

Karl Lagerfeld

Tastemaker, Paris

Karl Lagerfeld, widely recognised as an influential designer of our time, is best known for his work as the chief designer for Chanel. When not busy with shows all over the world, he has decorated and collected design for his Paris residence among others. His style is to amass large quantities of a particular design or period and then sell the entire collection through auction or private galleries.

Discovering Prouvé

You know, I bought Jean Prouvé 20 years ago, when nobody wanted him. These chairs I own were made for a school. I also have a set of 40 chairs and ten tables from his first known public work, for the Credit Lyonnais bank. I bought them for nearly nothing from a very good dealer, Anne-Sophie Duval, who unfortunately just died. Now people ask me for a chair, and I give them as gifts.

Why he is not a collector

I am a fashion person. I change clothes, furniture, houses, collections. Life is about change. There is a moment when things cannot become any better; then you change. There is no feeling of home in my house. I do not have those feelings. I am utterly free, European, free-minded, and I have no sense of possession. But to have no sense of possession is easier if you have owned a lot.

However, I can keep things like a joke – the furniture of my childhood home, for example. I have kept the pieces, but I don't use them. They are too tiny for me. It's a very beautiful set of Biedermeier furniture – the desk where I learned how to write and how to sketch, even the paintings my mother put there that weren't good enough for her, the leftovers, the German Romantic paintings.

New York apartment

I will do the new New York apartment in the style of the Deutscher Werkbund, the architectural movement that had designers like Bruno Paul, Hermann Muthesius and Peter Behrens, who taught Walter Gropius and Le Corbusier.

Marc Newson

Pod of Drawers no. MN-12PDB, 1987,
fibreglass and riveted sheet aluminium,
50 3/8 x 27 1/2 x 17 1/4 in.
(128 x 69.8 x 43.8 cm)

They did modern things differently in 1910, before the Bauhaus. I have a collection of furniture bought 20 years ago that is stunning, very colourful, in bright red, yellow, green and gold. Suddenly people are discovering Werkbund. Everyone knows Vienna Secession, but there is not much left. Werkbund is Germany for me, a Germany that I can identify with.

My apartment is in Gramercy Park. I like it because it's very German and very New York at the same time – the New York of E. B. White.



His current enthusiasm for contemporary design

I have known and followed it for years. I bought the first piece of furniture that Zaha Hadid ever made, for Sawaya & Moroni – a sofa 5.5 metres long – 20 years ago in Milan. If you ask me what genius is, I would say Zaha Hadid.

Most of the furniture in my Quai Voltaire apartment is from the well-made limited editions of the artists of Galerie Kreo: Marc Newson, the Bouroullec brothers (Erwan and Ronan) and Martin Szekely. Everything Martin does is great. The last thing I got from him is a real piece of art, a mirror made of a silicium-carbide-based ceramic that is more expensive than gold. For Quai Voltaire, he made two three-metre-long tables – one for writing, one for sketching – in white Corian with metal stripes. They face each other in the over-20-metre-long space that I made from three rooms.

There is also a huge sofa by Amanda Levette and two of the most beautiful coffee tables

I've seen in years, from Established & Sons, the British-based design company that Stella McCartney's clever husband Alasdair Willis heads. He does expensive limited editions like Kreo but also cheaper versions. One version of Amanda's sofa costs £80,000, the other £10,000, and they are both beautiful. And I have chairs by the

English designer Tom Dixon, two sofas by the French designer Jean-Marie Massaud and my favourite statue, *Serenity*, by Elie Nadelman.

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How he chooses

We live in a period of revivals – post Bauhaus, post 1970s, post 1960s, post whatever. What I like about the things I have bought from Galerie Kreo is that they have a voice only from now. The art that I think is genius is conceptual art, Land art. My favourite artist is James Turrell, and that is not for the living room.

I love contemporary art, but not at home. At home I want only books. Not even photography. In my home in Paris, there are no walls, just glass walls, glass windows, glass doors. It is a glass box. You push one button and 50 doors – 25 on each side – open at the same time and you have the library. On one side there are reading books, on the other side art books. It is like a flawless spaceship flying over



Jasper Morrison

Wing-nut chair, 1985, hardboard, piano hinges and wing-nut connectors, 31 7/8 in. (81 cm) high

Ronan and Erwan Bouroullec

Lit Clos, 2000, lacquered polyester resin, wood and metal, with futon and tatami, 71 x 100 3/4 x 78 3/4 in. (180 x 256 x 200 cm)