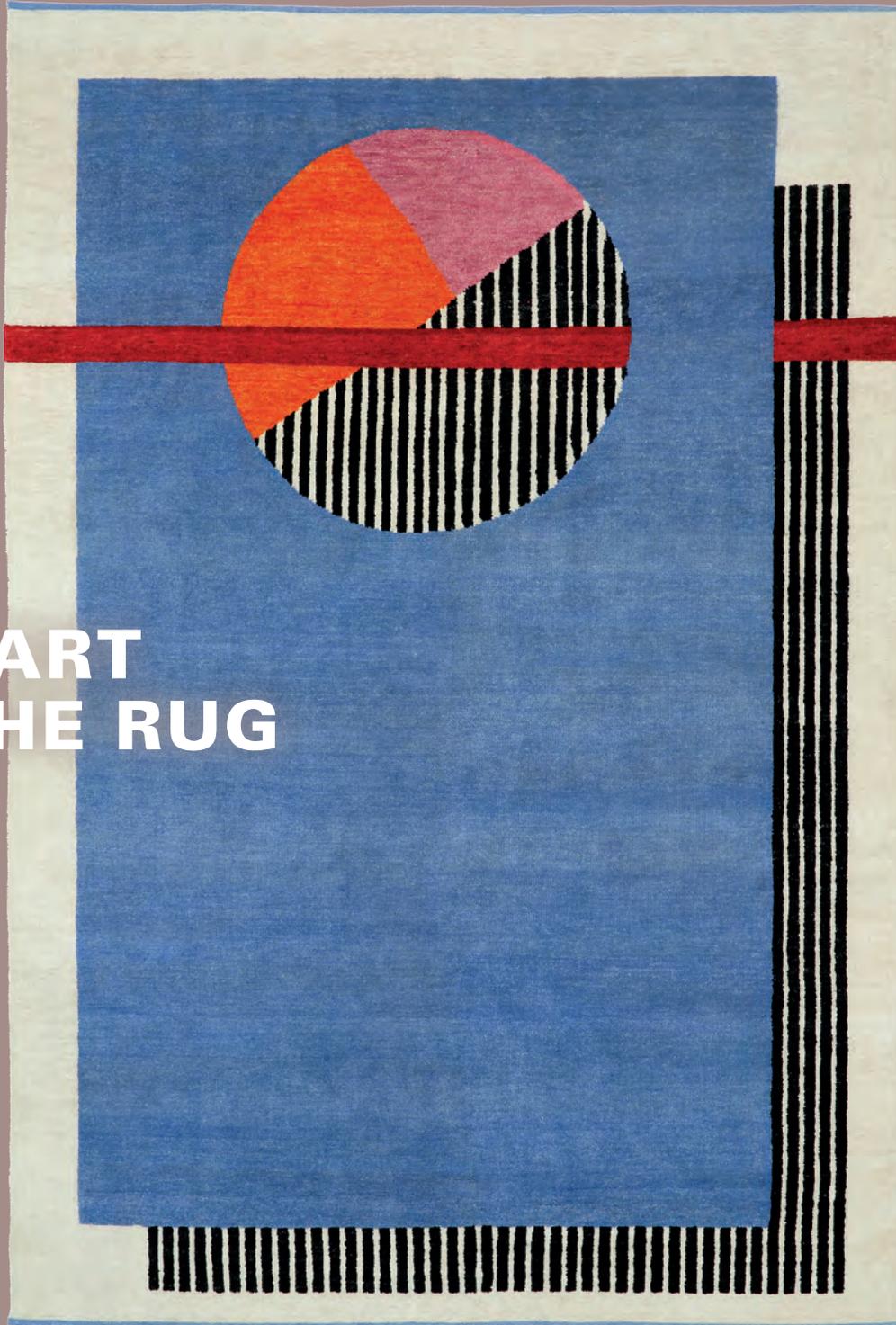


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## THE ART OF THE RUG



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01  
A sense of place

Interior architect Natalia Miyar shares her approach to creating comfortable elegance with **Rachel Meek**

**N**atalia Miyar considers rugs to be one of the most transformative elements of a space. Her studies at Brown University, Rhode Island took her close to becoming a professor of art history, before a love of architecture and interiors inspired a change of direction and she completed a Master's degree in Architecture at the University of Miami, launching her Atelier in 2016. 'Absolutely!' she exclaims when I ask whether she thinks that rugs can be considered works of art. Splitting her time between Miami and London, a Chelsea Wharf office acts as her base for around

two thirds of the year. It is clear at the outset of our conversation that international travel is key to her design practice and lifestyle, as well as that of her discerning clients. 'I have a global approach to interior design. My clients tend to be very well travelled with an appreciation of art and design from different parts of the world,' she says. 'Every place is unique and possesses its own character formed from a combination of the landscape, the architecture, the people and so many other components that come together in their own way. The design of homes should take this into account, making the best of their context, as well as considering the way that the clients want to live.' So how does one go about translating the complex essence of a place into a unique and personal residential space?

When it comes to rugs, tactility is all-important: 'My clients tend to be very particular about the feel of a rug underfoot. Depending on their requirements and the scale of the project, I will look for a vintage rug, source an existing design from a trusted brand, or commission a one-of-a-kind piece.



02

01 Natalia Miyar Atelier x LuxDeco room at Holiday House London 2018

02 Cozy project games room in an oak barn on a country estate in the UK, defined by horsehair, wool bouclé, linen and leather. Rug by Sinclair Till

03 Textured project bedroom, UK, with walls papered in herringbone and layered velvets, linens, silks and mohair

04 Natalia Miyar



03

04



Sinclair Till really get my style—combining earthy qualities with a glamorous look, so I go to them when I need something bespoke.' The London company stocks Swedish brands Vandra Rugs and Kasthall and has its own range of kilims and tulus, many of which have a largely textural aesthetic, as opposed to abstract or figurative designs.

Highlighting the inherent qualities of materials is key to Miyar's signature style. 'At the start of each project, we research what the location can offer in terms of natural materials and local craft makers who employ traditional techniques.' In Miami there is native limestone, in Spain, handmade tiles. But it is not always so straightforward. 'You might think you've found a local product you haven't seen elsewhere, but then it turns out to

have been made miles away,' Miyar says. She often finds this to be true of textiles—always important in her schemes.

'A room without cushions is a sad thing, but if the space is wrong, no one will care if the cushions are beautiful. That is the value of having us involved from the start; we are there at every stage of the project, balancing the materials palette, using collage, sketches and models to ensure the soft furnishings will work with the solid fixtures. Then, later, ensuring the finishing touches are just right.'

'I love the way that every project is an opportunity to tell a story,' she concludes. 'So many elements come together to create something that is entirely individual and different every time.'

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