

**EXCLUSIVE**

# A Showplace for Art

**By Robin Finn**

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An extravagant townhouse on Central Park West that retains its fanciful 1887 Queen Anne exterior, but received a rigorous renovation in 2006 that fast-forwarded its interior into a stark showplace for contemporary art, is poised to return to the market at \$27.75 million. The annual property taxes on the residence, whose unusual attributes include a 60-foot lap pool and an onion dome skylight encircled by a Guggenheim-esque stairway, are \$48,000.

The six-story house at 247 Central Park West near West 85th Street set a record for single-family homes on the Upper West Side nearly three years ago when it was bought for \$22.375 million by a Ukrainian investor and fertilizer magnate, Igor Iankovsky, who never moved in, apparently because his wife, Svetlana, while smitten like him by its grandeur and proximity to Central Park, preferred that their primary residence be in France.

The couple initially offered their new home as a \$110,000-per-month rental; then the nearly 23-foot-wide townhouse went on the market last year for \$32.7 million. It failed to attract a buyer/art collector bent on living large on the Upper West Side.

Now it is testing the market again, with a slight reduction in price but no lessening of luxury: Its audiovisual accouterments and museum-quality lighting and security systems are state of the art. Every front window, among them a classic Queen Anne bay in the master suite, which encompasses a full floor, and an original stained-glass transom in an office on the parlor floor, faces the park. The townhouse is among the very few single-family residences on Central Park West to have evaded the wrecking ball in the last century.

An undisputed trophy home owing to a spare-no-expense gut renovation by the previous owner, Keith D. Monda, the former president of the luxury-goods company Coach, it has five bedrooms, six full baths, two powder rooms, an elevator, a seven-seat home theater, a home gym and outdoor space on three levels. Mr. Monda bought the house from Abigail Disney, a grandniece of Walt Disney, for \$15.5 million in 2006 and undertook a yearlong customization that transformed it into a dramatic staging zone for his art collection. He sold his 12,000-square-foot trophy after retiring to Sarasota, Fla.

There is a 21-by-27-foot rear garden off the sitting and dining areas adjacent to the eat-in kitchen, which has a six-burner Garland range, mahogany cabinetry, a fireplace with a glass tile surround, and white marble countertops with a matching center island carved from a single slab of stone. French doors lead from the opulent 20-by-12-foot master bath, with its inlaid Italian mosaic tile, to a west-facing limestone terrace that spans the width of the house. Up on the roof, the observatory-like dome is the centerpiece of a spacious terrace with 22 feet of frontage above the park and eastward views to Fifth Avenue.

The historic house retains its massive arched front door, carved from oak, but the updates commence in the foyer, which has an Italian tile floor mosaic with a celestial theme and a tiled powder room. A set of doors carved from mahogany that matches the new plank floors and built-in cabinetry on the parlor level opens into the dramatic double-

height living room, which has an open stairway of glass and steel and views of the dome four floors above. The gallery-like main living room is 21-by-26 feet; a somewhat cozier second sitting room toward the back of the house also has a nearly 13-foot-high ceiling and a wall of west-facing windows that overlook the garden.

Mr. Iankovsky, who made his fortune at Stiro, a manufacturer of fertilizers, plastics and pharmaceuticals that was sold in 2010, said he and his wife were drawn to the home by its location directly across from the park and its array of amenities, particularly the pool, the commodious family-style kitchen, and the view of the park from the master suite.

The listing broker, Vanessa Kaufman of Sotheby's International Realty, said the townhouse, built with eight others by the developer William Noble and selected by him to be his own residence from 1887 to 1892, provides a rare amalgam of 19th-century charm, cutting-edge technology and art-ready space. It and its two neighbors to the north are all that remain of Mr. Noble's original block of ornate and, for that era, expensive townhouses (each cost \$37,000). "The impressive turn-of-the-last-century facade conceals a wonderfully airy interior space," Ms. Kaufman said, "and the fabulous park location and east-to-west views bring an enormous amount of light."

