

TEXT —
JANELLE ZARA

Piet

BOON

FROM PRIVATE, CORPORATE, AND COMMERCIAL
CLIENTS AROUND THE WORLD TO A RESTAURANT IN ANTWERP
TO HIS OWN FURNITURE LINE, DESIGNER PIET BOON'S
FUNCTIONAL, INDIVIDUAL, AND AESTHETIC SIGNATURE IS
FOUND ON ALL THE GRAND STAGES.

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PIET BOON

Not long into his career as a contractor, Piet Boon realized that he had taken on the wrong profession. “I was always getting into trouble with the architects because I tried to do the architecture myself,” he recalls. As it turns out, architects would not be the only ones whose toes Boon would step on. But rather than continue to battle with the architects, designers, and other creative types working on his projects, he decided to simply take on all the roles himself.

The eponymous firm Piet Boon, founded in Amsterdam in 1983, has grown to do it all, including architecture, products, and interior design—often all three within the same project and nearly always in a quintessentially Dutch style. This holistic approach is a byproduct of his early contracting days.

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Now on the other side of his firm’s 30th anniversary (and having left his contracting company in 2008), Boon’s design career is at its peak. And it’s a testament to his immense and ever-expanding influence that his name is everywhere these days, with many of the world’s top high-end luxury manufacturers lining up to tap his creative genius. There’s lighting for Maretti, fireplaces for Tulp, tableware for Serax, hardware for Formani, blinds for DTCH, doors for Bod’or, water bottles, sailboats, automobiles, flooring ... the list goes on, and its broad scope demonstrates the boundlessness of his creativity and influence.

Perhaps Boon’s largest triumph to date, and the biggest stage on which he showcased his signature style, came in 2014 with Huys, a luxurious bastion of modern Dutch design occupying a 1917 neoclassical Park Avenue high-rise. For the task of transforming the building’s former commercial offices into 58 luxury condos and ground-floor retail space, the Dutch developers Kroonenberg Groep charged Boon with the total concept, from the restoration of the historic façade, to the renovation and design of the interiors, including the products that furnish them. This holistic approach is how he works best, Boon told *ID* magazine in 2014. “That is the only way to create a balanced and harmonious design.”

To achieve consistency throughout the project, Boon employed an entirely Dutch team that included landscape designer Piet Oudolf for the rooftop garden and sculptor Frederik Molenschot for the lobby’s signature cast-bronze chandelier and the solid brass numbers for each apartment’s door. Boon’s creative director and partner Karin Meyn styled much of the interiors with works by Dutch artists, while the “concrete” in the lobby is a trompe-l’oeil wallpaper of his own ironic design, produced by Dutch wallpaper company NLXL.

Boon and his team completed Huys (an antiquated Dutch word for “house,” and pronounced as such) in October 2014 to stunning results: A confluence of luxury and simplicity; calming shades of white and blue warmed by the richness of natural woods; clean lines; and the same generous amounts of natural light that would define a Rembrandt painting. The Dutch, who had originally settled New York in the early 17th

SIDE NOTES

NAME *Piet Boon*
COMPANY NAME *Piet Boon*
COMPANY HEADQUARTERS *Amsterdam*
NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN COMPANY *45*
WEBSITE *pietboon.com*
SIGNATURE PROJECTS *The Jane, Antwerp; Huys at 404 Park Avenue; Oosten, in New York*

SIGNIFICANT AWARDS

2015 *Wallpaper* Shortlist Best New Restaurant (The Jane, Antwerp)*
2005 *Zaan Business Award*



The sleek interiors at The Jane, in Antwerp, are housed in the chapel of a former military hospital and include dramatic stained-glass windows.



1 Boon's sense of elegance and attention to craftsmanship abound in each of the villas at his Caribbean property Piet Boon Bonaire.

2 A World of Boon: A showroom in the Amsterdam area allows one to take in the designer's complete furniture line.

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century, had achieved an urban renaissance. In 2016, Boon is expected to bring even more Dutch character to the city in the form of Oosten (Dutch for "east"), a forthcoming apartment complex of similarly sleek design in South Williamsburg, Brooklyn.

Boon's other great triumph of 2014 has been described as a stroke of divine intervention: The transformation of a 19th-century military hospital in Antwerp into The Jane, an opulent, cavernous stage on which Michelin-starred chef Sergio Herman can serve his exquisitely plated inventions. Leaving the cracks and wear of the vaulted ceiling virtually untouched, Boon either designed or curated each of the extravagant details below it. The main event is the spectacular, urchin-like chandelier whose spines explode overhead.

The Jane has been such a success Boon says he has trouble securing a table for himself, although he doesn't seem to mind, perhaps because he favors more tranquil locales.

Projects elsewhere in the world contrast The Jane's ornate chaos with their "barefoot chic," a term Boon coined for their relaxed sophistication. Many of these projects find themselves on serene waterfronts, from private residences on the southern coast of Portugal to the Caribbean beachside hotel villas of Piet Boon Bonaire. The latter, set along the waterfront in Kralendijk, the island's tiny capital, presents individually styled villas made of natural materials with subdued shades, private gardens, lofty ceilings, and dark stone floors to solidify Boon's desired feeling for luxury with a cool, barefoot style.

"I've been going to Bonaire for 25 years," he says. "I fell in love with the island because it was so simple. There are no high rises." The beach is where the architect, an avid kitesurfer, has said that he can always return to find inspiration. —

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3 Boon's ITSKE coffee table comes in round or rectangular, satin or high-gloss, oak or walnut.

4 The combination of exquisite leather or fabric and cool powder-coated steel makes the KEKKE chair a sturdy yet elegant piece.

5 A massive chandelier by PSLAB commands attention at The Jane, in Antwerp.



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