



Interior designer Karen Herold moved to Logan Square years before it became the hip haven it is today.



Right on the square, Fleur offers contemporary arrangements and unique gifts.

“THERE’S A PASSION ABOUT LOGAN SQUARE.”

FROM WALKABILITY TO DIVERSITY, STUDIO K FOUNDER **Karen Herold** COUNTS THE REASONS SHE LOVES HER NORTHWEST SIDE NEIGHBORHOOD. **BY BRIAN JUSTICE PHOTOGRAPHY BY ERIC KLEINBERG**

Today, Karen Herold is known as one of Chicago’s most successful commercial interior designers, but when the Amsterdam native first arrived here in 1998, she was just another aspiring talent looking for work. Odd jobs in those early days included waitressing for three nights at Schuba’s (“I lost \$40 the first night, made \$400 on the second, and none on the third,” she laughs) and babysitting “every child in Chicago,” but Herold eventually landed a plum position as creative director at design firm 555 International. In her 13 years there, her contemporary, approachable style won her clients like Hugh Hefner, Michael Morton, and Steve Wynn, as well as Chicago hot spots Balena, GT Fish & Oyster, Girl & the Goat, Embeya, and Perennial Virant. Now the 42-year-old has gone solo, having launched multidisciplinary design firm Studio K in January. As Herold prepares to unveil her latest project, a renovation of Waldorf Astoria dining destination Balsan for hot-shot restaurateur Brendan Sodikoff, the designer opens up about how she finds inspiration in her home—with her son, Max, 12—in Logan Square, which she



has seen evolve over the years into the vibrant, diverse, and trendy neighborhood it is now.

“I really wasn’t familiar with Logan Square when we moved here in 2000; it was just something we could afford, and for me it was closer to work. But it was really beautiful and the first place where I wanted to stay a while, and that’s why I’m in Logan Square now. And now I love it—I absolutely love everything about it.

“Logan Square is a real walking neighborhood. When I come home and pick up my son around 6 o’clock, you see all kinds of people walking from the Blue line, and I like that. Now that Logan Square is really starting to become a destination—around Milwaukee, Logan, and Kedzie—people walk to the neighborhood, then disperse back to their homes. So I

like that the activity on the street is not just cars but people on foot, and lots of bikes. It sometimes makes me feel like I’m back home in Amsterdam.

“Walking to the **Farmers Market** on the square on Sunday is one of my favorite things to do, and I love **Half Italian**

CONTINUED ON PAGE 84

PHOTOGRAPHY BY SHANE WELCH (FLOWERS)



Lula Cafe's lush summer patio.



The Logan Square farmers market happens every Sunday through late October.

“ON ONE HAND, LOGAN SQUARE HAS BECOME VERY MUCH A HIPSTER NEIGHBORHOOD, AND ON THE OTHER, IT’S STILL VERY FAMILY-ORIENTED.”

—KAREN HEROLD

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 82 **Grocer**, which is the best store—just this little grocer where you can pick up freshly made food and cannoli, and they have the best yogurt and ice cream. It’s like a European neighborhood shop, and there are all of these people you know, from your neighbors to older regulars. It’s the kind of place where everyone knows you and asks, ‘How was your week? How did your event go?’

“If you ever go to the **Logan Theatre**, you’ll never want to go to a regular theater anymore, ever. There’s no arcade, no stale smell of popcorn. There’s a bar, and you can bring your drink inside the theater. And I love the scale: Just three little rooms and a little bar. You’re never in rows of people. It’s not overwhelming. I think the Logan Theatre is definitely the best theater in town.

“**Lula Cafe** has been a neighborhood anchor for a long time, and I love it. The space is charming in its simplicity. Nothing is overdone. The scale feels small and cozy, and my favorite dish there is the tinea, which is Indonesian-spiced peanut butter on whole-grain sourdough with tomato, cucumber, red onion, and sprouts. And I like **Reno** for breakfast; it has large communal tables, the atmosphere is really casual and personal, and the menu is very straightforward.

“On one hand, Logan Square has become very much a hipster neighborhood, and on the other, it’s still very family-oriented. It’s extremely diverse. There are beautiful streets with wide lots and big Victorian houses where everyone goes for Halloween, but then there are a lot of families in apartments, condos, and bungalows who were here before Logan Square became ‘Logan Square.’

“The biggest change in the time we’ve been here is how the commercial part has changed, especially since the farmers market started and they rehabbed the theater—those have been tremendous things for the neighborhood. And the strip, from north on Logan Boulevard to Milwaukee, has become really nice. There are pet-grooming places, eyeglass stores, bookstores, and if you need a little gift, there’s a really cute florist called **Fleur**, right on the on the square. Plus, we’re getting Chicago’s own ‘High Line,’ the Bloomingdale Trail. That will be amazing.

“Logan Square is a place with all of these people who are enthusiastic about something, and it’s still affordable to live here; it really stimulates an entrepreneurial spirit. There’s a passion about the neighborhood. That’s what I’m really drawn to.” **MA**

LOGAN LOVES

Karen Herold shares some of her favorite Logan Square destinations.

LOGAN SQUARE FARMERS MARKET

Logan Boulevard from Milwaukee Avenue to Whipple Street; logansquarefarmersmarket.org

“Walking to the market on Sunday is one of my favorite things to do.”

HALF ITALIAN GROCER

2643 N. Milwaukee Ave., 773-227-5600; halfitaliangrocer.com

“It’s like a little European neighborhood store.”

LOGAN THEATRE

2646 N. Milwaukee Ave., 773-342-5555; thelogantheatre.com

“If you go here, you’ll never want to go to a regular theater anymore, ever.”

LULA CAFE

2537 N. Kedzie Blvd., 773-489-9554; lulacafe.com

“The space is charming in its simplicity. Nothing is overdone.”

RENO

2607 N. Milwaukee Ave., 773-697-4234; renochicago.com

“Large communal tables and a casual, personal atmosphere.”

FLEUR

3149 W. Logan Blvd., 773-395-2770; fleurchicago.com

“A really cute place right on the square.”