

## **Claremont Rug Company Assembles Rare Collection of Tribal, 19th Century Rugs**

### **Thematic Exhibition Highlights "The Art of Timeless Beauty"**

BERKELEY, Calif., Sep 15, 2008 -- An exceptional collection of more than 60 antique Oriental rugs created in the 19th century by tribal weavers will go on display, Friday, October 3, at the Claremont II Rug Gallery as part of an exhibition entitled, "The Art of Timeless Beauty." The collection features rugs seldom available for sale and is believed to be the largest exhibition of rare tribal rugs in the world in recent years.

**The opening weekend of the exhibition will include a limited seating lecture, scheduled for 2:30 p.m., Sunday, Oct. 5, at the Claremont II gallery, located at 1813 Fourth Street in Berkeley.** Claremont Rug Company founder and president Jan David Winitz said that many of the rugs in the group "are of a type that are occasionally found in personal collections and seldom offered for sale.

"Over the past decade, tribal rugs of this quality have been increasingly limited to the private collections of connoisseurs," he said. "They rarely even come to the auction market, and when they do they regularly sell far above the high estimate. Because of our long-established reputation, we are often offered exclusive access to the finest rugs, as was the case with the Hudson River Valley Collection that we acquired earlier this year."

Winitz and Claremont Rug Company have recently been featured in articles that have appeared in the Financial Times of London, the New York Times, Elite Traveler Magazine, and The Robb Report Collection.

Winitz and his staff periodically present educational lectures in a limited audience situation. In late 2007 and earlier this year, Winitz and Claremont Vice-President Robin Somerville delivered two standing room only lectures about the rugs and tribal weavers of the Caucasus Mountain region.

"Virtually all of the rugs on display were acquired from long-established American and European collections and have not been viewed publicly during our generation. They feature numerous seldom-encountered motifs and color palettes," said Winitz, who created the internationally known Claremont Rug Company nearly three decades ago.

"As part of a tradition stemming about three millennia, rugs of unimaginable beauty were woven adapting the traditional archetypal designs and color combinations of eight major tribal groups. As their nomadic lifestyle changed irreversibly at the start of the 20th century, a limited number of these masterworks are left for us to marvel at today," he said. "The recent interest by major publications is another indicator that art collectors and investors are taking serious interest in the best antique rugs."

Speaking of his recent lectures, Winitz said, "The response was tremendously gratifyingly. They confirmed there is a true thirst for knowledge among rug aficionados who are beginning to look beyond the decorative value of rugs."

Somerville will be the primary speaker at the October 5 event entitled, "Antique Tribal Rugs: Unchanged since Biblical Times." To illustrate his lecture, Somerville will present a wide collection of extraordinary tribal rugs, rare photos and a film. There is no charge for the event. However, seating is limited and RSVPs are recommended