

Art World

How Art Played an Integral Role in the Construction of 181 Fremont, San Francisco's Newest Skyscraper

The city's third-tallest building boasts an in-house gallery and an impressive collection of over 120 artworks.

In Partnership With 181 Fremont, October 29, 2019



181 Fremont. Photo courtesy 181 Fremont.

Jeffrey Heller of Heller Manus Architects, the design team behind 181 Fremont, San Francisco's newest high-rise residence, knows that a work of art can assume many forms.

"Whenever I am in search of inspiration, I turn to the water," says Heller, who worked with the real estate developer Jay Paul Company on the project. Informed by his passion for sailing, Heller envisaged an elegant glass vessel moored amid the cityscape to compliment the adjacent San Francisco Bay.

He reinforced the building with a minimalist exoskeleton so durable that it was awarded a REDi Gold Rating (a coveted distinction marking a building's structural resilience). Heller also belted the tower with a reverse chevron motif to help further stabilize the monolith.

The chevron also maximizes the sensational views from this predominantly glass landmark. At 802 feet, the building is designed not only to be seen, but also to offer unparalleled views of its surroundings. Vast glass panes covering the façade are subtly tilted to reduce solar gain and to provide shade from direct sunlight for optimal vistas.



181 Fremont. Photo courtesy 181 Fremont.

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Inside, art plays an integral role in the experience. “All of our projects are designed with an elevated sense of design and beauty,” says Jay Paul Company’s Chief Investment Officer, Matt Lituchy. “Integrating art and development is a core value of our company.”

Given Jay Paul Company’s target audience of prospective homeowners who appreciate and, in many cases, collect fine art, 181 Fremont has acquired its own discerning collection of 200 artworks. Sculptors Tara Donovan and Joel Shapiro, photographers Trevor Paglen and Candida Höfer, and multidisciplinary artist Tauba Auerbach are amongst the illustrious cast of art stars represented within the building’s collection. In addition, Gallery 181, an on-site exhibition space, is located in a sprawling half-floor penthouse measuring 3,200 square feet.

“Gallery 181 produces and hosts new contemporary art exhibitions every eight to 12 weeks on an ongoing basis,” says Holly Baxter, the curator and art advisor who helms the gallery’s programming. The gallery is open to the public by appointment and also hosts events for businesses, cultural organizations, and non-profits.



Inside Gallery 181. Photo courtesy 181 Fremont.

The gallery’s first exhibition, which ran from July 11 through October 6, featured 25 pieces by an international roster of contemporary artists who show with New York City’s Albertz Benda Gallery. John Mason’s blue sculpture entitled *Folded Spear, Cobalt* (2015), Christopher Le Brun’s meditative *Angel Blue Seraphim* (2016), and *Untitled* (1973), an energetic composition by Ed Moses, were amongst the works on view, and Baxter will continue to promote prominent artists and galleries who have not yet exhibited in San Francisco.

“The objective is to contribute to the cultural dialogue in the Bay Area by introducing these galleries, their programs, and their artists,” says Baxter. “The gallery is located in the tallest residential building west of the Mississippi—it’s a truly inspiring and elegant environment in which to curate exhibitions.”

It will come as no surprise, then, that the rest of 181 Fremont is outfitted with consummate interior detailing. The full-floor Grand Penthouse, looming at 700 feet in the sky, boasts custom furnishings by the West Hollywood design studio MASS Beverly as well as its own blue-chip art collection, including a piece by German contemporary artist Gerhard Richter, which makes a special appearance in the documentary film, *Gerhard Richter Painting*.

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The view from Gallery 181. Photo courtesy 181 Fremont.

Starting at an altitude of 500 feet, 55 lofty apartments ranging from 1,200 to 7,000 square feet are furnished with floor-to-ceiling windows and custom interiors courtesy of the esteemed Orlando Diaz-Azcuy Design Associates. Master baths with Arabescato Corchia marble walls, white Brazilian macauba quartzite kitchen countertops, and top-of-the-line appliances and plumbing fixtures are amongst the luxury amenities that come with each unit. Diaz-Azcuy also masterminded 181 Fremont's glass-enclosed lobby, which he likens to a "living sculpture," complete with 25-foot ceilings, a regal gold leaf dome, and ample banquet seating.

Towering over the South of Market (SoMA) district's East Cut neighborhood, 181 Fremont offers yet another irresistible convenience: as one of only two buildings in San Francisco with direct access to the new Salesforce Park, residents simply traverse a seventh-story skybridge to reach this meditative public space.

The building's excellence extends 260 feet underground, where the structure is rooted into the bedrock by the deepest caissons of any condominium tower in San Francisco. And as the city's first mixed-use tower to be granted LEED Platinum pre-certification, the development has demonstrated its commitment not only to exceptional engineering, but to mindful design that benefits its residents and their surrounding environment.

Two and three-bedrooms residences, half-floor penthouses and a full-floor Grand Penthouse are currently available for immediate occupancy at 181 Fremont. For more information visit: 181Fremont.com.