

# Fashion icon Karl Lagerfeld to style Art Shoppe Lofts and Condos on Yonge St.

Designers elevate a new development's profile, aesthetic and appeal



PHOTO BY KARL LAGERFELD /

Internationally renowned fashion designer Karl Lagerfeld has agreed to lend his singular style to the lobbies of Art Shoppe Lofts and Condos.

**By:** Ian Harvey Special to the Star, Published on Thu Feb 19 2015

World famous fashion design icon Karl Lagerfeld is coming to a lobby near you.

Actually, it will be two lobbies — both serving the same project: <http://www.artshoppecondos.com/Art> Shoppe Lofts and CondosEND on Yonge St., just south of Eglinton Ave. It's the first Canadian building initiative to be guided by the celebrity creative director of global design brands Chanel and Fendi, and his namesake Karl

Lagerfeld label.

Lagerfeld, 82, has designed lobbies in hotels and condo projects around the world, including most recently the Fendi Chateau in Miami, a 58-unit building where residences start at \$5 million and climb to \$22 million (U.S.). His portfolio also includes work as a photographer, illustrator and film director.

“What I really like is what I’ve never done before,” Lagerfeld said in a statement. “I am always looking for opportunities to expand my range of creative expression,” he said, adding he’s excited at the prospect of working in Toronto with the developers.

On the former site of upscale furniture retailer The Art Shoppe (which is moving to a new location), the Toronto condo development is bounded by Yonge St. on the west, Soudan Ave. on the north and Hillsdale Ave. to the south.

The men behind the project, Peter Freed, of Freed Developments, and Jordan Dermer, managing partner of CD Capital Developments, said it was important to bring something iconic to the location because of The Art Shoppe’s brand and history.

“We’re really thrilled,” said Dermer of Lagerfeld’s involvement. “We’ve been talking about this for a year or more, it’s not an easy thing to arrange, you have to go through a lot of agents. We were lucky to work with a wonderful group at Leitzes and Co. in New York who do a lot in this area.”

But once the conversation was underway about the project and opportunity, things went smoothly said Dermer.

“Karl Lagerfeld is really hands-on, so it’s not like he will just delegate it,” he said. “We are going to Paris to meet him in the spring and we’ll have an initial design meeting. and he’ll be coming to Toronto sometime in April to continue the discussion.”

Art Shoppe Lofts and Condos is in pre-registration sales. Plans call for a 28-storey tower at Soudan Ave. — with one of the Lagerfeld-designed lobbies — stepping down to a 12-storey midrise on the south

that will feature the other celebrity-styled lobby. On the east side will be a six-storey structure along with a 12,000-square-foot linear park. Suites will range from bachelors to one- and two-bedrooms, starting at about \$200,000 with occupancy slated for 2019.

The development includes plans to animate the Yonge St. streetscape and to create a shopping destination with two floors of retail shops.

With the neighbourhood now the focus of condominium development in anticipation of additional transit with the Eglinton Crosstown LRT, the Art Shoppe project needed a touch of magic to differentiate itself in a busy marketplace.

As such, Peter Freed of Freed Developments and Jordan Dermer, managing partner of CD Capital Developments who are behind the project, said it was important to bring something iconic to the location because of the Art Shoppe brand and history.

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Interior designer, Elaine Cecconi, of Cecconi Simone — itself a brand with global reach — said working with Lagerfeld will add to the final vision of Art Shoppe Lofts and Condos.

“We have a Zen courtyard with a two-storey gym overlooking it, a yoga room with doors that open when the weather is nice, wine-tasting room, wine-storage lockers, a chef’s kitchen and a billiards room,” she said. “The best amenity, though, has to be the roof garden

with a linear swimming pool parallel to Yonge St, which, when you look south, has the entire city skyline.”

The design plan is to flow interior and exterior spaces seamlessly together with a classy, understated palette featuring crisp whites accented by textured light wood with raised grain.

“The lighting is also magnificent and really makes it all read so well,” she said, noting she’s sent Lagerfeld concepts and samples of the design. But the iconic creative force has a blank canvas when it comes to the development’s lobbies.

“He sent us the Karl Lagerfeld deck with examples of his work and we picked out some ideas to talk about as a starting point,” she said. “I’m looking forward to going to Paris next month.

“He’s a brilliant man who designs his own fashion shows and a lot of retail interiors,” she said. “Art Shoppe is about the art of change and we’re wrapping this into the building. With him grabbing at what the next idea is in fashion, it’s a wonderful opportunity for us.”

While it is their first time working with Lagerfeld, Freed noted it’s not their first time bringing in a renowned designer.

“We hired Philippe Starck for 75 Portland in 2006 and brought in Javier Mariscal from Barcelona for the lobby of the Thompson Hotel,” he said.

“We’ve been exposed to a lot of Karl Lagerfeld’s work over the years at the fashion level and the last few years to his design capacity, and his aesthetic is very exciting to us. We want to make these lobbies focal points and set them apart as a statement about what we’re doing here.”

## **Designers add cachet to condos**

Toronto’s design scene has no shortage of big name celebrities.

Names like Yanu Pushelberg, Cecconi Simone and Brian Gluckstein are local talents with global reputations while international stars

Armani, Fendi and Karl Lagerfeld are household names.

“My name is more important than myself,” Pierre Cardin is famously quoted as saying. But he jumped the shark by stretching his brand from clothing, to cosmetics and perfume, then even cigarettes and wine.

Still, extending the brand is the ultimate marketing game. Karl Lagerfeld’s brand has gone from runway to condos, most recently with the lobbies at the Art Shoppe project on Yonge Street. He’s already designed hotel lobbies around the world and is working Miami condo interior under the Fendi brand while Armani has created hotels around the world and is designing the interiors at another Miami condo project.

Gluckstein’s work is omnipresent at places like the Four Seasons Residences and the Windsor Arms Hotel and he also extended his brand to a successful line of bedding.

Former Pierre Cardin designer, Philippe Starck went from interiors to buildings and yachts, and was imported to add pop to 75 Portland St. condos.

Similarly, Spanish artist Javier Mariscal went from painting and sculptures to interior design and landscaping, including a commission for the lobby of Toronto’s Thompson Hotel while Hermès has furnished Yorkville’s Casa III lobby.

*Ian Harvey*