Mid 20th Century French Art Moderne Savonnerie Carpet

Description



Wool pile in symmetric (Turkish) knots, in a moderate weave, on a cotton and jute foundation. The transition from knotted pile carpets to those woven in the jacquard and tufted techniques continued in the 1960's, but a number of carpets were still woven in the more long-lasting knotted pile technique. The Savonnerie factory in Paris continued to weave for the State, but many other shops, including Cogolin in the south of France, also worked in that method. This carpet is lighter in weight than standard Savonneries and probably originates in one of these shops. The carpet shows a graded light grey field, with pale blue undertones, ornamented by drops and broken swirls of colour including cream, shades of yellow, brick and black. The narrow border shows black and cream, along with narrow, broken lines in medium blue and pale straw. It looks as much a ceramic plate as much as a carpet in the images. Upon closer inspection, the pixelation of the pile breaks up the colours. The rug is unsigned and there is no label surviving on the back to identify designer or workshop. Round rugs are fairly uncommon, and they are often placed under round tables. Although Leleu and his successors often employed round carpets, this is certainly not one of them. This carpet is certainly from the 1960's when designs loosened up from the more organized field/border distinction of the Moderne carpets of the immediate post-war era. So it is not really accurate to call it a "Moderne" carpet as it lacks the formality and structure of those pieces. Clearly, the maquette was intended for precisely this carpet. One of the problems of attribution of many unsigned modern French carpets is that were made as singularities, one-offs, and not ad seriatim. Each piece was unique. Without a signed maquette, attribution to an artist may be impossible. It is hard to imagine this carpet blown up to a three metre diameter unless more design elements were added. Merely making them larger would change the general look of the piece.

There is a subtle sense of rotational motion as the apparently random elements sweep around the rug. An enlargement might change both the tonal balance and the implicit motion. In other words, don't look for this design in a nine foot diameter clone. This piece securely fits in with the 1960's-1970's painterly trend, toward minimalism, but actually employing numerous subtle shades. It is not Op either, not Psychedelic, not artsy and stencil, cut-out cute. A number of other French carpets of the period are published with similarly abstract, asymmetric painterly designs, but in somewhat more emphatic palettes and rectangular formats. There is something calming about the pattern and palette. Mid-century modern furnishings, with their clean lines and defined edges are not particularly appropriate, but it requires something softer, more comfortable, more intimate, and definitely a smaller room. Not a loft space that goes on forever, but maybe a bedroom, or some sort of nook. We are always interested in these painterly rugs from a period that needs more study, both to establish designers and to sort out the workshops. A perusal of the maquettes and files of the various French companies still in business, and which were active in the 1960's, such as Cogolin, would be a good place to start.

Stock ID:	#24050
General Rug Type:	European
Specific Rug Type:	Art Deco - European
Circa:	1960
Color:	Grey
Origin:	France
Material:	Wool
Weave:	Pile - Knotted
Shape:	Round
Width:	7' 9" (236.22 cm)
Length:	7' 9" (236.22 cm)