

New in Homes & Condos

SECTION H
SATURDAY
MARCH 12, 2011
thestar.com

»TORONTO STAR«

WATCH THIS SPACE

Bryan Baeumler, star of Disaster DIY, will be launching his new column in New in Homes & Condos next Saturday



Your new home warranty explained.
Tarion.com

YORKVILLISM A CONCEPT



Arthur Mola's winning concept of a young woman wandering the streets of Yorkville was the winner of the Ryerson University co-op contest.

Photo co-op program with Ryerson reveals a growing talent pool

GALE BEEBY
REAL ESTATE EDITOR

The phone call was a surprise. Would I be willing, the representative from Lifetime Developments asked, along with another member of the *Toronto Star's* editorial team, like to become involved in a co-op program with Ryerson University's School of Image Arts, Montana

Steele Advertising and Lifetime, where students would submit their portfolios for a chance to be the lead photographer in a marketing campaign for the Yorkville Condominiums?

The challenge for the students would be to create images that represent life in Yorkville, including day and night life, culture, history

and landmarks.

An honour indeed, and a great chance for me, who loves the photo arts, to see some great work created by young minds. I asked the *Star's* deputy art director and avid photographer, Spencer Wynn, to join me in the two days of judging.

YORKVILLE continued on H13

THE QUEENSWAY

Intelligent living in old Etobicoke

IQ will change the way people think about The Queensway

TRACY HANES
SPECIAL TO THE STAR

The folks at the Remington Group know a thing or two about transformations.

For the past half dozen years, they've been transforming formerly vacant land north of Highway 407 and east of Warden Ave. into Downtown Markham where eventually 9,500 people will live and 16,000 will work in a European-style mixed-use urban downtown.

Now Remington is about to contribute to the ongoing transformation of Toronto's Queensway neighbourhood with the launch of IQ this month. The IQ moniker is a play on the "smart" aspects of the project, such as energy efficient features and optional plug-ins for electric cars, and on its location at Islington Ave. and the Queensway.

Local councillor Peter Milczyn says for years the Queensway was "a lost street" that has slowly been evolving from an aging industrial/commercial strip where many of the old factories have closed, into a mixed use road with retail and residential. Several years ago, the City of Toronto undertook an avenue study to give direction to the Queensway and "we wanted to promote urbanization and intensification," says Milczyn.

Modest efforts to bring residential units to the Queensway started in the mid '90s with a few small infill townhouse projects and got a recent boost with the completion of the Loggia condo just east of Islington.

IQ continued on H6



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HOMES & CONDOS

IQ from H1

Milczyn describes the IQ development as a “very welcome” addition to the neighbourhood. “What we need now is population and more people on the street to animate it so it becomes a destination, not just someplace people pass through. As more people who live here, more restaurants and stores will come in, to serve the people who live here and attract others to visit the area.”

“This area has a lot of potential and opportunity and it’s great to be involved with the City of Toronto and Etobicoke,” says Michael Bratty, president of Remington’s high-rise and commercial/retail division. “We have high expectations and think the Queensway is a great location.”

“This project is not the first multi-family residential project, but one of the few that have been started in the area. I think it will tie in and lend itself well with existing retail and other businesses,” he says.

IQ’s initial phase will include the 12-storey, 123-unit west tower, which will be the first of seven in the master-planned community that will create 1,200 residential units.

“It’s a big commitment to this neighbourhood. Whether it’s 300 or 1,200 units, our vision here is long term,” says Bratty. “We are as interested as those who live in the area to witness the changes that are coming and to be part of them.”

“Etobicoke is a great gateway to downtown when you are coming into Toronto along the west side. I think it offers the lifestyle of an urban downtown with the lakeshore and boardwalk, and vibrant retail along the Queensway without the downtown prices.” (Prices will start in the \$190,000s).

Bratty says the project reflects a multi-faceted urban lifestyle. “I think it’s very hip, very professional — it’s fun, it’s active, it’s passive, it’s going to the opera, it’s going to the football game. And you are within walking distance of fine restaurants, shops, movie theatres. It’s great to have that lifestyle available to you at suburban prices.”

IQ marks Remington’s return to the condo market since its first foray with Viva at Bathurst St. and Wilson Ave. half a dozen years ago.

While Remington’s Downtown Markham development tends to get the most attention, Bratty says, the company’s vision also includes areas with existing infrastructure where the company can “bring in buildings that complement and interact well within the neighbourhood.”

IQ is being touted as smart and urban



TIM FRASER FOR THE TORONTO STAR

Michael, left, and Rudolph Bratty of the Remington Group are seen at the IQ sales office in Etobicoke. Michael Bratty is the mastermind behind IQ at Islington Ave. and The Queensway.

IQ TEST

Development: IQ Condominium Residences
Location: Islington Ave. and The Queensway
Developer: The Remington Group
Architect: El Richmond
Designer: Bryon Patton & Associates
Development size: 12-storey tower with 123 units.
 First of seven towers in master-planned community
Suite sizes: 485 to 900 sq. ft. including studio, one bedroom, one bedroom plus den, two bedroom, two bedroom plus den
Prices: From the \$190,000s to the high \$300,000s
Suite features: Nine or 10 foot ceilings; high performance double-glazed windows; expansive

balconies and terraces; hardwood, ceramic and porcelain flooring; Energy Star appliances; granite kitchen countertops
Amenities: Indoor salt water pool/whirlpool, fitness centre with weight, yoga and cardio rooms; party room; lounge; car wash bays; pet spa; lounge; six floor exterior landscape terrace with fireplace, dining and lounging area and barbecues
Tentative occupancy: Summer 2013
Sales centre: 1061 Queensway. Open Monday to Thursday noon to 6 p.m.; Saturday, Sunday and holidays noon to 5 p.m. Tel. 416-253-5838
Website: www.iqcondos.com

Though the IQ site could have been used for retail or commercial purposes, Bratty says “we thought there was a bit of a void with residential and we thought we could introduce a multi-family lifestyle and still maintain the integrity of existing real estate uses in the area.”

As well as a multitude of new condo suites, IQ will bring a much-needed green component to the area, including a large urban park at the centre of the community and a spacious outdoor terrace atop the sixth-floor podium joining the first two towers.

“We’ve paid a lot of attention to the design of the first building and how it would blend in and be harmonious with the existing retail along the Queensway,” says Bratty. “There is a small retail component, but the first level of the condo will intertwine with it. We’ve brought the gym and other amenities to ground level. We wanted activity on the first floor beyond just the 9 to 5 retail to give the streetscape the vibrancy it deserved.”

“I think strong cities are always defined by their streets and buildings needs to respect and recognize and exist in harmony with those streets. That inevitably should create a great city.”

The condo is designed by E.I. Richmond Architects Ltd. “who came in with an open mind, recognized our vision and knew how to engage at street level.”

Interior designer Bryon Patton, who worked with Remington on Downtown Markham, created the interior common areas and the open-concept model suite in blacks and whites. Its contemporary urban look will appeal to younger buyers while not alienating their older counterparts who appreciate sophisticated, clean style.

Bratty is counting on a “multi-layered” market demographic, including first-timers drawn by the price point, those who have grown up in the neighbourhood and can’t afford a detached home, and empty nesters with older homes who “still want to be part of the changes the area is going through.”

Bratty says IQ will include “forward thinking” features such as optional plug-ins for electric cars. Much of what the company learned about green design at Downtown Markham it will be employed here, to make the building and suites energy and resource efficient.

The sales centre will also use large “pop-up” renderings of various features, such as the rooftop terrace, to give potential purchasers a sense of what the finished building will be like.

HOT HOME PRODUCTS

Add a little colour, pattern and texture

From appliance decals to whole wall reusable wall covers and tattoos

VICKY SANDERSON
SPECIAL TO THE STAR

Just as nature abhors a vacuum, the devoted decorator abhors an unadorned surface — whether it’s a wall, floor or ceiling. Fortunately, there are now loads of relatively easy and affordable ways to add colour, pattern and texture to just about any surface in the home.

One of the newest options I’ve heard about comes from Casart (www.casartcoverings.com), a Virginia-based family-run business that sells removable, reusable wall coverings that mimic hand-painted faux finishes or textiles, such as linen or quilted fabric. Custom designs are also available.

Designs are scanned in high-resolution and then printed on pressure-sensitive, canvas-like vinyl with a repositionable, adhesive backing — like a post-it note, but much stronger. The backing doesn’t leave a residue after it’s removed.

Application is DIY-friendly, although given that the width on the rolls is 52 inches, two pairs of hands would probably be necessary unless you have the arm-span of basketball phenom Yao Ming.

As with any wall treatment, the surface, which can include glass, pre-painted walls (latex is preferred), and cabinets or doors with an eggshell or glossier finish, must be properly prepared. A one-week

“curing” period on a freshly-painted wall is, for example, required. Walls covered in the product can be cleaned with a damp cloth and a mild solution of water and soap. A liquid laminate topcoat can also be applied for extra protection.

There are several designs, which come in a rainbow of colours. Most can be custom matched with Benjamin Moore’s paint palette.

A 25-foot roll (52-inch width) of the linen-finish paper sells for \$921 (U.S.). That’s less than what it would cost to cover a wall in real fabric, according to designer William MacDonald, who has done fabric walls for “a very few” (translation: only his very wealthiest) clients. By way of further comparison, a roll of Farrow and Ball’s (www.farrowandball.com) high-end Drag paper (32-foot roll/21-inch width), which has a linen-like finish, sells for \$165 (minimum three-roll purchase).

“The look of fabric can be unbelievable,” says MacDonald, “but there are two problems. One is finding someone who can do it — there’s maybe a couple in Toronto — and there’s the expense. It will cost a bomb in terms of labour. And you have to really want to make a statement, which is something Torontonians often seem reluctant to do when it comes to decor.”

Closer to home, there’s another new option for surface decoration. It comes from the Master Academy of Decorative Arts (www.madamasters.com), a studio/workshop a stone’s throw from Yorkdale Shopping Mall, where partners Jim Connelly and Agnes von Mehren re-



Mur Mur appliances decals, which are about \$70 for a refrigerator size, will be available at Rona.

cently showed me examples of Tattoowall (www.tattoowall.it), a transfer technique from Italy that allows prints to be applied to any surface, including rough substrates like concrete block and even floors, to produce a fresco-like effect. (Historically, frescoes are painted on fresh plaster or mortar with watercolours so that the image becomes embedded in the surface.)

Tattoowall transfers would also work on headboards, coffered ceilings, room dividers, or on canvas that could be hung on a wall or used as an area rug or runner, although the latter two would require a suitable protective layer.

Von Mehren says initial interest has been strong, and she only expects it to pick up steam. “I think there’s a growing taste these days for decoration, because people need and want to be surrounded by

beauty.”

Finished frescoes can be embellished with Swarovski crystals, metallic foils and decorative glazes. There’s no limit to the size, and seams between panel pieces that make up the whole image are invisible. Prices vary, but von Mehren says it’s comparable to good wallpaper.

Application must be done by qualified installers, who can be accessed through Master Academy, which certifies professionals in the application of Tattoo wall. The finish is guaranteed for 10 years for interior applications and two if used outside. It is, by the way, just one of several decorative practices being promoted by Master Academy, which also offers two-day seminars in Venetian and textured plaster techniques.

Even your refrigerator or dish-

washer can now become a design statement, with Mur Mur appliance decals, which should be hitting Rona’s shelves (www.rona.ca) within the next few weeks. There you’ll find adhesive images for appliances with various designs, such as cityscapes or plant motifs, that start at about \$40 for a dishwasher and \$70 for a refrigerator.

If you have a very large screen television in a “public” area of your home, you can also turn it into an art canvas of a sort while entertaining. Run a classic black and white movie without the sound — anything from Charlie Chaplin would do — to create, as it were, a “moving picture art.”

You can read Vicky’s On the House blog at www.yourhome.ca. Contact Vicky Sanderson at vswwriter@sympatico.ca and follow her on Twitter @vickysanderson.