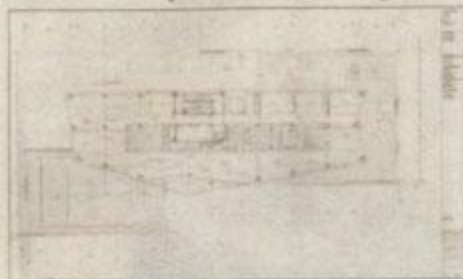




Fantasy land

Dream pad = army of designers + imagination (and, oh yeah, \$30M)



THE BLUEPRINT: The drawings for Michael Hirtenstein's unit nearly outnumber the sketches created for all of One York.

By KATHERINE DYKSTRA

MICHAEL Hirtenstein was driving down Ericsson Place in TriBeCa when two large renderings hanging in a window caught his eye.

The first was of a glass-walled apartment with a terrace, a turquoise-blue swimming pool and a woman dipping her legs in the water. The second was of a duplex apartment with double-height ceilings, all of Manhattan stretching out around it.

A self-described entrepreneur and real-estate junkie (when we ask him how many homes he owns, he says seven and then proceeds to list eight, not counting the two plots of Hamptons land he plans to develop), Hirtenstein decided then and there that he had to have this apartment.

"They hadn't even begun construction yet," says Hirtenstein, 44, a telecom mogul who once paid \$15.7 million to buy a Time Warner Center apartment and rented it to Jay-Z for \$70,000 a month before selling it for \$27 million earlier this year. "I thought it looked really cool."

But there was one tiny problem. The two renderings were of two different

apartments: a simplex with a pool and a duplex.

"I told Michael that the apartments were on different floors," says Stan Perelman, the developer of One York, the TriBeCa building whose sales office stopped Hirtenstein in his tracks. "And he said, 'I don't care. I want that, same kind of apartment built for me.'"

And so began the conceptualization and realization of a downtown dream apartment. One that would ultimately combine 3/2 units, cost \$20 million (plus a build-out of nearly \$10 million), and employ an army of architects, interior designers and specialists from around the world.

So, what can you get for nearly \$30 million in Manhattan? Just about anything you want.

ONE OF A KIND

Step one was figuring out how Hirtenstein could have both the pool and the duplex. The pool — designed to be imbedded into the roof of One York's sixth-floor base, the skele-



ton of a historic warehouse — was attached to the seventh floor's south unit. Since this was the only outdoor space in One York big enough to accommodate a pool, Hirtenstein started by purchasing that unit.

Next he bought the apart-

ment directly below it on the sixth floor (to achieve the duplex feel) and a portion of the apartment directly above him on the eighth floor so that he could knock out the floor and get his double-height ceilings (22 feet high, to be exact).

He had 3/2 units, both pool and duplex. Not bad, but why stop there?

"I was going to buy only half [of the seventh floor], but I really love the view to the north [up Sixth Avenue] and I said, 'Why don't I just buy the whole floor?'" says Hirtenstein. He did, ending up with a grand total of 3/2 units, 6,000 square feet inside and 5,800 square feet outside.

From there he employed Enrique Norton, the architect who designed One York, to help him customize his three-bedroom space. Perelman allowed Hirtenstein and Norton to design on the drawing board, as opposed to post-construction, which, as anyone who's ever combined units in a residential building knows, is somewhat uncommon.

"If someone is paying money for an apartment [at One York], they should get exactly what they want," says Perelman. "They shouldn't have to close and then rip out the kitchen and then rebuild it."

Because the entire apartment will be enclosed in glass, Norton opted to place all of the "services" (bathrooms, closets, etc.) in the center of the apartment in order not to inhibit the movement of light.

"We decided we would make it as open and flexible as possible. We'd concentrate that core of services in the middle and obscure or hide them all," says Norton. "It's literally a super-huge closet, everything goes in there."

This "super-huge closet," basically a rectangle in the



PERCHANCE TO DREAM: These two renderings are the inspiration for Hirtenstein's mega Manhattan abode.



TWO HEADS: Dieter Schoellberger and Timothy Dumbleton of Ten Arquitectos put their heads together to help come up with the concept for Hirstenstein's sprawling TriBeCa place, including the consolidation of the "services" at the core.

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center of the seventh floor, will contain the master bath and dressing room, two mini-bars, two powder rooms, the kitchen, coat closet and more. And all the living spaces (living room, billiards room, media room, bedrooms, etc.) will flow around it.

Next Hirstenstein brought on interior designer Amy Lau, who had helped him with three of his other homes. Together they came up with an aesthetic (polished/eclectic/industrial) and began to search for the pieces and artisans that would help Hirstenstein

achieve the desired look. They chose suede for the floor and walls of the master closet, and marble slabs and luminous glass, respectively, for the walls and ceiling of the master bath.

"I've taken him all over the world now," says Lau. Already they've commissioned three artists and are in the market for two more; one to do a mural on the wall that backs the vaulted ceiling and one to design a lounge and bar area.

For the outside of the "super-huge closet" Lau found leather designer Jim Zivic, who will wrap it completely in 30- to 40-foot strips of belting leather.

They hired Enzo Enea, a landscape architect from Switzerland, to design all the outdoor spaces. The north terrace will include a hot tub, shower, steam room, rock garden and outdoor TV. And on the south terrace, 14-foot trees will tower around Hirstenstein's prized pool — "I'm a Pisces; I'm always in the water," he says. On the bottom of the pool, an LED screen behind glass mosaic tile will project video. Why?

"Because it's fun, because it's never been done before," says Hirstenstein. "I saw an installation of LED on a wall somewhere and thought, why can't we do it at the bottom of the pool?"

Such off-the-cuff ideas are the way most of the extravagant accoutrements have come to be included in Hirstenstein's apartment. Halfway through the photo shoot for this piece, Hirstenstein turned to one of the architects from Norton's firm, Ten Arquitectos, and said, "I think I'd like to add a dumbwaiter from the seventh to the sixth floor for food. Can we do that?"

The architects and designers have been more than amenable to all of Hirstenstein's requests, despite the work that goes into deviating from the original design. Initially the building was designed in fritted glass.

"Enrique wanted [a range of] small to bigger dots. I told Stan this didn't seem like a good idea. I don't want shadows of dots on me," says Hirstenstein. "He agreed. So there's no frit anywhere."

Along the same lines, Hirstenstein's pool will be bigger and deeper than the

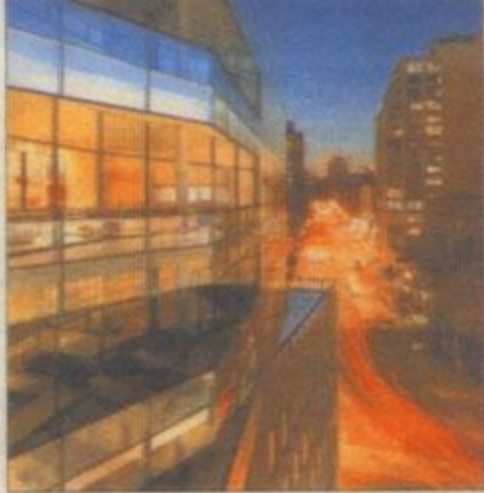
original plans called for, thus requiring more structural support than had been planned. And the unit's custom-designed air conditioning (rather than central air that comes out of a bunch of vents, one thin vent will traverse the entire perimeter of Hirstenstein's apartment) and more than 473 light fixtures (that's just inside) made it imperative he purchase his own electrical riser.

"I could sell electricity to other people in the building. Forget the maintenance. I fear my electrical bill," says Hirstenstein, who hired Clark Johnson, a lighting designer who has worked on Ian Schrager properties including the Mondrian hotel in Los Angeles. "My lighting budget is the most expensive [he estimates more than \$1 million; the riser was \$100,000] of any apartment ever."

Much of Hirstenstein's design inspiration came from his love of entertaining. The sixth floor will have a kosher kitchen, an industrial laundry room (for all the pool towels) and space for the domestic help. And he has plans for a bar/lounge area.

"I really enjoy a nice setting for a bar area, for cocktails before you go sit in the living room," says Hirstenstein. "I like having different sitting spots."

As the plans begin to come together, he's now spending his time on bells and whistles, including a 103-inch TV (at about \$80,000), which will drop out of the ceiling in the living room, a TurboChef oven (\$15,000 — "And I don't even cook!" he says,



YORK IN THE ROAD: One York is Guggenheim Guadalajara designer Enrique Norton's first New York residential project.

"I eat out every night."), a 50-inch TV behind the mirror in the master bath and a 750-bottle wine vault with a fingerprint-activated keyless entrance.

"I'm even trying to put up a canvas, so I can watch big movies, on the end of the pool," says Hirstenstein. "It's a 20-by-20-foot device on a pulley."

The apartment should be completed by February. Though he swears he has every intention of actually living in this residence, Hirstenstein (who currently considers his newly

renovated Park Imperial apartment home base) is already onto his next big project. He has just purchased a building on Houston Street, which he plans to develop.

"It's not ultra-high-end like my usual standards, but I will make it very hip," he says.

"I like buying nice properties that are going to appreciate, and I can use when I want to use them. It's a good place to put your money. A diversification for me with a little fun to it; I like redesigning them."



MOTHER INTERIOR: Amy Lau has taken Hirstenstein all over the world in search of the perfect finishes for his homes.



TIME ON HIS SIDE: The sale of the Time Warner Center unit Jay-Z rented nearly covered the cost of Hirstenstein's new pad.