

New carpets have fashion covered

More designers bring signature style to rugs

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You admired designer [Nanette Lepore's](#) peacock-patterned dresses, but they were so three years ago. Now you can resurrect the pattern for your floor.

Lepore has joined a growing list of fashion designers — [Calvin Klein](#) and Liz Claiborne (with Nourison), Oscar de la Renta (with Elson & Co.), Vivienne Westwood, Paul Smith, Diane von Furstenberg, Lulu Guinness (with the RUG Co.) — all translating their passion for fashion design to floor coverings.



Nourison

(ENLARGE)

'In this day and age, people associate certain looks and concepts with fashion designers,' says Julie Rosenblum of Nourison, maker of Calvin Klein and Liz Claiborne carpets. Above, a Calvin Klein rug.



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Thom Filicia of Style Network's 'Dress My Nest' looks at Calvin Klein-designed area rugs at ABC Carpet & Home in New York. 'Good design is good design,' he says.

people's wardrobes."

His big advice: Designing from the floor up is a good start. "Start from the rug, in terms of colors and what sets the tone, whether classical or modern, or whatever."

Another factor to consider: Rugs have a longer shelf life, said Lepore, and that's precisely what made the project appealing to her.

Lepore recently introduced a bold-patterned area rug with her peacock design for the Doris Leslie Blau carpet gallery in New York. The gallery also in early March unveiled two nautically inspired rugs designed by Tommy Hilfiger (one blue with white anchors, the other navy with a red chain-link pattern).

Lepore said she is happy she did the project, especially since she now has one of her rugs in her own living room.

"The way it transformed my living room with color and a bold pattern, it would be fun to do more of that," the designer said. In fact, she's considering designing another rug for her pool table area that the public may see in stores some day.

What do those in the world of interior design think about fashionistas stepping in?

"I believe good design is good design and a good designer is a good designer," said Thom Filicia, best known as the design expert on the television series "Queer Eye for the Straight Guy." But would he recommend consumers start buying area rugs based on what's in their wardrobes?

Filicia said he wouldn't go that far. Still, he has a new show on the Style Network called "Dress My Nest" in which he will use fashion as a springboard to help folks figure out interiors.

"I do think there's a relationship. Saying you want to match your house to your clothes is too literal, but clothes do indicate your point of view, your aesthetic," he said.

"Young and hip or traditional or conservative, you can tell when you see someone," Filicia added. "And you get color from

"People don't change their homes as much as they change their closets," she said.

As for the trend of fashion designers stepping into rug design, she said, it brings "a fresh eye" and new brands that will create more interest.

Julie Rosenblum, brand manager for Nourison, the manufacturer of the Calvin Klein and Liz Claiborne carpets, agreed.

"In this day and age, people associate certain looks and concepts with fashion designers," Rosenblum said. "It's reaffirming to the consumer that the product has a point of view and they understand that point of view."

Rosenblum said she suspects more fashion designers will introduce area rugs, and that's a good thing. "It brings rugs to the forefront."