HIGH-END RESIDENTIAL

LUXURY HOMES ADD FINE ART TO ENHANCE HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Experts say placing curated works of art in buildings' shared spaces provokes upbeat and positive emotions, writes **Peta Tomlinson**

Artworks with a natural feel and pleasing colours have been chosen for the shared spaces at the Four Seasons Private Residences at 706 Mission, San Francisco, US. Photo: 706 Mission Street Co.

Incorporating fine art into high-end residential projects is a trend that developers are increasingly embracing everywhere.

Appealing though this might be, can a purposely curated art collection really help promote health and wellness in these troubled times?

Maria Di Grande, principal and founder of US art consulting

firm MDG Art Advisory, is certainly convinced.

Indeed, Di Grande, curator of the art programme at the recently opened Four Seasons Private Residences at 706 Mission, San Francisco, US, says the chosen artworks can "alleviate some of the stress and mental strain we've been healing from since the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic". How?

The uplifting, relaxing experience the collection intends to portray draws on the "positive tension" of the building itself, which is comprised of two contrasting towers: the renovated historic Aronson Building, with its dark, moody interiors, and the new light-filled contemporary tower.

When Di Grande selects art with wellness or happiness in mind, she considers the intention of the artist.

"For many artists, their artmaking is a meditative process, and subsequent artworks may take on a hypnotic energy that inspires serenity and contemplation," she explains.

"For example, Allison Svoboda's *Mandala* series put her in a meditative state in the creation process, and when 706 Mission residents encounter her *Mandala Iberis* in the tower lift lobby, they tap into their own inner presence while immersing in the repeating patterns and shapes from nature. Inspired by fractal geometry, the collage's

layers and brushstrokes pulse with a calming energy."

Di Grande also considers the colour, size and placement of artworks to determine whether they will evoke a spiritual feeling.

On colours, she says: "I always refer to nature – such as the beautiful blue of a perfect sky, the various shades of greens in trees and plants, the yellow of the sun, and the bright and varied colours of flora."

At Four Seasons Private Residences at 706 Mission, two artworks that include both an abstract botanical mode and "pleasing colours that envelop us and make us happy" are Maria Burtis' *Aqua Pura* and Carlos Ramirez's *Stepping Stones Across the Creek* (both 2019).

In the corridors, artworks by South Korean artist Bumin Kim feature smooth textures and a subtle gradation of colour across multiple threads, delivering a soothing effect as residents walk past them.

Furthermore, Di Grande believes it's important for the artist to have a connection to place when curating for health and wellness. Hence the inclusion of *Mid Refraction* by Casper Brindle (2018), an innovative artist who grew up surfing the beaches along Los Angeles' coast who "creates work that is highly meditative and in direct response to the human condition, culture and environment of California".

According to Di Grande, her clients affirm that living with art which evokes pleasurable or positive feelings has a powerful effect on their well-being.

"We are reminded how much our clients enjoy their paintings, especially during this stressful year of Covid-19," she says. "They are finding solace and happiness in their artworks, which bring a positive vibration to their homes."

Incorporating art into everyday home life is also the intent of Hong Kong's Swire Properties, whose artistic commissions include a signature sculpture for the garden at Eden, a Heatherwick Studio-designed luxury residential development in Singapore's District 10, completed in 2019.

Adrian To, director of residential at Swire Properties, says the trio of Spun chairs by Heatherwick Studio – made of Pannonia Verdi, a green granite from Austria – is both a fine artwork and a practical piece, purposely inviting residents to sit and rest.

"We feel that art and culture should be an integral part of people's daily lives," he said.

"That's why we add value to our portfolio by adopting a holistic approach to the design of our residences, incorporating unique works of art as key design features to enhance residents' overall experience of our developments."

At Arte Surfside, a 16-residence oceanfront condominium in Miami, US, the developers personally selected a collection of blue-chip works with the help of Monica Kalpakian, an esteemed art patron, founding member of Art Basel Miami Beach, a member of Tate Modern's International Council and a former board member of The Bass and MOCA Miami Museums.

Arte, the first US project by Italian architect Antonio Citterio, takes its name not only from the artful design of the building, but also from the curated artwork within it.

An original *Art* sculpture by American artist Robert Indiana – best known for his iconic *Love* sculptures – stands outside Arte's front entrance, while a

work by Danish-Icelandic artist Olafur Eliasson anchors its elegant lobby lounge.

Also on view is a work from Mads Christensen called *New Horizon II* (2019).

Residents of Arte, where apartment prices start at around US$10.8 million, can avail themselves of personalised art consultations with Kalpakian who can advise on everything from curation to installation.

Developer Edward J. Minskoff, another active patron of the arts, enhances all his projects with works from his personal collection. The latest, 17 Jane Street – a rare, ground-up West Village condominium in New York City – features *Corks (Couple)*, a three-metre (10-foot) bronze sculpture by famed American artist Jeff Koons.

While 17 Jane is a private residential building, architect Sir David Chipperfield designed the lobby to be an illuminated presence on Jane Street, making it the ideal showcase for contemporary art. Remaining half-floor residences are priced from US$9.7 million.

And to brighten the day of residents as they come and go, the lobby of The Smile, a New York rental building by Danish architecture firm BIG – Bjarke Ingels Group – is bedecked with rainbow colours, Harlem-inspired murals, and an expansive work by Kaws, an American graffiti artist and designer. Prominent behind the desk, the 10 silk-screen prints are from a series of 100 titled *No Reply*. Rentals start at US$2,850 per month for a studio flat.