

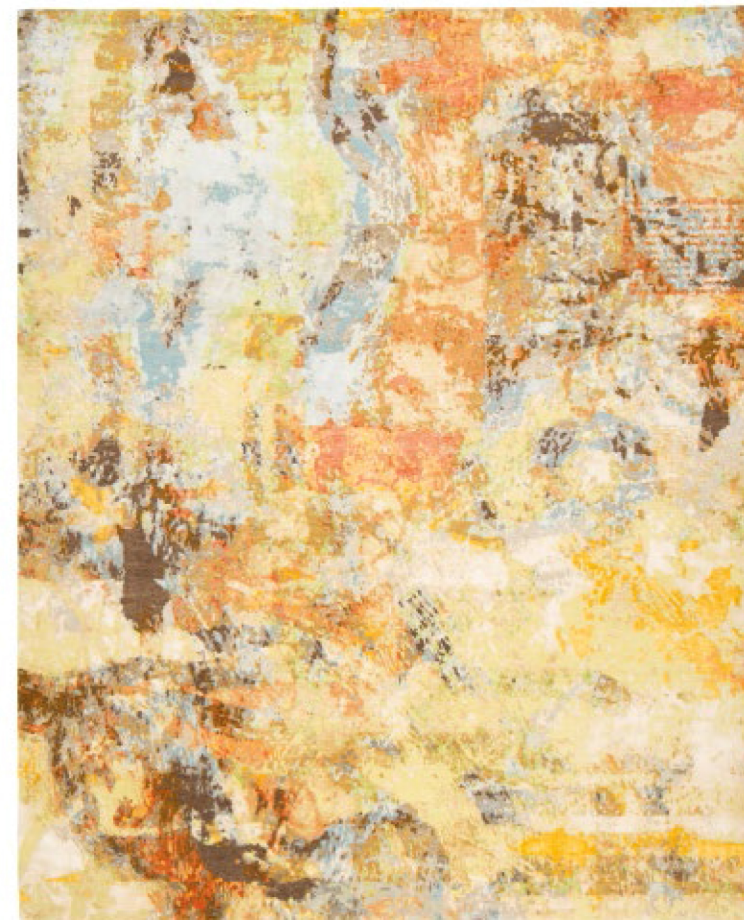


01

## A new rug chapter

Thirty years of experience working within the rug industry has informed Alan Pourvakil's new eponymous collection. **Denna Jones** talks to the Toronto-based purveyor of high-end carpets

02



01 Alan Pourvakil with Rug no. 27985

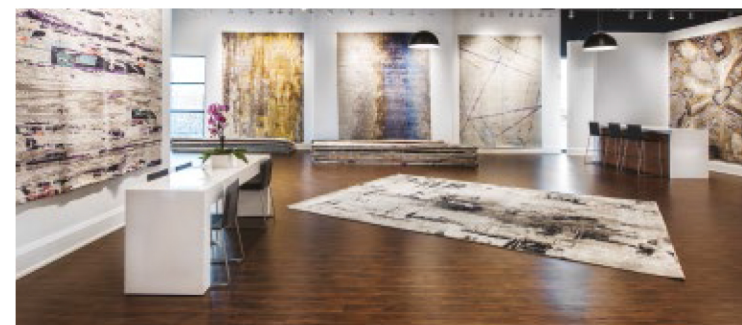
02 *Limelight*, Alan Pourvakil Collection

03



04 Alan Pourvakil's Toronto showroom

03 *Shimmer*, Alan Pourvakil Collection



04

Alan Pourvakil wears fashionably bookish yet businesslike black eyeglasses. A simple but luxurious woven scarf is looped around his neck, its gray and black weave complementing his understated yet sculpted hair. Laptop in hand to give his interviewer a video overview, he seems to fly around his eponymous Toronto rug gallery, a new wholesale rug venture that differs from his retail W Studio. The Alan Pourvakil Collection is the culmination of thirty years in the rug business, and represents a new, independent design direction. 'Now I feel I'm ready,' he confirms.

Pourvakil's inaugural collection is ultra high-end and contemporary. The limited-edition designs are complex Tibetan weaves handmade in Nepal with 70% pure silk and 30% wool. His coup de théâtre, however, is colour. Each rug features more than twenty tones. Pourvakil halts

in front of a display. 'This one you can use anywhere,' he states, 'even in a commercial application.' The dexterity of the design hinges on its deceptively shifting camouflage of colours. At one angle it appears predominantly cool greys, at another it is warm taupes and yellows, at yet another the brighter colours prevail. He points to an area. 'Pure black is harsh, but we dye it to be a soft charcoal.' Pourvakil points to another area and beams. 'The green, purple, and teal lift a room, they have a happy factor. The rug, the colours, they bring a smile to your face. It lifts a room.'

To create and forecast designs his clients need now or will want, Pourvakil tracks trends, the psychology of colour, interior design, fashion, street style. He knows what sells and what will sell. Pourvakil's innate style enables him to be a perspicacious provider

of the perfect rug for every client and every space. Keen powers of observation also play their part. When a new client visits, Pourvakil silently clocks everything the client wears down to the colour of their nail polish or the shine of the shoe to align those factors with what the client voices as their rug needs, and ultimately what Pourvakil will recommend.

The rug industry has historically been dominated by men. Pourvakil does not have sons, but he needs no prompting to extol the skills of his two daughters. 'I definitely believe women can do the job better than men!' He laughs with delight at the thought. 'They're more focused.' His youngest is nine and the eldest fourteen. Both are precocious painters who take classes at Toronto's Avenue Road Arts School. Pourvakil gestures to two abstract rugs. 'Golara is from a

painting by my older daughter and *Golsa* is by my youngest.'

'There's a lot of noise out there,' Pourvakil refers to the international rug trade. 'I'm producing my own designs now under the name Alan Pourvakil.' He speaks confidently as a man who knows his trade inside and out. 'I can spot a good carpet from a hundred feet. I know what sells and I can tell you what works in a room or tell a retailer the top ten carpets to have—the money makers.' The repositioning of Pourvakil in the rug industry is strategic and savvy. His personal style signals his bellwether role in the industry. The eyeglasses are quirky and his sartorial elegance is heir to Yves Saint Laurent. Together these signals and his skill mark out an *éminence grise* of the rug world, ready to write a new chapter.

[www.alanpourvakil.com](http://www.alanpourvakil.com)