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artful ESCAPE

For antiques maven Margaret Naeve Parker, a contemporary loft in Houston's Museum District turned out to be the perfect blank slate for her furniture know-how and ample creativity.

By Mini Fenest
Photography by Max Burkhalter

What comes to mind when you think of a bachelor pad? A clunky big-screen, a hand-me-down leather sofa, a vintage beer sign or two? These stereotypes couldn't be further from your stream of consciousness as you walk through this Houston bachelor's sophisticated loft space designed by Margaret Naeve Parker. Along with her soup-to-nuts design work, Naeve Parker has been doing out some of Houston's most coveted antiques—and chic contemporary pieces—from her Westheimer shop, M. Naeve, since 2007 (when she was just 25). Think 19th-century French club chairs alongside an Egg Collective console; Apparatus sconces mixed with Hans-Agne Jakobsson table lamps. Which is why, when she encountered this modern blank slate in Houston's Museum District, she saw its potential to be her client's well-appointed, art-filled starter pad.

"I knew exactly what we wanted to do with the space," says Naeve Parker, who had formerly lived in the building herself. The 1,950-square-foot unit carried the inherent charm of a true loft space—exposed concrete ceilings, visible pipes, expansive floor-to-ceiling windows. The designer's

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The light-flooded living area features two custom white sofas, a pair of Apparatus Fenest chairs upholstered in a Zoffen fabric and a vintage French oak coffee table. Craftful Martin Thompson throw pillows punctuate the scheme.

DESIGN DETAILS

- TYPE**
Loft
- LOCATION**
Houston
- INTERIOR DESIGN**
Margaret Naeve Parker
mnaeve.com
- RESOURCES**
- BARBARA DAVIS GALLERY**
Art in office
barbaradavisgallery.com
- BDOW**
Console and dining table in living room
bdow.com
- DAVID SHELTON GALLERY**
Art in dining room
davidsheltongallery.com
- DESIGN WITHIN REACH**
Serge Mouille floor lamp, Frank Gehry Wiggle chair
dwr.com
- HOLLY HUNT**
Upholstery on breakfast banquette
hollyhunt.com
- LAWSON-FENNING**
Chairs in living room
lawsonfenning.com
- LINSEY ADELMAN**
Chandelier in dining room
linseyadelman.com
- M. NAEVE**
Custom and vintage furniture throughout, Martin Thompson throw pillows
mnaeve.com
- SUNSET SETTINGS**
Chair and ottoman in office
sunsetsettings.com
- ZAK+FOX**
Upholstery on chairs in living room
zakandfox.com



Farrow & Ball's Hague Blue worms up the artful home office. Opposite page, chandelier from top right. A vintage Italian brovettina table hosts casual meals. Frank Gehry's Wiggle chair, works by Texas artist Vincent Valdez enliven the dining room.

task was to make space feel warm and comfortable despite its bare bones. Naeve Parker knew furniture would be the focus. She scoured the globe—and her own shop—to find not only sought-after antiques, but also a cohesive mix of custom and contemporary silhouettes and original artwork to keep the space current. "I always prefer to mix contemporary, vintage and antique pieces in every project," she says. "It feels very organic to me."

Naeve Parker was also careful to edit her selections and give the space some breathing room. "[The client] works in finance, so he wanted a space that felt like an escape from his busy days," she says, "and also to work from home when he needed to." The ample light from the floor-to-ceiling windows helped too: "The natural light gives you so much freedom in selecting pieces," she adds, noting that they stuck to light colors that would reflect the daylight, and blues that would absorb it, to give some depth to the design.

Another challenge the designer faced was demarcating individual spaces in such a wide-open floor plan. "I played a lot with texture and scale to encourage the open feeling of the space while also designating more intimate vignettes."



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says Naeve Parker, who let materials and texture be the home's unifying thread: as opposed to a color palette. For example, a neutral rug and handsome upholstered pieces work to signify the living area, while a brass and blown glass chandelier by Lindsey Adelman drops in from the high ceiling to mark the dining room.

"We started from scratch, which is a rarity in this business sometimes," says Naeve Parker, reflecting on the project's successful outcome. In the end, amid all the layers, she concludes: "The entire space is having a cohesive conversation." As for the bachelor?

"Throughout our time working together, we got him really excited about art," she says. "[He is now] addicted to art and good furniture." What more could a designer hope for?

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