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Best Places to live in NY

Gallery-like units at NoHo's Schumacher fit for a fine art show

BY GINA PACE
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Like a sought-after painting at a Christie's auction, the luxe properties at the Schumacher — a former 19th century printing plant being redeveloped into luxury apartments in NoHo — the trophy spaces are going, going and almost gone.

The first of 20 units went on the market two weeks ago, and already half the building is under contract. Priced at \$3.75 million up to \$25 million for a penthouse, A-listers and the uber-wealthy are clamoring to get a piece of the building at 36 Bleecker. So much so that Prudential Douglas Elliman Brokers John Gomes and Fredrik Eklund haven't yet listed all the units.

"We don't want to sell too fast because we might sell ourselves short," Gomes says. "Why do you want to do that when you've worked so hard on something?"

The most surprising part: Walking by the building on a quiet corner of Bleecker and Mott Sts., there isn't much to see. The building is covered in scaffolding and netting.

The marketing team has painted a picture of the vision a few blocks away at a Crosby St. sales office. As Gomes starts to give a tour of the office, a woman stumbles in, mistaking it for an art gallery.

It's exactly the kind of mistake the brains behind the project want visitors to make. After all, it's a real estate development with its own art curator — SoHo gallerist Cristina Grajales.

In the first room, there are works by French artist Christophe Côme and Brooklyn painter José Parlá — who has large works hanging in the Brooklyn Academy of Music and Barclays Center — who have been commissioned to create pieces for the building.

Renderings of the finished product — expected to be completed by the end of 2014 — hang on the walls like paintings. Potential

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Units at Schumacher feature high ceilings and plenty of space, starting at \$3.75 million.

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Developers stayed true to the building's original features (inset) and even got OK to light facade from outside (r.). Below, a common roof deck.



WORK OF ART

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The art of living well

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buyers can gawk at the plans for the courtyard's vertical garden designed by landscape architect Ken Smith, who created the sculpture gardens for MoMA.

The Kallista fixtures used in the bathrooms are set on pedestals, with gallery-style labeling. Slabs of Italian marble used in the bathrooms can be picked up for inspection.

"I'm confident we are creating something of artistic significance, and I'm not surprised certain people get it," says developer Roy Stillman, whose previous projects have included the Centurion, built with renowned architect I.M. Pei.

Walking into the building, Stillman says the space, with its high ceilings spoke to him.

Stillman describes several "crimes against architecture": the original 1860s red brick was covered with nearly 50 coats of paint; wrought-iron work was covered by aluminum siding, and windows had been blocked.

Stillman went on a mission to find what the building used to look like. Through analyzing historical photographs, they determined there had been a Queen Anne-style pediment. The Landmarks Preservation Commission not only gave permission to rebuild it, but to light the building from the outside — a privilege rarely granted to residential buildings.

The chance to live in such a luxury building downtown isn't lost on potential buyers, Gomes says. At the base of the building, there are four "mansions" — triplex homes that have



Building will feature a vertical courtyard garden (top), and original designs like a vaulted ceiling. Below, broker John Gomes.

customizable basements, where the future owner can determine if they want a home theater, wine cellar or a pool built into the space. One buyer has put two of the mansions under contract, and plans to combine them into a massive 9,000-square-foot home.

There will be two penthouses — one which isn't on the market yet. The other is listed for \$23 million. They each share part of the sixth floor, and then have new-construction seventh-floor additions along with plenty of roof space. Everyone else gets to share a common roof space designed by landscape architect Smith.

Most of the interested buyers are art collectors, says Eklund, who is also one of the stars on "Million Dollar Listing New York."

"In a very short time, this has become the 'It' building in New York," Eklund says. "The caliber of these buyers — and their art collections — is unparalleled."



SAM COSTANZA/DAILY NEWS