

THAT HEALING TOUCH

Oregonian, The (Portland, OR) - Thursday, September 10, 1998

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Summary: Designers transform a renovated apartment building into a haven for people living with HIV

Think of it as a miniature Street of Dreams inside one apartment building.

Some of the city's top interior designers have donated their time to create attractive, comfortable, affordable homes for people living with AIDS and HIV. The apartments will be open to the public this weekend as part of Designs on Hope, a fund-raising event sponsored by Central City Concern.

The Portland nonprofit organization renovated the once-derelict building and brought in designers to make over 28 of the 35 one-bedroom and studio units in the Rose Wood Apartments at 4810 N.E. Sandy Blvd.

"This is a shining example of how the community and nonprofit housing developers working together can create affordable housing that serves those in need and provides a benefit to the neighborhood," said Richard Harris, director of Central City Concern and the owner and developer of the building.

Lack of affordable rental housing is a major problem for people with HIV/AIDS living on a limited income, according to the Ryan White Planning Council, a local nonprofit group that helps allocate funds for AIDS-related services.

A variety of nonprofit organizations and government agencies that work with people with HIV/AIDS will steer tenants to the building.

"We want to give them a sense that somebody cares," says Shirley Roggen, one of the designers on the project, "a sense that he or she is not forgotten and that there will be at least a comfortable tomorrow."

DESIGNS ON HOPE

WHAT: Renovated building with 28 designer-decorated apartments, created as affordable housing for people living with HIV/AIDS. Gala opening 5:30 to 9:30 p.m. Friday, public tours noon to 4 p.m. Sunday. Sponsored by Central City Concern, a nonprofit organization helping people with HIV/AIDS.

WHERE: Rose Wood Apartments, 4810 NE. Sandy Blvd.

TICKETS: \$50 for gala opening, \$10 for public tours. Call 294-1681.

Picture captions

1. Working primarily with recycled and refurbished pieces, designer Will Perkins created a luxurious, inviting space he describes as a "serene, healing atmosphere" that combines earthy textures and soothing, muted tones. The designer saved money by using junk store and garage sale finds. He found a large Asian-inspired cabinet, left, at a garage sale and refurbished it himself. He topped it with what he calls "junk pottery," which he also

refinished himself. Perkins gathered the branches on his coastal property after an ice storm. "The branches started the whole theme," he says. A driftwood lamp and the headboard were garage sale bargains. The sofa, which was later reshaped and reupholstered, was donated by a client. Fabric in the bedroom was left over from an earlier design job.

2. "Know you are loved and walk with peace and dignity." The message painted on the wall over the master bed conveys what designer Debbie Laughlin hopes is an inspiration for the person who ends up living here. Soothing neutral tones and natural fibers fill the space with an aura of peace and comfort. But smaller details make the apartment especially inviting. Local fused-glass artist Breta Matson donated dinner plates for the dining table and drawer pulls for the bathroom. And decorative artist Jeannie Rounsefell applied a soft green two-tone finish to the dining chairs before decoupageing dried flowers on the backs. In a similar spirit, one wall is covered in handmade bark wallpaper from China. Laughlin donated and framed some inexpensive Rodin prints she brought back from Paris. She says she hopes visitors to the room this weekend will fill a guest book with other inspiring messages for the person who eventually lives here. "I want the person who is in here to feel comfortable, warm and welcome."

3. Designers Tina Landaker and Diane Keaton are creating an English countryside theme in this first-floor wheelchair-accessible apartment. "Given the project -- low-income housing for people living with AIDS -- we wanted to go completely all out and make this a haven," says Landaker of Christina Marie Interiors. Working exclusively with fabrics donated by Whittaker & Wood, the designers turned the bedroom into a toile confection, complete with a toile canopy over the bed. A mural on all four walls creates the illusion that one is on a terrace overlooking the English countryside. In the living room, the donated sofa is upholstered in chenille and the walls are covered in an English tone-on-tone stripe wallpaper. Ann Sacks Tile & Stone donated the tile in the kitchen and bath, where the designers opted for a 36-inch wainscot with a mosaic border. "It's very romantic. Very luxurious," Landaker says. "As if you've just checked into a suite at the Waldorf-Astoria or the Ritz in Paris."

4. A team of five designers opted for a straightforward, clutter-free approach that emphasizes comfort and simplicity. "We wanted to create something workable and usable -- with bright colors -- in a comfortable environment," says designer Shirley Roggen, who led the team. Small pieces of furniture, some with multiple uses, keep the space open and easy to maneuver in. "We found a dining table that doubles as a game table. We didn't want to overcrowd," says Roggen, who worked with designers Mary Fazzio, Kelli Bell, Gloria Cortella and Deborah Reiersgaard. Simple, low-toxicity cotton fabrics, including sheer cotton window coverings, were chosen for easy care. The starting point was a donated duvet cover and dust ruffle by Waverly in a deep crimson and forest green floral print. The designers accented neutral wall colors with fabrics in burgundy, dark green and warm taupe. "Part of this is the creativity of taking something you have and making it work for you," Roggen says.

Caption: 4 Color Photos by SERGE McCABE - of The Oregonian staff

Edition: SUNRISE

Section: HOMES & GARDENS OF THE NORTHWEST

Page: 24

Column: Home Tours

Index Terms: Column; AIDS

Record Number: 9809100237

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