

Press Release

Legends of Carpets

Five new carpet designs tell of the colors and landscapes of a fascinating continent. Welcome to Africa.

Inspired by the landscapes and colors of Africa, and hand-knotted in certified Nepalese workshops, the collection “Legends of Carpets” translates abstract painting into timeless, woven works of art. Wool from the Tibetan highlands, fine Chinese silk and nettle yarn all possess exceptional qualities which consequently characterize the products. In Nepal, our certified partner workshops have often been in the hands of the same family for generations. There, carpets are hand-crafted using traditional Tibetan knotting methods under sustainable and socially responsible conditions. Due to the heterogeneous nature of fibers and threads, to their diverse colors and hues, and to the personal interpretation of craftsmen, every rug ends up being a unique masterpiece. These objects are living proof that true values are wisely handed down from generation to generation.

With Jioni, Tembea, Ajabu, Kimya and Akiki, five new carpets expand the successful product family of carpets and carpet pillows. They tell stories: of the procession of a caravan through the desert and dawn in the night sky. Of the beauty of the precious stone agate and the silence of the dark night. And of natural wonders, such as the pink glowing salt lake Retba in Senegal.

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THE DESIGN STORY

Inspiration Africa: Going back to the origins

In the beginning there was the inspiration. While family entrepreneur and Walter K. CEO Markus Benz has visited a lot of fascinating places around the world, you will always see him returning to his place of longing, Africa, with a camera by his side. And it was his travels to various African countries that inspired our carpets. In the archaic beauty of this many-faceted continent, Markus Benz found the inspiration to expand the collection with carpets.

Creative together. So, Markus Benz once again set out for Africa with his friend Helmut Scheufele, an artist and textile designer, to gather more specific ideas. Their journey to Marrakesh marked the start of the “Legends of Carpets” by Walter K. Vivid impressions of the people, landscapes and light that retracts in the souks of the medina, began to come together. After another journey to Namibia and Botswana, the leitmotif of the carpet collection was clear: the landscapes and colors of Africa.

Based on the impressions and description of their travels, Helmut Scheufele started work in his studio: painting. Painting abstract pictures inspired by their common impressions. Later these pictures were translated into carpet designs. Structures intensified, yarns were selected, colors developed. Carpet for carpet, detail for detail.

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THE COLLECTION

Our Legends of Carpets collection consists of three lines: Patterned, Plain and Silk.

Landscapes and snapshots from abstract paintings were translated into timeless, knotted works of art for the colorful Patterned carpets. The Plain carpets each shine in an exquisite shade, inspired by a specific landscape and its special light mood – in a way you will only find in Africa. The Silk carpets made of 100 % pure Chinese silk are a tribute to the beauty of Africa's natural treasures.

Every carpet is given a name in Swahili, a language that connects many countries in Africa. Furthermore, each carpet encapsulates a proverb that has been passed down from generation to generation.

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NEW MODELS



Jioni.

Design: Helmut Scheufele.

“Where there’s love, night never comes.”

African proverb

The colors of the sky. Our new carpet Jioni – “twilight” in Swahili – translates the beginning of the night into modern carpet art.

Details:

- Patterned
- low pile
- 35 % wool
- 45 % silk
- 20 % nettle

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Tembea.

Design: Helmut Scheufele.

“Only by moving forward you will reach the end of the journey.”

Proverb by the Ovambo

Desert wanderer: Tembea – to “walk” or “wander” in Swahili – shows the procession of a caravan through the seemingly endless expanse of African salt deserts.

Details:

- Patterned
- low pile
- 35 % wool
- 45 % silk
- 20 % nettle

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Ajabu.

Design: Helmut Scheufele.

“No witness is better than your own eyes.”

African proverb

The Retba salt lake in Senegal is the inspiration behind Ajabu – “miracle” in Swahili. The carpet magically glows pink – like the unique spectacle of nature.

Details:

- Plain
- low pile
- 33 % wool
- 34 % silk
- 33 % nettle

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Kimya.

Design: Helmut Scheufele.

“When a tree falls, you hear it. When a forest grows, everything is quiet.”
African proverb

Seems to go on forever, as soothing as the night sky in the desert. The deep dark blue of our new carpet Kimya – Swahili for “silence” – relaxes the eye.

Details:

- Plain
- low pile
- 33 % wool
- 34 % silk
- 33 % nettle

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Akiki.

Design: Helmut Scheufele.

Agate – stone of inner balance and strength

The precious stone agate represents inner balance and stability. As the deep blue silk carpet Akiki – Swahili for “agate” – it absorbs and reflects light in a unique way.

Details:

- Silk
- 100 % silk

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OUR PURE SILK CARPETS



A tribute to the beauty of Africa's natural treasures. Minerals, crystals and precious stones have evolved in the depths of the Earth over millions of years. These natural works of art reflect and absorb light in a unique way. These fascinating precious objects are the inspiration behind our silk carpets. Only one of the most valuable materials on Earth could be used to express the beauty of the precious stones shaped by the elemental force of the Earth: silk. With its wonderful shimmer and soft-to-the-touch feel, the fine fabric fiber creates carpet pictures of incomparable harmony and elegance.

Touch and feel. Walter K. silk carpets are brought to life by the changing incidence of light. The brilliance of the yarn effortlessly floats above the floor. Running your hand over the pile intensifies the interplay of light and shade. The shining yarn reflects and breaks the beam of light, making these hand-knotted pieces shimmer in a unique way when observed from different angles. The depth and magic of the material come alive.

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BADAWI PILLOWS



In oriental cultures from time immemorial, people have been seated close to the floor for a good reason: pillows are soft, adjust to the body's shape and create a unique feel-good atmosphere. Nomadic peoples tend to use carpets and pillows not only to sit on but also as items to rest their weary heads on.

The Badawi Pillows from Walter K. exude this air of traditional seating culture. Created with Walter K. hand-knotted carpets, they shape places turning them into individual settings for utmost individuality. Ideal to snuggle in, read or simply relax. Exquisite furnishings that suit your personal lifestyle perfectly. A unique and unexpected way of expressing yourself.

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100 % NATURAL MATERIALS

Wool:

The basic material used in our carpets is wool from the Tibetan highlands – one of the best quality and most sturdy wools in the world. Brought down to the valley by the shepherds from the highland pastures with yaks, the sheep's wool is washed in rivers, then carded and spun by hand. The wool fibers appear long and elastic. The high fat content of the fibers protects the carpets from dirt, in an entirely natural way.

Silk:

Exquisite Chinese silk in brilliant colors bestows a special shimmer and charming light reflections upon our carpets. Taken from the cocoons of the silkworm moth, natural silk is prepared and spun in silk-weaving mills before being hand-knotted into carpets. At random, a splash of violet shows up here, an orange-colored thread there. Extremely fine nuances of color are created, resulting in vibrant surfaces and patterns. Silk carpets are made exclusively from these selected fibers providing a characteristic play of light and shade.

Nettle:

As original as cotton and as shiny as silk best describe the yarn spun from nettles. An exceptional natural product that unites naturalness and individuality in equal measure. To produce this fine yarn, the stems are broken down into their individual fibers and the fibers are then handspun. Nettle fibers give the carpets strength and sturdiness.

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THE MANUFACTURING

Sustainable and socially responsible. Walter K. carpets are created by artisans who work in fair conditions where manufacturing methods are environment-friendly. Following centuries-old traditions, the carpets are hand-dyed and hand-knotted in workshops in the Himalayas. The craftsmen prepare the wool, silk and yarn, dye the materials with 100 % natural eco-friendly colors and then process them by hand over a period of several months. During this process, the wool is combed until all the fibers are parallel to each other – a process known as carding.

Our partner workshops in Nepal follow the code of the STEP label: no child labor, compliance with hygienic standards and occupational health and safety measures. For fair and good working and living conditions and environmentally sustainable production methods. Furthermore, STEP promotes the craft of carpet knotting as part of the Nepalese identity.

Every Walter K. carpet is unique due to the natural materials used, individual dyeing and the personal interpretation of each craftsman. The certificate accompanying every carpet stands for quality and authenticity, lasting values that are handed down from generation to generation.

Each carpet is spun out of the loom knot by knot, row by row, and centimeter by centimeter. Four to five craftsmen sit next to each other on a bench to produce 2.5-meter pieces. It takes months of synchronized teamwork and thus, depending on the dimensions, up to 1.5 to 2 years when adding the labor of all weavers who worked on a single carpet.

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