

MERYL HARE

PORTRAIT Kristina Soljo

Creating layered interiors to reflect their clients' lifestyles, Hare + Klein is known for its distinctly collaborative design process. Led by Meryl Hare, the studio works in tandem with the desires of clients to formulate thoughtful residences that play with proportion and polished, elegant aesthetics. Each project reflects the practice's commitment to warm and welcoming interiors, executed with excellence.

Sum up your signature style. Is there an aesthetic or approach that runs through all your work? If we have a signature design style, it is in our attention to detail and in layers of texture and colour, which we build up through hard and soft surfaces. It is also in a generosity of scale that we bring to each project. I think that comfort and proportion are linked, both visually and ergonomically.

Who have been your style mentors – whether people you worked with or admired from afar? My mother was my first mentor. She was a decorating obsessive, changing slip covers from summer to winter despite living in the tropics! I admire many creatives, but perhaps early influences were designers such as Andrée Putman and Christian Liaigre, both renowned for their timeless aesthetic.

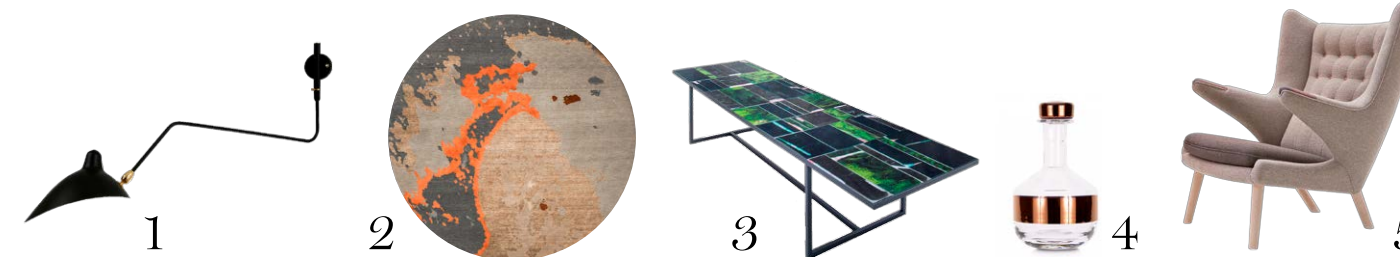
What are your five essentials for ensuring a room is welcoming and hits the right note? I am in favour of lights that are flexible depending on the room usage, so always on dimmers and judicious use of overhead lights, as well as lamps for atmosphere. Layers of colour and texture set the tone of an interior – minimal and tonal or big and colourful – the combinations of the finishes should work together to create a warm and welcoming atmosphere. I like to place furniture in such a way as to encourage entry into a room, rather than blocking it. This is not always achievable, but should be considered if possible. And comfort! A room should exude a feeling of comfort, which is created by a combination of all the above – plus furniture that looks and is comfortable. I think the personality of the owner should shine through in a room.

You embrace vintage and upcycle chic – what are some of your favourite pieces you have given new life to? Vintage furniture certainly has a place if it fits the criteria of the brief and has integrity. For example, mid-century furniture often works well in contemporary design.

Which homewares can you save on to get a luxe look for less? Elevate an interior with some special pieces and save with homewares that don't compete. Use books to add layers of luxe.

What are five things you would buy right now, from high to low? The Hans J. Wegner 'Papa Bear' chair from Cult. I recently visited the factory in Copenhagen, Denmark, where this iconic chair is made, and it's totally handcrafted using traditional techniques and will become an heirloom. A Serge Mouille wall light from Cult. One of my all-time favourites. A furniture artwork is Paola Lenti's Sciarra table from dedece, which is made from lava stone and molten glass. One of the Hare + Klein-designed rugs from our latest collection for Designer Rugs. The whiskey decanter from the stylish Tank Copper collection by Tom Dixon from HK Edit. @hareklein

Hare + Klein 'Canopy' rug from Designer Rugs.



1 'Applique 1 Bras Pivotant Courbe' wall light in Black by Serge Mouille, \$7678, Cult. 2 'Aceto' circular rug by Hare + Klein, \$6731/250cm, Designer Rugs. 3 'Sciarra' dining table by Paola Lenti, POA, Dedecce. 4 'Tank' whiskey decanter in Copper by Tom Dixon, \$300/1L, HK Edit. 5 PP Møbler 'Teddy Bear' armchair by Hans J. Wegner, \$43,400, Cult.

Did where you grew up or your family home have an impact on your work in the design industry?

I grew up in Africa, which had an influence on my work there, but in the 34 years I've lived in Australia, I think my aesthetic reflects our environment. Perhaps the common denominator is an appreciation for textures and artisan-crafted objects.

LIVING Jen curved modular sofa upholstered in Westbury outdoor linen in Flax, Neva dining chairs and Freycinet bowl by Ruth Levine, HK Edit. Molly nesting coffee tables, Jordan. Single Curve counter stools by Gebrüder Thonet Vienna and Twiggy floor lamp, Space. Aceto rug by Hare + Klein, Designer Rugs. Lisa armchair, Pure Interiors.

Photography by Jen Wilding.

How did your decorating style evolve – was it through your early career?
 Certainly my decorating style has evolved, which is to be expected, however when I look back at projects I designed many years ago, I see that I have always tried to create timeless interiors that survive despite the changes in trends.

KITCHEN “I recently reused an antique Northern Chinese sideboard as a kitchen island bench,” says Meryl, who believes that vintage pieces can work beautifully even in contemporary interiors.

“Personal collections and artwork should reflect the taste of those who live there.” Meryl Hare

Photography Jen Wilding

What advice can you recommend for achieving grand results on a limited budget? If you approach a room as a blank canvas, the maximum effect comes from the floor and walls, so flooring, rugs and paint are game-changers. Working with scale in furniture, artwork and joinery alters the dynamics of a room, so my recommendation is to be generous with scale.

“Getting the *lighting* right is really *important*.” *Meryl Hare*

BEDROOM Beau bedside cabinets, HK Edit. Custom ottoman, headboard, doona, valance and cushions, Hare + Klein. Mom Fatty pendant light and China floor lamp, Fanuli. Sereno throw, Analu. On terrace, Erica armchairs and Strap side table, Space. Curtains by Simple Studio.

Photography Shannon O'Connell

Which timeless furniture pieces or homewares would you always invest in? I always recommend investing in original furniture designs, never copies! Homewares that are handmade are always at the top of my list.

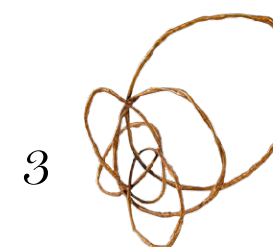
ENTRY Canopy rug from Hare + Klein Collection, Designer Rugs.



MERYL HARE

SHOP THE LOOK

Bring gravitas with pared-back designs in rich hues and textures.



Photography Shannon McGrath (opposite), Jen Wilding (this page).

1 DINING Layers of texture and colour are built up in hard and soft surfaces. Gubi Beetle chairs, Cult. Asterias table by Molteni, Hub. Meshmatics pendant light by Moooi, Space. Queen Gesha platter from Ruth Levine Collection, HK Edit. **2** Martyn Thompson jacquard and linen cushion, \$270/50 x 50cm, Mondopiero. **3** 'Whirlpool' bronze sculpture by Camie Lyons, \$7250/49cm x 46 x 44cm, Australian Galleries. **4** Krafthaus throw in Pumpkin Spice, \$1500, HK Edit. **5** Haymann Editions 'Dartagnan' armchair in Black oak by Tony Grilo, \$3930, HK Edit. **6** 'Nagoya' lacquered desk, POA, Liaigre. **7** Gubi 'Gravity' floor lamp, \$1499, Cult. **8** 'Lazarus' stoneware vessel, \$350, Katarina Wells Ceramics. **9** 'Crew' outdoor coffee table by Jean-Marie Massaud, POA, Poliform.