

# Kerman rug

a song of time and beauty





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# ***Dedication***

## ***To My Friend Dr. Mark R. Jones***

*You were the man that helped me to realize my dreams. Without you, none of this would be possible. Your interest and inquiring mind about oriental rugs inspired this project. You are the most imaginative and perceptive person I have ever met. Very few people have these gifts. You have faithfully believed in my vision and understood the importance of this project.*

*You came in as a curious investor, and have become my most loyal and trusting friend. You were the Godsend that made this all possible.*

## ***To My Father Mozafar Khazai***

*I dedicate this work to my late father – the man who initially cultivated the passion I have for thinking ambitiously and having big dreams. Acting as a living example, he nurtured the virtues of discipline and hard work within me, which have led to my life's achievements and overall success. His unending generosity, courage, friendship, networking, and ability to live life large will always leave me in awe.*

## Karvar & Karbakhsh

Ahmad Karvar's rug workshop was ablaze and the mobs aimed for his house. It was August 1953, Kerman, Iran. A constitutional crisis was occurring in the country and the Iranian major cities were experiencing civil unrest.

Like a typical Persian city-workshop, Karvar's was attached to the owner's House yard. The mobs almost reached the house when police arrived and rescued the Karvar family. For the workshop, it was too late. Failed to enter through the skylight dome, they had poured oil into the workshop and kindled. Less than 3 decades before that August day, Karvar had removed the workshop's roof to establish a couple of looms tall enough for two big-sized carpets in pair commissioned by the court. The reigning family had just changed, and Reza Shah Pahlavi, the new dynast, demanded a series of official buildings.

The Marmar Palace was built to house receptions and official functions. The building is covered by a huge dome that is a replica of the Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque's dome in Isfahan. 'Marmar', is Persian for 'marble' referring to the white marble reliefs on the exterior. The interior has adornments of mirrors and carved woods as well as exquisite carpets and tapestries.

Great artists were called. Decorations were made by Hossein Lorzadeh, the tiles were produced by maestro Yazdi and paintings by maestro Behzad. The best Iranian carpet producers were called, from Tabriz and Mashhad to Kashan and Isfahan, to display the diversity of Persian styles. Karvar was there to represent Kerman. Alongside his partner and brother-in-law Ahmad Karbakhsh, Karvar visited the Marmar Palace. The twins were to carpet one of the Marmar Palace' halls and it was the prime of Ahmad Karvar.

He was a man of precision and creativity. Once he cut an almost finished rug out of the loom after he found some jufti knots (a knot tied over three or



more warps instead of the usual two warps) which are considered a cheat in high quality production. His descendants still keep the unfinished peace as a token of honesty in their family business.

Karvar didn't let a design be woven more than once, keeping the loom-drawings safe in the workshop. These, too, burnt in the flames of ignorance. The dyeing house and wool warehouse were also completely burnt. The former had used to be the workshop's magic house. The magician was a certain Mashallah Rangraz, the master dyer, who was able to bring every color to the tone and value Karvar needed. His surname, which means 'dyer' in Persian, suggests he had inherited the craft from his father.

Rangraz provided Karvar's creativity with an extensive palette ideal for Hezar-Gol designs in which he was interested the most. Hezar-Gol or millefleurs designs composed of many tiny flowers and blossoms. Karvar's innovation was using black for ground or outlines in Hezar-Gol designs, encouraging other Kermani producers to do so. Using black was not approved in Persian city-style schools. With a moderate use of it, Karvar succeeded to make blossoms shimmer and glitter, while avoiding the dullness too much black brings.

A good number of finely-woven pieces burnt in that August day and Karvar and Karbakhsh's career as rug producers reached to a sudden end, though they had already left their footprints on Kerman designs. Inspired by them, the next generation of Kermani Producers, such as Arjmandi and Dilmaghani, earned the Kerman school a lasting reputation.







*Antique Persian Kerman, Country of Origin: Persia, Circa Date: Late nineteenth century – A scalloped ogival medallion surrounded by a dense tangle of undulating vines and palmettes replete with perching birds unfolds across the soft green field of this sumptuous antique Kerman. The floral detail is rendered mostly in golden*





*tones with sparing use of red for accents. The same approach recurs in the borders whose grounds alternate between green and gold. Tabrizes are renowned for their fidelity to classical Persian carpet design, but it is uncommon for them actually to equal such distinguished forerunners as this glorious example does.*



The city and province of Kerman have been built on a desert surrounded by numerous mountains. Even though Lout desert is considered world's hottest spot with a recorded temperature of 70.7 degrees Celsius, this mountainous city has relatively cool summers and cold winters due to high elevation from sea. Among cities of Iran, Kerman has the third highest sea level elevation.

## Foreword



There are several etymological hypotheses regarding the meaning of "Kerman", one of which translates "ker" to mountain and Kerman to the land filled with mountains. Other hypotheses consider ker to be kār -work or war- and regard Kerman as the place for endeavor or battle respectively.



*Rayen Castle (Arg-e Rayen in Persian) is an ancient adobe castle in Kerman province, Iran.*



Tales, myths and mythical chronicles have also attempted to shed light on the meaning of this age-old name. It is said that Kaykhosrow bestowed Kerman on Rostam, however another myth suggests that Rostam's pedigree were themselves creators of the city and it is named after one of his ancestors. The myth claims that person to be Narimān's father whose name was Karimān.

*Bam Castle. Kerman province, Iran.*





It is written in Ardeshir Babakan's "Karname" (warlog) that Haftvād's daughter, found a worm (kerm in Persian) while spinning cotton and with it, she could spin double the amount. Thanks to the worm's charm, Haftvād won one battle after another, thus they fed it and it grew, so much that it would fit in a chest, at first. After it grew even more, they carved a pit in the mountain and nested it there.







As time passed by for Haftvād  
He named Kerman to the tune of that worm  
That girl, caretaker of the worm  
Whose father was a military chief of the worm  
(Versified translation of Ardeshir Babakan's  
warlog in Ferdowsi's Shahname)  
Haftvād's victories continue until the worm's  
charm fades and Ardeshir Babakan beats him  
and kills the worm.

The author of the war-log must have certainly  
been in the dark that hundred years prior to the  
Sassanid king, the Achaemenian Darius had  
pointed to Kerman in Bistoon inscription; he  
speaks of a type of wood brought from Kerman  
to build the king's palace.

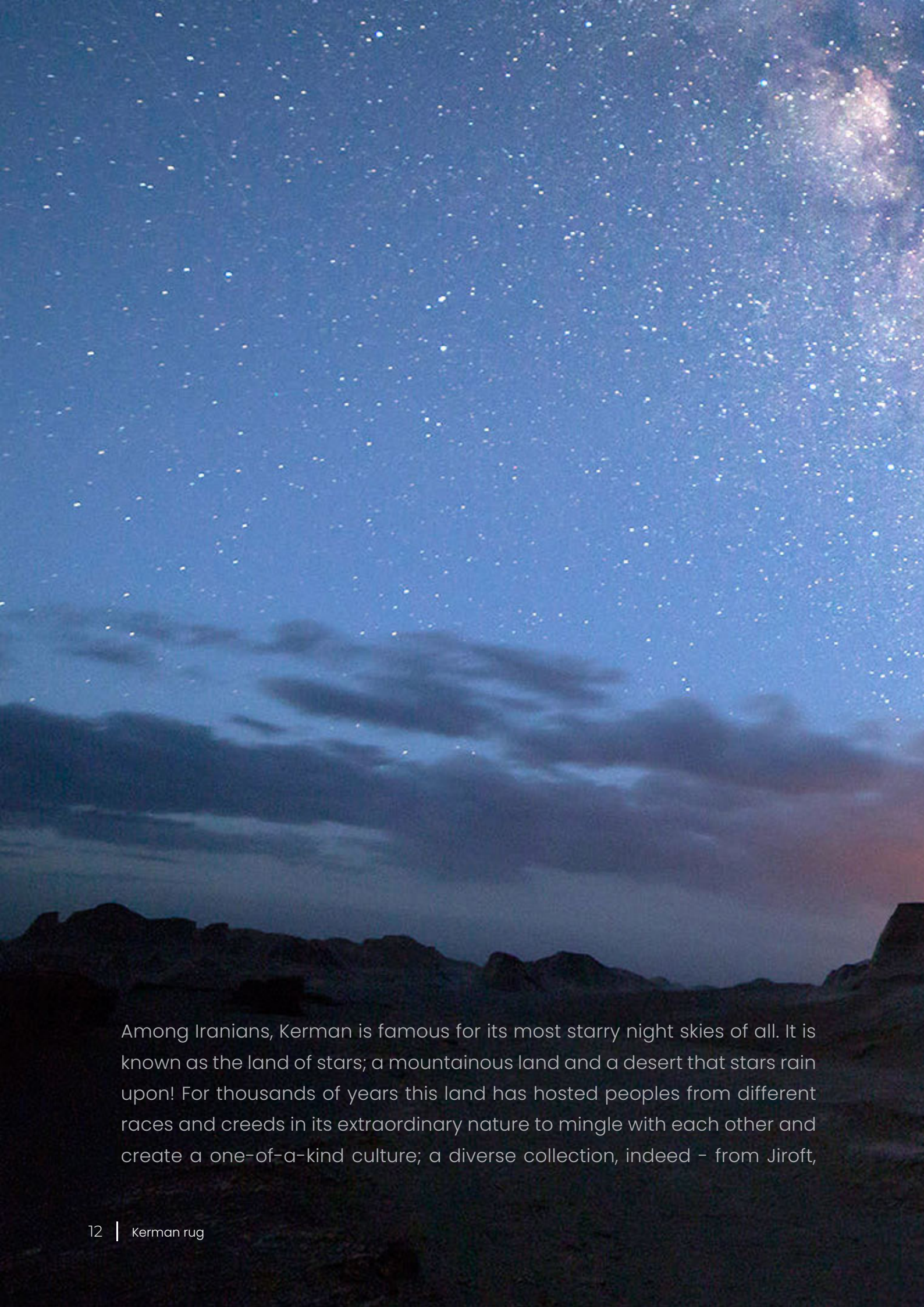
Land of Kerman during the time was recorded  
to be Karmania. In Aramaic, Greek and Persian  
texts the land has also been called archaic  
names like Gavāshir, Germania and Boutia.





A Persian miniature from a 15th-century manuscript of the shahnameh depicting Ardashir Killing Haftvād's worm





Among Iranians, Kerman is famous for its most starry night skies of all. It is known as the land of stars; a mountainous land and a desert that stars rain upon! For thousands of years this land has hosted peoples from different races and creeds in its extraordinary nature to mingle with each other and create a one-of-a-kind culture; a diverse collection, indeed - from Jiroft,





the most ancient human civilization known to man, to ancient Karmania which has been one of the most important satraps (provincial governing systems) of Achaemenid empire; from fascinating mosques muslims built, to fire-temples and synagogues zoroastrians and jews have held dear till today, from Turkic tribes who have migrated in its mountain and meadows to its Persian speakers in cities and villages who have told stories and sung lyrics under star showers of Kerman.





It is not exaggerated to say that Kerman is Iran's museum of history. We want to add to this common claim that Kerman rug is one of the most invaluable assets of this museum. Focusing on Kerman rug, one can spot the reflection of that sky and earth, and to search for that ancient history and mixed culture between warps and wefts, is a pathway filled with pleasure and astonishment.

It is known that woven materials from textile to rugs are destined to be less durable, thus if we want to enter the rug gallery of this grand museum, first we must follow signs in pottery designs, illustrations in books and also written texts. However, rug and other woven materials are luckily created by peoples who are unintentionally continuing the cultural life of their predecessors.

*"The Feast of Sada", Folio 22v from the Shahnama (Book of Kings) of Shah Tahmasp. ca. 1525* —→





کر ناما و گردن چشما و کرد  
جماینه بر نیکی از و با و

بدان از روی جبار و فتنه یگان وزیران و زید و زین و زین و زین چو بنجاب و قاسم زربان جیشید و کس و و خور و سپهر بکشت از برش بخت سالی اهل	زنجیه کور و کوزن یان می خوش تن تاج را پرورید چهارم همورست کشت و کرم رفت و جز نام نیکی نبرد پراموشن مغرور و پرازد اول	جد اکا زکا و خوش کوغند ز پونیدکان هر چه پوشش کوغند برین کوز و از چرم پونیدکان سے پنج بر و اندران و کاکا چو پیش آمد شرف و کار سیه	بورز آوزید انچه به سوغند بکشت و زین و زین و زین و زین بوشید بالایی کوغند کان بافون و اندیش و بی شمار از و در و بی اندخت می
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Since 5000 B.C. until the mongol invasion, Jiroft has been the capital and the most important city of the land of Kerman. It is the most age-old civilization known in the ancient world – dating back to 7000 years ago! We are talking of an era when two central deserts of the Persian plateau were not deserts but lakes, full of water and among the mountains surrounding these lakes, there were rich meadows. The most fertile meadow of them all was Jiroft, which had heavenly climate and a city like heaven was built upon it; clean and rich. This city was also the heart of two trading vessels in the ancient world; one was a main road that led to India and the other to Persian sea that continued to Mesopotamia.



These images show stone artifacts found in Jiroft excavations (near Kerman) which date back to 5000 B.C. and an artifact hand-woven in mid 20<sup>th</sup> century. Traces of the stone cutter can easily be recognized in the work of his carpet-weaver fellow citizen. What similarities can you find in the two images?



*Stone carvings, Jiroft, 5000 B.C*





*Gabbeh, Jiroft, 20<sup>th</sup> century*



Kerman has an old history in rug-weaving. Experts believe that it dates back to the Safavid period and before it. Abolfazl Alami (1593-1505, historian of Akbar Shah Gourkani period) wrote in "Akbarname": "Rugs are exported to India from Khouzestan, Kerman, Joshaqan and Sabzevar". Eskandarbeig Torkaman, secretary to the great Shah Abbas and author of "the Jahan Ara history of Shah Abbas" points to the export of Kerman rugs to India as well. Whereas, Akbar Shah had ordered to revive rug-weaving in India but Indian noblesse and the king himself preferred Persian rug for its higher quality.



*Shah Abbas the Great*





*The gifts Shah Abbas sent to the Serenissima court*









After the Safavid dynasty, rug-weaving stagnated but more or less continued. From the rise of Zandiye dynasty to the Qajars was a short period of peace and calm, when Lotf Ali Khan made Kerman the capital of his kingdom. When Agha Mohammad Khan appeared, Kerman sank into dark times. Most of the city was destroyed during its occupation by the Qajars. Thousands were killed or blinded, and many women and children were enslaved. Blood carpeted Kerman, indeed.



At the time, rug-weaving was not that popular until the middle of Nasereddin Shah's time, when it regained popularity with the king's mandate to revive rug-weaving in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.



*Nasereddin Shah*



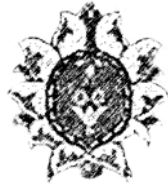


## Kerman rug: weaving and dyeing

What classifies as Kerman rug, are urban-made rugs, woven in city of Kerman and villages in its vicinity or in Rāvar (wrongly called Lāvar in European languages); a city north of Kerman on the way to Shahdād desert.

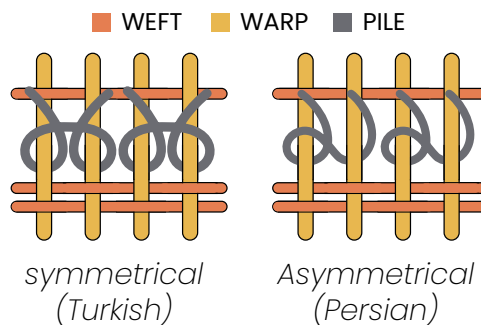
Global fame of Kerman rugs owes, more than anything else, to diverse designs, colorfulness and delicate texture. More than any other rug-weaving hub in Iran, Kerman gave rise to beautiful and innovative original designs. Brilliance of colors plays a fundamental role in making these designs stand out. These designs have also given the wonderful colors a context to shine in. The color count in top quality rugs is up to thirty while fewer rugs can be found with less than fifteen colors in their palette.





Thin, smooth yet greasy enough sheep wool in Kerman coupled with natural dyes (e.g. indigo plant, madder, cochineal, walnut and pomegranate hulls, different leaves, straw and henna) have flourished the creativity of Kermani dyers. They have mastered bright colors as well as getting various shades out of one dye base better than anywhere else. Bright diverse colors allow weavers to use various color shades next to each other which gives the designer freedom to integrate diverse delicate patterns.

Then comes the weaver. Kerman rug is one of the most delicately woven rugs in Iran. Except for some rugs made by Turkic nomads in Kerman, the common knot in Kerman rug is "asymmetrical knot" also known as Persian knot. It is knitted around a warp and is free from the right or left end (mostly left in Kerman rugs).

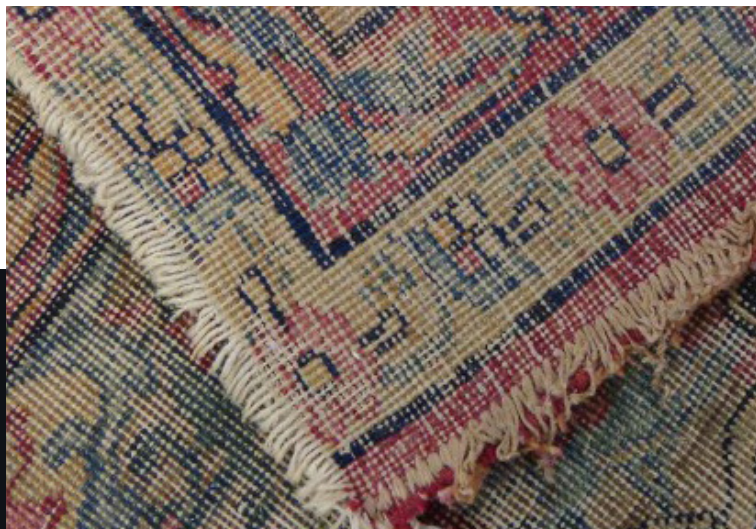




It is common in Persian rug-weaving, that after every raj one or two wefts are drawn through a warp but Kerman rugs are tri-wefted i.e after every raj three wefts are knitted. First and third wefts, called "thick weft", are finer than the warp and the second weft is even finer.



*Kerman rug, rear side: white strings are thick wefts, red strings are knots*



*Antique Kerman rug, rear side*

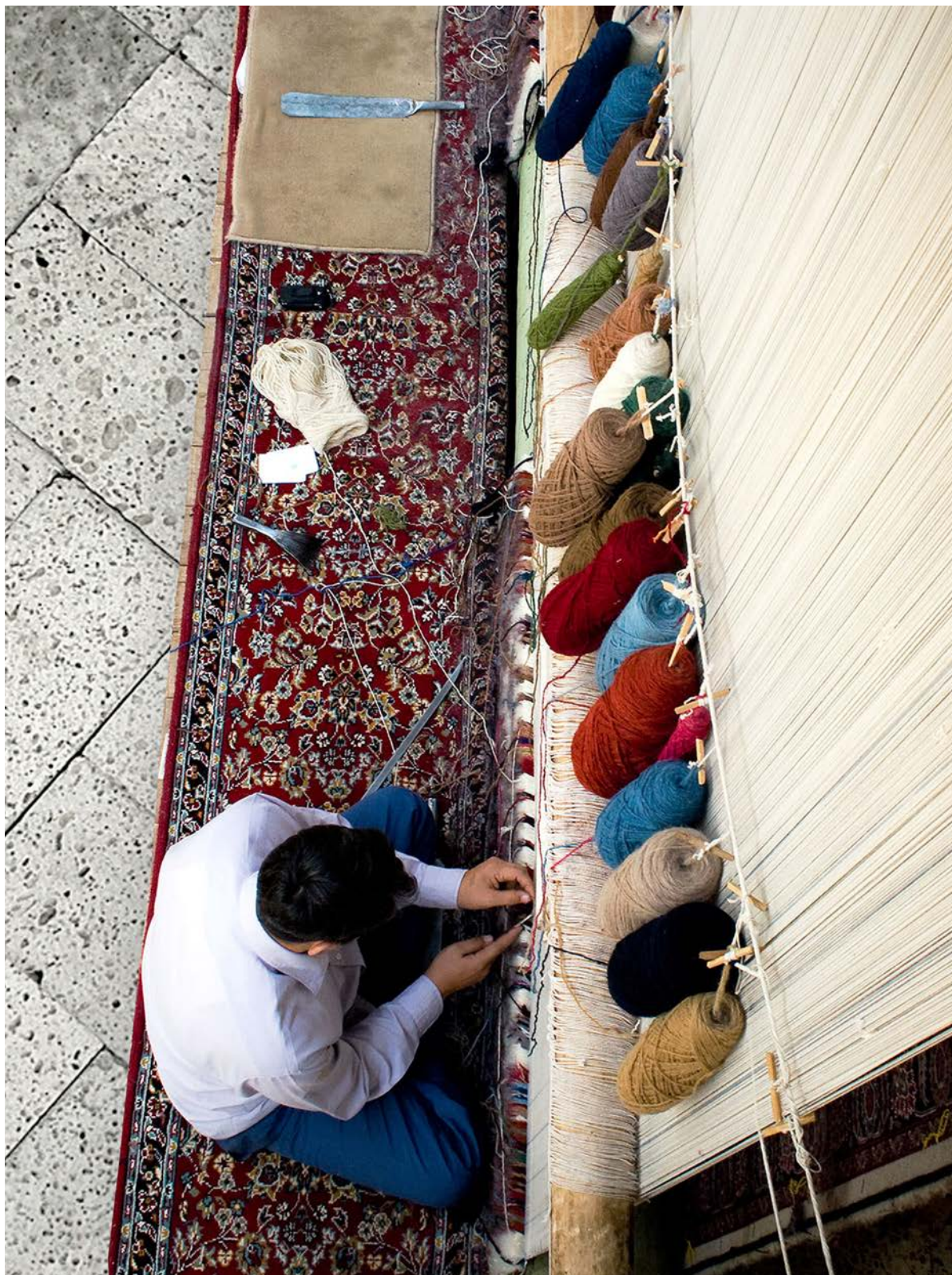




*Antique Kerman rug, rear side*



Rug-weaving looms in Kerman are normally non-fixed. In a non-fixed loom, horizontal beams rotate and what is woven, twists around the bottom beam. Different sizes of rugs can be made using such looms.









Freedom of size allows designers to be most creative. By the mandate of Reza Shah Pahlavi and Mohammad Reza Shah, this very feature of non-fixed looms, has led to the weaving of some large rugs by artists like Arjomand and Karvar for Sa'dābād and Marmar palaces.

The history of diverse designs of Kerman rugs begins with these natural features along with the creativity and perseverance of different art masters.

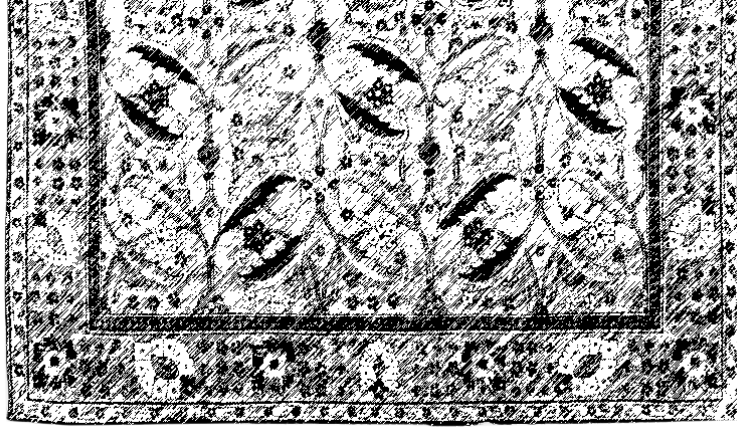


*Arjomand rug-weaving factory in Kerman is one of the most well-known which has made some of the royal rugs.*









## Kerman rug: design and color

Design of Persian rugs evolved greatly in the Safavid period. Majority of traditional Persian motifs were created in this period, including Afshān (scattered), Shah Abbasi and Goldāni (vase). The latter is believed by many to have been created in royal workshops of Kerman at the time of Shah Abbas Safavi.

Antique rugs from that period have decorated many grand museums around the globe and are considered world's most popular Persian artifacts. In 2010, a Kerman rug woven in mid 17<sup>th</sup> century was sold for 7.5€M at Christie's auction in London which was not only the most expensive rug in the world but was also the record-breaker of the most expensive piece of "Islamic art". Before its legal ownership debates were finished, in 2013, another Kerman rug from first half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century was sold at an unbelievable price of 33.8\$M in Sotheby's auction in New York and broke the record.





*Persian Kerman rug from the Safavid period sold at Christie's auction for 45.4\$m and it was created by anonymous artists*





*For a Kerman rug, from the Safavid period, known as Sickle-leaf  
sold recently at Sotheby's auction for over 2\$m*

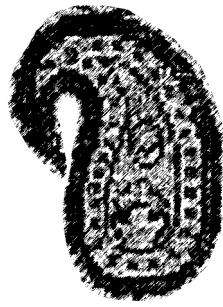




Nineteenth century Kerman rugs are referred to as “Kerman Eskis”; a Turkish expression for old, coined in Istanbul market which for a long time, has been an export hub of Persian rugs to Europe.

Until mid 19<sup>th</sup> century, rug-weaving was the most important industry in Kerman, but in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, its rug-weaving was weakened by shawl-weaving and the world-fame of Kashmir and Scottish paisley shawls. This was in time of development of routes, booming of global export, arrival of orientalists in the east and their exploration of eastern culture which brought unprecedented demand for Persian rug in western markets.





Nasereddin Shah mandated the development of rug-weaving at this point of time. One after another, artists and artisans relinquished weaving shawls and wove rugs. With the support of the Qajar king, traders from Tabriz were the major buyers of Kerman rugs. Kerman rugs were taken to Istanbul from Tabriz and from there to Europe. With the increase in production, the need for new designs also rose, which led to the emergence of a masterful generation of designers in Kerman. To diversify design, they sought patterns in other Persian arts and tastefully inserted motifs into rug design. Textile-weaving, book-layout and book-binding were some of their sources of inspiration but the biggest of all would be the previous art in Kerman, shawl-weaving. The main motif of this period is botte-jeqqe (paisley bush) which is directly taken from shawl-weaving. Its importance is so high that this first period -in four major periods of contemporary rug-weaving in Kerman- is known as the shawl-weaving period, which itself, is divided into two periods of Terme and Bahārestāni.



In the Terme period, botte-jeqqe was the point of focus. It has been the most fundamental motif of Persian art in many centuries. This item has playfully appeared in textile to metal work, from India and Altai to Anatolia. But Iranians recognize it as a reflection of zoroastrian cedar; the symbol of liberality.



*Cedar design in tiling of Shāzde (prince) garden, Kerman*





*Terme and shawl-weaving have long prevailed in Kerman*





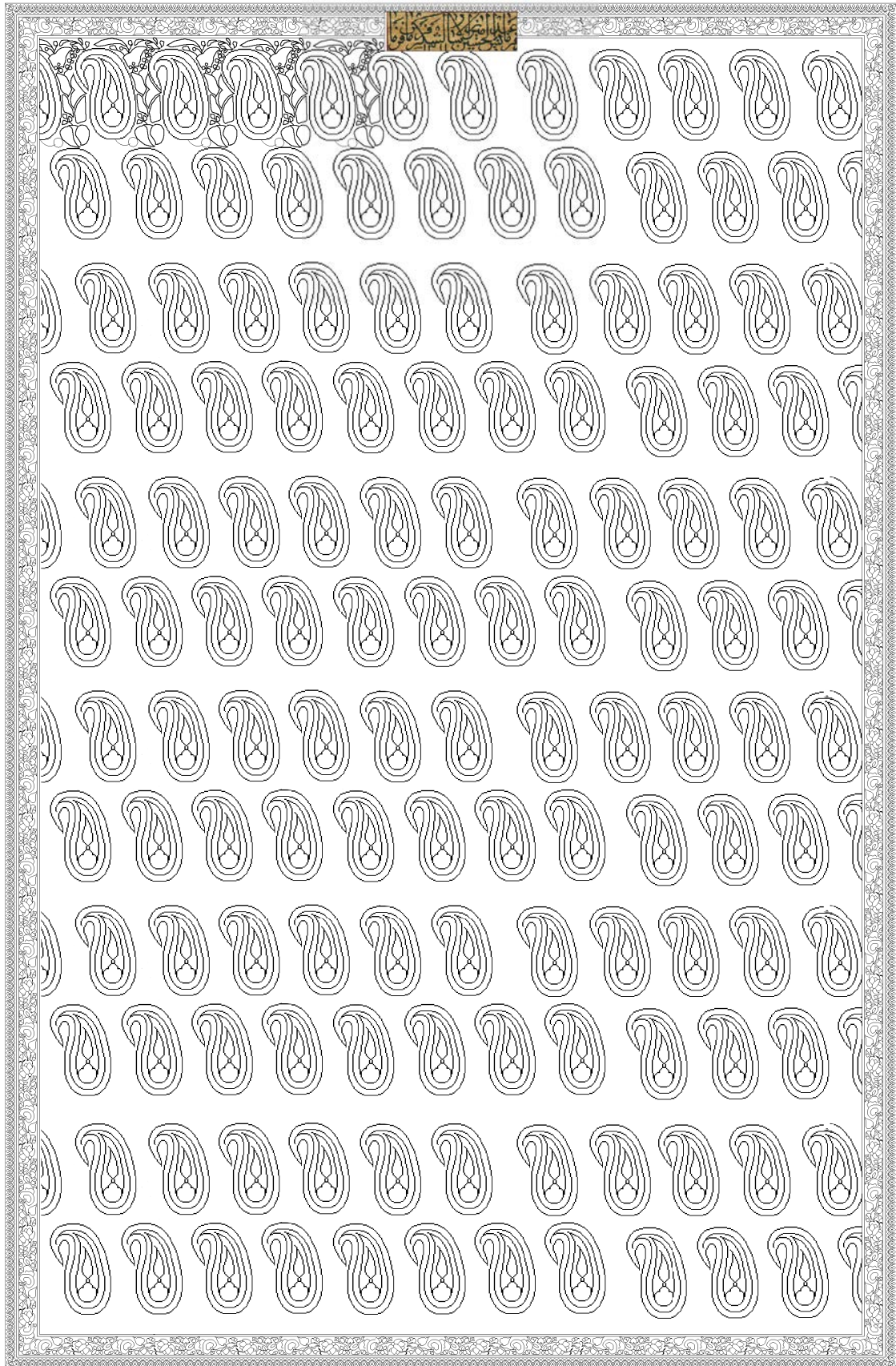
*Shawl and terme in Iranian clothing, painting from Qajarid period*





*Kerman (Rāvar) rug, repetitive pattern, botte design, 19<sup>th</sup> century*





*Botte design is woven in different ways in Persian rug-weaving. It is known to be a reflection of leaf, Zoroaster's cedar and flame. In terme period in Kerman, botte was prevalent.*





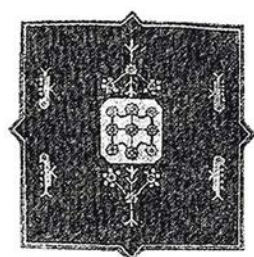
Rug-weaving continued to flourish until world war the first began and demand in western markets for Persian rug declined. However, after war, rug-weaving started to grow again and the demand for Kerman rug grew even more than before the war. The US was the first buyer of Kerman rug and the market was boomed so much that foreign companies were even showing interest in investing in Kerman.





*Kerman (Rāvar) rug, repetitive pattern, botte design, 19<sup>th</sup> century*





In the years after the war when botte was still popular, new designs like simple ground Lachak-Toranj, Deraxti, Afshān and Sabzikār emerged which marked the beginning of a new period, the second shawl-weaving period: Bahārestāni. Painting known as “shade and light” is also original to this period, which is the integration of a light shade with a dark one.





*Simple ground Lachak-Toranj design, Kerman*





*Simple ground Lachak-Toranj design, Kerman*





*Bahārestāni design, Kerman (Rāvar), 20<sup>th</sup> century*

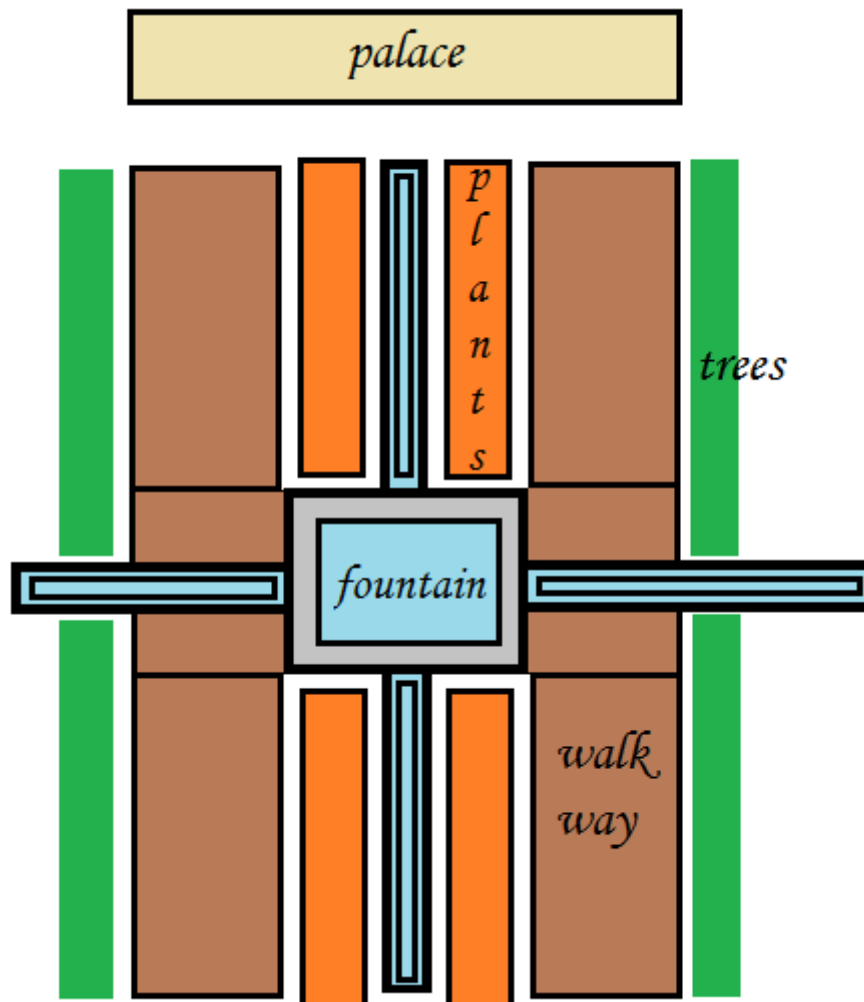




*Deraxti (tree) design, Kerman (Rāvar), 20<sup>th</sup> century*



Bahārestāni designs were inspired by Persian gardens. Rugs were seen as gardens filled with flowers, branches and leaves. The Bahārestāni design (specifically Sabzikār) is believed to be invented by Shahrokhi family, of most popular designers of Persian rug history.



*The basic quadripartite structure of a Persian garden with the water feature in the center.*





*Shāzde garden, Mahan, near Kerman*





*Persian rug, Safavid period, inspired by Persian gardens*





*Sabzikār design, Kerman (Rāvar), 19<sup>th</sup> century*





Najaf Qoli Khan Shahrokhi and two of his sons, Mohsen Khan and Abdol Hossein Khan, and Mohsen Khan's sons, Hassan Khan and Amir Khan were masterful painters in crafts like pen-holder making, jewelry-box making, illustration for shawls and textile and wood-painting and took their skills to rug design. The Shahrokhis played an influential role in sustaining Kerman rug design tradition by bringing up their children and other students, that made Shahrokhi a name to remember. Among them, Hassan Khan and Ahmad Khan are most popular in rug design.



*Hassan Khan Shahrokhi*





*Hassan Khan Shahrokhi and sons*





Gradually, numerous foreign and multinational companies expanded in Kerman and founded weaving workshops. These include Near Co.Castelli, an Ottoman-Italian company, EasternRug and Trading Co. of New York, an American rug-weaving company and O.C.M. a Greek-British rug-weaving and trading company. Their widespread expansion in Iran influenced Kerman rug design in the years following the end of war. Terme and Sabzikār designs slowly lost their popularity and buyers demanded rugs with Gol-dorosht (large-flower) themes.





Market preference forced kermani designers to revert to old Safavi designs, which marks the beginning of the second period in contemporary rug-weaving. We know this period as "return" or "classic" period in Kerman rug-weaving. This period was short yet impacted Persian rug greatly. Highest quality rugs were made in this period. 90 percent of Kerman products were exported to the insatiable US market. Between 1922 and 1929 rug-weaving loom count in Kerman reached 5000 - five times the count in late 19th century. Rugs with large flowers during Safavid period were known as "herati" which served as inspiration for rug designers in the return period.

*Rugs with large flowers during Safavid period were known as "herati" which served as inspiration for rug designers in the return period. —————>*











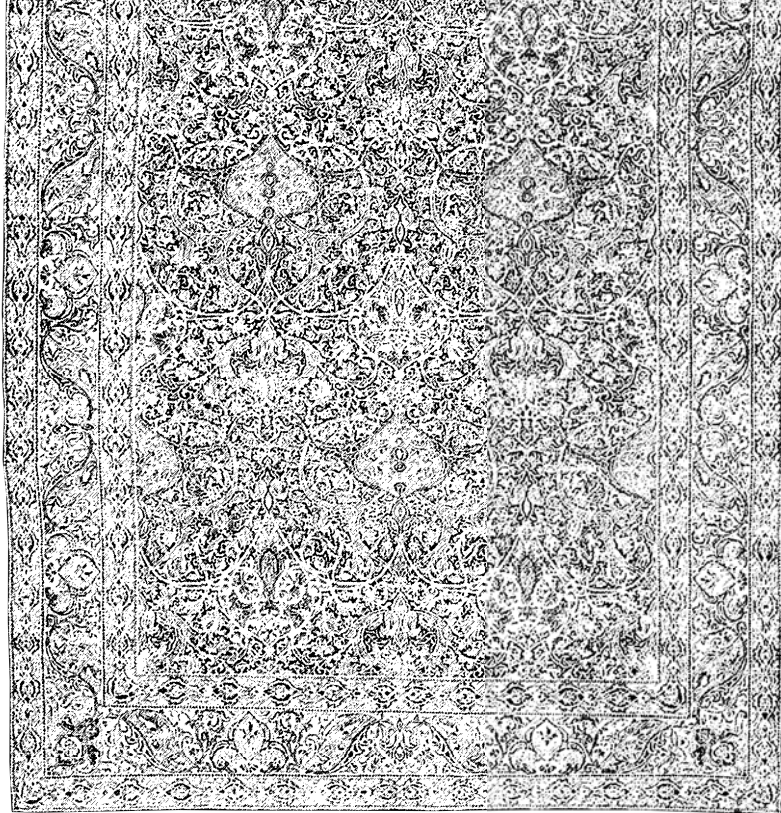
*Kerman rug, around 1900's*





*Kerman rug, new Kenare (runner)*





In 1930 with the advent of the economic depression in the US, the market suddenly declined and American companies revoked their orders and did not continue their activities after the crisis. Rug-weaving workshops of foreign companies were taken over by the Carpet Corporation which was founded in 1935. Limited market had also shifted preference and designs had reverted to tiny scattered flowers. Thanks to Shahrokh's innovation, Sabzikār was upgraded to modern taste and regained its previous status, this time with dense designs and continuous flowers and bushes. This period is known as "filled ground".





*Kerman rug - in this period, tiny scattered flowers became fashionable again*





*Kerman rug, repetitive patterns, ground of the rug is completely filled with tiny flowers or leaves*



World war the second had started and the market, especially in the US, shifted taste again. Filled ground was still common; this time with large discontinuing flowers.



*Kerman rug, ground with large discontinuing flowers was in fashion*





*Kerman rug, ground with large discontinuing flowers was in fashion*

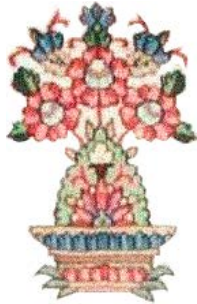


For the first time in centuries, segmentation of borders and text was altered in this period. Borders and text were separated no more, and a new style in rug design was born, later known as “broken border”. By the end of war and occupation of Iran by allied forces, Iranian society also evolved and new economic classes were formed and new markets for Kerman rug emerged inside Iran. Thus, this period is also known as “breaking traditions” period.



*Kerman rug with free or broken borders*





US market was gradually booming again and new tastes influenced the design of Kerman rug. Floral designs similar to those remaining from old french rug and textile workshops that were used in curtains and furniture textile - namely Aubusson and Savonnerie - were also favorable for rugs in the US; maybe to go with one's curtains and furniture. Designers incorporated these patterns and the fourth Kerman rug period began which is popular as "french" or "goublin" period. Main themes of this period are known to us as Goublin and Floral French.





*Kerman rug: these rugs are inspired by French style of Aubusson and Savonnerie patterns*





*Kerman rug: these rugs are inspired by French style of Aubusson and Savonnerie patterns*





*Kerman rug: these rugs are inspired by French style of Aubusson and Savonnerie patterns*





*Kerman rug: these rugs are inspired by French style of Aubusson and Savonnerie patterns*





In this period, we even come across a Bulgarian who designed Kerman rugs. Sermagief, a shareholder of the American-Lebanese company, Atieh, innovated a design inspired by a Quran cover which was popularized as Qāb-e-Qur'ān (Quran frame).







*Kerman rug, Qāb-e-Qur'ān design, popularized by American-Lebanese company Atieh*





*Kerman rug, Qāb-e-Qur'ān design, popularized by American-Lebanese company Atieh*



This period of french inspiration did not last long and taste shift in national and international markets led designs to basic themes with Lachaki-Toranj; XušeAngour (vine cluster), Sabzikār, Goldāni (vase), Deraxti (tree), Qāb-e-Qur'āni, Xeshti, Shekārgāh (hunting garden) and Xātam are the most renowned designs of this period.

In the evolution of these four main periods of contemporary history of Kerman rug, name of each designer is a credit for Persian rug-weaving. Hassan Khan's father, Mohsen Khan Shahrokhi, was the innovator of "spotting" style. Hassan Khan (1940-1862), traditional arts maestro, mathematician and amateur astrologer, was so famous that world-known art historian and one of O.C.M. shareholders, Cecil Edwards, invited him to cooperate but Hassan Khan, being a maverick, turned down the offer.

Later on, Hashem Khan, his son, accepted to cooperate with Eastern Rug Co. and took charge of Mahan and Joupar branches, and after it merged with Iran Carpet Corporation, he stayed in his position till the end of his life. Mohammad Ali Khan, Hassan Khan's other son, was Gnostic and would never acquiesce to employment in private or governmental companies. He left many pieces of art.

Mohsen Khan's brother, Abdol Hossein Khan, like his father and brother, was interested in painting but there is no evidence that he worked in rug-weaving. His son, Ahmad Khan, however, was a famous designer and is considered second-best Kerman rug designer after his cousin, Hassan Khan. He is famous not only for his designs but also the students he has trained such as Mahmood Arjomand Kermani, Asghar Nafisi and Sadegh Rad. All of them have a name for themselves in Kerman rug. Ahmad Khan's sons, Hossein Khan and Hassan Khan, known as Hassan Khan Jr. were also trained by their father and both became maestros.

Other well-known Kerman rug designers are Alireza Mayel, Hossein and Mohammad Rasouli, Kazem Jannati, Reza Bahremand, Mir Ali Kashi and Sheikh Hossein Zeyni. Eshrat Shahrokhi, Hassan Khan's daughter was the last of Shahrokhi bloodline who learned the arts from her father and designed rugs.





## Pictorial rugs of Kerman

Since Safavid dynasty, and along the different historic periods of Kerman rug design, pictorial weaving has had an exclusive position in Kerman rugs.

Designs like Sabzikār and Hunting Garden can be considered pictorial weaving, however, the term pictorial is used for rugs that depict humans, nature, landscapes and animals or have realistic illustration of creatures.

Dervishi, one of the most popular Kerman pictorial rug designs consists of images of dervishes, their daily life and belongings such as halberd (small axe), staff, dervish hat and rug, kashkoul, cloak and skin mat. Realistic pictures of creatures and portraits are also common in these rugs. Portrait-weaving was mostly done for famous Iranian and foreign characters like kings and politicians but weaving anonymous, unknown faces was also common such as faces of beautiful girls.





*Dervishi, one of the most popular Kerman pictorial rug designs consists of images of dervishes, their daily life and belongings such as halberd (small axe), staff, dervish hat and rug, kashkoul, cloak and skin mat.*





*Kerman rug, dance of angels, realistic creature themes and portrait weaving are also common designs of pictorial rugs of Kerman.*



When studying pictorial rugs, especially portrait-weaving, one comes across the Shahrokhis again. Hassan Khan, who was the most famous of his family, was an expert in “portraying” on pen-holders and could create portraits for weaving. He also integrated his family’s infamous Sabzikār with pictorial rugs.

Hassan Khan has also made numerous story-telling rugs. One of them is a rug that depicts Kerman’s history. Close to 220 men and animals are illustrated on its borders and text. This rug, woven by maestro Ali Kermani, is so delicate that is known as “paper rug”.

Another rug, woven by Mohammad Ibn Jafar, illustrates nomadic life. On this rug, women have been depicted so beautifully milking cows, making butter and gathering firewood.



*Rug plan, Hassan Khan combined Sabzikār design with pictures*



The customary art of book illustration also entered pictorial rug-weaving. Many Shahname stories were woven on rugs. Moreover, religious events and stories and also icons of the Shia Imams were common themes of these rugs and had numerous buyers among Iranians.



*Kerman rug, throne of Houshang Shah*





*Rug of fame, on this rug famous historic and religious characters are woven*





*Joseph being thrown into the well, Kerman*





*Rug of kings, depicts Persian kings from the beginning up to Ahmad Shah Qajar*





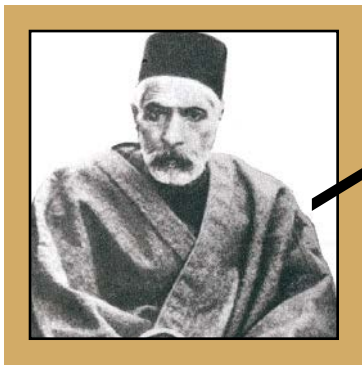
Though we know high price is not the only measure of artistic value, a glance at world's grand auctions shows that Kerman rug is of most valuable Persian artifacts. Every Kerman rug spreads a world of colorful patterns under our feet, and by setting foot or lying down on it and touching it, its secret beauty is revealed and it welcomes us to its colorful universe.





## Kerman Carpet Artists Gallery





## Hasan Khan Shahrokhi

Kerman city is located somewhere near the Loot Desert, where lies the glorious history of Persian carpet. Its legendary rug has entered the Persian literature as well. If the Kerman carpet has topped the list of Persian handmade products in quality and beauty, it owes part of the fame to the unknown proficient designers and dyers like Hasan Khan Shahrokhi.

Mohsen Khan Shahrokhi and his son, Hasan (born 1862) are respectively known as the founding masters (trainers) of carpeting in Kerman.

Mohsen Khan Shahrokhi is a pioneer carpet designer renowned for his valuable researches on the resources and background of carpeting; something that rarely carried out in his time.

Hasan Khan was an elite practicing calligraphy, design, painting and carpet weaving; he even pursued his studies in literature. Making dazzling pen cases and painting them was one of his favorite activities; samples of his works still exist with Shahrokhis. His talents in painting helped application of painting standards in carpet weaving. Depicting nature and shades in carpet designs are methods introduced by Hasan Khan Shahrokhi.

Unfortunately, there is not any carpet design or pattern remained after Hasan Khan, however considering his style one can detect his unique works. He used to depict bunches of flowers including sweetbrier, petunia, dahlia, lily, rose, narcissus, cockscomb and daffodil in his carpet designs. He even used to illustrate different motifs out of butterfly's flying anatomy that the created garden could convey the meaning of Eden. The butterflies are known as the symbol of Hasan Khan's works of art. Hunting was a hobby among Shahrokhis; thus, such motifs could have been his motives for using



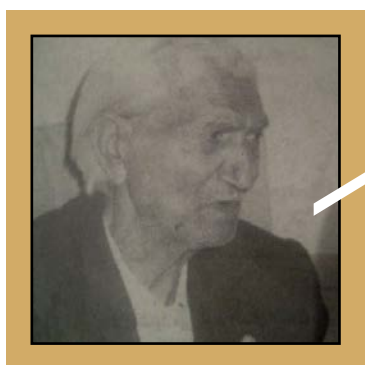
those elements in applying the naturalism in carpet designs.

Hasan Khan had astute ability in drawing the tables of the carpet design, besides his talent in drawing patterns, as his grandson, Asadollah Khan recalls. Termeh motifs like bushes, Lachak Toranj or even vase-like parlor motifs are visible in his works. The bush patterns distinctly pair the ground with the fire kindles. Hasan Khan followed his father's innovative moves in carpet designs.

Hasan Khan is said to have more than a thousand carpet designs from which only fifty might have survived. Zaman Khan Mirhoseini was the brilliant student of Hasan Khan Shahrokhi, following his styles.

Patterns like bunches of flowers and Seram margins along with Shah Abasi margins in Industrial Museum of Kerman are recorded as Hassan Khan Shahrokhi's works.

Hassan Khan had two sons, Hashem Khan and Muhammad Ali Khan, both active in carpet designs, following their father's art and their family business by the help of their cousins, Hashem Khan and Muhammad Ali Khan.



## **Hossein Khan Shahrokhi (1997–1916)**

He was so interested in painting and designing in his childhood. When he was just 7, he used to go after school to the Carpet Office and make some designs under his father's supervision. He was so many years in the job, both in OCM Company and the Iranian Rug Corporation. Late in his life, he burned all his and his father's designs, preventing them to be copied by incompetent hands.





## Amir Khan Shahrokhi

A member of Shahrokhi House, brother to Hasan Khan Shahrokhi. He began his career as a rug designer but continued it in a profession which was so rare. In the absence of graph paper in the past, it was a profession to draw charting squares on designs with pink. Amir Khan and Baqer Khan Shahroki were proficient in this job.

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## Mohsen Khan Shahrokhi (1910-1828, Kerman)

He is the premier figure of the golden generation of Kerman rug designers. Till 1936, Mohsen Khan Shahrokhi worked as a miniature painter and penner painter, since then he started to paint and design for rugs. Unfortunately, now a days there is no evidence of his innovations in rug design.

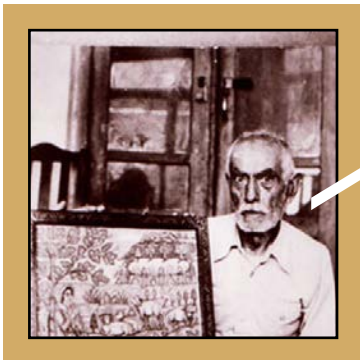




## **Eshrat Shahrokhi**

Born in 1940, she was the last designer of the Shahrokhi House. She started designing when she was a little girl under her father's supervision. She found her way to Arjmandi designing workshop at the age of 10 and continued the job for 24 years. Beside her designing and painting, she was a rug designing teacher and also a librarian in the National Library of Kerman.

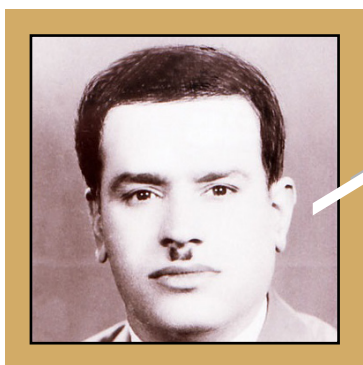
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## **Mohammad Ali Shahrokhi (1988-1903, Kerman)**

He is the second son of Hasan Khan, and another great name in Kerman rug designing. He was heir to his father's unfinished designs. Beside his job as a rug designer, Mohammad Ali Khan Shahrokhi was also an amateur astronomer.





## **Akbar Baharestani (1983 -1918, Kerman)**

His father, Azizollah Baharestani, nicknamed Azizollah Naqqash, was such a great designer and painter that the period of time he was active in has been named Baharestani. With his unique talent, Akbar Baharestani learned painting from his father, and although his father died when he was just a teenager, he could fill his empty place as a famous skillful painter. He designed for different types of rug and yet his designs are unique, without being influenced by prior examples. Akbar Baharestani had collaboration with lots of famous producers and traders, such as Dilmaghani, Arjmand, Agah, Azhdari and Bitar. In 1970, after a stroke, Baharestani loosed control on his right hand and had to use his left hand for designing. The result was unbelievable! He could regain his skills after a short period of time.



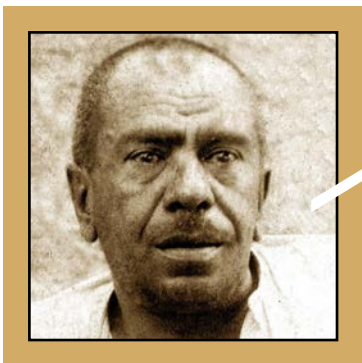


## Mohammad Arjmandi

He is famous as Sultan of Rug. By his artistic talent and creativity, Arjmandi succeeded to introduce Kerman rug to the world and adorn Kings' palaces with this valuable art.

He had a difficult childhood. He started to produce and trade rugs in his youth. Thanks to his good cognition about designs and patterns, Arjmandi chose unique designs with amazing colors and made them be woven with high-grade raw materials. Little by little he spread the business in both quality and quantity and his rugs found their ways to Astan-e Quds-e Razavi (Imam Reza Shrine in Mashhad), Fatima Masumeh Shrine in the city of Qom, White House of the United States and Buckingham Palace. When in the November 4th 1968 he passed away, Radio Berlin announced Sultan of Rug died.





## Ahmad Yazdanpanah Dilmaghani

Famous rug trader who produced a big number of fine high-grade rugs. Because of their quality, his rugs found lots of applicant in Germany, Britain and especially in the United States. With establishing workshops outside the city of Kerman, he succeeded to spread the business and became the biggest trader of Kerman rug in his period. He is the founder of Dilmaghani Orphanage in Kerman.

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## Mirza Mustafa Kamal

Famous rug trader, who give a world-wide reputation to Kerman rug. He was born in Ottoman Emperor (Turkey) in an Armenian family. By the Armenian genocide, he took refuge in Iran, and started to study in Isfahan College. After that, he moved to Kerman. From 1911, products of Kamal's rug-weaving workshops, being loaded on camels, were transported to Bandar Abbas and from there with ships to the U.S. His big amount of exports, especially to the United States, caused the world-wide reputation of Kerman rug at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and naming Kerman as one of the most important rug production centers during the century. He died 1951 in Tehran.

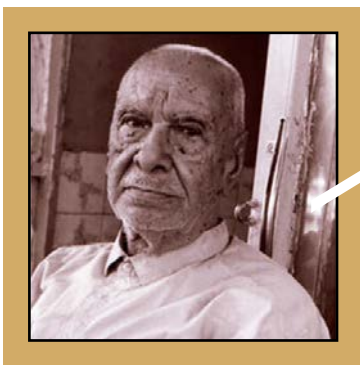




## **Master Ali Kermani, nicknamed Ali Honari (1939 -1877, Kerman)**

He was a very worthy and capable weaver who stands far above other Kerman rug producers in the late Qajar era. He was Abol Qasem Kermani's apprentice. Most of the exquisite rugs he has produced are hasan Khan Shahrokhi's designs.

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## **Morteza Mahdavi**

He is son of Abdol Karim Mahdavi, the designer and painter of Kerman rug, so he started to work in his father's Painter House in his teens. Since he was 21, he started his collaboration with George Bitar and then with John Timoyanaki, head of Oriental Carpet Manufacturers. He trained some designers and he himself was very active in designing till 1971, when had to retire because of a heart attack.





## **Mahmud Rasuli (-1943 Kerman)**

He is one of the most superior and creative designers of Kerman. At his childhood he was skillful in portrait painting and he tried almost every art styles during his productive life-time. Before establishment of the Iranian Rug Corporation, he had worked for foreign companies, and after their merger into the Corporation, he continued his job there.

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## **Ahmad Rasuli (-1943 Kerman)**

A Kermani rug designer and also teacher who has trained lots of designers. From 1963 till the Iranian Revolution in 1979, he was an active member of the syndicate of rug designers and had a great role in insuring weavers and increasing wage for weaving, designing and rug painting. He was also against child labor and succeeded to prevent children under 14 being employed in weaving workshops.





## Ahmad Iranmanesh (1923, Kerman)

Kerman rug designer, who worked with several rug producers.

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## John Timoyanaki

Head of Oriental Carpet manufacturers Company

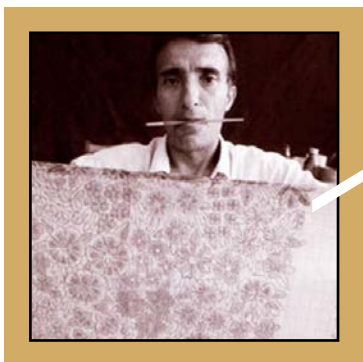
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## Hasan Soti (-1918 Kerman)

Kerman rug painter, whose profession was in painting and dotting the design.

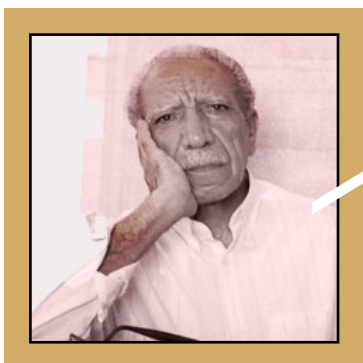




## **Soleyman Heydari Delfar (1950, Kerman)**

Rug designer. At the age of 14 he started to work under the supervision of Mashaallah Saljuqi and then he became an apprentice in Arjmand-e Kermani workshop for one and half year and learned painting and dotting. For almost 8 years he was trainer in the Iranian rug corporation.

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## **Abbas Nejad Sarvari**

Rug designer and painter. He was Akbar Baharestani's trainee. After his training, he established his own rug painting workshop, first with just one employee. After a while he succeeded to spread the business and employed more designers.

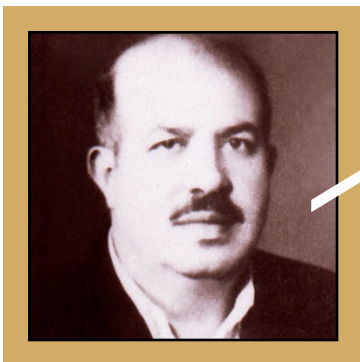




## **Abdolhossein Misarjani (-1930 Kerman)**

He started to design and paint rugs at young ages, and after learning basic methods from his father, joined the rug designing workshop of Mohammad Ali Daneshmand. Next he continued his job in Hasan Khan Shahrokhi's designing workshop and then in the Painter House of Arjmand-e Kermani Firm.

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## **Ali Soti (1981-1906, Kerman)**

Rug designer, brother to Hasan Soti. He worked with different companies and in the meanwhile he established his own designing workshop, in which he employed his brother, Hasan Soti, Ali Saheb Al-Zamani, Afghanzadeh, etc. In its golden period, the workshop was famous for its high-grade and diverse designs.





## Mohammad Ali Namazian

He began designing at 18. He was trained by great masters such as Abbas Namazian, Akbar Baharestani and Mohammad Ali Daneshmand. After five years established his own rug designing workshop. He continued the art for 14 years but he had to leave the job because of eye disease.

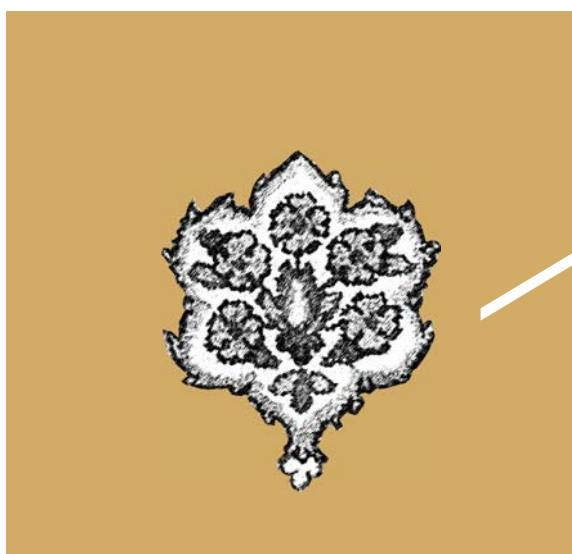
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## Hossein Yasaei

Famous artist and weaver, who was well-known as Rangraz (dyer) because of his talent in dyeing and painting. His rugs was so precious that having one of them in home indicated wealth of that family.

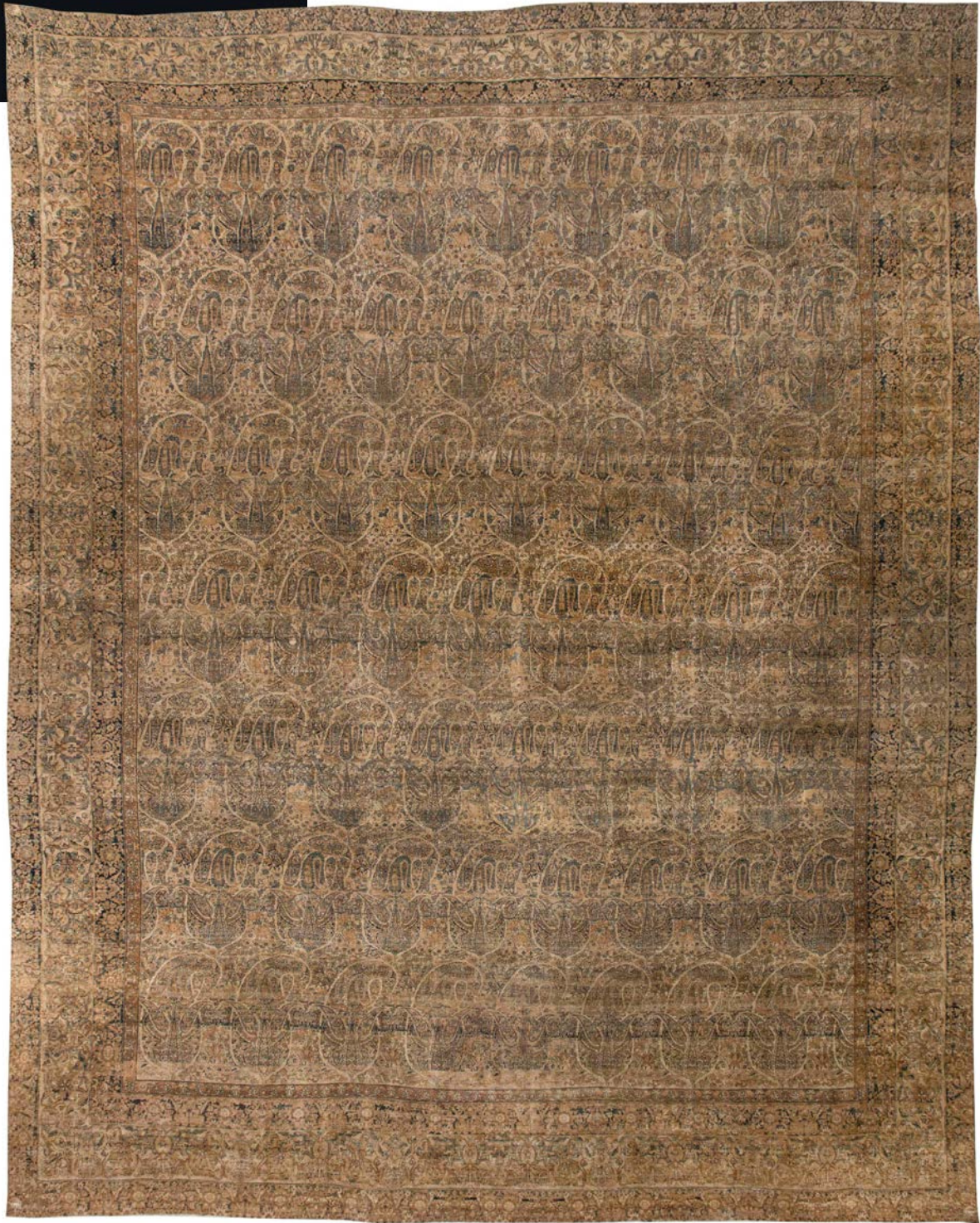




## kerman rugs collection



## Botte (Paisley) design



*An early 20<sup>th</sup> century Persian Kirman (Kerman) antique rug, the abrashed camel field with an overall enlarged paisley lattice with a cream floral motif border.*





*This antique circa 1900- Persian Kirman rug features floral abstractions and boteh shapes in shades of blue as an all-over design. A pear-shaped figure often used in Oriental rug designs and characteristic of the paisley pattern, the boteh may represent a leaf, bush or a pinecone. In the world of antique Persian rugs, Kirman carpets are celebrated as being among the best. Kirman rugs are prized by collectors for a myriad of reasons, which includes but is not limited to a wide range of designs, a broad palette, utilization of natural dyes and fibers, immense tensile strength and abrasion resistance, and expert color combinations. No two Kirman rugs are precisely alike, but these general characteristics typify this enduringly popular style. Relatively advanced compared to their fellow countrymen, Kirman weavers had learned to set their looms so that the cotton warps were on two different levels.*





*Antique Persian Paisley Kerman Rug, Country of Origin: Persia, Circa Date: Final Quarter of the Nineteenth Century – Here is a unique and charming antique Oriental rug – an antique Kerman rug that was woven in Persia during the latter years of the nineteenth century. A small piece measuring under four square feet, this charming Kerman carpet from Persia is characterized by a composition that features different styles of botehs, or paisleys, in both the border and the field sections. Colored with a pallet of muted browns and reds, this small Persian rug boasts a quiet, somber quality that is interrupted by the energy of its many botehs. Narrow inner and outer borders surround a primary border, which is populated by a series of botehs outlined in red. Small floral details appear between these botehs, giving the border a rich and complex quality. Within the field, a similar pattern unfolds. Here, fourteen individual botehs are presented, each outlined with dark brown. In the space between the individual botehs, a charming splay of leafy vine scrolls unfolds, with colorful vegetation peaking through at regular intervals. A charming antique Oriental rug, this antique Kerman carpet from Persia is a lovely example.*





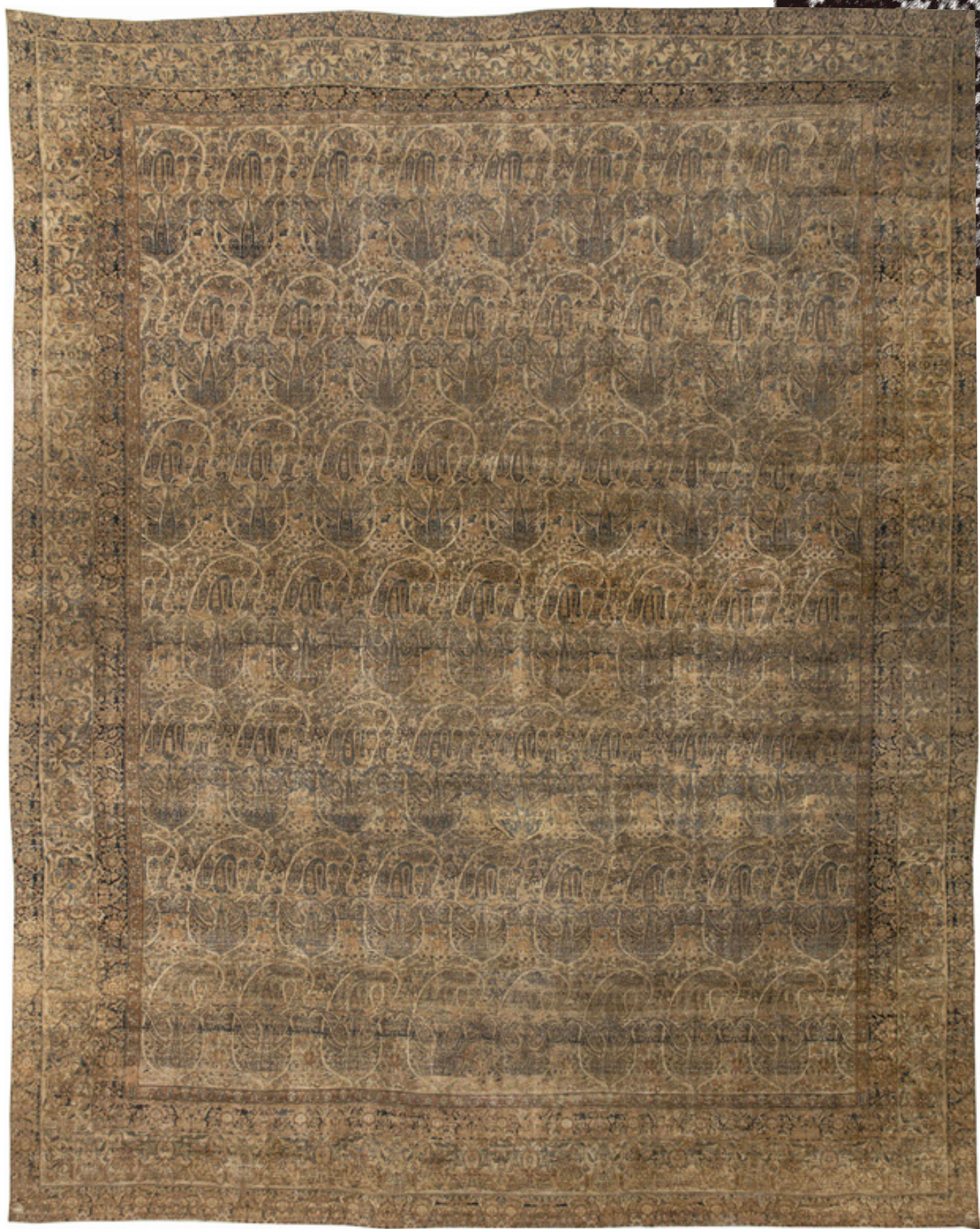












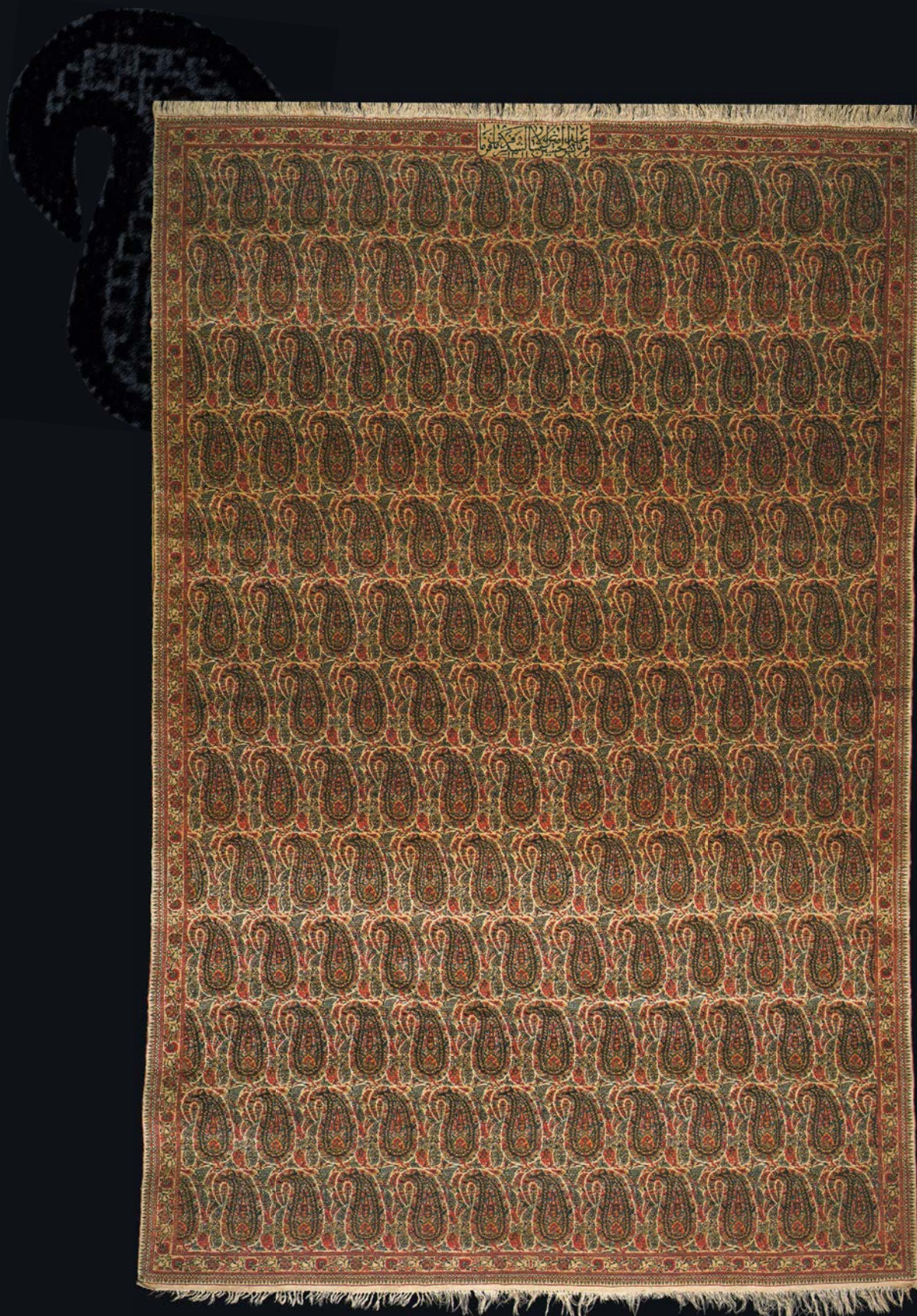












*This very beautiful and extremely fine rug is a typical Kerman rendering of the boteh repeat pattern, which is both a motif and a design associated in particular with this weaving city, renowned for its shawls. The long and beautifully woven inscription includes the date 1131 [CE 4-1893] and signature 'Farmayesh Abdul Hosein Mirza Salar Lashgar Farmanfarma'. Wool pile on a cotton foundation. 2m x 1.3m (6ft  $\frac{4}{3}$  6in x 4ft  $\frac{8}{1}$  3in)*





A very finely woven rug from the Ravar suburb of Kerman dating from the late- 19<sup>th</sup> century. Once again, this has an all-over pattern of large botehs reminding us of the heritage of shawl weaving in this region. Interestingly, the angular 'vine' border is one found more often on North West Persian rugs. Kork wool pile on a cotton foundation. 1.5m x 1m (4ft 11in x 3ft 8/3 3in)











## Medallion rugs



*Oversize Large and Finely Woven Antique Kerman Persian rug, Country of Origin / Rug Type: Persian Rugs, Circa Date: Late Nineteenth Century – In the tradition of the great classical Persian court carpets, a grand arabesque medallion hovers within a soft raspberry open field on this palatial antique Kerman rug. Lush floral details on a champagne ground fill the medallion and the corner-pieces of similar design that frame the field. A delicate vine-scroll and palmette main border offers a contrast in scale and detail while preserving the coloration of the nearby corner-pieces, giving the entire design of this grand palatial antique Oriental rug a unified decorative effect. The velvety Kerman rug wool pile further enhances the luxurious overall impression of this extraordinary carpet.*





*Kerman Rug, Persia, Late 19<sup>th</sup> Century – Exquisitely executed and phenomenally detailed, this quintessential Persian city carpet features a stunning allover arabesque comprised of superfluous cloud bands and dramatic polychromatic botanical motifs set over a robust burgundy-red field. The extraordinarily ornate arabesque surrounds a magnificent circular medallion decorated with sinuous botanical motifs that feature hyper-realistic shading. The level of detail and the spectacular assortment of patterns make the grand medallion like a carpet unto itself. The grandiose composition of the field is balanced by the impressive borders, which feature elegant rosettes and flourishing cloud bands surrounded by multiple sets of guard bands. This exquisite antique Kerman rug is a stunning example of the city's masterful design traditions.*





*Beautiful and Finely Woven Large Oversized Antique Kerman Persian Rug, Country of Origin / Rug Type: Persian Rugs, Circa Date: 1900– This grand, palatial antique Persian Kerman rug is one of the best of its kind. A monumental indented medallion with large finials spreads star-like into the soft salmon-terracotta field, empty except for a few crowns and birds. Delicate blue-ground corner-pieces frame the medallion, enclosed in turn by a series of fine borders filled with tiny flowers. The great size of this fine Persian large oversized Kerman antique Oriental rug is nicely balanced by the minuscule detail of the decor and the openness of the composition.*





*Large Size Antique Persian Kerman Rug, Country of Origin / Rug Type: Persian Rugs, Circa Date: Late 19<sup>th</sup> Century – Crafted in Kerman, this stunning large palace size antique oriental rug features palatial proportions, sublime surface decorations and a regal golden-yellow and ultramarine blue color scheme. This exceptional palace-sized carpet represents the striking visual works of geometers, artists, designers and immensely skilled weavers. The complex composition centers around a gorgeous layered medallion with strap work outlines and fluid curves that are based on artful geometric principles. The limited color scheme is augmented by the textural botanical surface decorations that feature soft camel browns and saturated blues in varying intensities. The soft colors and intense decorative features of this extraordinary antique Kerman rug create a homo-genius composition of exceptional aesthetic value.*





*Finely Woven Beautiful Oversized Antique Persian Kerman Rug, Country of Origin: Persia, Circa Date: 1900– The gentle, sunny tone of a late afternoon sky dominates this oversized, antique Persian rug. A crisp design with black line-work and blue, orange and green flora spreads over the central field, forming a pattern symmetrical about both the horizontal and vertical axes. A small, circular flower rests in the center, and a leafy array of elaborate blossoms springs forth all around, every form wrought with precise stitches in a stylized, angular fashion. A thin, dark band surrounds the central field, and a series of borders further encloses the space in this beautiful antique rug. A de-saturated orange hue forms the backdrop within the narrower borders of this antique Kerman rug, along with simply styled blossoms and leaves, and these flank the widest band of dark blue-black with impressively large, complex blooms.*





*Beautiful and Finely Woven Large Oversized Antique Persian Kerman Rug, Country Of Origin / Rug Type: Persian Rugs, Circa Date: 1890's – A kaleidoscope of color greets the viewer, creating a complicated tapestry of vivacious motion that only the most experienced hands could create. This antique Persian Kerman rug features several intricate borders, each surrounding the other, leading inward to the core of the antique Oriental rug. Each border features a different backdrop and houses a vast number of sprawling vines and dancing petals. Bright reds, gentle yellows, elegant purples and dusky blues all comes together in their own unique way to play a part in this arboreal dance. Between each of the thicker borders are smaller and thinner borders, acting as the outlines to the beauty within. Beyond the outer frames is a rich black field, the background to the center of the rug, which houses a complicated collection of leaves and petals, themselves the background to the bright mandala in the middle of the antique carpet.*







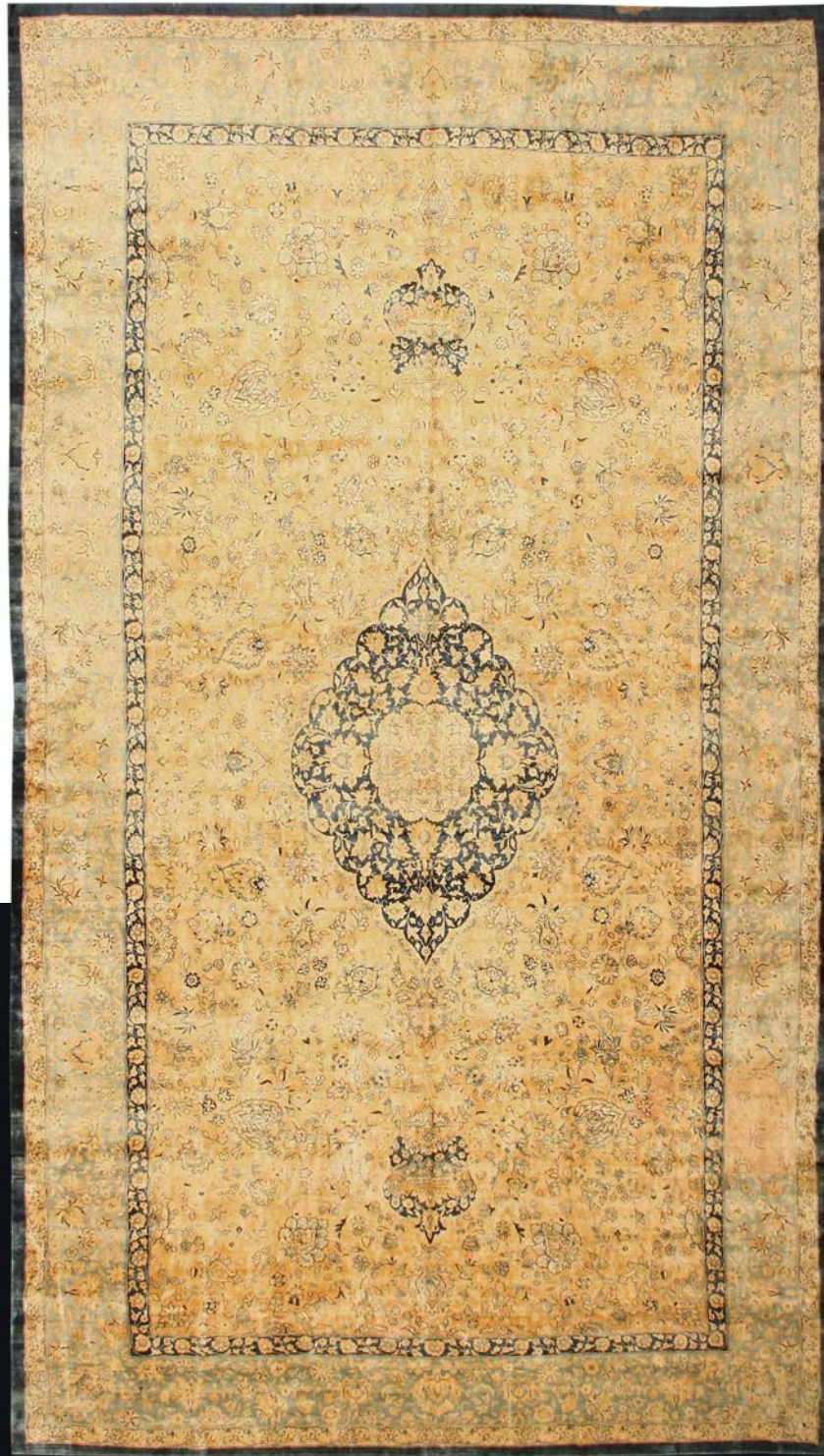






*Antique Persian Kerman, Country of Origin: Persia, Circa Date: Late nineteenth century – A scalloped ogival medallion surrounded by a dense tangle of undulating vines and palmettes replete with perching birds unfolds across the soft green field of this sumptuous antique Kerman. The floral detail is rendered mostly in golden tones with sparing use of red for accents. The same approach recurs in the borders whose grounds alternate between green and gold. Tabrizes are renowned for their fidelity to classical Persian carpet design, but it is uncommon for them actually to equal such distinguished forerunners as this glorious example does.*





*Antique Persian Kerman Rug, Country of Origin: Persia, Circa Date: 1900 – A scalloped diamond medallion sits amidst a field strewn with floating palmettes, vines, and floral sprays on this wonderful antique Kerman. The medallion has a deep green ground echoed only by two pendant finials at either end within an otherwise pale golden field. The main border is the palest shade of green barely distinguishable for the field. Here again its framing function relies on the inner minor border and an outer edge zone which pick up the ground color of the medallion. Despite the rich complexity of its ornamental detail, this carpet has a light, open quality that makes it eminently decorative.*





*Beautiful Large Size Antique and Finely Woven Persian Kerman Rug, Country of Origin: Persia, Circa Date: Late 19<sup>th</sup> Century – A large medallion fills the middle of this antique Persian rug, crafted with equal parts creamy white and dark blue in an intricately elaborate motif. Pale from the effects of time, an antique sheen yet reveals precise stitches that pick out complex floral elements interlinked with quadrilateral symmetry. A tan background surrounds the medallion, brimming with stylized blossoms in white, blue and shades of brown. Every flower, large or small, links to the greater whole with thin, dark stems. Feathery fronds and large blooms in an intricate, meditative array fill every corner of the antique rug's central field, which is surrounded by a set of borders. Ornate floral decorations through the widest band of this antique Persian Kerman rug seem to spill over into the smaller bars, trailing vines and smaller flowers.*





Antique Kerman Lavar Rug, Country of Origin: Persia, Circa Date: Late 19<sup>th</sup> Century – Antique Lavar Kermans are highly prized for their ability to recreate the designs of the great classical Kerman masterpieces of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, but rarely do they capture the stunning color of such forerunners as this superb Lavar Kerman does. This Persian antique Kerman Lavar rug features a diamond medallion design filled with a multi-colored profusion of flowers and vines on a dark ground hovers majestically within an open red field occupied otherwise only by a selected array of finials and cartouches with similar floral filling. Cornerpieces echo the central medallion as they transition into a multiplicity of borders, eleven to be exact, which collectively frame the openness of field with a contrasting complexity of fine detail. Here we see the convergence of exquisite design and color characteristic of the greatest antique Persian rugs.





*Antique Persian Kerman Rug, Country of Origin: Persia, Circa Date: 1880 — This antique Persian Kerman rug follows the traditional patterns of Persian art with a center medallion leading its way to surrounding geometric patterns and an outer frame. The center medallion is bold, catching the eye before anything else. Light pinks, blues, browns, reds and purples meet with natural cream to create harmony within this beautiful rug. Flowers grow throughout the piece and branches reach down to touch every blossom, speaking of Persia's natural bounty.*





*Antique Kerman, Country of Origin: Persia, Circa Date: Late 19<sup>th</sup> Century – A richly articulated all-over pattern of vines and flowers sprawls lushly across the field of this sumptuous antique Persian Kerman, although the rich red ground barely peeks out from behind the closely worked floral exuberance. The main border adapts this patterning to a longer vinescroll format, but utilizing a more muted color scheme. The uniform design texture binds all these elements together with a pleasing visual consistency, making this a first-rate decorative carpet. This piece is extremely fine, the condition is excellent with good / soft pile throughout and it could take daily traffic and use with absolutely no problem.*





*Large Decorative Antique Persian Kerman Rug, Country of Origin: Persia, Circa Date: Early 20<sup>th</sup> century – This antique Persian rug is a large Kerman rug with antique tones like aged papyrus. The predominantly yellow and cream tones are accented with dark brown, deep slate blue and orange. As a notable centerpiece, a medallion with curling, fractal edges sits filled with the dark blue color and overlaid with dusky orange flowers. A fine scroll-work surrounds the piece like an aura, enclosing blossoms growing over stiffly delineated brown twigs. Continuing the ropy design, a coiling boundary like cresting waves sets off the dark corners of the interior. Light-hued borders surround the central area, filled with delicate floral patterning similar to that of bone china. The widest band's ornaments are dark and ornate, echoing the design of this antique rug's centerpiece.*





*Antique Persian Kerman Lavar Rug, Country of Origin: Persia, Circa Date: 1900 – A classical Persian design unfolds with consummate elegance across soft tan field of this stunning antique Kerman. A scalloped ogival medallion brimming with minute ‘millefleurs’ detail sprouts fleur-de-lis finials, enclosed by cornerpieces that define an oval field. The field itself is studded with tiny, scintillating jewel-like floral elements in mauve-aubergine, some of which form a corolla at the edge of the oval. The floral borders are all comprised of the same elements and tones that ornament the field, thereby endowing the antique carpet with a remarkably harmonious decorative unity.*





*Extremely Fine Large Size Silk and Wool Antique Persian Lavar Kerman Rug, Country of Origin / Rug Type: Antique Persian Rugs, Date: Antique Rug Circa Late 19<sup>th</sup> century– True to many beautiful Kerman patterns, this exquisite antique Persian rug features a bounty of details, designed to entice and enrapture the viewer. The thickest border is surrounded on both sides by thinner ones, which act as attention-grabbing outlines to the forms within. No matter where the viewer looks, there is something to be seen, and the vibrant colors result in plenty of contrast, adding further definition and unique character to the elements present throughout. The volcanic color palette seems to exude warmth, which results in added depth to the regal character present throughout the antique rug.*





Antique Kerman Rug, Country of Origin: Persia, Circa Date: 1880's – Here is a truly wonderful antique Oriental rug – a Kerman piece made in Persia some time during the 1880's. This rug represents something genuinely special, and is a testament to the artisans who produced it. A fabulous piece, this rug possesses many of the qualities most sought after by collectors and experts, and would bring beauty and sophistication to any home. Strapwork borders, detailed guardbands and intricate millefleur motifs woven in a diverse palette of colors add eye-catching details to each element of this formal carpet from Kerman. Sombre blue guardbands and accents in the field are counterbalanced by branching floral sprays woven in lavish shades of pink and rich magenta paired with soft green foliage. Simply put, this rug is a remarkable piece of work. A stately and majestic design and composition combine to make this rug something more than a decorative piece: they combine to make it a veritable work of art.





*Antique Persian Kerman Rug, Country of Origin: Persia, Circa Date: Late 19<sup>th</sup> Century – A stately but exuberant design of flowering vines spreads elegantly across the field of this sumptuous antique Kerman. At the center of the field is a scalloped diamond medallion filled with lush flowering vines around a star-shaped core. Arabesque cornerpieces complete the field with a delicate mesh of flowering vines in the intervening space. A vinescroll main border frames the field, along with flanking minor vinescroll borders. The richness of the design is mollified by the minimal contrast of the subtle tone-on-tone coloration, underscoring the superior decorative quality of this lovely antique carpet.*





*Beautiful and Finely Woven Antique 19th Century Kerman Rug, Country of Origin: Persia, Circa Date: 1900— This spectacular antique rug displays a large central ornate medallion in shades of red, cream, pink, beige, gray and black. It offers a floral motif, showcasing a multitude of red-centered white blossoms and four large white blossoms tinged in red around a central red flower. Four ornate floral spandrels in red, black, cream and pink hues mark the corners, cascading flowers downwards along the edges of the field. The cream border carries a floral motif. It is surrounded on either side by narrower black guard borders densely populated with flowers. A narrow interior border encloses the field, reflecting the same design pattern and colors as the border itself. Located in South Central Iran, Kerman became a center of rug production during the 1400's.*





*Beautiful and Finely Woven Floral Design Antique Persian Kerman Rug, Country of Origin: Persia, Circa Date: Late 19<sup>th</sup> Century – This sumptuous antique Kerman carpet features a classical Persian medallion design. An elaborately-contoured circular medallion in blue expands outward into a soft ivory field replete with additional small flowers and rosettes. Scalloped arabesque cornerpieces frame the field in a lovely, contrasting shade of red. Several narrower borders combine to frame the field, echoing its coloration and minor detail. The drawing is expert, and the palette is rich, recalling the great forerunners of the Safavid period. The velvety wool pile adds the final touch of opulence.*





*Antique Persian Kerman, Country of Origin: Persia, Circa Date: Late 19<sup>th</sup> Century—Kermans of the late nineteenth century constituted a major facet of the great Persian rug revival at that time, but rarely do they attain the exquisite detail and perfection of design like this superb example. The field has a grand central medallion antique rug with large finials set between lavish cornerpieces of similar design. But in place of open space, the intervening area is filled with a complex all-over pattern like that within the medallion and cornerpieces. Even the coloration is uniform across the entire field. It is the use of bold outlining that preserves the distinction among all the components. The borders present a contrast in design and scale with their dense, finely worked patterns of naturalistic vinescrolls and flowers. The black ground of the outer border is kept to a minimum, showing just enough to highlight the design without darkening it. Collectively, they frame the field effectively, while still harmonizing with it. The more closely one looks, the more one begins to appreciate the masterful design of this outstanding piece.*





*Antique Kerman Rug, Country of Origin: Persia, Circa Date: Late 19<sup>th</sup> century – A grand, richly detailed medallion floats serenely on an open field surrounded by lush vinescroll cornerpieces on this antique Kerman masterpiece of classic Persian design. The lovely soft red tones of the medallion complement the accenting dark ground of the cornerpieces, while they both contrast beautifully with the soft champagne of the intervening ground. The contrasts recur on a smaller, finer scale in the multiple small borders, nicely balancing the monumentality of the field.*





*Antique Persian Kerman Rug, Country of Origin: Persia, Circa Date: Late 19<sup>th</sup> Century – Drawn in Kerman's distinctive floral style, this striking antique Persian medallion rug features a beautiful feminine color scheme with rosy Kerman pinks, inky accents and softly shaded botanical motifs. Recurved acanthus leaves with feathery edges spiral through the borders and encircle the lavish medallion while giving the Persian motifs an alluring Rococo-style flair displayed in the sweeping fronds, asymmetric details and dimensional shading. Delicate pink and pastel chartreuse green borders offset the creamy white field beautifully. These chic Indo-Persian borders are filled with conical cypress trees and pendulous shrubs that give the composition a highly refined style with subtle international influences and progressive aesthetic details introduced in late 19<sup>th</sup> century designs.*





*Antique Persian Kerman Rug, Country of Origin: Persia, Circa Date: 1880's – Here is a truly wonderful antique rug – a Kerman piece made in Persia some time during the 1880's. This rug represents something genuinely special, and is a testament to the artisans who produced it. A beautiful Persian piece, this rug possesses many of the qualities most sought after by collectors and experts, and would bring beauty and sophistication to any home. A flower-filled octofoil medallion based around a Kerman-style star provides a strong anchor for a series of radiating patterns and petals that emerge from the central design. Recurving spandrels with sweeping curves and dramatic arches frame the field and supplement the wide guardbands and detailed borders that complete this exceptional carpet. Simply put, this rug is a remarkable piece of work. A classic and gorgeous design and composition combine to make this rug something more than a decorative piece: they combine to make it a veritable work of art.*





*Antique Persian Kerman Rug, Country of Origin: Persia, Circa Date: Late 19<sup>th</sup> Century – Here is a beautifully woven and enticing antique Oriental rug – an antique Kerman carpet that was woven in Persia during the latter years of the nineteenth century. Beautifully showcasing there Kerman style, this charming example is a testament to the enduring appeal of antique Persian rug design – especially in regards to classical and stately compositions. This outstanding antique rug preserves a classic design from the great era of Persian court carpets. The red ground central medallion and cornerpieces display the cloudband arabesque, with floral wreaths or sprays arranged symmetrically around blue rosettes in the ivory areas. The whole field pulsates with sinuous ogival rhythms as each adjacent medallion tapers and swells from one to another. But ultimately the classic control and restraint predominates in the relatively simple narrow borders that frame and complete the entire composition. A beautiful example, this antique Persian rug is an alluring and exciting composition that beautifully communicates some of the finer points of classical Persian rug design and composition.*





Antique Persian Kerman Rug, Country of Origin: Persia, Circa Date: 1900 – This luxuriant and stately antique rug – a Kerman piece made in Persia some time around the turn of the twentieth century – is truly an achievement in rug-making. This majestic piece possesses many of the qualities most sought after by collectors of such rugs, and would make a proud addition to any home. This Kerman-style carpet features an octofoil medallion defined by plump leaves with strongly-emphasized ogival curves surrounding an eight-pointed star that radiates from a central rosette. Ogival spandrels, ornate scrolling edges and detailed floral sprays complete the exquisite carpet field while multiple guard-bands and dynamic secondary borders filled with accents in a subtle shade of ice blue frame this exceptional carpet. All in all, this is a piece that is not to be missed. Its stunning design and intricate composition make it not only a highly desirable piece, but a genuine work of art.





*Antique Persian Kerman Rug, Country of Origin: Persia, Circa Date: Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century– This gorgeous Kerman antique rug is one of our more unique pieces. The brilliant saffron yellow and bright pink powerfully contrast with muted blues and greens. The exquisite florid scrolls along the border accentuate the bright, radial splashes repeated throughout. In this rug, the eye is drawn to the reds and pinks in the corners rather than the relatively subdued medallion at the center. Notice how the designs are continued beyond the borders – this unique feature is reminiscent of a summer garden thriving beyond its bed. The bright palette and fine details of this Persian rug make it the perfect centerpiece for a larger area.*





*Antique Silk Kerman Rug by Master Aboul Ghasem Kermani, Country of Origin: Persia – This eye-catching antique Persian rug is a truly unique composition with a coveted pedigree. Attributed to the legendary Aboul Ghasem Kermani, known as the master of masters, this remarkable antique Kerman rug is characterized by a monumental central medallion and an energetic palette of reds. Dominating the composition, the monumental central medallion is flanked on each corner by an intricate, outsized corner piece. The overall effect of this compositional choice, in which the central medallion and the corner pieces are disproportionately large, is one of unbridled, overflowing energy. This effect is underscored by the flowing, undulating nature of the detail work throughout the piece, which consists of countless floral and vine scroll elements. A master composition, this antique rug is a one of a kind masterpiece, overflowing with classical beauty.*





*Antique Silk Persian Kerman Rug, Country of Origin: Persia – This brilliant antique Kerman medallion rug embodies the extreme skill of this famed carpet-producing city and highlights the natural luminescence of the crystalline silk fibers that reflect light beautifully. Flourishing saffron spandrels frame the vivid cerise field and encircle the explosive lobed medallion, which displays a multitude of curvilinear decorations and radiant flowers. The bright color palette and vibrant jewel tones, including saturated midnight blues, periwinkle and persimmon, are accentuated by the luminous properties of the shimmering silk pile. These brilliant decorations have a vibrant personality with bold colors and opulent details that have a fresh, surprisingly contemporary personality. Strapwork guardbands and ruby-red main borders complete the composition while highlighting the lush botanical decorations that epitomize the curvilinear style of Persia's city carpets, which are prized for their timeless appeal and elegance.*





*Antique Persian Kerman Rug, Country of Origin: Persia – Here is a truly wonderful antique rug – a Kerman piece made in Persia. This Persian rug represents something genuinely special, and is a testament to the artisans who produced it. A beautiful piece, this rug possesses many of the qualities most sought after by collectors and experts, and would bring beauty and sophistication to any home. Reminiscent of Sheik Safi medallions, this Kerman carpet is woven with a dramatic central medallion containing sixteen leaf-like pendants and ogival corner spandrels. In addition to the accentuated guardbands decorated with star-like flowers and geometric petals, the main border features an intriguing, notched key-scroll design decorated with botanical motifs and architectural details. Simply put, this rug is a remarkable piece of work. A classic and stunning design and composition combine to make this rug something more than a decorative piece: they combine to make it a veritable work of art.*





*Finely Woven Small Mat Size Antique Persian Kerman Floral Rug, Country of Origin / Rug Type: Persian rugs, Circa Date: 1900 – True to traditional Persian Kerman rugs, this beautiful antique Persian rug elegantly shows off floral motifs and patterns through the use of flowing movements. The lines are very crisp and clean, representing clear paths of motion that carry the viewer's attention along other sections of the antique Persian Kerman rug. Primarily warm colors are used throughout the rug, but the elegant presence of the eggshell white adds intrigue and mystery to the piece, like a fine white smoke rising above a smoldering fire. A thick primary border surrounds the center of the antique rug, itself surrounded by two thinner and smaller borders. Within the largest border are several dancing floral petals and perennials. At the center of the rug is a beautiful mandala, surrounded by elegantly defined negative space created by the lighter-colored triangles present at the corners of where the borders meet with the rest of the antique Persian Kerman rug's core.*





*Antique Kerman Lavar Persian Rug, Country of Origin: Persia – Here is a beautiful antique rug – an antique Kerman Lavarrug, hand made in Persia around the turn of the twentieth century. Antique Persian Kerman rugs such as this fetching little example are widely sought after and admired by collectors for their unique beauty and exciting designs, which are generally characterized by elaborate and beautifully wrought detail work. With soft colors and lush florid motifs, this traditional Persian carpet is a classic representation of the Lavar style carpets produced in Kerman. The dark blue background provides ample contrast from the floral arabesques and detailed borders. With a soft green border and variety of pink, blue, and rose-colored flowers, this Lavar carpet uses many classic elements and colors that make the regional style highly desirable. A beautifully composed antique Kerman Lavar rug, this antique Persian carpet is an excellent example of one of the more popular styles of antique Persian rugs.*





## Pictorial rugs



*Antique Pictorial Lavar Kerman Persian Rug. Beautiful pictorial Lavar Kerman rug, c1875. The rug is made of all vegetable dyes. It depicts a lion, deer and gazelle in the forest. At the center of the top edge is a signature. The rug measures approximately 2/1 25 x 2/1 33 inches. It is finely woven and has approximately 225 knots per sq in. The rug's ends have been overcast, but the sides have light wear. There is quite a bit of pile remaining. This rug has been hand washed.*





*Ravar Kerman Pictorial, Court of Kiumars. Here is a lively Ravar Kerman Antique Pictorial Rug employing a palette of red, dark salmon, gold, pale amber, slate blue and black. The rug presents a scene of three robed men, two standing and one sitting on a carpet in a setting of small dogs and flowers and bordered by small floral groupings. This may be a scene of the three wise men.*





Oversized Large Antique Persian Kerman Lavar Rug, Country of Origin / Rug Type: Persian Rugs, Circa Date: Late 19<sup>th</sup> Century – Expertly composed, this inventive antique Oriental rug from Kerman showcases a lively repeating pattern comprised of pictorial vignettes. Mirror-image repeats seamlessly connect the individual scenes while creating a variety of kaleidoscopic intersections. Equestrian masters, towering minarets, modest bathers and verdant trees are combined to create a harmonious repeating pattern that is full of nuanced details and a dash of humor. The beautifully executed pictorial scenes are juxtaposed by layers of traditional border patterns. Artful main borders adorned with dramatic rosettes and flourishing Saz leaves are enclosed by multiple sets of secondary and tertiary borders that feature elaborate latticework patterns, intricate floral motifs and articulated vine scrolls formed by bifurcated calyces. This exceptional antique Kerman rug incorporates original patterns, masterful details and traditional design principles that are paired with an assortment of new, creative ideas.





*Ravar Kerman Pictorial. A small, elegant Ravar Kerman Pictorial Rug. The rug presents a stately figure above what appears to be a royal seal and surrounded by a field of cascading floral groupings and sprays.*





*Ravar Kerman Pictorial, Ahmad Shah. This small, delightful Ravar Kerman Antique Rug presents a portrait of a youthful royal figure in a garden setting framed by a bordering wreath of segmented blossoms.*





*Ravar Kerman Pictorial, Ahmad Shah and the other Qajar kings. A small, charming Ravar Kerman Pictorial Rug. Red, orange, brown, olive, sage, flesh, white and cream predominate. The rug presents portraits of various royal figures in a garden setting enclosed by tile-like floral displays.*





*Ravar Kerman Pictorial. A wonderfully stylized Ravar Kerman Pictorial Rug. Slate blue, camel, salmon, pink, cream and black predominate. A large border of florets and blossoms encloses a scene depicting men on horseback and men in repose.*





*Ravar Kerman Pictorial. Dark red, orange, olive, black, slate blue, light blue and amber predominate the palette of this richly detailed Ravar Kerman Pictorial Rug. A border of cameo-like portraits and groupings of wild animals encloses a panel which displays a forest scene of intertwining, spreading leafy trees and groups of exotic birds.*





Ravar Kerman Pictorial  
Court of Amir timur Gorkani





*Ravar Kerman Pictorial. Red, orange, black, sage, camel, tan and ivory predominate the palette of this richly colored Ravar Kerman Antique Pictorial Rug. The rug presents three well dressed men, two standing and one kneeling on a carpet in a pastoral setting with a rabbit and a cat. The scene is enclosed by diagonals of vinery and stemmed blossoms.*





Antique Persian Kerman Rug, Country of Origin: Persia, Circa Date: Late 19<sup>th</sup> Century – This stunning antique Persian Kerman rug is an incomparable masterpiece with a tremendously decorative composition, an exquisite level of detail and an ornate inscribed cartouche. The beautifully patterned field is adorned with a tower of rounded escutcheons filled with fruit-laden date palms that are flanked by supportive lion figures with eagle's wings and hooved feet. The heraldic Persian-style composition incorporates savage predators with hairline details that are paired with sweeping curvilinear vine scrolls. The superbly decorated field displays a regal selection of carmine red, Kerman pink and soft neutrals that continues through the elaborately decorated borders. Even the ornate border cartouches feature complementary date palms and intricate hunting scenes that exaggerate the extreme decorative style of this masterful antique rug.







*Antique Persian Kerman Rug 49063, Country of Origin  
Rug Type: Persian Rug, Circa Date: 1900 –*





Beautiful Silk and Wool Antique Persian Kerman Rug by Master Aboul Ghasem Kermani, Country of Origin / Rug Type: Persian Rugs, Circa date: 1880 – Through a masterful use of movements and outlines, Master Aboul Ghasem Kermani transitions this elegant antique rug from the abstract to the concrete. Vibrantly flowing forms begin at the upper edge of the rug's core, standing out against the rigid border, as if dropping downward like curling vines. These forms circle around a larger architectural relief, which itself leads the viewer's eyes to the beautiful scene below. Underneath the relief is a massive tree, providing much-needed shade to a host of animals, who gather around a kneeling man. Several smaller trees stand out in the background, their sizes a direct contrast to the majesty of the tree at the Persian rug's core.





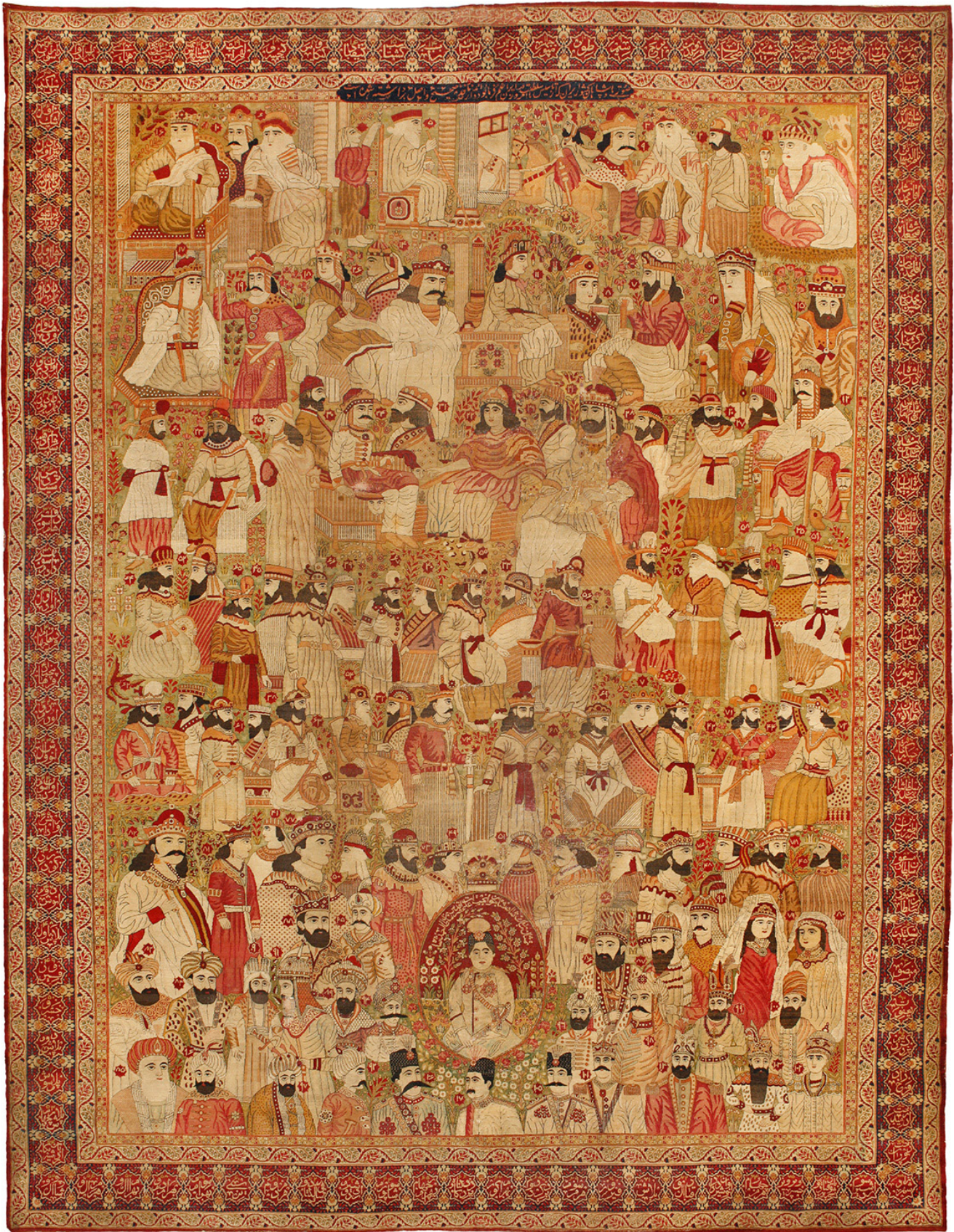
*Antique Kerman Persian Rug, Country of Origin / Rug Type: Antique Persian Rugs, Date of Origin: Late 19<sup>th</sup> Century – A complicated series of borders frame around each other within this gorgeous Kerman rug, each defined by a primary color sequence that effortlessly leads into the next. Though the beige tones of this antique rug are present throughout the piece, they act as an earthy grounding element to the black and red hues that define the foreground elements. This antique Persian rug branches out in theme as the viewer moves past the borders, turning away from abstract figures and forms to instead marvel at the concrete scenery at the rug's core. Here, a royal scene is beautifully rendered to appear as if it is taking place at a marvelous palace.*





Ravar Kerman Pictorial  
Abraham and Isaac





*Antique Lavar Pictorial Carpet, 19th CENTURY*





*Antique Kerman Persian Rug, Country of Origin: Persia, Circa Date: Late 19<sup>th</sup> Century – Indicated by the jewels, plumed turban ornament, and the profusion of symbolic swans, the courtier depicted in this portrait was a member of royal society. This luxurious antique carpet is an extremely impressive example of weaving from Kerman and the city's classic coral pinks. The typically western cameo is also quite unusual for any portrait produced by Islamic artists, who generally preferred broader formats.*





Ravar Kerman Pictorial  
Leily and Majnon





*Ravar Kerman Pictorial. A small, very pleasing Ravar Kerman Pictorial Rug. Slate blue, light blue, deep red, olive, pale olive, amber, orange and ivory predominate. The rug presents a maiden sitting with rip fruit and a linked purse in a floral setting bordered by small floral sprays and leafy vinery.*





Ravar Kerman Pictorial  
Rug of fame, 19<sup>th</sup> century





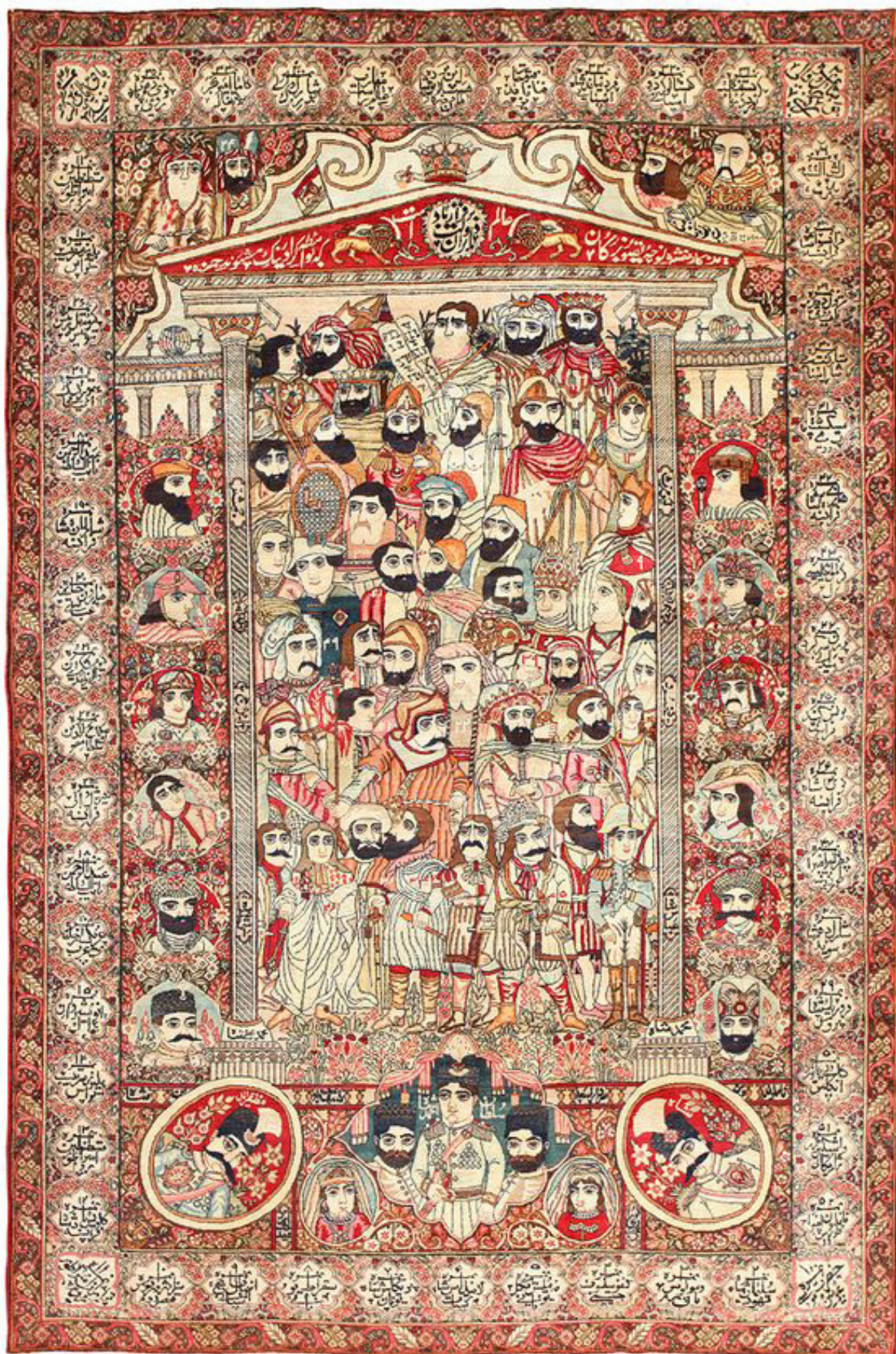
Matching pair of antique Kerman pictorial mats / poshtis – late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Good condition. Recently hand washed. They did have some strips glued on the edges, which have been removed, but they left a faint discoloration along the tops and bottoms. You can sort of see this in the pink of the borders. There is about half of the original end finish existing, but the ends have recently been secured and hand selvaged. The sides selvages have been re-wrapped also with fine wool. There is some embroidery infill along the edges of the tops and bottoms in the middles, where a couple of knot rows were missing. There is corrosion in the dark brown, and the cochineal or lac dyes. They are finely woven with about 300 kpsi, and the pile feels like velvet. Wool on cotton foundation. All the dyes are natural. They are about 25" x 32". Both have the same number written on the back. c 2085





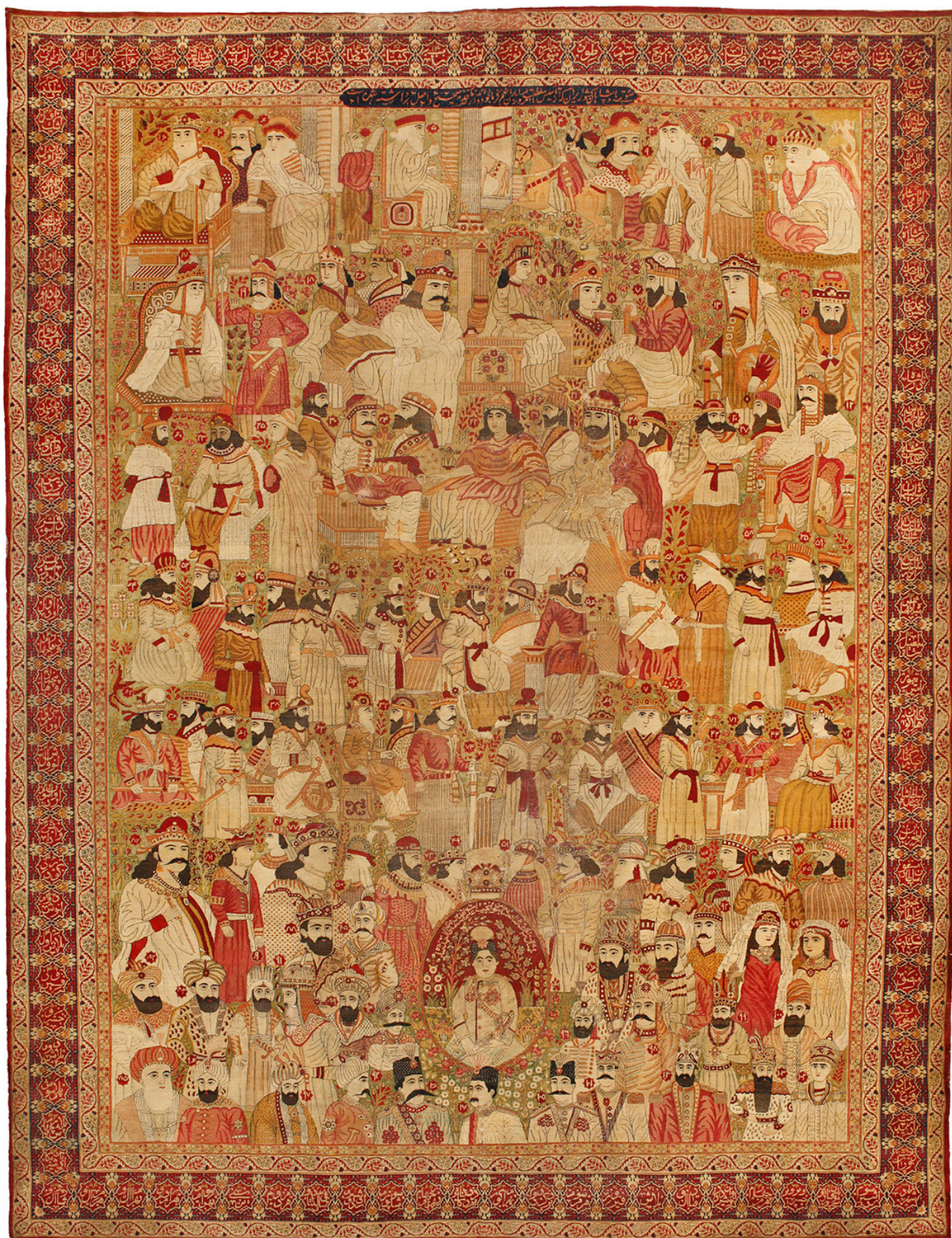
*Ravar Kerman Pictorial, Ahmad Sha. A small and fascinating Ravar Kerman Antique Pictorial Rug. Rich red, amber, orange, tan, green, dark blue and cream predominate. The rug presents a center panel with a seated, highly decorated military officer and two side panels of large floral displays surrounded by a border of roping, serrated vinery and floral sprays.*





Ravar Kerman Pictorial, Rug of Shahs and fame





*Ravar Kerman Pictorial  
Ahmad Shah and the other Qajar kings*





*Leily and Majnon*  
Kerman pictorial rug, Top condition, High pile, Not restored, All natural colors,  
Size: 135 x 95 cm. ( 53.1 x 37.4 inch )





*Ravar Kerman Pictorial  
Ahmad Shah and the other Qajar kings*





*Ravar Kerman Pictorial. Here is a small, enchanting Ravar Kerman Pictorial Rug. Bright red, dark blue, orange, amber, green and cream predominate. The rug displays a portrait of the Madonna and Child against a simple background enclosed by a border of serpentine vinery and stemmed blossoms.*





Ravar Kerman Pictorial  
The banquet Khayyam rugs









An antique Ravar Kerman pictorial rug, woven in colours and depicting Abraham being stayed by an angel in the sacrifice of Isaac, with signature panel to sky, within calligraphy border, 33ins x 25ins (slight wear) Note: Previously sold Woolley and Wallis, 18<sup>th</sup> July 2000 - Lot No. 61





*Antique Pictorial Lavar Kerman Persian Rug  
Karim khan Zand the King of Persia*





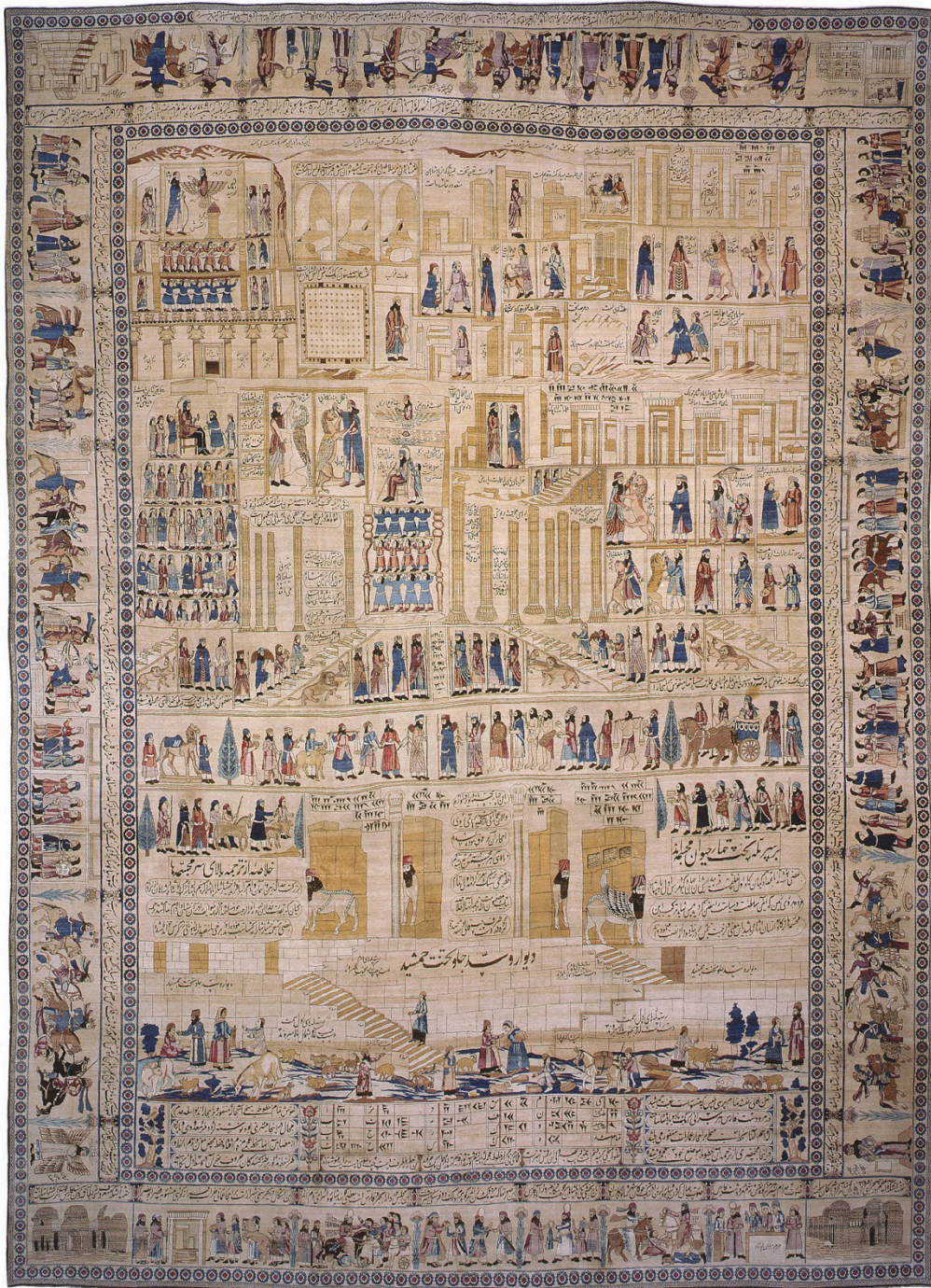
*Ravar Kerman Pictorial. A stylish, ornate Ravar Kerman Pictorial Rug. Red, blue, black, amber, camel and parchment predominate. A border of serrated leaves and floral groupings encloses a pair of matching panels presenting a royal person seated on a plush carpet in a palace with a second person standing nearby.*





*Ravar Kerman Pictorial, Leily and Majnon*





Antique Kerman Persian Rug. Antique Persian Kerman rug, late nineteenth century, designed by Master Kermani. Various nineteenth century Persian carpets, have from time to time been modeled on the ruined reliefs of the great palace built by the ancient Achaemenid Persian kings Darius I and Xerxes at Persepolis in the early fifth century B.C. But no other rug of this kind can compare with the range and monumentality of this splendid example, woven under the supervision of the great master Kermani. He combines reliefs from all over the site as well as views of the architecture, the great stairways, and even the nearby tomb of Darius. The border is based on scenes from later rock reliefs of the Sassanian Persian kings. Kermani has combined them into one great decorative homage to ancient Persian history and kingship in keeping with the taste and revivalist aspirations of the Qajar dynasty for whom Kermani worked.





Europe Map Pictorial Laver Kerman  
Circa 1880





*Antique Pictorial Lavar Kerman Persian Rug  
Rug of Shahs and Fame*





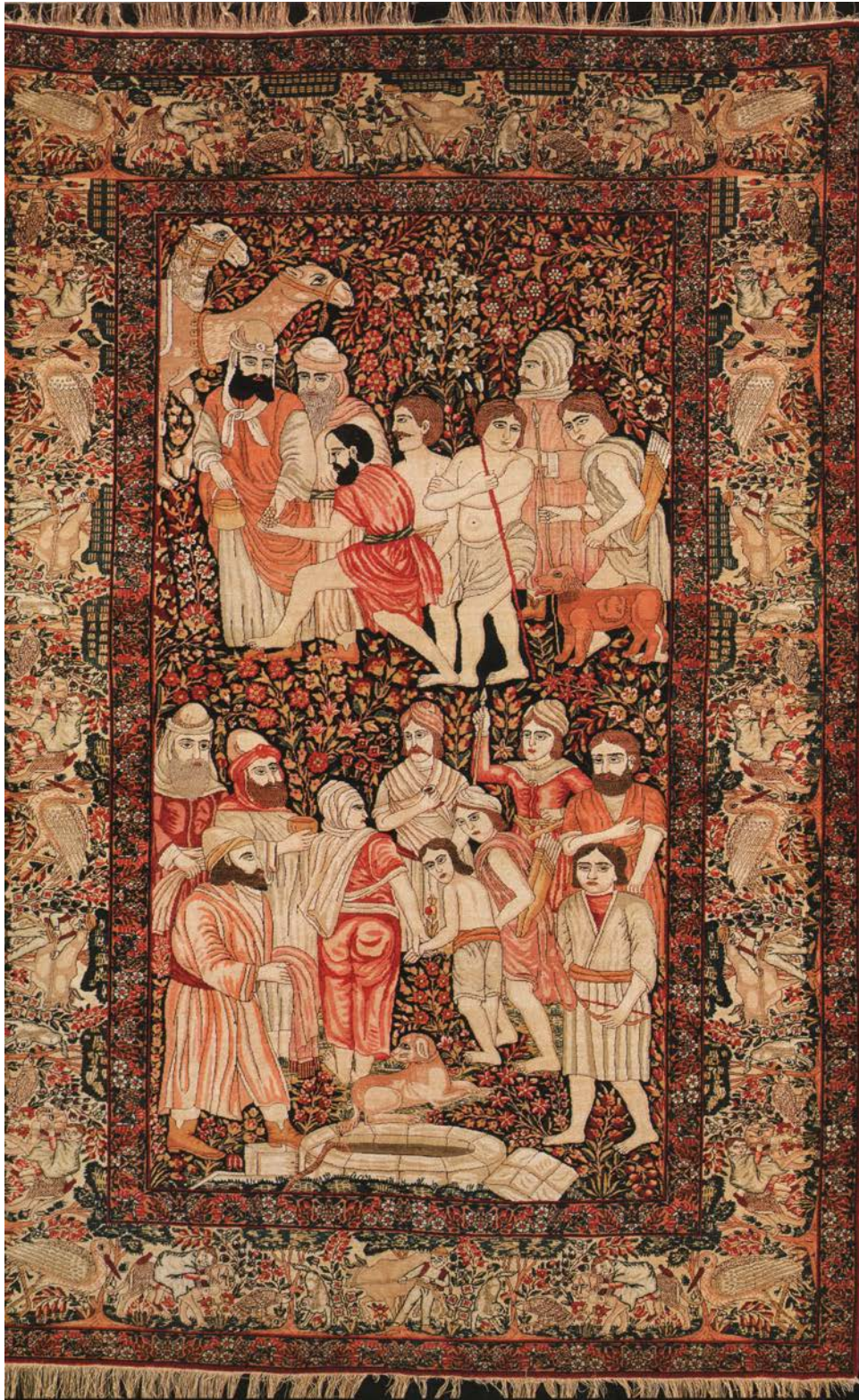
Ravar Kerman Pictorial, Banquet in the garden  
 Signature: Ostad (Master) Hossein Kermani, 1864





*Ravar Kerman Pictorial. A small, but eye-catching Ravar Kerman Pictorial Rug. Deep red, amber, cream, gray, blue tan and ivory predominate. The rug displays the portrait of royal figure beneath a draping canopy and framed by tiled floral elements.*





*This charming rug, c.1900, is typical of pictorial weaving produced in Kerman and the adjacent village of Ravar in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries: many of the compositions are derived from European prints, which were very popular in Qajar Persia. Here the story of Joseph and his brothers is told.*

*We can see Joseph inside the well (centre), Joseph being sold (above) and Benjamin being handed by Jacob to his brother Judah (below). Fine wool pile on a cotton foundation. 2.03m x 1.36m (6ft 8/7 7in x 2/1 5 4in)*





This is an extraordinarily high-quality version of one of the most famous late 19<sup>th</sup> to early 20<sup>th</sup> century Raver Kerman pictorial designs. Called 'The Dance of the Nymph' or 'The Pipes of Pan', it is based on a late 17<sup>th</sup> to early 18<sup>th</sup> century French tapestry after a Raphael cartoon that the Qajar Shah Nasser ud-Din had hanging in the Golestan Palace in Tehran. The earliest Kerman rug versions are attributed to the designer Hassan Shahrokhi and, judging by the number of surviving examples, it must have been extremely popular. Some of them are of extraordinary quality and signed by leading Kerman ustadans. Kork wool pile on a cotton foundation. 2m x 1.35m (6 ft 4 2/3 in \* 4 ft 8 1/2 in)





This ornately decorated 'Hunting Park' rug from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century has a design much favoured by weavers from Ravar in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Among the interlocking tree branches (a particular motif found in many different and often extremely dense versions on Ravar rugs), there is to be found an extraordinary menagerie of animals, including an elephant, a lion wrestling with what appears to be a winged snake, monkeys, rabbits, peacocks, various wild cats and deer, with some animals attacking others and displayed in the particular grouping (see, for instance, repeated all round the main border) that is known to carpet writers as 'bum-bits'. A very attractive carpet of unusually large size. Wool pile on a cotton foundation. . 3.38 m x 2.24 m ( 11 ft 8/11 in x 7 ft 4/14 in)





A rug from Ravar near Kerman, probably dating from the 1900s. The dense floral patterning is typical and can be seen on a number of examples in this book. More unusual is the fact that these flowers are not, as is often the case, tiny semi-abstract motifs recognisable as flowers more because of their context than their appearance. Here individual species can be identified, particularly the clump of irises in the centre foreground over which hovers a large butterfly. Also unusual is the fact that the dense floral patterning acts as a three-sided 'frame' for a pictorial composition with, in the middle ground, a group consisting of a stag and two does, who seems disturbed by the singing birds, and, in the background, a river landscape with trees. Wool pile on a cotton foundation. 2.46m x 1.54m (8ft 8/7 0in x 5ft 8/5in)





*This extraordinary Ravar Kerman rug, c.1900, bears an inscription at the base to the effect that it was woven by Mohammad ibn Jafar (c.1968-1896), one of the greatest ustadan of the period.*

*Mohammad ibn Jafar changed his name to Mohammad Arjmand c.1930 and subsequently used this name to sign his rugs (see Plate 100). Like the Kashan carpet illustrated in this Plate, this example is devoted to Sufi iconography and also depicts two of Sufism's greatest saints, Nor Ali Shah and Nematullah Shah. All the same Sufi attributes as on this Plate are also present, including axes, begging bowls, clubs, rosaries, cat skin rug and so forth, whilst the 'filler' ornamentation is a typically dense Kerman floral decoration.*

*All the main border decoration, including pictorial roundels of the saints, is in mirror image with a central dividing line running down through the exact centre of the rug. Although Sufi imagery is quite often encountered on 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century Persian pictorial rugs, especially these two saints, this is one of the most spectacular examples we have seen. Signed. Wool pile on a cotton foundation.*

*3.45m x 2.77m (11ft 8/7 3 in x 9ft 1 in)*





A Ravar Kerman version of the Qashqa'i rug illustrated in this Plate. The inscription cartouche in the field tells us that that large enthroned figure is Hushang Shah; the topmost cartouche contains an inscription reading 'Amaleh ustad Abd' [the work of the master-weaver Abd]. It is important that inscriptions such as this continue to be recorded and published as their value to future historians will be of great significance. After all, they represent one of the major documentary sources of information concerning weavers, patrons and dates. The close pictorial similarities between the two rugs are due to the fact that these designs were copied from 19<sup>th</sup> century illustrated books. Fine wool pile on a cotton foundation. 2.07m x 1.34m (Sft 9 ½ in x 4ft 4/3 4in)





This splendid and extramaly finely woven rug uses a very distinctive design known as 'The Leaders of the World'. The figures are an eclectic mix of impptant men through me ages, including Moses, Christ, Romulus, confucius and Napoleon. The identity of each person represnted is given in border cartouchas in both French and Farsi. Such rugs were obviunslly very highly regarded among wealthy Iranians. Signed in Farsi and French: Fabrique de Milani Karman. Kork wool pile on a fine cotton foudation. 2.43 m X 1.52m (7ft 6/7 11 in x 4 ft 6/7 7 in)





This early 20<sup>th</sup> century Ravar Kerman rug is stylistically typical of a group of pictorial rugs made at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> and beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, a period characterised by one leading rug writer as 'the Kermani Boom'. The scenes shown here, in two registers, are from the story of Joseph; he is being sold into slavery by his brothers in the top register and, in the bottom register, being forced naked into a well. Joseph's life was a favourite subject of Persian weavers at this time and it should be remembered, of course, that many of the stories concerning the one Testament Prophets also appear in the Quran. wool pile on a cotton foundation. 2.28m x 1.4m (7 ft 4/3 5in x 4ft 8/1 7in)





*The somewhat sketchy nature of the river landscape with animals shown in this rug is unusual. It is combined with a typically dense floral 'ground' at the base and a bower arch at the top and an equally dense flower and bird border. The way the landscape is arranged, with different animals at various levels, a suggestion of buildings among trees in the background and a realistically drawn clump of flowers and shrubs at the base, suggest that some of the ideas for this rug, like others made at Ravar around 1900, derived from European tapestries belonging to the Persian Court. Early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Wool pile on a cotton foundation. 21m x 1.3m (6ft 8/5 10 in x 4ft 8/1 3 in)*





*In among the usual dense flowering shrubs and intertwining leafy tree branches of this late 19<sup>th</sup> to early 20<sup>th</sup> century Ravar Kerman rug, there is a central landscape of three deer grazing with a lake and a mountain range in the background. In the foreground, at the base of the field, a cockbird and two hens scratch and strut among tree roots. Fine wool pile on a cotton foundation.  
2.12 M x 1.3 M (6FT 2/11 IN x 4 FT 8/13 IN)*





*This is an unusual rug in that it follows a format often found on French and English late 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century carpets but rarely on those from any of the great Eastern weaving countries. The large and elaborate armorial has as its central motif the lion holding a sword with a sun behind. This was the emblem of the Qajar dynasty, which ruled Persia from the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> to the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries; the emblem was adopted by the succeeding Pahlavi dynasty. The lion has particular significance since the Farsi word for it is shir, close to sh'ia ('the party of Ali') and the Imam Ali himself is known as Shiri Khuda ('Lion of God'). The entire armorial is surmounted by the Pahlavi Imperial crown. Fine wool pile on a cotton foundation. Early 20<sup>th</sup> century. 2.2m x 1.38m (7ft 8/5 2in x 4ft 8/3 6in)*





This is a good Ravar Kerman 'notables' rug from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Many examples of this remarkable type of pictorial rug were woven in Ravar in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The term 'notables' is used for the simple reason that all examples have densely packed fields depicting famous people from history, religion and mythology. In many cases, both Eastern and Western notables are mixed haphazardly. The present rug, however, confines itself to person-ages from Persian history and mythology. The crowds are divided into three principal registers, the upper two peopled with 'notables' from ancient history and mythology (certain figures are based on reliefs at Persepolis and other ancient sites). The most clearly recognisable group, however, is that at the base of the rug; this shows various rulers from the 16<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The central dominant standing figure, with the large white plume in his black hat and dressed in military uniform, is that of the last Qajar ruler, Ahmad Shah (r. 24-1909); the obvious reason for his dominance in the group is that he was almost certainly still reigning when this rug was woven. The three figures in the lower right corner are all recognisable by their various and distinctive barbade styles. In the bottom right corner, with a long lustrous black beard, is the Qajar Emperor Fath 'Ali Shah (r. 1834-1797); next to him, in the Qajar hat with white aigrette and waxed moustache, is the later Qajar ruler Nasir al-din Shah (r. 96-1848); and next to him, wearing a turban and with the instantly recognisable vast handle-bar moustache, is the Safavid, Shah Abbas the Great (r. 1629-1588). The name of each individual appears on his chest like a tiny lapel badge. Wool pile on a cotton foundation. Signed. 2.43m x 1.47m (7ft 8/5 lin x 4ft 8/7 9in)



## Qab-e-Quran design



*Antique Kerman Rug, Country of Origin: Persia, Circa Date: Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century – An ornate powder blue medallion with extended pendants and a central quatrefoil pattern decorate the dramatic cranberry red field of this Persian rug. Ornate spandrels featuring dense floral sprays in pastel pink and blue form an inner border that continues around the field. Well-defined floral cartouches surrounded by a secondary frame of ornate vinescrolls decorate the main ice blue borders. Kerman's signature carnations decorate the cartouches and corner sconces of this intricate carpet.*





*Antique Persian Kerman Lavar Rug, Country of Origin: Persia, Circa Date: Late 19<sup>th</sup> century— A cruciform medallion in violet mauve sits amidst a lavish profusion of flowering vines and branches on this opulent antique Kerman Lavar. This floral array is set against an ivory ground that is so dense, that little of it shows through. Still, the use of color in the floral detail is carefully controlled in order to articulate bands that organize the larger design. The form of the medallion is echoed on a larger scale, while additional bands create a larger frame for the field with indented niches at either end. The myriad floral elements of main border are similarly arranged through the use of color the articulate a series of grand cartouches that frame the field while preserving its palette and design texture.*





































































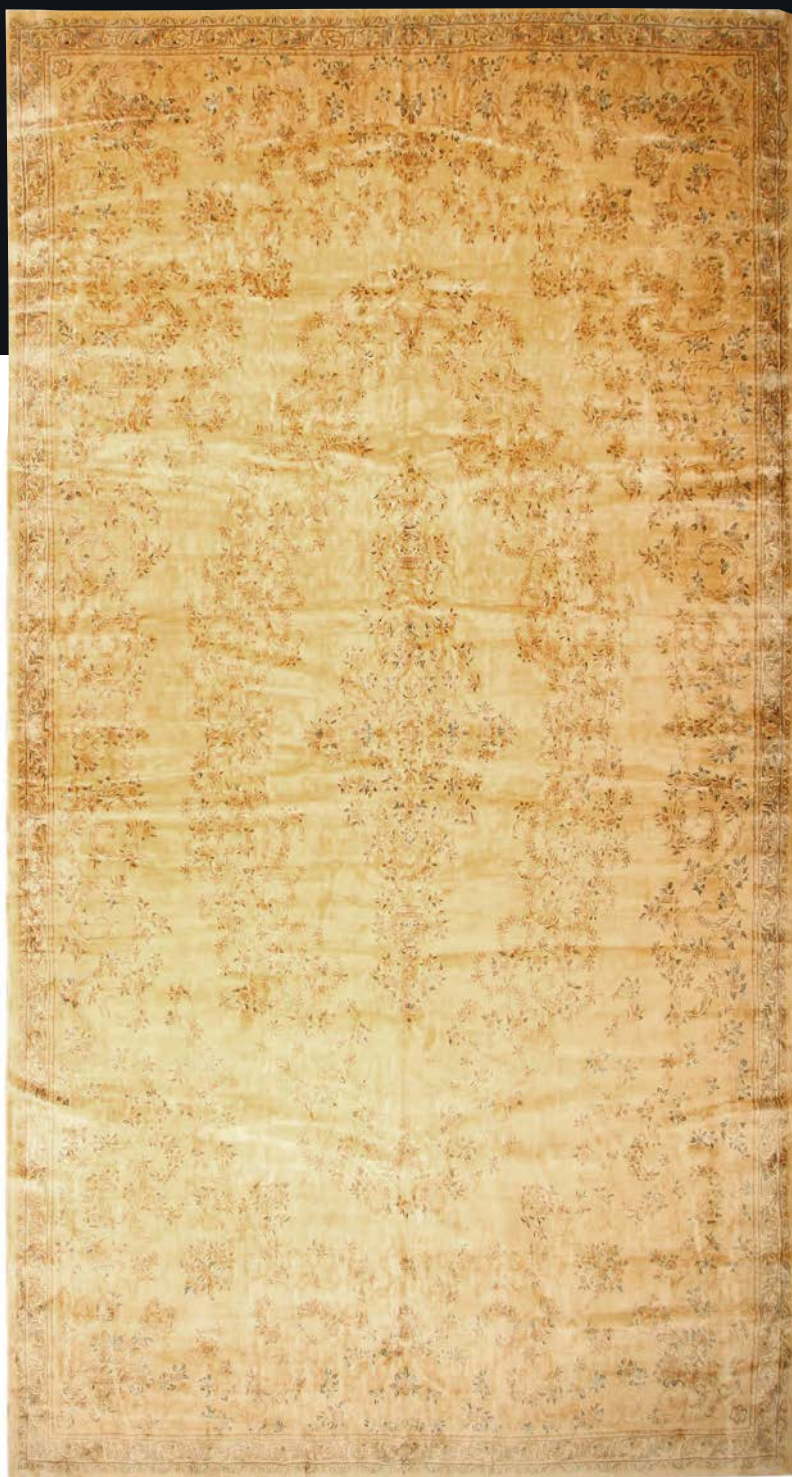


## French style



*An early 20<sup>th</sup> century Persian Kirman (Kerman) carpet, the camel field with a symmetrical design of elaborate flowering branches framing a stylized central medallion with pendants framed by a dense paisley border.*





*Antique Persian Kerman, Country of Origin: Persia, Circa Date: Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century—A subtly articulated medallion pattern unfolds gracefully across the field of this sumptuous antique Kerman, inspired by French Aubusson and Savonnerie carpets. The medallion itself occupies the center, rendered in an openwork mesh of flowering vines. A similar viney mesh surrounds the medallion as an oval corolla, enclosed yet again by surrounding cornerpieces of the same configuration. A narrow, unassuming vinescroll border frames the field, virtually merging into the cornerpieces. The soft palette of pale aubergine on soft golden tan is luminous, accented of course by the thick, lustrous Kerman pile.*





*Antique Persian Kerman Rug, Country of Origin: Persian, Circa Date: 1920's – Here is a truly beautiful antique rug — an antique Kerman rug that was originally made in Persia during the 1920's. Dramatic corner spandrels featuring accentuated vine-scroll flourishes frame the field and central medallion. Intricate borders woven with an elegant pattern of continuous floral motifs complement the style and colors used throughout the field. All in all, this is a truly wonderful antique Persian rug. Boasting many of the characteristics and qualities of antique rugs most desired and sought after by experts and collectors all over the world, this truly remarkable piece possesses a deep and enduring beauty. Sure to bring elegance, class, and sophistication into any home, this antique rug is a genuine work of art, the impeccable craftsmanship of which is a testament to the artisans responsible for its original construction.*

































































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