



## **Demand for Antique Carpets and Rugs Expands While Availability is Reduced**

Oakland—September 16, 2007—Internationally-recognized antique rug expert Jan David Winitz today said that the market for investment-quality, art-level antique Oriental carpets has increased dramatically during the past decade. He warned, however, that the best rugs from the 19<sup>th</sup> century were far less frequently available for purchase by collectors.

“Having experienced in our nearly three decades of the business that the availability of great antique rugs has been steadily decreasing,” said Winitz, founder and president of Claremont Rug Company, “we have strategically created a network of access to the finest collections and estates in the U.S. and Europe, as well as maintaining an inventory of a minimum of 3000 rugs of our own.”

Adjunct to this, Winitz has noted that many of the finest pieces that he sells are being stockpiled by a growing group of connoisseurs and even going into private museums. “A number of our clients are asking us to hold many of their rugs in our warehouse for future use or for investment,” he said.

Winitz, author of *“The Guide to Purchasing an Oriental Rug,”* manages an international team of expert buyers who continually review private collections and estates, purchasing rare rugs for the inventory of his two galleries.

His main Claremont Rug Company gallery, called by the Financial Times of London “one of the world’s best sources of antique carpets,” houses his vast inventory. However, he notes, that two-thirds of his clients are “not local” to

his San Francisco Bay Area location. "Even some of our most active clients have never been to our gallery," he said.

"An unprecedented amount of wealth has been created starting in the 1990's." Winitz said, "and this has drastically reduced the number of outstanding antique rugs available internationally. This has progressed to the point where many companies have switched over to primarily offering reproduction carpets."

"To our long-time customers, we propose rare rugs as soon as they become available," he said. "Because of the trust that they place in our expertise, it is not at all unusual that they purchase them from the photos, without even having seen the actual rugs.

"Our clients are very busy and very art-savvy. They have multiple residences and are always on the move. For this reason they often purchase even extremely rare rugs from us by using our Internet gallery, our extensive catalogue and the home presentations we do all across the country." he said. "We complete many full-home furnishing projects without the clients ever having come to the store," he added.