

DESIGN & TEXTILES

SUPPLEMENT

“Let me, O let me bathe my soul in colours; let me swallow the sunset and drink the rainbow.”

Kahlil Gibran.

“**COLOUR IS IMPORTANT.** It has always been important,” says Adam Gilchrist founder and owner of *Veedon Fleece*, the purely bespoke, high end luxury rug design company. Since the company’s earliest inception colour interwoven with detail, quality and luxury have clearly become his *raison d’être*. “We have a fairly defined client base who are design professionals within the industry, who tend to create excellence on an international basis and are looking for something different.”

At the high end of textile design, there is no counterpoint to luxury, especially in an industry where clients can call the tune to whatsoever they desire, and if the world is your oyster, then the ultimate luxury is surely a *Veedon Fleece* custom made, bespoke carpet or rug. This is the *haute couture* of carpet design. At *Veedon Fleece* the art of the woven carpet reaches beyond functionality and immediate visual satisfaction; it is a fully immersive sensuous experience, which speaks of superior quality and longevity. It is an immersion in richness of tones and texture; in sumptuous colours of the subtlest aesthetic languages. This is quality and design at its best. Imagine plunging your senses into a custom made, handwoven carpet created from the finest golden Muga silk, the softest pashmina, or the ultimate luxury; a rug made from a blend of hand carded silk and wool. These rugs are the pearl in the oyster.

Always striving for something better, always looking for something special, it took Adam Gilchrist over 10 years to source the best quality Tibetan wool and the finest golden silk produced in the mountains of Assam, to satisfy not only their discerning clientele but their own strict quality control. But what exactly is *Veedon Fleece*? Where does the name come from? “Through our development of the yarns, it led to the creation of a unique fibre. It is so wonderful, we gave it our name *Veedon* as it really is a material that we believe is second to none,” explains Adam.

Over the course of twenty-five years, together with his wife Clare, he has painstakingly sourced and developed the most luxurious wool and silk combinations that can be found. Silk, combined with the best Tibetan wool is hand carded and carefully blended before being hand spun and then dyed, creating a carpet with a subtle lustre and patina

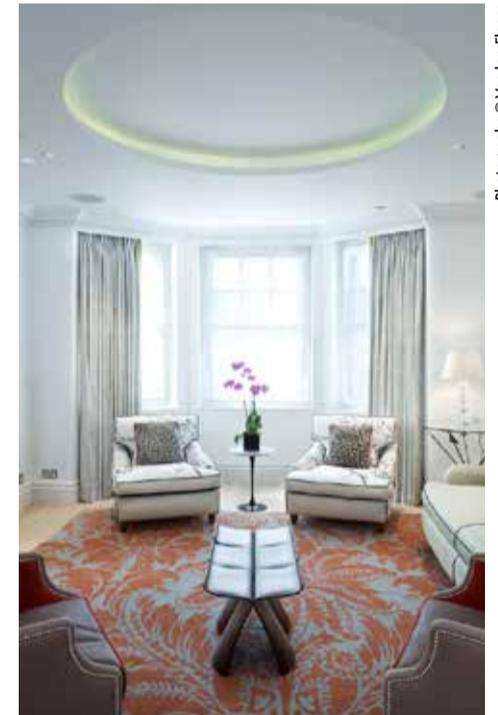


“We never have and never will employ weavers under the age of 15, and 150 knots per square inch is enough. Really it’s enough.”

Top:
Slides commission,
Bannenberg & Rowell Design
Left:
Hermione Skye
Top right:
Damask commission
Christopher Chanond

of the best quality antique carpets. It is this exceptional *Veedon* quality that allows the translation of any design, be it contemporary or classical, into a carpet that is literally fit for a king or queen. In fact designing for royalty is no exaggeration, and though he keeps his little black book quietly under wraps, this is an international designer whose clientele spans the ages, from rock stars, heads of states, to fashion houses and press barons; add a sprinkling of super yachts, ‘we are on board three of the top 10 largest super yachts in the world,’ a dash of English aristocracy and Middle Eastern royalty, you have the picture. Which brings us to the name *Veedon Fleece*; an adapted title borrowed from Van Morrison’s 1974 studio album. But Adam Gilchrist is no hijacker of ideas. He is an original thinker in his own field, as well as an entrepreneur of luxury and excellence. He is also a

staunch defender of his ethical child labour values which he has emphatically instilled and maintained since the outset. In part, luxury carpets are dependent on the quantity and size of knots per square inch. “Every tiny stitch is a hand tied knot,” explains Adam. “It can be done with child labour, however by the time a weaver is 15 years old, they are half blind with the hands of a man. In the early 1990’s we were the first to say no to child labour and it was not received well by the industry. We never have and never will employ weavers under the age of 15 and 150 knots per square inch is enough. Really it’s enough.” It should be noted that it is not just the high knot count that contributes to making *Veedon Fleece* the leading quality rug producer from Nepal, but it is also the quantity of the best quality wool which is used. There are ten different grades of Tibetan wool. “We only use the best.



Photographs © Veedon Fleece

We also hand wash the wool ourselves to keep as much of the natural goodness. In our opinion, over processed wool is spoilt and therefore not allowed into our workshops. Neither do we blend our best wool with less costly New Zealand wool. There is very little point in trying to save a little on the ingredients when you are producing leading quality bespoke carpets. Our wool is so carefully sourced that we even developed the seven Natural Colours of Wool, undyed natural colours, available from the Himalayan range.”

It is perhaps this very clever combination of blending that makes *Veedon Fleece* so unique. A precise understanding of colour palette and selecting the finest yarns that helps create each one-off bespoke carpet in the signature *Veedon Fleece* silk and wool so special. “It starts with silk highlights in a *Veedon* or best Tibetan wool carpet and continues to the point where some 60% of the design can be in silk. This application works particularly well with *Veedon Fleece*’s damask and especially when working with a single colour, the silk reflecting the light to allow yet another shade, superb *en grisaille*.” Adam Gilchrist has a certain cachet. He has rich undertones in his thinking. Some might claim he has vision, but not many people could apply their imagination and aesthetic understanding with such dogged determination to travel to Tibet, source and actually produce something of such luxurious quality from their mind’s eye. He may not have drunk the rainbow but he has certainly captured some of its magnificent colours in his sumptuous carpets.

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