



Oriental rugs provided shelter in nomad's land

By Cynthia Thomas
Battalion Reporter

Oriental rugs are more than just beautiful floor and wall coverings; they are historical works of art.

The rugs were first used by the nomads of the east. Local Oriental rug dealer George Woods said nomads used the rugs to eat and sleep on, to carry their belongings and as saddle coverings.

Woods said every rug has a specific meaning. Some rugs are used to tell the history of events or tribes of people. Others are used in religious ceremonies.

Woods, owner of The Un-Common Art Shop at 3219 Texas Ave., has been in the Oriental rug business for 20 years. Through his shop, he buys and sells Oriental rugs and acts as broker for interested clients. The rugs in his shop range from \$30 to \$240 for Oriental design rugs and from \$25 to \$1800 for the original Oriental rugs, with most selling for about \$300.

"Rug patterns used to depict the history of the area where the rugs were made,"

Woods said. "But today, people are duplicating patterns so this is no longer true."

The designs, which are carried through ancestry, were made up by a master rugmaker in charge of telling the others about the designs, Woods said.

Original Oriental rugs are hand-knotted or tied, and woven on a loom, Woods said. Children used to make the rugs because they had nimble fingers, but this is no longer true because they must go to school.

Oriental rugs are made in many of the countries of the East and Far East, including Greece, Turkey, Pakistan, China, Iran, Japan, India, and parts of Russia.

The value of an Oriental rug depends on its age and the material used. Oriental rugs are considered new, semi-antique or antique, Woods said.

"As a rule of thumb, I consider any rug that is at least 50 to 100 years old to be semi-antique. Anything older than 100 years is antique," he said.

Most rugs are well-worn, but not "old," by the time

they are 50 years old, unless they have been hanging on a wall.

"There is no such thing as an old Oriental rug," he said. As they "mellow" through wear, the colors become muted and the rug more valuable.

Some materials used in making Oriental rugs are llama, horse, and camel hair, but lamb's wool is the most popular, Woods said.

Oriental design rugs, which are machine-made today, look very much like original Oriental rugs. They are often made of cotton, wool or a man-made material called olefin. These rugs are manufactured in Bulgaria and in the United States.

Woods suggested that anyone interested in buying an Oriental rug should read about them first if they don't know anything about the rugs. A qualified dealer should be able to help determine the value and authenticity of a rug, he said.

But there is no fool-proof way to tell the Oriental design rug from an original. Experience is the only guide.

Warm up for the game with Aggie jazz club

By Nancy Weatherley
Battalion Staff

If you like to arrive at Kyle Field three hours before football games start in order to find a parking place, this weekend stop by the MSC Main Lounge instead of sitting with the birds on the third deck.

The University Jazz Club, a campus organization whose members all share a love for big-band sound, will be performing in the MSC before the SMU game.

"Most of the students really seem to enjoy it," said David Purcell, who plays the trumpet and is public relations director in the band. "Even though we're playing jazz, I think everybody likes live music."

Purcell and Floyd Kaminski, a trombonist and secretary/treasurer of the Jazz Club, said the band has been well received by the students and both hope students will continue to give the group feedback on their sound.

"I can't say enough about the people, how they have warmly welcomed us and made us a recognized part of the University," Kaminski said.

The 27-member group, structured like a big band, tries to play numbers that are popular with the audience, Kaminski said.

"Not too many people know the finer points of music or jazz, and they can't identify with the hard rhythms," he said.

"The music varies; from ballads to big-band, things like Glenn Miller did in the 1940's, from upbeat boogie to down-

nright funk," Kaminski said. Purcell said the group is more into the entertainment business, so what they play isn't difficult, clinical jazz.

"Jazz is a unique form of music, it's an interpretation of music and a feeling," Purcell said. "If you've got the feel for it, most of this music is easy enough and by seeing the music one time, you're as good at it as anyone else."

The group considers themselves unique in the fact that they are student run. "We conduct the music, work out various parts, all ourselves," Kaminski said. "The band is for everyone."

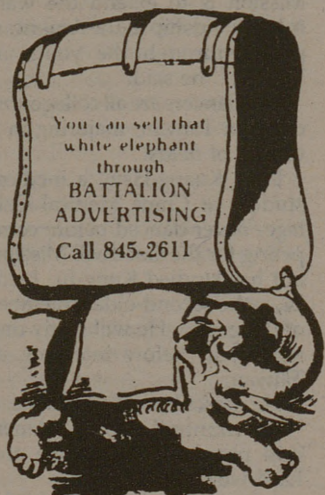
Purcell said they aren't just a club, with officers conducting the business, but a musical group with everyone involved.

Most of the members of the group have been in jazz programs during high school and have wanted to continue their music in college, Purcell said.

"Some of the finest players we have in the band are young, still fresh out of high school and in shape," he said. "The more people we get like that, the better we're going to be."

Purcell said just because someone who plays a particular instrument sees the band has a person in that place already, it doesn't mean they can't join the group. "We're still a club of all jazz musicians," he said.

The group has plans to play at all the home football games this year, and if you can't catch them there, they practice every Monday night in the Commons Lounge.



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