

ELLE DECOR

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THE CITIES ISSUE

A LOVE LETTER
TO DARING
DESIGN AROUND
THE WORLD

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TRANSLATES**
DECORATIVE
DELIGHTS FROM
MILAN, JAIPUR,
CAPE TOWN,
SEOUL & BEYOND

**DIGITAL
ROOMS ARE
THE FUTURE**
WHAT IT MEANS—
AND HOW WE'LL
DECORATE THEM

**ON THE
COVER**

A RUSSIAN
APARTMENT
THAT'S FAR FROM
ORTHODOX

AMSTERDAM

DUTCH BY DESIGN

Karin Meyn, the creative director of Studio Piet Boon, has spent the past year and a half building a personal sanctuary every bit as carefully considered as her professional projects.

BY **DREW ZEIBA** PHOTOGRAPHS BY **RICHARD POWERS**



The stairwell of Karin Meyn's Amsterdam home, in a former boat shed she transformed with Studio Piet Boon. The custom stucco and wood staircase was designed by Jim Bouwmeester Vloeren, and the wall sculpture is by Wia van Dijk. **OPPOSITE:** The living room sofa is by Baxter, the cocktail table is custom, the painting is by Gerd Kanz, and an Armando sculpture rests on a Mathieu Nab bench. For details, see Resources.



POURTRAIT: SOPHIA VAN DEN HOEK

IN A FORMER BOAT REPAIR SHED ON THE outskirts of Amsterdam, an industrial building unexpectedly reveals the home of Studio Piet Boon creative director Karin Meyn: a three-story, two-bedroom apartment tastefully outfitted with art and objets. “From the outside you see this commercial loft, and then you enter and it’s my life, my thinking,” says Meyn. “It’s a different world.”

Meyn began renovations on the space in 2019, gutting the building, laying down a new foundation, and working with her team to rebuild the interiors over the course of a year

and a half. She kept busy during the week with some three dozen client projects, while weekends were dedicated to extensive planning and construction.

Only the outer walls and roofing were left in their original condition—though Meyn did lower the ceiling over her dining area to make space for a rooftop terrace. Interior walls and staircases were added to realize discrete spaces in the loftlike residence, creating surprising shapes that jut and float. Niches and gaps were carved into otherwise plain walls to offer space for display.



Meyn, who joined Studio Piet Boon in 1986 as a joint business partner and the creative director of interiors and styling, is an avid collector well regarded for her intuitive approach to mixing art and decor. She wanted her new home to function as a sanctuary as much as a backdrop for the storied pieces with which she lives.

To that end, she sought to minimize visual noise by creating uniformity among surfaces and limiting her palette to shades of gray in a variety of materials—concrete, marble, and a textured stucco—that allow for a play of light. Meyn’s team added Piet Boon by Senso resin floors and worked with designer Jim Bouwmeester to introduce new wood floors and stairs. “Playing with combinations of materials, colors, art, and objects is very important to me,” she says. “It’s about creating a composed balance. There’s a lot happening, but when you come to my home, you feel you can relax.”

In the living room, alongside a suspended fireplace, Meyn had shelving customized to appear as if it’s floating in air; the technical apparatus is hidden behind the wall and embedded in the ceiling. It was a difficult task she undertook, true to form, for the sake of the groupings of objects she’d composed to sit atop the cabinetry.

That dialogue between form and function extends from Meyn’s soulful compositions to the construction of the home itself. The kitchen island comprises the same style of gray marble in different finishes, assembled at odd angles to lend the room an informality that balances out the harsh symmetry of the formerly commercial space. The vintage chandelier above the island is strewn with costume jewelry and accessories from Meyn’s late mother, an unexpected flourish that feels considered rather than cloying. ▷

OPPOSITE, FROM LEFT: Meyn on the entry stairs; the flooring is from Piet Boon by Senso, and the sculpture is by Mathieu Nab. The mailbox is in a natural stone by Hullebusch.

BELOW: In the dining area on the first floor, the Desalto table is framed by a Piet Boon banquette and Warren Platner chairs by Knoll. The sculpture (left) and rosary are by Studio Job, and the artwork is by Anton Heyboer.





In the kitchen, the island, cabinetry, sink fittings, and stools are by Piet Boon, the wall oven is by Gaggenau, and the chandelier is vintage. **OPPOSITE, TOP:** The living room's built-in bar has a Gaggenau wine cooler and is stocked with glassware by Piet Boon for Serax. The sculptures (from left) are by Lars Zech and Lieve Rutte, and the artwork is by Jeanne Opgenhaffen.

For Meyn, whether she's placing an imposing bloodred Lars Zech sculpture on a custom pedestal next to the bar or finding a home for any one of the heirloom pieces she's accrued over the years, "it's always about emotion." What brings together the seemingly disparate objects on view—a Vincenzo de Cotiis lamp, a brass work by Armando atop a Mathieu Nab bench, and a Pachamama leather rug, say—is a love for the artistry and the affective power of each creation. "A project without styling and art is not finished," she says. "Both really make a design come to life."

The primary bathroom is a case in point: Situated in the open in Meyn's private quarters, "like in a hotel," she says, the suite's exposed tub and shower, positioned in the middle of the room, indulge the home's starkest impulses while graciously accommodating a thoughtful suite of art and curios. Who needs privacy when you've got sight lines from the bed to consider?

In all of her work, Meyn leans into a visual tension that makes her spaces vibrate at a lower frequency. It's a give-and-take that defines her creative output and the look of Studio Piet Boon. "I have the old and the new together, the local and the global together, family heirlooms and travel keepsakes—it's all on display," says Meyn. And now she has the perfect vantage point from which to take it all in. ■



The table and chairs on the roof terrace are by Paola Lenti, and the banquette is custom.



In the primary bathroom, the vanity and shower are custom, and the fittings are by Piet Boon for Cocoon. The stool is by Studio Job, and the artificial flower arrangement is by Pompon Amsterdam. **OPPOSITE:** A Baxter chair pulls up to a custom vanity in the primary bedroom. The bed is custom, and the copper door is vintage.