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**Jim Caruk**

The many steps of a reno  
begin with a solid plan, **H2**

# NEW IN HOMES & CONDOS

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 2015 SECTION H

CE ON2

> HOW WE LIVE

## White hot designs for colour

Creativity of adult colouring trend inspires the design and functions of a midtown highrise

**ELAINE SMITH**  
STAR TOUCH

A chance discussion about a new artistic outlet has gained some serious traction in the design of a downtown building.

"I knew my dad would appreciate the new trend in adult colouring, because it's a way to be creative and relieve stress," said Diana DeSantis, 21, a medical student. "So I picked up a book to show him what was being produced."

Turns out her dad, Andy DeSantis, is creative director of Montana Steele Strategic Marketing and the company working with the builders of the new condo development, Whitehaus.

After their conversation, DeSantis saw an ad for a colouring event and a story listing adult colouring as a new trend. "From there, it just organically grew into the concept for Whitehaus," said Andy. "The timing was right. Sometimes you stretch for an idea and sometimes it comes knocking on your door."

"When we're working on art, our brain's right side takes over, and we lose track of numerical, left-sided concepts like time . . . It's blissful, and not the kind of experience most of us can easily replicate nowadays, as 'grown-ups,'" said Andy, adding: "The colouring craze isn't just a way back to childhood, but a path back into a state of creation where process trumps results."

The slogan for the building, at Yonge St. and Helendale Ave. — steps from Toronto's second-busiest intersection at Yonge-Eglinton — was a natural: "Life happens between the lines," referring to builder Lifetime Developments' vision for a canvas allowing owners and residents to create their own environment.

The building takes its name, Whitehaus, for the planned white exterior.

"With the opportunity to use clean, crisp, white material, you will get a fresh, simple clarity," said Donald Schmitt, a principal at Diamond Schmitt Architects,



AARON HARRIS FOR THE TORONTO STAR

Lifetime Developments' Brian Brown, left, Montana Steele creative director Andy DeSantis, and his daughter Diana try their hand at the new craze.

**Whitehaus' interior common spaces will be black and white, with splashes of colour**

the architects for Whitehaus. "It allows the life within the retail area and the colour of life to show."

Whitehaus plays up the colouring trend with six illustrators commissioned to create their impressions of the neighbourhood for reference materials and sales kit packages.

A colouring contest will include area residents and potential owners in the cre-

ative spirit of the new building. Prizes will be gift certificates to local stores and eateries in the Yonge and Eglinton neighbourhood. Visit [whitehaus.ca](http://whitehaus.ca) for more information about #ColourMeWhitehaus.

The condo's interior common spaces will be black and white, with splashes of colour. Condo suites will be white, with a choice of white or black cabinetry.

"When you think of a white canvas, it is reflective of everything one is and one does," said Anna Simone, a principal at Cecconi Simone Interior Design, the firm responsible for the building's interiors. "Ownership of your own place is all about creative process and it is not complete without the person engaging it."

WHITEHAUS continued on H10



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>> HOMES & CONDOS



AARON HARRIS FOR THE TORONTO STAR

Whitehaus will play up the new trend in adult colouring books. Six illustrators have been commissioned to create impressions of the neighbourhood.



**> WHITEHAUS**  
**Builder:** Lifetime Developments and Knightstone Capital Management  
**Architect:** Diamond Schmitt Architects  
**Landscape Architect:** Janet Rosenberg & Studio  
**Interior Design:** Cecconi Simone Interior Design  
**Size:** 29 floors, 366 suites from 377 to 1,140 sq. ft., plus four townhomes 1,030 to 1,243 sq. ft.  
**Prices:** mid-\$200s to about \$700,000 for condos; townhomes under \$850,000  
**Occupancy:** 2019 (tentative)  
**Contact:** whitehaus.ca; info@whitehaus.ca  
**Source:** Lifetime Developments

# Where residents can live in colour

WHITEHAUS from H1

Simone added that her creative thinking is often kindled by others' thoughts and ideas, and so it was important to create that bridge at Whitehaus.  
Common areas will also provide residents the places and opportunities to socialize while exploring their creative sides. An artists' studio will include work tables and easels where residents can paint, draw, sketch, sculpt and pursue creative activities.  
The studio will be connected to a performance kitchen, where cooking classes and demonstrations can be held. The entire combined area is also intended for private parties and events.

In addition to a fitness room, the Whitehaus will also house a Ping Pong lounge — another way to bring people together and inspire connections, said Brian Brown, vice-president of the condo's development firm, Lifetime Developments.  
"I definitely feel the building will attract a very social group — the young or young at heart," he said.  
"The lobby won't be just a lobby; it will be a social area with communal tables like you see at Starbucks and breakout sofa areas. We'll bring life down to the lobby and make it something active, warm and welcoming."  
A third-floor terrace will include a barbecue and lounge area, as well as a pet-friendly area. At 29 storeys, the 366 suites will range from 377 square feet for junior suites (studios) to 1,140 square feet for two bedrooms plus a den.  
Four townhomes, fronting onto Helendale Ave., are also planned. Prices will go from the mid-\$200,000s to about \$700,000 for condos; Townhomes will be priced at just under \$850,000. Occupancy is expected in 2019. As well, there will be four floors of retail space, including a third-floor restaurant.  
"The broad range of suite sizes was done intentionally to attract a diverse group, from young folks who see the neighbourhood as an extension of their unit and just want to sleep in the building to a more-middle-aged group who will be attracted by the location, the movies and the restaurants," Brown added.

## THE AISLE OF WHITE

Donald Schmitt, a principal at Diamond Schmitt Architects in Toronto, is no stranger to creating white exteriors: four of his firm's recent projects involve white buildings. "There is a connection between fresh, positive white buildings and the urban landscape," he said. "It connects to art, design and creativity. If you strip out all other colours, it sets up a context for other splashes of colour to emerge." Elaine Smith talks to Schmitt about the four buildings.



**Emily Carr School of Design, new Vancouver campus, 2017:** "This is a place bursting with creativity and colour, so it needs a neutral context for art-making. It has the same sense of freshness as Whitehaus and serves as a background for life and creativity in an urban context. It's a very classical, cool colour scheme."



**Delaware North Office, Delaware and Chippewa Sts., Buffalo:** "The base of the existing building has a beautiful, heritage, white terra cotta façade from the early 19th century. We restored the façade and it became an entry colonnade framing the retail space. We took that white and built on it, so the office building is clad in white horizontal rods and the office building has white ceramic baked into the glass for solar heating and cooling. It's like having the shades pulled in full daylight."



**KPMG Tower, Vaughan:** "We used the same strategy here as we did in Buffalo with white ceramic baked into the glass for solar heating and light."



**Daniels Spectrum, Regent Park:** "We used white as the backdrop against which we set up colours. Regent Park is a huge immigrant arrival area, so we took the colours of the flags from 60 nations and worked with graphic designers to create abstractions of these colours. They are used as punctuation on neutral white metal panels. We establish an emotional connection between the residents and what is going on in the building."

## Q&A > ANNA SIMONE CREATIVE LIVING

Design guru and principal at Cecconi Simone explains the concept of suites at Whitehaus condos

ELAINE SMITH  
SPECIAL TO THE STAR

**Creativity is a driving force behind Whitehaus. Did that also drive interior design?**  
Yes. When you walk through a space, you intuitively know whether thought has been given to it and whether it has been done creatively. As you move through it, you note the compression and extension of spaces. We're doing that throughout the amenities areas in order for people to be constantly engaged as they are moving through the building. People know when something feels right, even though they may not be

able to articulate it.

**What was the intention of the common spaces' design?**  
When you look at cultures, there is so much you can learn and add to creative thinking. Toronto is so multicultural and being able to explore that is a gift. We wanted the possibility of spaces where people experience each other and learn from each other.

**What will the studio space offer residents?**  
The ability to have surfaces where you can write or draw keeps a per-



Interior designer Anna Simone says the studio space is all about engaging the mind.

son's thoughts engaged. It's all about engaging the mind.

**How does that creativity extend to the condos themselves?**  
In the suites, we have islands that are very simple and small; they are places where people can eat, prepare food and create. The storage components within the space are transport-

able, so people can own the space and tailor the ways they use it.

**What about the colour palette?**  
The colour palette is black and white. That was done so that the owners themselves can create their own environment. They add the animation.

**Did you factor the neighbourhood into the design concept?**  
We used the community as a springboard. There's a vibe and energy, and white is a colour that reflects this. You want the building to be uplifting and add to the community.

## > ASK JOE



Joe Richer

## Taking time, space to make best decision

**Dear Joe:** We recently purchased a home and the experience initially was an emotional roller-coaster. However, we followed your advice from past columns and I thought I would share with you how things worked out.  
A property we came across had everything we wanted and was in a location we loved. But on the flip side, we would be leaving a comfortable home in which our children had grown up.  
We considered several referrals

from friends and family and went with a sales representative who thought was the best fit for us — one with 26 years of experience in the local market. After considering her advice and talking through our options, we decided to use three tactics to help us make a rational decision about buying the home and to stick to the plan we put in place.  
First, once we set our budget, we were determined to stick to it. We knew exactly what we were able to pay and we refused to pay more, no matter how taken we were with the home. By setting our hard cap, we prevented ourselves from making a decision that could have had a harmful impact on our finances.  
The second tactic we employed was giving ourselves time to think. We were fortunate to have periods of 48 hours or 72 hours to think about an offer. We used them. It helped us get over the adrenalin rush of putting in an offer on a great place. It also gave us time to come to terms with leaving a comfortable

home that we had lived in for 28 years.  
Finally, we weren't afraid to walk away. After several offers and counter-offers, we finally just said "no" because we didn't seem to be making any headway in our negotiations to get to within our budget.  
Because we had time to think and because we knew exactly what we wanted to pay, it made it easier for us to get past our emotions and make that decision. Fortunately for us, 20 minutes after we told the sellers we were no longer interested, they came back with the offer we wanted. For us, it wasn't a tactic so much as knowing where we were prepared to draw the line.

**Dear reader:** Given that November is Financial Literacy Month, your experience is timely as it demonstrates the value of sound planning when it comes to your financial assets.  
It seems that the key to your success was rooted in the strategy you

developed with your real estate representative. Someone who has a lot of knowledge of, and experience in, your particular market can provide great advice at a time when emotions can get the best of you.  
Knowing what you can afford to pay and what you are prepared to pay (quite often not the same thing) and resisting the urge to bid higher than your budget is certainly prudent as it gives you more financial leeway down the road for other expenses such as home inspection, moving, legal fees and other closing costs.  
You also benefited from having time to think. Not all buyers have that luxury, especially in hot markets where bidding wars rule the day. But even then, if you have the option of sleeping on a counter-offer, that gives you time to process the big decision that you are making.  
And, while it is never easy to walk away from a terrific opportunity, sometimes that is the smartest

move for a variety of reasons. Moreover, taking advantage of that option can sometimes work in your favour, as you found out.  
For those who don't have the luxury of time to find a home, it can be very difficult to walk away, so it's important to discuss your options and strategy with your sales representative before going after a home. You have to know and assess your options before you go house hunting, so you aren't lured into an emotional trap.  
Next week, we will be sharing the results of a new survey that shows some common concerns Ontarians have about the buying and selling process at different points in their lives.  
Joseph Richer is registrar of the Real Estate Council of Ontario (RECO). He oversees and enforces all rules governing real estate professionals in Ontario. Email questions to askjoe@reco.on.ca. Find more tips at reco.on.ca, follow on Twitter @RECOhelps or on YouTube at youtube.com/RECOhelps.