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**Autor:** [s.n.]  
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Ever since Marco Polo, rugs have been travelling the old caravan routes from East to West. A much more recent phenomenon, however, are rugs heading the other way – from West to East. It took two Swiss to break the established pattern: Johannes Holenstein, a well-known architect cum interior designer and Michael Frei of Joy Atelier Ltd., a skilled carpet manufacturer. Together they produce custom-made hand-tufted carpets that have literally been judged as:

## FIT FOR A KING



The dining room with a  $6,5 \times 4,5$  m carpet serving as dining table. A scalloped edge marks each place setting. The pattern, a modern interpretation of Islamic ornamentation, is repeated in chrome and tinted glass on the walls. Black inlays in the white marble floor outline the carpet's silhouette.

When Johannes Holenstein first started to design palatial residences for high-placed personalities in the Middle East, the question was how to adapt modern architecture to suit the traditional requirements of the Oriental way of life. Through his research of living customs he became aware of the overriding importance of interior design in Arabian buildings. And within this interior framework, of the particular function allocated to carpeting. Henceforth, the talented Swiss not only designed buildings but the entire interior decoration as well.





The children's day room: 9 × 12 m wall-to-wall carpeting with a traditional Mid-Eastern design, repeated in Chinese lacquered wood on walls and ceiling.



The gentlemen's conversation room in shades of grey and white. Wall-to-wall carpeting 6 x 9 m with rosette 4 m Ø, marking the sitting area. Central motive mirrored in Chinese lacquered wood on ceiling. Wallcovering "Skyline" by Jack Lenor Larsen, caught in a silhouetted cloud of lacquer-wood.

## Contemporary Islamic ornaments

For a recently completed private residence in the Middle East, Holenstein's concept – at the specific request of the client – had to incorporate elements of Oriental culture. With this in mind, the architect turned designer created a series of extraordinary settings for the 5000 m<sup>2</sup> living space. His interior design is a well-

balanced synthesis of modern Western design and Eastern neoclassicism, a successful blending of Oriental woods and marble with contemporary materials and home textiles. His rug patterns are abstractions of Islamic ornaments, often repeated in precious woods on walls and ceilings. They pick up the colour schemes of the rooms and outline functional areas.



## Hand-tufted works of art

Joy Atelier Ltd., Hegnau, a specialist in the manufacture of custom-made hand-tufted carpets and wall-coverings, undertook the execution of Johannes Holenstein's rug designs. For this comparatively new carpet factory, even very large rugs – the largest for this order measured  $9 \times 12$  m – and pile heights of 50 mm present no problems. With great skill and precision they reproduce stitch by stitch in pure new wool the most intricate patterns and shapes, perfectly design- and colour-conform. Their creations not only adorn palaces in the Orient, Joy carpets are equally "at home" in public buildings, corporate settings and private houses in Europe, the United States and Canada.

Beatrice Feisst



White area rugs with intricately curved Islamic motives in greys and blues. Patterns are measured to section off various seating arrangements in the  $15 \times 7,5$  m reception room.

Design: Johannes Holenstein, Zurich  
Carpets: Joy Atelier Ltd., Hegnau  
Curtains: Zumsteg Ltd., Zurich