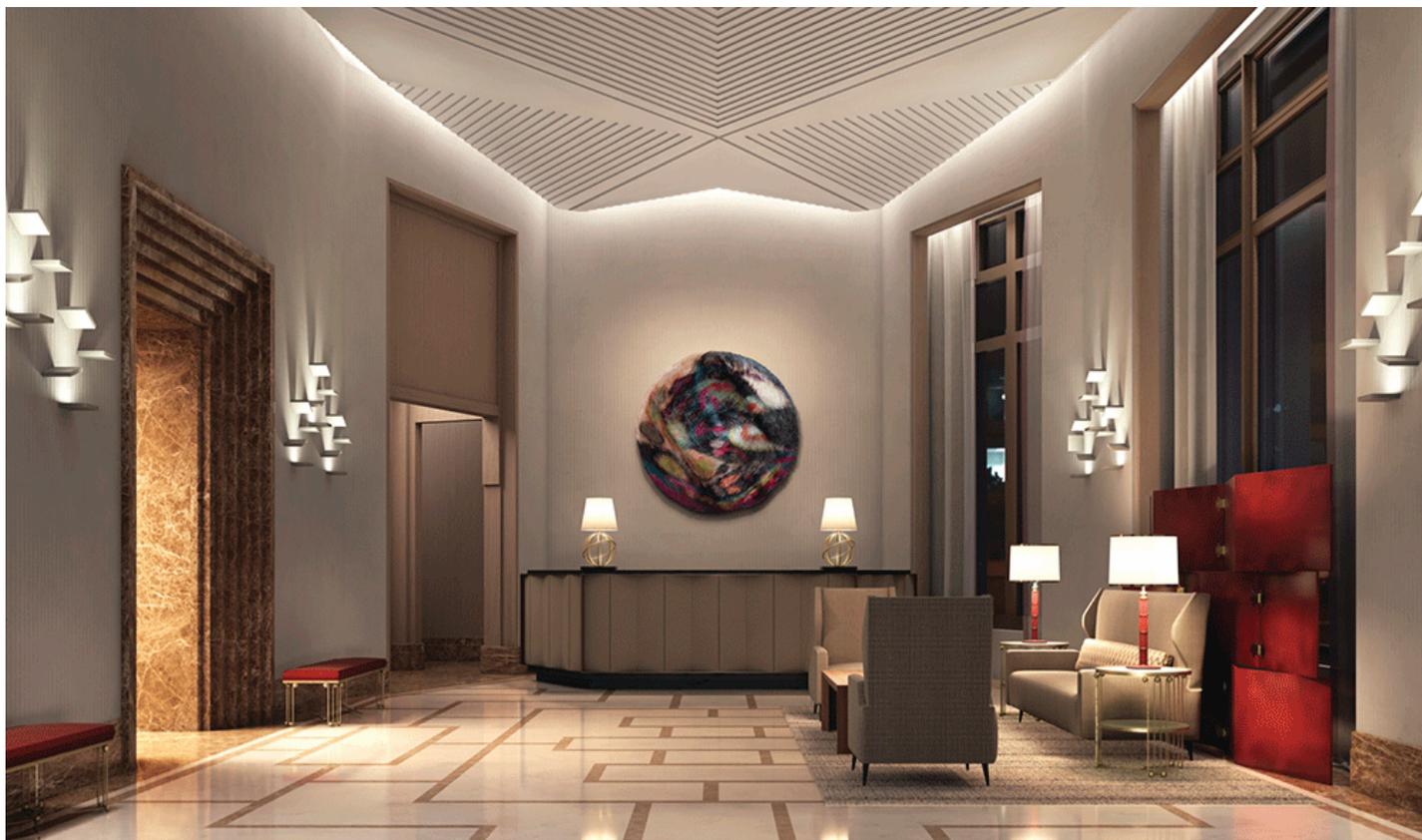


MICHIGAN AVENUE

How One Bennett Park is Showcasing Chicago Artist Nick Cave

January 15, 2019 | By Stephen Ostrowski



As the city's tallest exclusively residential building, ultraluxe Streeterville high-rise One Bennett Park has all eyes fixed upward. But the scene at street level is equally head-turning, as the apartment lobby of the 70-story, Robert A.M. Stern Architects-designed tower is stunningly accoutered with a polychromatic mixed-media tondo by Chicago-based interdisciplinary artist Nick Cave.

"This is a residential building, and not unlike moving into a single-family home, it doesn't feel like home until you hang art on the wall," observes Ann Thompson, senior vice president of architecture and design at Related Midwest, which worked with art consultant Andrea Hazen to curate the art in the building's lobby spaces (the separate condominium lobby is also accented with eye-catching works). "[It] brings a layer of personality and warmth that you don't get other than through the art experience."

With its lush texture and punchy color palette, the 6-foot-wide-in-diameter "Tondo" (2018)—acquired by the developer from Jack Shainman Gallery in New York City—hangs in sensuous contrast to its restrained, art deco-inspired environs. Entering the building, it's a powerful opening statement, both aesthetically and symbolically: The auroral arrangement of

sequined fabric, bugle beads and wire is actually the visual realization of “catastrophic” weather patterns layered over brain scans of PTSD-suffering black youths affected by gun violence.

Cave has addressed similar themes through his soundsuits, recontextualized here by appropriating the suits’ oversized, “gramophone”- like face as a stand-alone piece, “transferring the essence of what’s in the soundsuit,” according to the artist, through a different medium that he likens to painting: “There is a seduction in the work. But at the same time, there is this unsettling sort of feeling that is built in through motion, in terms of how the material is agitated and illustrating movement.”

Displayed front and center in one of the city’s buzziest developments, it invites meaningful conversation with arresting immediacy. Reflects Cave, “As artists, we want to work out in the public realm.... And I think living with art is an extraordinary provider of just enhancing our cultural, internal self.” 451 E. Grand Ave.