



Oushak, Circa 1880

Ref: 29071

Size: 9'4" x 11'

Content: Wool

Collection: Antique

Hand-knotted in Anatolia

## Angora Oushak Carpet, 9' x 11,' Western Turkey, Circa 1880

Room-size Oushak carpets like this come from a long tradition of western Turkish or Anatolian rug weaving. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Oushak was a leading center in the production of large-scale palace carpets for the Ottoman dynasty, carpets luxurious enough to compete with contemporary Safavid Persian court products. Oushak carpets were also highly prized by the European aristocracy at this time. In the nineteenth century when the western demand for Oriental carpets greatly increased, Oushak once again emerged as a major center that could satisfy the European and American requirement for luxurious room-sized rugs. During this later time Oushak workshops continued to draw on the designs that had long made their carpets famous, but in addition they now began incorporating an ever wider and more exotic design repertoire from all across the Asian continent.

This magnificent carpet beautifully exemplifies the new, more eclectic and cosmopolitan Oushak orientation. The field features a dynamic array of variably colored stylized marigolds delicately staggered in rows against a rich red-gold field. A closer look reveals that the marigolds are actually stylized 'Tibetan' lotus pompoms of a type long established in the textile arts of the Silk Road. Their color varies rhythmically from soft olive, sage, and blue tones to cinnamon and dove grey, with their petals beautifully articulated in contrasting outlines. The natural tone of the marigolds themselves has actually been transposed as the ground color, while the tones of the flowers shift constantly and unexpectedly, endowing the design with a graceful dynamism. The main border features similarly colored lotus pompoms of a slightly different form arranged as a kind of vinescoll, but set against a deep blue ground that nicely frames the field with its contrasting hue. Minor geometric and floral minor borders or guard stripes in marigold and tan underscore and enrich the framing effect of the border, capped off by the final, external marigold band running all around the perimeter. But for all the care and delicacy of the drawing and design, the true glory of this carpet is the luminous, silky 'Angora' wool of the voluptuously thick pile. It is the transparent luminosity of the wool itself that lets the color attain its maximum effect and beauty, while allowing the delicate texture of the pile to complement the delicacy of its design.