

Her Eye

Female Dutch Interior Designers

TERRA



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FOREWORD

The Dutch Devil is in the Detail

I have always had a soft spot for female interior designers. Time and again, they prove to be unique storytellers – stories in which the distinctive characters come to life. Because that is what a well-crafted interior truly is: it reads like an adventurous, one-of-a-kind book in which, chapter by chapter, you get to know the main characters – the residents – more intimately.

The secret lies in the fact that these female design talents possess the authentic ability to combine empathy with a unique sense of beauty, functionality (let's be honest, women think practically) and an infectious drive to create dream interiors time and time again. An important distinction: not for themselves, but always with the other person in mind.

Her Eye takes you on a journey through the Netherlands' most beautiful interiors, designed by the most talented female interior designers.

That all these designers are Dutch is no coincidence. The Dutch are known as explorers, travellers and cultural bridge-builders. This open and connective outlook is reflected in the work of our designers and architects. As a result, their interiors feel layered, rich and worldly, while remaining deeply rooted in Dutch aesthetics. Is it less is more? Is it cosmopolitan? Or is it Dutch Design? You decide.

I have had the privilege of working with many of these female interior designers during my career at *Residence* interior design magazine. I continue to research emerging talent and celebrate designers at *Harper's Bazaar*. Some of them I had the honour of discovering myself, watching their stars rise, in some cases beyond the Dutch borders. What strikes me is that their personalities are just as fascinating as the spaces they create. Without a doubt, this contributes to the human touch present in every home, loft, apartment and villa they design.

The interiors in *Her Eye* have been carefully curated by a woman dear to me. She has an impressive background in interior photography, art direction, interior design and storytelling: Willemijn de Leeuw. This creative multi-talent was the long-time art director of *Residence* before channelling her love for interiors into designing her own colourful spaces. She also co-founded the interior photography agency Space Content Studio with her partner Thijs, driven by her passion for storytelling.

With *Her Eye*, Willemijn, along with all the interior designers and writers involved, invites you to immerse yourself in the interiors and personal stories of these Dutch icons, brought together in this book for the first time. To inspire you to develop your own style, push the boundaries of your interiors, explore new possibilities and, of course, to surprise you with the wealth of female talent the Netherlands has to offer.

Let yourself be carried away and... who knows, you might soon be looking at your own home through her eye.

Miluska van 't Lam
Editor-in-chief *Harper's Bazaar*



INTRODUCTION

Her Vision Our Inspiration

Interior design is more than just creating a beautiful space, it's about a feeling. It shapes how you experience a place, how you move through it, and how you connect with it. For me, a great interior story begins with the designer's vision, but it truly comes to life through the way it is captured.

My love for interiors began when I worked at *Residence* magazine, where I had the privilege of meeting designers and architects in person. Their stories filled with craftsmanship, vision and an incredible attention to detail deeply moved me. That fascination evolved into a mission: to capture interiors exactly as the designers intended. Together with my husband Thijs, a photographer, I bring these spaces to life. While he looks through the lens, I search for the best angles to reveal the true essence of a space. With a sharp eye for detail, materiality and the atmosphere a room exudes, we aim to translate each designer's signature style into imagery.

For *Her Eye*, I deliberately chose 17 female designers who are reshaping the Dutch interior landscape. Not simply because they are talented, but because each of them brings a distinctive signature to their work. What unites them is their intuitive approach to design, creating spaces that are not only visually compelling but also evoke a profound emotional response. They work with an unwavering attention to detail, combining craftsmanship with boldness, proving that design is far more than just aesthetics. These designers push the boundaries of what is possible in Dutch interiors today, often challenging norms and forging new directions. Their unique contributions reflect both a deep respect for local traditions and an innovative approach that speaks to the evolving nature of contemporary design in the Netherlands.

For us, it is an honour to capture these interiors. Without their designs, our work would not exist. Photography and design enhance each other, we make visible what they have created. In this book, we don't just showcase spaces; we highlight the vision and identity of each designer. What makes their style unique? How do they make an interior speak? And above all, what feeling does it evoke?

With *Her Eye*, I hope to showcase the power of Dutch interior design and how these female designers infuse spaces with soul through their vision and talent. I hope this book inspires you to look at design in a new way, to see its layers, the choices made, and the details that make all the difference. Let yourself be surprised by their vision and discover what becomes possible when passion and talent come together.

Willemijn de Leeuw
Founder, Space Content Studio



EMBRACING
HERITAGE

COLOURS

LEONIE HENDRIKSE

AND
PATTERNS



The Contemporary Chic Interiors of Leonie Hendrikse

Every now and then, Leonie Hendrikse drives to Jacob Obrechtstraat in Amsterdam and allows her mind to wander back in time, to when she ran a small and cosy interior studio there in her younger years. Like her mother and grandmother, Leonie has a fondness for colourful creations with a balance of patterns and textures. By translating this style into timeless interiors incorporating the residents' personal histories, she was already attracting attention back then. Now, 20 years later, Stock Dutch Design has grown into a flourishing family business in Haarlem, and Leonie is aware of her ability to make a meaningful impact on the new generation of interior designers. "I notice that, since hitting 50, I can draw on my seniority. I really enjoy sparring with young designers. What are their dreams for the future, and how can I help them?" she states.

"I regularly find myself together with a client admiring family heirlooms that have been stored away in the attic for years. Things like antique silver candlesticks, for example, which we polish up and place on the table. Our clients' heritage is very important to me. It's at the core of who the residents are, and without knowledge of their family history, it's impossible to design a personal interior. It doesn't always have to be something grand. You can achieve a lot just by reframing a cherished photo of the owner as a little girl." In her interiors, Leonie Hendrikse, known for her warm smile and distinct signature style, focuses on the inhabitants' personalities and lifestyles.

She creatively connects the past with the future, giving often historic family homes a contemporary chic look without compromising their authentic character. "In our very own Stock Show Home, located in a listed canal-side building in Haarlem, we show clients what's possible when you step out of your comfort zone. Some interiors are overly thought-out and appear bland; that's not us. We like to colour outside the lines. We don't restrict ourselves to only using silk and marble."

Each interior designed by Leonie and her team is unique, though the Stock signature has become a well-known standard after 20 years of interior design. A trained eye recognises the signature in many historic family homes, richly adorned with colours and patterns that complement and reinforce each other. "Our interiors have a certain layering, which you see in the refined custom work. The palette of colours, fabrics, materials and lighting gives a certain flow to a house. My brain is hyperactive all day long, and I notice a lot of details – sometimes to the extent that it's irritating! But I owe much of my success to this trait; attention to perfection is important if something needs to appear imperfect. You'll never see an overly styled house from Stock."





“We celebrated the fifth anniversary of our business on a sunny spring evening. The sounds of Candy Dulfer’s saxophone filled Jacob Obrechtstraat, where we were previously located, near Amsterdam’s Vondelpark. Park visitors came to see what was going on, and we’d also greatly underestimated the power of social media. In no time, the square was filled with people; it was like a Queen’s Day party,” says Leonie, reflecting on the early days of Stock Dutch Design. Before founding the company in 2005, she’d travelled the world as a stewardess with KLM. Leonie left that job when she got the chance to become manager of a new beach club, De Kust in Bloemendaal aan Zee. The way she could channel her creativity while leading the project in the run-up to the opening made her realise how fulfilling and enjoyable it was.

“I come from a line of creative women. My mother is the daughter of an artist and studied dressmaking at Frank Govers’ Vogue fashion academy. My grandmother made amazing wall tapestries, one of which I had framed.” During a position at Wilhelmine van Aerssen Agenturen, Leonie learned about the interior industry from the inside and encountered exclusive fabric brands. “I advised interior stores on their collections, and I eventually started applying that advice for myself in a rented shop on Amsterdam’s Scheldestraat. I began with furnishing family homes, which quickly went so well that my husband Jeroen joined the business.”

I admire family heirlooms that have been stored away in the attic for years.

on this page — Family heirlooms are given a special place in the interiors.











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dreams.

“Soon, I developed close ties with a renowned paint brand and several preferred fabric and wallpaper brands. The warm relationships I’ve built with people from these companies – often family businesses – remain very valuable to this day. I enjoy sharing my successes with partners; ‘sharing is caring’, as the saying goes. In our early days, the interior world looked very different than today. Our way of applying colours and patterns was very distinctive back then.”

Today, Stock has grown into a thriving family business that is involved in all disciplines: from initial drawings, permit applications and custom kitchens, to selecting the right bathroom tiles and perfect towels for in the closet. “Our projects have frequently been featured in publications over the years, and we’ve released several books.”

“One memorable moment that I remember fondly was the launch of the coffee table book *Dutch Interior Design*, which we published in collaboration with TeNeues. We were approached by the Dutch consulate, and the launch took place on a fantastic rooftop in New York. When I later walked into the Rizzoli bookstore and saw our book lying there, I felt immense pride. I can still get emotional about that.” The Stock Show Home in Haarlem is the beating heart of the business and where projects come to life. The couple have completely transformed the property into a space where living and working go hand in hand. “Here, we show in the most realistic way possible how a family can live. We literally open the doors of our own home, where we live with our three children. By welcoming people into our home, we enable them to experience who we are in the purest form.”

Clients and interior professionals find their way to the authentic Stock environment every day. “Designers come by to gain inspiration and to purchase fabrics, wallpaper, paint and interior accessories. That makes me really happy, and I also enjoy helping and inspiring them. I really love all the beautiful projects we get to do for our clients, of course, but mentoring young designers gives me new energy. I’ve found a sort of new role for myself in motivating and inspiring the new generation of interior designers to practise their craft. There’s enough work for all designers and I notice that I really enjoy this new role, now that I’ve been in the business a bit longer.”



LEONIE HENDRIKSE IN SHORT

In the creative mind of Leonie Hendrikse (1974, Sydney, Australia), colours and patterns merge and there is always room for a story from the past. After spending her youth in Singapore and Bloemendaal, as well as a number of enjoyable years studying in Amsterdam, Leonie's creative mind guided her towards interior design. In 2005, Leonie founded Stock Dutch Design, and her partner Jeroen Stock joined the company within a year. In 2018, the duo launched their coffee table book, *Dutch Interior Design*, in collaboration with TeNeues in New York. In 2024, they opened the Stock Show Home in their family home in Haarlem, where clients can experience the 'Stock feeling' for themselves.





HUMAN
TOUCH

AND

ELLEN TEN HOVE

MATERIAL
ELEMENTS



Ellen ten Hove Embarks on a Quest for the Ultimate Destination

When Ellen ten Hove walks through a factory, she often wishes she could step into the craftspeople's shoes. Nothing excites her more than taking a deep dive into techniques, understanding how materials work and absorbing new experiences. She gathers her ever-growing knowledge into her design toolkit and unpacks it to create unique interiors, carefully crafted with her partner to the utmost precision. "I have trained myself to seek connections in the broadest sense of the word: from the use of colours and materials, to how the inhabitants move within their environment. Everything is interconnected," she says.

"For a project in Amsterdam, I envisioned a light fixture with glass spheres hanging above the stairs, like a piece of jewellery. Nothing like that existed, so we had one custom-made in the Czech Republic, where the best glassblowers are based." Once Ellen has a vision for a space, she will go to great lengths to bring her ideas to life. "And if it doesn't exist, we design it ourselves. Anything is possible and that's how we prefer to approach things." This is just one example of how Ellen and her partner – who form Studio OCEAN, and are partners both personally and professionally – consistently push boundaries to create extraordinary interiors.

"The spaces we create are always unique; they are literally one of a kind. Timothy focuses on the building, the sightlines and the layout, while I start with the human element and then add to the foundation he lays. I used to do a lot of styling work and tended to view materials in their purest form, but now I've learned to apply materials architecturally, giving them greater value within a space." Ellen inspired Timothy by showing him that his clean, architectural layouts can come to life through the thoughtful use of materials.

Growing up in the Dutch village of Enter, in a family that cherished creativity, Ellen enjoyed the freedom to explore and experiment with tools in her father's workshop. Her school report described her as a girl who "always wanted to make everything more beautiful," a trait that has remained a consistent thread throughout her life.

After completing a vocational course at Cibap, a design college in Zwolle where she focused on the technical aspects of materials and finishes, Ellen spent years developing her creativity at various companies across the country. "Initially, I wanted to become a building restoration specialist. I love the craftsmanship involved: breaking down layers of paint and discovering their composition. Working at the painting and decorating company where my brother was employed taught me a great deal about this."

She also gained valuable experience at a carpenter, where they have the expertise to craft tailor-made interiors. "I insisted on working in every department so that I could truly get a feel for the factory and learn about every tool."

Since OCEAN has been located in Apeldoorn the couple has been working together and moved their office into several properties, located in the beautiful Park Quarter.

"But another property came our way – a unique opportunity to combine our passions, because we could live there as well. It offers endless possibilities, and we particularly fell for the fantastic patio. I see it as a case study, enabling us to show clients where our added value lies. Our interiors may look simple, but creating a perfect whole requires in-depth precision. That is evident in the details." The location, tucked away in the leafy neighbourhood of Berg en Bos, suits the couple: "We stay away from the spotlight. I want to showcase our work, of course, but I'm very selective about where we do that. I prefer to see ourselves as the underdog: surprising and mysterious."

Our interiors
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on this page — Far-reaching precision in the details brings the design to life.





I play with layers, shades and intermediary tones to create harmony.



OCÉAN thrives on working with clients who are as uncompromising as they are. Clients who are in search of the ultimate destination, a place more beautiful than anything they have seen before. A place that feels different and more personal than anything they have ever experienced. After an initial conversation, Ellen first analyses what she has gleaned from the clients. She learned the art of ‘reading’ people during her time as a stylist for television programmes, where she selected clothing and accessories for TV characters by studying their personas. Later, she refined this skill while working as an interior designer at a store in Zutphen, where she would get to the heart of the matter by asking the right questions. “I approach every project with three ingredients: the place, the space, and the client. By using these three pillars I give them identity with a chosen sphere, material, and colour. This approach allows me to create results that are always unique and thoughtfully tailored to the homeowner.”

The resulting proposal is the product of close collaboration with her partner. “Timothy can do what I can’t, and vice versa. That’s why it works so well.” However, that’s not to say they never clash. “We often hear that we set the bar very high. But we’re both very determined. And when we try to convince each other of our own perspectives, that’s when something truly surprising emerges.”

One example of this was a project in Bergen. Timothy was focused on the layout, while Ellen felt something was missing – an element where the homeowner could showcase her favourite items. “By challenging each other’s thoughts, we sparked the idea for a cabinet. While Timothy envisioned a sightline, I came up with a glass baker’s cabinet for displaying her treasures. That’s how we embrace each other’s strengths.” The unique way the duo constantly seeks connection between humans and materials also shines through in the project in Bergen. “While we were talking to the client, my eyes were drawn to a yellow elastic hair tie, which the daughter of the family was playing with. I borrowed it from her and used it as inspiration for a yellow kitchen.” It’s a small but powerful example of how people and their surroundings inspire Ellen. It also aligns with Studio OCÉAN’s vision: “We want to understand the space and the people, and then bring the two together to create the most exceptional interiors.”

on this page — The interiors of Studio OCÉAN are truly one of a kind.











ELLEN TEN HOVE IN SHORT

After completing her education at Cibap in Zwolle, Ellen ten Hove (1982, Enter) gained experience at a furniture-making company, a painting and decorating company and various interior design shops in Amsterdam, 's-Hertogenbosch and Zutphen. In Amsterdam, Ellen worked as a stylist for television programmes before starting to design interiors for both the corporate and the consumer market. In 2015, she joined Studio OCÉAN in Apeldoorn, the design agency her partner Timothy Luhukay had founded in 2008. Studio OCÉAN's work is uncompromising and exclusive. It exudes uniqueness and makes no concessions on any level.

