



**Architect Richard Gluckman said Olive 8 will have an animated facade. Egg-shaped cut-outs at the podium will let people see into the hotel.**

Photo by Sam Bennett

## NYC architect hired to give Olive 8 'landmark status'

**By SAM BENNETT**  
Journal Staff Reporter

Richard Gluckman wants Olive 8 to fit in. But he's less concerned with how the building responds to nearby structures, and more interested in how it blends with the sky and topography.

"I'm not trying to blatantly appropriate a regional style, if there is such a thing for high rise buildings," he said. "I'm thinking about the way the building will look in different climactic conditions in Seattle — the gray and brilliant blue of the sky."

Olive 8 began construction in January and is expected to be complete in the fall of 2008. Located at Eighth and Olive, it will include the 350-room Hyatt at Olive 8 hotel and 198 condos above. The 36-floor tower will have separate entrances for condo owners and hotel guests.

Even on gloomy days, Gluckman wants Olive 8 to have a glow, with its white and light gray exterior. He takes his cue from one other downtown building.

"I've always admired the Smith Tower as a really elegant building with unique proportions," he said. "I think it's time we had another white tower."

Developer R.C. Hedreen Co. hired Gluckman's firm, Gluckman Mayner Architects of New York, to give the building extra flare. Gluckman has designed a residence in the Northwest, but he's best known for galleries and museums such as the Andy Warhol Museum in Pittsburgh and the Mori Museum in Tokyo.

MulvannyG2 Architecture is the managing architect and architect of record. Zena Design Group is the interior designer.

Alec Carlin, project manager with R.C. Hedreen, said his company wanted to "raise the bar" by bringing in a well-known New

York architect. He said Hedreen wanted Olive 8 to have a high profile design, like the Central Library and Experience Music Project.

"This building is going to have the same sort of landmark status," said Carlin. "We're making [Denny Triangle] into a vibrant part of the city, and this is the flagship."

Gluckman described Hedreen as a "client willing to experiment," allowing him to make the building stand out.

One of Olive 8's most distinctive features will be the podium. It will have large cut-outs that resemble eggs or ellipses.

"It started with a hand sketch of organic shapes," he said. "I liked the shape and realized that if you rotate it, it looks like it's rolling."

Gluckman also experimented with using images of sine waves at the base of another building.

He said he wanted an animated facade that begins with the egg shapes at the base and extends upward with the use of lightly and heavily fritted glass, as well as blue-tinted glass. The building has several zones — each with different combinations of glass types.

The egg-shaped cut-outs will allow people on the street to look inside at parties, meetings or people working out in the health club.

"If there is a party going on, we wanted those elements to be visible from the outside," Gluckman said.

Craig Davenport and Ted Caloger, principals at MulvannyG2, said Hedreen originally hired their firm to be the design architect. MulvannyG2 was into early concept design when Hedreen decided to put Gluckman in the lead design role.

"He thought it would be intriguing to do something pretty cutting-edge," said Caloger, referring to Hedreen. "Most of the time we have been the design architects and hired

another firm to be the architect of record. In this instance, the roles were reversed."

Hedreen hired MulvannyG2 to design the Grand Hyatt in downtown, and Caloger believed Hedreen wanted a similarly conservative design for Olive 8.

"He changed his thinking," said Davenport. "We were caught off-guard because Dick (Hedreen) is a traditional guy."

Caloger said his firm regularly does cutting-edge designs outside the country, in places like China. But he said Olive 8 is a break from tradition.

"If you look around the city at the design architects — Callison, NBBJ, ZGF — this is something they probably wouldn't do for a residential tower, maybe in part because of our familiarity with the design review process," said Caloger. "But if you come from out of town and have international name recognition, you can shoot for the moon."

Blaine Weber of Weber + Thompson said hiring celebrity architects may appeal to some developers. "It is a trend we see in some larger cities," he said. But Weber said there are often extra costs due to more complex designs.

As the former chair of the Design Review Board in Seattle, Weber said board members review projects solely on "good design principles," and high profile architects must meet those standards just like everyone else.

Caloger said he expects his firm will "push the envelope more" with upcoming residential towers in downtown Seattle.

He expected the trend among East Coast high-rise residential developers to hire notable architects will spread west. "Having a name associated with a design attracts buyers," said Caloger.

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