and knowledge. It was at his 1990 exhibition, *Masterworks I*, that Ann and I bought our first bagface. From that time on, John helped develop our eye and shape our collection; without his mentoring that collection would not be what it is today.

Along the way, we became good friends. Hanging out at his gallery with the other characters who wandered in, listening to opera or the blues, drinking good wine, talking about rugs, politics, art, and family, and gazing on the beauty exhibited on the walls turned into a much-anticipated weekend event.



**... and at a Collins Gallery exhibition in 2004, with employee and former NERS member Anne Rug**

John lived life large, enjoying the finer things—oysters, champagne, and single-malt Scotch. An avid Boston Red Sox fan, he saw three world championships. And, with the 2017 publication of his *noir* crime novel, *The Fall of Declan Curtis*, he accomplished his dream of becoming an author. As he would say, not bad for an Irish kid from Brooklyn.

He will be sorely missed.

*Rich Blumenthal*



**... and with Rich, back in 1994, at John's *Mostly Afshar***



## Looking Ahead: Skinner Fine Oriental Rugs & Carpets, October 23

### Lawrence Kearney reports:

Skinner's next rug sale, on Monday, October 23 (with previews on the preceding Saturday and Sunday), will feature a large collection of early and beautiful textiles: Ottoman velvets **(1)**, Chinese silks (including several Ming pieces), and excellent Central Asian embroideries **(2)**. The sale will also include many nineteenth-century Caucasian rugs in good condition **(3)**, as well as Persian workshop rugs and a broad array of antique furnishing carpets.



**1. Silk velvet and metal-thread *yastik*, probably Bursa, early 17th century**



**2. Classic Nurata *suzani* showing Mughal influence, Uzbekistan, early 19th century**



**3. Kazak, 19th century, last sold (for \$4750) by Skinner on Nov. 20, 1985 (lot 21)**

## Rug, Textile, and Related Events

### Auctions

Sept. 12, Stuttgart, Nagel, Rugs & Carpets, Textiles & Islamic Arts  
 Sept. 12, Vienna, Dorotheum, Oriental Carpets, Textiles, and Tapestries  
 Sept. 26, Boston, Grogan & Company, Fine and Decorative Asian Works of Art (includes no rugs)  
 Oct. 14, Vienna, Austria Auction Company, Antique Oriental Rugs VIII  
 Oct. 23, Boston, Skinner, Fine Oriental Rugs & Carpets **(see above)**  
 Oct. 25, London, Sotheby's, Arts of the Islamic World  
 Oct. 26, London, Christie's, Arts of the Islamic and Indian Worlds, including Oriental Carpets  
 Nov. 1, London, Sotheby's, Rugs & Carpets including Property from the Alexander Collection

### Exhibitions, Fairs, and Conferences

Long-term installation, Dallas, Dallas Museum of Art, Works from the Keir Collection of Islamic Art  
 Sept. 23–Jan. 21, 2018, Toronto, Aga Khan Museum, Highlights from the Bruschetti Collection  
 Oct. 1–5, Istanbul, various locations, Istanbul Carpet Week  
 Oct. 3–8, London, Battersea Park, The Decorative Arts & Textiles Fair  
 Oct. 17–20, Baku, multiple venues, 5th International Symposium on Azerbaijani Carpets  
 Oct. 27–29, San Francisco, 2015 Greenwich St., ARTS (Antique Rug & Textile Show)

## Future NERS Meeting

November 17: Nick Wright and Thom Mond, "Tibetan Rugs: New Scholarship and a Broader Picture"  
 Durant-Kenrick House, Newton

## Photo Credits

**p. 1:** Gerald Roy, Jenn Swope, MFA **p. 2:** Tom Farnham, David Collection **pp. 3–5:** Jim Sampson (1), Julia Bailey (2), Yon Bard (3–7)  
**pp. 6–7:** Jim Sampson (1, 3–5), Julia Bailey (2, 6) **p. 9:** Julia Bailey (top and center rows), Jim Sampson (bottom row) **p. 10:** Yon Bard (top row, middle row left), Doug Bailey (middle row right, bottom row left and center), Yon Bard (bottom row right) **p. 11:** Doug Bailey (top row), Yon Bard (middle and bottom rows) **pp. 12–14:** Lloyd Kannenberg (1, 3, 4, 5), Sotheby's (2), Metropolitan Museum (6)  
**p. 15:** Rich Blumenthal **p. 16:** Skinner **p. 17:** row 1: Jim Sampson (left), Julia Bailey (right); row 2: Julia Bailey (right), Michael Franses (center, left); row 3: Julia Bailey; row 4: Jeff Spurr (far left, center, far right), Julia Bailey (photos of Jeff); row 5: Doug Bailey (right, left), Jürg Rageth (center); row 6: Jim Sampson (left), Yon Bard (center), Julia Bailey (right)



(see p. 11, **Meetings and speakers, 2016–17**, for identification)

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**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 6125, Holliston, MA 01746; or by contacting Jim Sampson at [jahome22@gmail.com](mailto:jahome22@gmail.com).



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