

CONDO LIVING

UP CLOSE

The art of condo design

Condo developer believes it's the little touches that make a condo unique



ART condominiums is a unique 11-storey, terraced mid-rise located in the heart of the Queen West arts community.



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DUNCAN MCALLISTER
Special to QMI Agency

Prolific Toronto artist and entrepreneur Gary Silverberg has several themes for life and art. One is that 'It's Easier to be Afraid.'

"Fear stagnates you from trying things. It's so much easier to be afraid then to go forward and take a chance and make something happen," he says.

Silverberg is the developer behind the ART condominiums, a unique 11-storey, terraced mid-rise located in the heart of the Queen West arts community. The building rises from the site of a former industrial building with cutting-edge design and interior spaces.

Art is Business and Business is Art is another theme from Silverberg's 1995 reactionism show with paintings depicting businessmen in suits in various abstract settings. "When I talk about art, I talk about influencing culture and changing the way things are. In the beginning my works reflected aspects of the business culture at the time: how people thought, where we were and the dynamics of business. Each one of those pieces was telling a smaller part of the story."

As a consultant, Silverberg has assessed development opportunities in the US, Europe, Asia, and worked in Russia towards the end of the Soviet era. "Business has become the one unifying culture in the world. I've been in Russia, I've been in all these countries, and I saw that they were trying to be capitalists. They only knew a car-

icature of what business was when they were starting out."

Silverberg also marketed a line of clothing and accessories. "I designed ties that were licensed and they sold around the world. At the time you had a uniform as a businessman. You had a need to express something. It was more than just the pattern or the colour; it was communicating. A lot of them were emerging countries and the ties had messages about this new culture of business, so that was the kick."

ness is normally about numbers without a soul, and business needs a soul."

Silverberg has been a principle in projects including high-rise residential, suburban house building, and the renovation of old buildings and homes in Toronto. "I've done pretty well almost everything except build a hotel." The new mid-rise on Dovercourt Rd., has a number of interesting features and it's the little added touches that make ART condos unique.

In an effort to make all four sides of the building significant, the rear loading dock doubles as an event space. "The idea for the back of the building is, it's a lane which we didn't want to be a lane. We wanted it to be a pedestrian and transportation route where people felt very comfortable walking down. Something like what happens in Europe after years of intensification," says Silverberg.

The whole building has been wired for high-tech services. Each suite is cabled for home theatre with connections between rooms. There's even a hookup for a projection TV in the middle of the living room. "You could have a screen come down, you could just leave the blank white wall or you could put paintings, multi-purpose things," explains Silverberg. Stationed on every floor are

flat screen televisions near the elevators displaying a continuous slideshow by artist, writer and critic, Gary Michael Dault. "He put together for us 5,200 images of significance from the historical, contemporary and avant-garde and these circulate at 10 seconds at a time."



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Silverberg sees how much things have changed in culture since then and now and attributes that to the internet. "Because where our cultures are with the new technology age, we can all connect with each other all over the world. Everybody's aspiring to a higher order and busi-