



## Karin Sundstedt Kuenstler

May 9, 1951 - January 16, 2022

Karin Sundstedt Kuenstler, died at home on Sunday, January 16th after a short battle with Ovarian Cancer. She was 70.

Karin was born in Flemington, New Jersey, and moved to Philadelphia in 1969 when she attended Drexel University as an undergraduate majoring in interior design and visual expression. Thus began her longtime affiliation with Drexel: Karin joined the faculty of Nesbitt College in 1982, was later promoted with tenure, and then served as the Head of the Department of Design. Upon her retirement, Karin was granted the status of Professor Emeritus and stayed engaged with the faculty and students of Westphal School of Design up until her passing.

Karin loved to travel, especially to visit her extended family in Sweden. Throughout her life, she traveled to Sweden many times, beginning with a formative summer she spent there when she was 16. She also enjoyed teaching abroad, and taught courses for Drexel students in London, Amsterdam, Copenhagen, and Berlin. She made a special point to take her daughters abroad whenever she could, and was known for seeking out interiors and exteriors far and wide.

Karin was the proud mother of and survived by her twin daughters, Zoe and Alexa Kuenstler (Emily Widra), her sister Anne-Sofie Mortimer, her nephew

Axel Mortimer, and niece Kirsten Mortimer. She was predeceased by her parents, Yngve Sundstedt and Brita Karlsson Sundstedt.

Karin's memorial service will take place later this spring.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in Karin's memory to the Antoinette Westphal School of Design at Drexel University online at [giving.drexel.edu/Kuenstler](https://giving.drexel.edu/Kuenstler) or by mail at Drexel University, Institutional Advancement, PO Box 8215 Philadelphia, PA 19101-9684.

# Tribute Wall

RS

“ I was one of Karin's graduate students at Drexel and she was one of my favorites. I loved her interpersonal style and sense of humor. I remember her as being somewhat wry from time to time and this little window into her as a person, not only my instructor, gave me such a feeling of comradery and warmth. Often I remember these small connections keeping my spirits and effort up on exhausting days. She made you feel included and in on whatever was going on. She was kind and funny. She was frank. I loved her honesty and directness with heart. She was an absolute kick. Sending love. I know she will be missed for all the joy, love and fun she brought into the world.

-Rebecca Short, MA Interior Architecture and Design '07

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**Rebecca Short** - May 10, 2022 at 05:15 PM

JM

“ Beautiful thoughts of Karin:

*I always think of color when I think of Karin, a lively, bright & exciting Red! She had that lipstick that was perfect with her personality, she never shied away from a splash of intense color. Though, even such intense color, paled in comparison to the aura that was Karin!!!*

*Karin was exuberantly encouraging and a true ray of sunshine in the chaotic and stressful days of college. She knew how to guide her students to a deeper place of thought, nudging us towards finding what we were seeking in design and life. She poured herself passionately into each minute of our time together during personal desk crits, or, a quick chat in the hallway. She was so inspiring during crits that I could hardly write down ideas that we generated together fast enough before they slipped off into the ether.*

*Karin became a part of me as a student and as a professional. I would often find myself thinking “how would Karin solve this problem” as an inroad to beginning the pulling & pushing of that “meatball” I had been handed as a design or art project. She was a rare teacher and human being that I feel lucky to have known.*

*My thoughts have been drifting off to memories of time spent with her these past few days, after hearing the sad news of her passing. Karin was my teacher 24 years ago, yet she made an impact that has lasted my adult lifetime and I am so appreciative of that gift from her.*

*Karin, you will truly be missed in your physical presence here on earth, but you showed me, and many of your students, a piece of your soul and that cannot be lost. You’ve made etchings in my soul that will live within me forever.*

*Much love and condolences to Karin’s family, friends, and my former classmates. Karin was an extraordinary woman!!*

*Julie Marquart, Design Student- Graduate 1989*

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**Julie Marquart** - March 03, 2022 at 10:48 PM

SM

“ *Karin was my professor and when I lost my portfolio in a fire, she motivated me to work that much harder on my last year at Drexel, and that hard work lead me to my first job even before I graduated. I owe her a great deal in my career start and very sorry to hear that she passed. She was so full of life.*

*My Condolences to her family.*

*Sue Murtey(Fisher)*

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**Sue Murtey** - February 28, 2022 at 11:00 AM