

# Beauty Reborn

NAN FUNG DEVELOPMENT LTD BLENDS THE OLD WITH THE NEW TO CREATE PROPERTIES OF THE UTMOST LUXURY, WRITES JOYCE YIP

**H**ONG KONG PROPERTY DEVELOPERS have long been criticised for being all too eager to tear down and build anew – at the expense of our heritage. Nan Fung Development Ltd, however, is keen to see the city become a haven for retro-chic architecture. Originally built over a century ago to house civil servants, the Winfield Building in Happy Valley is one of the most classically designed structures in the area. Recently, the building was bought and later refurbished by Nan Fung Development Ltd – property developers with an impressive portfolio including, among others, Queen's Cube, the Asia Trade Centre and Octa Tower.

"Nan Fung regards the Winfield Building project as highly significant and worthy of attention," says deputy general manager Raymond Lai. "It's a property that occupies a longer time in history compared to others in the area. And with our refurbishing work, we believe that any old building can be as good – if not better – than new ones."

Though building refurbishment has yet to go mainstream in Hong Kong, some of the world's most renowned landmarks are, in fact, restored properties. Examples include New York's Chelsea Market – a once quiet commercial space that is now one of the city's hippest party spots – and The Lancaster near London's Hyde Park, a Grade II listed hotel cum residential property with a preserved 1850s French Renaissance terrace facade.

Appointed with spectacular views over the Happy Valley Racecourse, the Winfield Building



is divided into A and B blocks, the former containing 2,400sq ft for rent, while the latter comprises 42 sellable units complete with master bedroom, two rooms and a maid's room. At 1,940sq ft (the living room and balcony alone measure 590sq ft and 107sq ft respectively), Block B boasts a spaciousness rare for the area.

But the Winfield Building has more than just size to recommend it. In Block B, Nan Fung will offer a series of designer apartments conceived by world-renowned interior designer Kelly Hoppen. Famous for her clever use of textures as well as both Eastern and Western elements, Hoppen's client base extends to celebrities including Brad Pitt and David Beckham. The Winfield Building will be Hoppen's first assignment in Hong Kong.

Hoppen, though, is not the only star in the building. Its homage to the property's proximity to the racecourse, the Winfield Building's podium garden is dressed with opulent-themed artwork – much of it by world-class photographer Tim Flach, whose portraits of horses create a distinctive personality that is both elegant and animated, wild and gracious. The first 45 homeowners in Block B will be presented with a signed copy of Flach's latest photo book, *Horses*. Notes the photographer, "Horses have been associated with a sense of exuberance – a classicist almost – which is what the Winfield project is about."

Also in the podium garden are tailor-made Mies van der Rohe chairs by celebrity furniture designer



Kenneth Cobonque. Chosen for its daring silhouettes that reference nature, Cobonque's summer patio furniture provides the centrepiece for the Winfield Building's ample patios, in combination with stylish pieces from the *open Green*.

"The Nan Fung project is in line with our philosophy of escape from the urban jungle," says Cobonque. "My work incorporates ideas of the forest and foreign cultures, with a hint of antiquity."

It's an idea that encapsulates the contemporary passion for retro-chic – and Nan Fung's commitment to fusing the best of the old with modern designer sensibilities. ■



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Summer patio furniture by Cobonque, Israeli name dishes appliances. Let orders into a short-time collaboration with Hoppen

## A LOST CLASSIC FOUND

ABOUT  
Winfield Building at Happy Valley boasts one of the most classic structures in the area