

Mesmerizing Marble Interiors by Kelly Wearstler, Juan Pablo Molyneux, and More

A stunning new book presents the ancient stone's most innovative and artful applications in homes around the globe

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The cover of *Splendor of Marble* by Karen Pearse.

PHOTO: COURTESY RIZZOLI

Much like diamonds, marble is one of nature's most astonishingly beautiful creations. Steeped in history, the stone has long been associated with luxury and worldliness; its grand applications range from the Parthenon in Athens to New York City's Grand Central Station. As technological advancements made the durable material more accessible to the masses, it also became an industry favorite for bathrooms and kitchens. A new book, however, illustrates how marble's endless design possibilities go far beyond the utilitarian.

Splendor of Marble: Marvelous Spaces by the Worlds Top Architects and Designers (Rizzoli) celebrates the stone's enduring appeal and versatility, which lends itself to any part of a home. "While a traditional marble floor is beautiful, the variety of applications has grown tremendously, from waterfall kitchen countertops and marble furniture to bold book-matched marble walls that take the place of a painting," author Karen Pearse tells *Galerie*. As the founder of Karen Pearse Global Direct, an international purveyor of stone and marble for private and commercial spaces, including Ritz-Carlton hotels and MoMA, Pearse is a bona fide marble expert.



A Malibu living room designed by Kelly Wearstler features honed and leathered finishes on Bardiglio marble.

PHOTO: FRANÇOIS HALARD, COURTESY RIZZOLI

Pearse's father was a leader in the stone industry, and her own interest in geology developed early on. When other kids were playing with toys, Pearse was collecting rocks and breaking them open to view their complex inner structures. "My father introduced me to breathtaking quarries around the world, while my grandfather, a renowned painter, taught me to see the world through the eyes of an artist," she explains. "For me, the veining and colors of marble are nature's brushstrokes." Now, it's Pearse who guides architects on excursions to the right quarries for their projects.



Designed by Tom Kundig of Olson Kundig, the master bath of this Whistler, Canada, ski house masterfully brings the outside in with its Zebrino marble by Marble Art and local wood from fir trees.

PHOTO: BENJAMIN BENSCHNEIDER, COURTESY RIZZOLI

Drawing on her 40 years of professional experience and her artful eye, *Splendor of Marble* uniquely offers insight into the stone's history, varieties, technological developments, and evolving design trends. An impressive list of A-list designers and architects who often incorporate marble into their work also share their perspectives. "Marble conveys its materiality stronger than any other material we work with. We are enamored with the

possibilities of different finishes,” Will Meyer and Gray Davis of Meyer Davis tell *Galerie*.” Rather than more traditional polished marble, the New York design duo often use honed, hammered, chiseled, or leather finishes.

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KAREN PEARSE

No two slabs of marble are the same, even when cut from the same area of a quarry. “Marble is a stroke of time in the earth’s history,” says Pearse. Like her, designers continue to be drawn to marble for its intrinsic connection to nature. “Marble is certainly the realest and most graceful lyrical answer from mother nature to our quest for beauty,” Aline Asmar d’Amman, Founder of Culture in Architecture, tells *Galerie*. Her designs in *Splendor of Marble* range from violet- and blue-toned marble bathroom oases to a furniture collection made in collaboration with Karl Lagerfeld for Carpenters Workshop Gallery. “The raw beauty, dazzling colors, and ever-changing landscape are divine works of art.”

As for other innovative uses of marble showcased in the book, Pearse applauds architect Tom Kundig of Olson Kundig, whose Canadian ski house’s master bath blurs the lines between the interior and exterior landscape. Pearse also praises a bath design by the Haas Brothers, who she says possess “an innate feel for marble.” She specifically cites their “polyp-like ‘Bathy Bates’ bathtub that was carved from a single block of Pele de Tigre marble.”



In this interior by Juan Pablo Molyneux, a black-and-white floor is reimagined through honed white limestone and black slate as a surrealist work of art.

PHOTO: DURSTON SAYLOR, COURTESY RIZZOLI

One designer whose connection with marble, Pearse argues, is unparalleled, is Juan Pablo Molyneux. “Marble is everything: The sea that is at the origin, the earth that transformed it, the color and its infinity of possibilities, the mystery of its veins, the past, the future, luxury, power,” the designer tells *Galerie*. Among his many striking spaces featuring the material, Molyneux often uses contrasting marbles to create one-of-a-kind graphic floors for his clients. “Talking about marble is talking about history, antiquity, sculpture, architecture, Greece, Italy, Versailles, or the Taj Mahal. Through its thousand metamorphoses, marble is an endless journey.”

Mesmerizing Interiors from *Splendor of Marble*

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