

RIGHT NOW SPACES

Words by JEAN WRIGHT



The Residence Hyde Park, due for completion in 2011, boasts commanding views over Hyde Park. The indicative display apartment (seen here) was put together by Sydney-based interior designer Neil Bradford.



French polish

This prestigious new Sydney development exudes a distinctly Parisian feel.

IN 2007, ARCHITECTS SCOTTCARVER won a City of Sydney competition to turn the former NSW Police Force headquarters office in College Street, one of Sydney's least distinguished buildings of the 70s, into a prestigious residential apartment block directly opposite Hyde Park, where the commercial and cultural life of the CBD meets the mixed residential neighbourhood of East Sydney. The development is due for completion in 2011.

"Working within the constraints of an existing structure is never easy," says Bob Perry, design director of ScottCarver, who describes the concept as "architecture of reconciliation", whereby the unsympathetic original office building is converted into a piece of civic art. At street level a sandstone-clad podium will anchor the project to the street and relate in scale, material and detail to the neighbouring historic buildings of the Australian Museum and Sydney Grammar School.

Looking skywards, the building takes its cue from the spires of St Mary's Cathedral, with a tower split into two slender wings. The slightly more formal west-facing wing will have long balconies tilted

slightly towards the Anzac War Memorial in Hyde Park. This tilt will emphasise the lightness of the tower looking along College Street from the north. The east wing will take on a less formal feeling, given its outlook over East Sydney, an area that has come full circle, from fashionable in the mid-1800s, to gritty for much of the 1900s, and now trendy, with up-market apartments, old stone row houses, art galleries and restaurants.

Mark Sydney of Pamada, the developers, wanted the interiors to reflect the prestige of its city parkside location. One automatically thinks of New York's Central Park, but Mark turned to Paris – the city known for its culture of urban apartment living and parks – and to designer Christian Liaigre, in particular, for inspiration.

Liaigre is one of the most influential designers alive today, equally renowned for his interior design and his studio's exquisite furniture. Mark and the architects visited the designer's studio in Paris, to explore ways in which his furniture could be integrated into the design of the apartments at the so named The Residence Hyde Park. "During these workshops, it was evident that Liaigre's design

integrity and pursuit of excellence would fit perfectly into the world of the apartments on offer at The Residence," says architect Doug Southwell of ScottCarver. As a result, Liaigre was asked to design a collection especially for the development. "The Residence Hyde Park has commissioned an original furniture collection by Christian Liaigre specifically for a typical apartment," Mark says.

The designer's warm and restrained style is the inspiration for the interiors of The Residence Hyde Park, which have been designed by Parisian architect Marc Seifert in conjunction with Sydney-based interior designer Neil Bradford (who put together the indicative display apartment shown above).

The attention to detail has been considered throughout, from the elegance of the main facade, sandstone podium and detailed metalwork, through to the French-inspired interiors.

The option for purchasers of apartments at The Residence Hyde Park to acquire the specially commissioned Christian Liaigre collection is an exciting opportunity, as this is the first time that his furniture has become available in Australia.