

ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN

Francis Sultana's new rug collection titled *Indore* is an ode to India's rich history

London-based designer Francis Sultana's latest collection of rugs—made by hand in Persian-, Tibetan-, and flat-knot techniques—launches at Paris's Galerie Diurne.

By Cristina Kiran Piotti

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"India is a country of such great history, which is so inspiring to a designer," says Francis Sultana—the Maltese interior designer, featured on the US AD100 list—who recently launched a new series of four rugs, titled *Indore*, at Paris's Galerie Diurne. "My inspiration really came from a collection of sources but all were from the art deco era and its influence on some of the maharajas, and the incredible architectural and interior style they created in their palaces all over India," Sultana explains.

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Sultana resides in London, where his studio is set in St James's. A great admirer of artisanal skills and techniques, he designed three of the Indore rugs in wool and silk (Eugène, Elisabeth, Evelyne), and a fourth in linen and silk (Eloïse). "It's all in the detail of the execution and process with my designs—both the type of yarns that are used and the traditional dying and weaving techniques that create the sophistication of these handmade carpets," Sultana adds. "I love using traditional artisanal crafts in my furniture and my interior design project and it was no different in the rugs. It is so important to keep these skills alive, and appreciate and use them within contemporary interiors."

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Hand-knotted at two workshops—one in Nepal and the other in Uttar Pradesh, near Varanasi—the collection highlights three different weaving techniques. The boldness of the colours stands in contrast to the simplicity of the patterns in the collection. As a result, the Evelyne colour palette, which is both striking and delicate, is intriguing, while the black lines that surround but do not completely embrace the Eugène rug appear to be figurative. "The approach was to look at historical textiles from the 1920s and to be inspired by the colour palette, and that is one of the fundamental qualities of my process in designing this collection," Sultana explains. "I looked to the past to inspire me and to help me in the creation of pieces of long-lasting beauty."