

AT HOME WITH THE FLYNN

By Henrietta Thompson
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Winkreative and Art&Graft have created a stylish animation to market The Flynn, a block of chic new residences in New York's Chelsea

Although business has been booming for luxury property developers lately, it's not all been sunshine and roses for the industry. A nasty backlash has seen the media criticise every questionable move – and often rightly so – from “poor doors” to “homeless spikes”. And nowhere is a bigger magnet for snarky comments than their marketing materials – there are Tumblr feeds, dedicated blogs and architecture critics around every corner ready to entertain the masses with snippets of “What Developers Say”. Not offending often means treading a very fine line.

All of which is why it's so refreshing to see a genuinely smart campaign. Setting a new benchmark for aspirational apartments, Winkreative approached Art&Graft to design and develop a set of films, press ads and catalogue illustrations for The Flynn, a new block of very des res residences in New York's Chelsea.



Building and surrounding street

The Telegraph



The cast

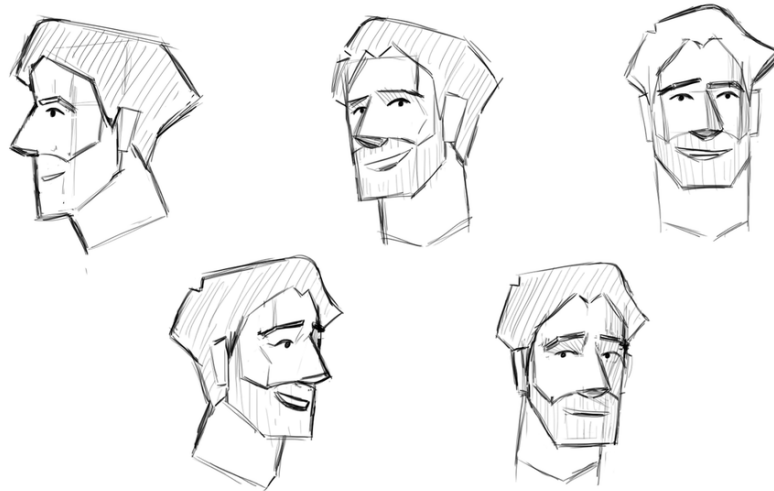
Neatly sidestepping the over peddled clichés of placemaking and hollow nods to community or heritage, Art&Graft have focused their films instead on a cast of eccentric characters. Telling the stories of fabulous (if fictional) prospective residents, the campaign centres on a namesake character, Flynn, following his daily life at home and beyond.

Winkreative (the creative agency arm of Tyler Brulé's Monocle magazine) has long done a very nice line in loveable animated characters. Their adorable Mr Porter raccoon, developed in 2006 for Porter Airlines, is a case in point. Here, life at The Flynn is presented as nothing short of wonderful – a world away from the cheesy, patronising ego-centric “lifestyles” so often (and naively) peddled to bankers and the super rich, this Chelsea development's stylish residents are eclectic and fun, and their taste in design is - naturally - impeccable.

The development in question is 155 West 18th Street, an 11-storey, 80,000-square-foot building between Sixth and Seventh avenues with an irregular, cantilevered top section (presumably allowing for more penthouses) designed by ODA New York and developed by IGI-USA. Prospective buyers can choose from 30 condos, including four duplex penthouses and two garden units, ready for occupancy by mid-2016.

Mike Moloney, Art&Graft's creative director says the key was finding a balance between showcasing the building's design details and keeping the dashing Flynn's characters in focus. “We didn't want this to become a cold architecture film. We also needed to ensure we maintained a smooth graphical style while keeping the building proportions, atmosphere and surroundings faithful to the real place.”

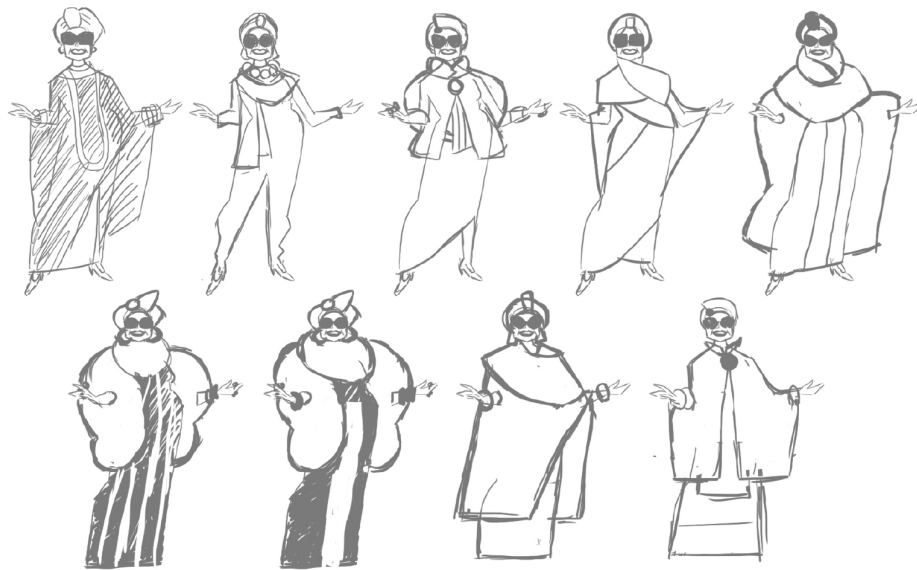
The Telegraph



Character development roughs – Flynn

The result is fashionably retro and sleek affair that melds the warmth of an illustrative style with wide-angle camera movements showcasing the architecture almost incidentally. All the environments were created in 3D first, then hand illustrations mapped on top, enabling the agency to add as much depth as they liked to the interiors, explains lead creative Clement Bolla.

A new standard of city living? Maybe. A fresh new language for luxury property developers worldwide to look to – certainly. What a relief.



Character development roughs – Lady

The Telegraph



Penthouse living room



Bathroom



Building exterior

The Telegraph

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