

Saint Kate unveils art-centric rooms

219-room hotel opens Monday downtown

Alexa Buechler

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The new Saint Kate hotel isn't designed just to be a hotel, but a hot spot for artistic minds to come together.

Saint Kate replaced the former InterContinental Hotel on 139 E. Kilbourn Ave. The 219-room hotel from Marcus Hotels & Resorts will open to the public Monday.

"What you are seeing today is countless hours of effort and work and thought and creativity and argument," said Greg Marcus, president and CEO of Marcus Corp.

Each aspect of the hotel was decided to bring to light various artists' abilities. About two dozen artists collaborated to create the hotel's guest rooms. Depending on the night, the price for a standard king room can range from \$189 to \$509 per night.

The hotel also features five Canvas Rooms. These are rooms that embody one artist's vision. Fine artist Lon Michels' room had every spare surface painted in leopard print, even the deer heads on the wall. On the other hand, you have John Grant. His room displayed a certain elegance, but his theme was less-than-perfect. He calls it the Perfect Room. The price of these rooms ranges from \$224 to \$524 per night.

At the end of each hall, there is a cozy gathering space with coffee, records and a television. Each room is accompanied by a record player, and guests can check out records from the lobby.

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Art is displayed and performed throughout the hotel, and the elevators will have monitors showing digital art-

work. There will be rotating exhibitions in its four gallery spaces and live performances on its stages.

One of these galleries is operated by the Museum of Wisconsin Art. It includes a sculpture of women mannequins shielding themselves with umbrellas from raining shoes. And, the piece is painted in leopard print.

Three of the galleries are on the first floor, including the one operated by the Museum of Wisconsin Art. On the second floor rests the fourth gallery; it's the size of a closet and intended for immersive art experiences.

The lobby was not the exception to the rule. At the front entrance, a wooden-looking horse that is actually made of metal watches the guests. This piece was created by Deborah Butterfield. In the sitting area, there is a striking photo by Mickalene Thomas that depicts an African American woman sitting in a power stance with 1970s furniture and decor in the background.

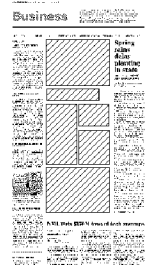
The hotel also features a permanent art collection including 100 contemporary works from nationally and internationally known artists. However, it aims to display emerging artists as well, according to Maureen Regalie, the curator at Saint Kate.

"We're also using this as an opportunity to highlight a lot of Midwestern artists," Regalie said. "Midwestern artists often get overlooked in the art narrative, and this is really a chance to let that Midwestern art shine."

All the galleries will be free and open to the public daily.

Saint Kate also has a variety of dining options, including an all-day cafe and a Neapolitan-style pizza spot. The Bar, off the hotel lobby, will have coffee, juices and pastries. It will also have a menu of cocktails, wines and beers.

On the hotel's second floor includes Giggly Champagne & Wine Bar, which incorporates sparkling wine into your beverage. TDR, or The Dark Room, mim-



icking the vibe of a speakeasy, is a reservations-only steakhouse that opens June 18.

Saint Kate will be the first hotel in Milwaukee to feature a theater. The 90-seat black box theater will host a wide array of performers, productions and lectures. The summer lineup should be announced within the next couple days.

“Let’s do something nobody has ever done before, we’re going to add the performing arts,” Marcus said. “And, it seemed to make a lot of sense because we’re sitting in an area surrounded by performing arts venues from the Marcus Center to the Pabst to the Rep (Milwaukee Repertory Theater). We’re really in the heart of performing arts.”

The Marcus Corp. is a company

“rooted in the arts,” Marcus said. “There’s an intersection you can find between commerce and art.”

Marcus said the Saint Kate will differ from other hotels because instead of responding to demand, it will generate its own demand.

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Maureen Regalie, the curator at Saint Kate



Artist Lon Michels (center) answers questions about his room at Saint Kate, 139 E. Kilbourn Ave. PHOTOS BY MICHAEL SEARS / MILWAUKEE JOURNAL SENTINEL



Artist John Grant talks about the room he created in the hotel. He titled it the "Perfect Room."



Work continues to get the hotel ready for its opening.

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