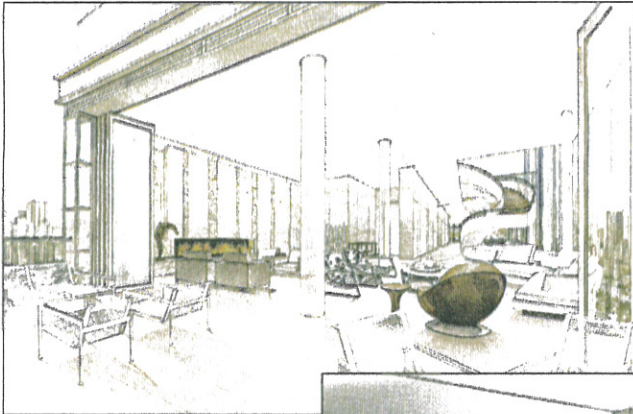


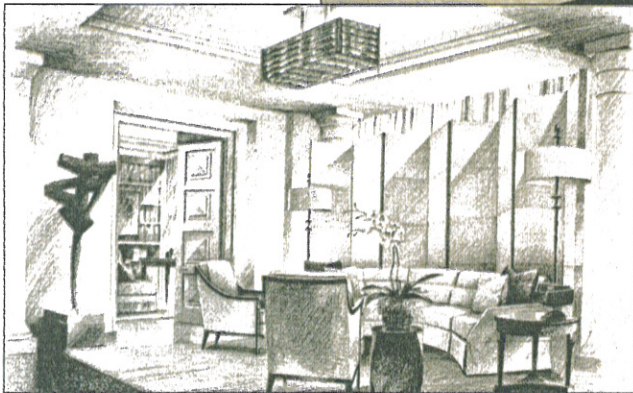
New in Homes & Condos



Design by
Alessandro
Munge



Design by
Patty Xenos



Design by
Fenwick Bonnell

PENTHOUSE DESIGN

Museum quality

Three designers express their vision for a \$12.8 million penthouse

TRACY HANES
SPECIAL TO THE STAR

Three different designers, three distinctly different designs.

That was the result when a trio of the country's top interior designers was invited to submit their visions for an elite \$12.8 million penthouse atop MuseumHouse, an upscale condo in Yorkville.

Fenwick Bonnell of Powell & Bonnell, Alessandro Munge of Munge Leung and Patty Xenos of Patty Xenos Design recently presented their concepts to a small, invitation-only gathering at the MuseumHouse sales centre.

Their canvas: A two-storey, \$12.8 million, 5,618-square-foot penthouse with 1,152 square feet of stone terraces, expansive windows, panoramic views and a private elevator.

The 19-storey condo, developed by the Yorkville Corp., is on Bloor Street West across from the Royal Ontario Museum and will have just 26 suites.

"It's fascinating to see how three individuals approached the space in dramatically different fashions," said Sol Wassermuhl of Page + Steele / IBI Group Architects, who designed the MuseumHouse and has purchased a suite there.

All three designers found the greatest difficulty was designing a space with no homeowner in mind and no set budget. (Whoever does buy the penthouse will have the opportunity to see all three concepts and can opt to work with one of the three interior designers, or choose their own).

FENWICK BONNELL

Bonnell and his team took inspiration from a 93-year-old client who had been chairman of the Royal Ontario Museum and owned a penthouse on Bloor St.

He envisioned an art-loving world traveller as the resident and maximized wall space in the "glass box" while not impeding its airy brightness.

"We wanted to honour someone like our client, to make it so incredibly personal to transcend trendy," Bonnell explained. "It's somewhat transitional, not wholly traditional or contemporary, and it could be for someone moving from Forest Hill or for a European buyer."

In Bonnell's plan, the stairs were tucked behind a two-storey wall to create a feature wall for art, while upstairs and on the second floor, doors were moved to the ends of the corridor to create a gallery space.

Terrace doors in the master bedroom and conservatory were expanded to blend indoor and outdoor living spaces.

To allow the artwork to be the main focus, a palette of gesso white and other neutrals was used, as well as lavish fabrics.

Bonnell's plan was illustrated in a series of exquisite hand-drawn sketches to reflect the timeless traditional nature of his design.

"Classic," declared Wassermuhl.

PATTY XENOS

Xenos brought her Montreal-influenced French flair to the project, designing each room to offer a sensory experience.

She wanted to capitalize on the 180-degree view while "creating a sense of mystery" about what lay beyond the main foyer, which offers a view of a light-frame staircase.

She played on the themes of fire and water, with a two-storey water wall in the centre of the suite and an oversized backlit fireplace. Upstairs in the master bedroom, a two-sided

stone fireplace can be enjoyed from the bed or the outdoor terrace, and an oversized pedestal bath sits on a granite floor that runs into the terrace, where it becomes an infinity pool.

She created versatile spaces which can be "huge entertaining spaces or rooms within rooms." That's why the den's partitions pivot and can be tucked away when privacy's not required to open to the living room to create a large singular space.

"Clients want grand great rooms but don't want them to feel cold," she explained, using the spectacular backlit alabaster fireplace to create intimacy.

Wood panels warm the dining room, an intimate space which has a view of the great room through a glassed-in wine cellar.

"Each room seems to very dramatic with very, very interesting experiences throughout," noted Wassermuhl.

ALESSANDRO MUNGE

Munge took his cues from the neighbourhood "cultural icons" like art galleries and the ROM, and

considered the type of person who can afford, and expect, the best and has eclectic tastes.

"We envisioned someone with a great art collection and there's a great opportunity in this space to celebrate art," Munge said. "And the unobstructed views are very rare. When you get off the elevators, you get the No. 1 view to the south through wall-to-wall windows."

As a result, his design is modern and open concept, to maximize the stunning views.

Munge opted for "classic, classic materials" like travertine stone and rift oak and light-toned palettes, and said the furnishings should be collectibles themselves, like a solid carrera marble dining table.

The dramatic sculptural staircase, made of concrete and white plaster, is a showstopper, "a ribbon that takes you to the second floor," he said.

"There's pure form there," noted Wassermuhl. "It's a swooping thing that draws your eye up."

For more information on MuseumHouse, go to www.museumhouseonbloor.com.

Three visions for penthouse