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## The High End A Hudson Square Tower With a French Accent

Françoise Raynaud's 30-story condo is designed to blend in with the neighborhood.

By JANE MARGOLIES

Despite all the construction cranes that can be spotted around New York City, it is still the rare woman who gets to design a major building in this town.

Annabelle Selldorf and Zaha Hadid realized various high-profile New York projects. Now, as the lead architect for Greenwich West, a 30-story condominium rising in Hudson Square, Françoise Raynaud joins the select group.

Mrs. Raynaud, 59, is based in Paris and relatively unknown here, but she has made a name for herself at home with public and private projects, including libraries, cinemas, corporate headquarters and housing. She founded her own firm in 2005, after nearly two decades working for the architect Jean Nouvel, much of it heading up his projects in Asia.

"I was the specialist of towers in the office," she said in an interview in Greenwich West's sales gallery.

The new building will indeed loom over its neighbors in tiny, fast-changing Hudson Square, which is tucked into the western edge of Manhattan between Greenwich Village, SoHo and TriBeCa. Once a manufacturing district known for its printing plants, the area has lately attracted media, technology and advertising firms. Disney is relocating its New York headquarters there, and a 2013 rezoning intended to encourage residential development has spawned a wave of luxury projects.

Greenwich West's developers — Strategic Capital, Cape Advisors and Forum Absolute Capital Partners — sought as large a footprint as possible for their building,



RENDERING BY FAMILIAR CONTROL

Greenwich West, expected to be ready for occupancy in 2020, has oversized windows.

which fronts on both Charlton and Greenwich Streets. When attempts to purchase low- and mid-rise structures on either side of their L-shaped site were unsuccessful, they bought up air rights on the block so they could maximize the size of their building.

The entrance will be on Charlton, opposite the Children's Museum of the Arts. Retail space will occupy the ground level on Greenwich, facing the multiblock UPS building, whose low-rise profile is one reason half of the 170 apartments in Greenwich West will have Hudson River views.

Height aside, Mrs. Raynaud — whose firm is named Loci Anima, Latin for "the soul of place," reflecting her interest in designing buildings that relate to their sur-

roundings — sought to make Greenwich West feel like a part of its neighborhood. Its classic New York setback form will be faced in brick and have a regular grid of oversized windows.

The bricks will be light gray, extra-long, and assembled in geometric patterns that the architect calls "a kind of scarification." Darker, metallic-looking glazed bricks will frame the window openings. The building has rounded, or squircle, corners for a softer effect and, perhaps, a whiff of Art Deco — which, after all, originated in France.

Rounded motifs will continue inside the building, where another French architect, Sébastien Segers, has overseen the interior design. Baseboard moldings, kitchen counters and even electrical switch plates will all have curved edges and corners.

The apartments, which range from 500 to just over 2,200 square feet, are mostly one- and two-bedroom units. They start at \$965,000 and currently max out at \$5.5 million — prices the developers call "affordable," at least when compared with those of some other luxury buildings nearby.

Greenwich West is expected to top out before the end of the year and be ready for occupancy in early 2020, according to the developers.

And Mrs. Raynaud isn't the only woman working to make it happen. Plaza Construction, the general contractor for Greenwich West, said that 25 percent of its employees are women — which exceeds the proportion of women working in construction nationally (9.1 percent) and locally (around 7 percent).

Plaza recently reworked the standard construction sign to be more inclusive. Instead of "Men at Work," Plaza's diamond-shaped orange and black sign, affixed to the construction shed at Greenwich West, proclaims, "Men and Women at Work."