



Het Katshuis, Kats. *Designed and inhabited by* Elly Prins & Remco van Heumen

PAST PERFECTED PRESENT

In the middle of the vast polders of Zeeland lies this fairy-tale estate. What, at first glance, appears to be an 18th-century mansion with an outbuilding is actually a 1930s home with a barn, but in reverse order: in 2016 designers Elly Prins and Remco van Heumen converted the barn into a country house, relegating the original home to a subordinate building. The result is a beautifully designed building complex that serves as a residence, design studio, and event venue.

During the conversion, Prins and van Heumen incorporated as many old building materials as possible, both from the Netherlands and abroad, yet did not compromise on modern comforts. For example, the old barn now has a steel structure, concrete floor, and under-floor heating. Prins and van Heumen also landscaped the garden. In a style appropriate to the

renovated house, with long sightlines, they laid out an avenue of oaks with a fountain and an avenue of roses with thirteen rose arches. The pair's main principle when designing interiors is that a room should be atmospheric, even when empty. As early as the construction phase, they paid attention to fireplaces and paneling and ceilings made of stucco or wood. Also characteristic of the design, the doors to the rooms are all in line with one another, a feature described as *enfilade*. It creates tranquility. Now, after more than eight years of remodeling and decorating, the house is completely finished. Prins and van Heumen have set their sights on a new project outside the Netherlands: Plymtree Manor in Devon, United Kingdom. Het Katshuis is for sale to a buyer who appreciates the couple's extraordinarily imaginative design philosophy.