



**W**hen artists Brad Davis and Janis Provisor traveled to St. Barth's last year, they searched for a house with a veranda over the roof where they would be able to paint all day. "Natural phenomenon are how we draw our inspiration — trees, plants, air, even rocks," Davis says. This trip was how Davis and Provisor's newest collection, Glimmering, for their carpet company Fort Street Studio, came about.

"Glitterati is a very Chinese style of design, as a lot of our work is," says Provisor, whose art has been shown at The New Museum, the National Gallery of Art, and Germany's Ludwig Museum. The new collection has a higher knot count of any rugs on the market, and contains Soumak gold, giving it that glimmering-glitterati effect. Two distinct designs in the new collection, Dawn and Twilight, evoke light reflection in a pool of water or a cloudy sky.

Fort Street Studio was brought to life when the couple of 26 years decided to collaborate on a custom piece for a friend's loft in New York. "When we began, we just did what we liked, what we really wanted to do," says Provisor. Before returning to New York from Hong Kong and opening their Soho studio at 578 Broadway seven years ago, they'd worked together on their former home in Colorado, which featured purple stucco and corrugated metal, much to the neighbors chagrin. The design, however, won the AIA House of the Year award for the state — and while it may not work for some couples, they have always had fun coming up with creative ideas and producing them together.

Now fully immersed in the rug business, the creation process begins when watercolor paintings inspire the

# Glimmering LIGHT

FORT STREET STUDIO MAKES THE RUGS THAT GLITTER WITH GOLD

STORY: ERIN RYDER / PHOTOGRAPHY: SETH SMOOT

couple to weave different patterns. Their rugs contain more color components than any other carpet company with up to 22 colors per carpet — compared to an industry average of seven to 12 — in order to achieve the gradation the studio is known for. The carpets are made in the Chinese province of Zhejiang, which is the center of the community where more than 90 employees grow all of their own vegetables out in front of the factory and produce daily lunches that are all shared together. All of the employees, most of whom have been with the Fort Street brand since the beginning, have since become experts in the trade, and live within the village where the carpets are manufactured.

With showrooms in New York, Los Angeles, and Hong Kong, and representation in London and Milan, fans include sophisticated designers and highly design savvy clients like Madonna, Elton John, Jennifer Aniston,

Matthew Perry, John Bon Jovi, Jimmy Buffett and the late Sydney Pollack. This loyal following leads the pair to see the brand creating more carpets of a finer quality and of a higher aesthetic value, very much like what they've embarked on with Glimmering. There is also discussion of more custom commissioned projects, possibly taking on a hotel or yacht, and also talk of collaborating on another interior collection beyond rugs.

Since both began as artists first, and rug businesspeople second, they take pride in sticking to their roots and continue to gain inspiration for their new craft from travel. They've been known to go to a resort in Bali, set up a show and paint for up to six hours a day, and surely have been known to spend just as much time researching for new rug designs. "I often look to fashion for inspiration. I think a lot of the interior design community does," said Provisor, who has an affinity for both worlds. ■