



ABOVE: Old meets new in the grand entrance to the Exchange at 25 Broad. Liz Swig designed the contemporary electric purple carpet with orange circles that mirror the original circular fixtures hanging from the elegant coffered ceilings. RIGHT: Kent and Liz Swig on one of the Exchange at 25 Broad's opulent, sweeping marble staircases. A custom-made Murano glass chandelier hangs behind them, adding a dash of modernity to the historic building's Old World charm.

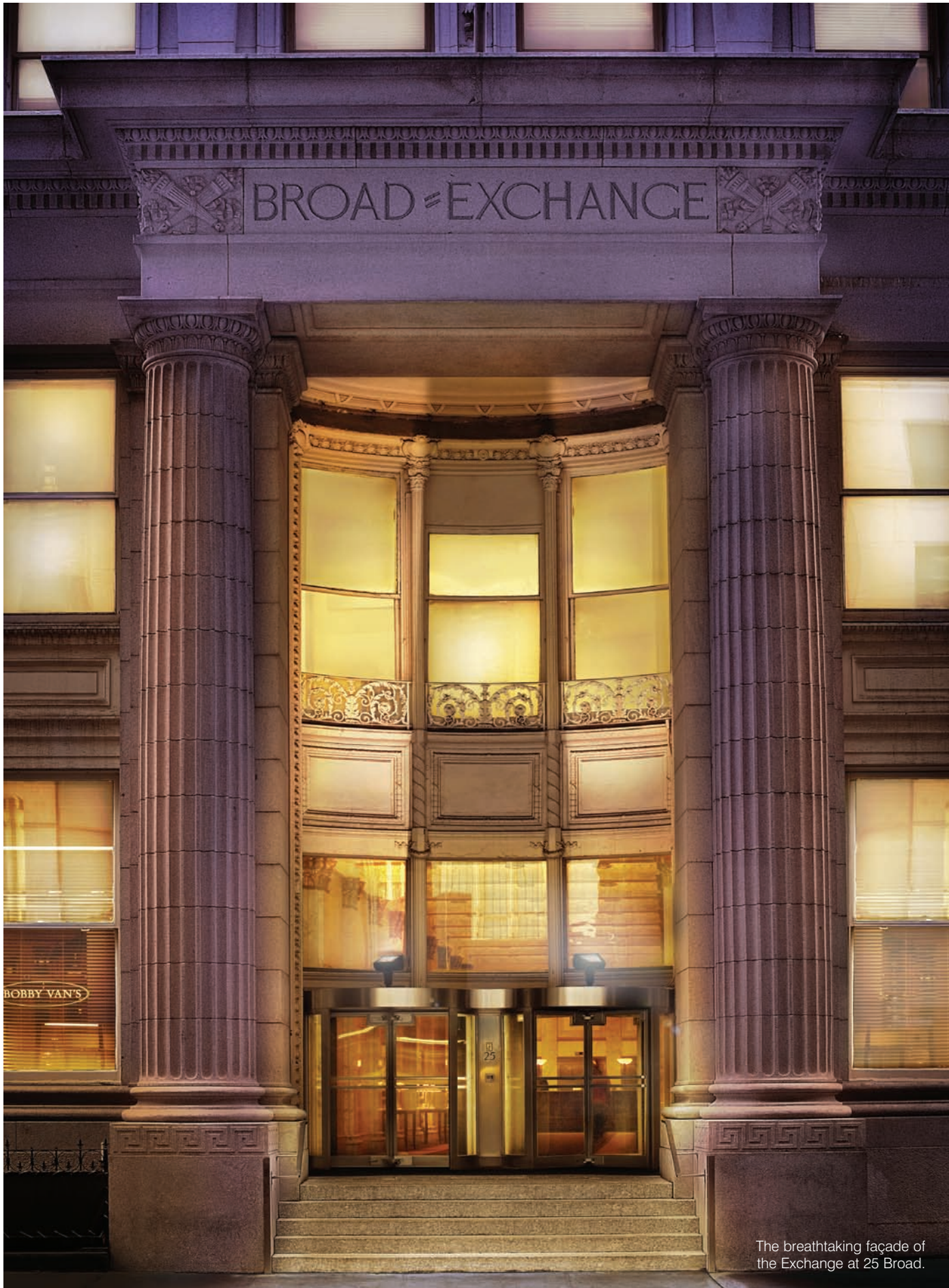
LOVE AT FIRST SITE

Just 15 days after they met,
Kent and Liz Swig were engaged.
But that's not the only deal
these real estate honchos
have brought to a brilliant conclusion.

*by Sue Hostetter
photographs by John Lei*

SOME 20 YEARS AGO, LIZ SWIG'S PARENTS, New York real estate scion Harry Macklowe and his wife, Linda, kept suggesting she accompany them on a night out with a nice young man they all knew (with the intention of setting them up). She reluctantly agreed but then canceled the date, opting instead to have drinks with a girlfriend at the Saloon across from Lincoln Center... where she ran into the aforementioned young man and fell in love. His name: Kent Swig. Fifteen days later they were engaged.

The union is truly a marriage made in real-estate heaven, and to say that things have worked out would be an understatement. Kent has built his own empire with Swig Equities LLC, which owns some of the bluest of blue-chip residential and commercial spaces in New York City and San Francisco. Liz works alongside her husband as director of design, creating the buildings' interior spaces. Their most recent success is the Exchange at 25 Broad.



The breathtaking façade of the Exchange at 25 Broad.



“I was trying to create something **fresh, fun, and whimsical**—not your average apartment,” Liz says.

THIS PAGE: Channeling Andy Warhol: Liz mixed hot pink walls with a Kartell orange sectional sofa, shag rug, and images of Marilyn Monroe to outfit this mod pad.
TOP, OPPOSITE PAGE: Liz boldly pairs a hot pink wall with orange bedding in the Warhol bedroom, and the backlit headboard makes the bed glow.

One of the few pre-World War I buildings left in the city, the breathtaking 565,000-square-foot Italian Renaissance Revival structure was completed in 1902 and at the time was the largest and most valuable office property in the country. For 70 years it housed companies like Paine Webber, and stored all of the neighboring Stock Exchange’s certificates in a cellar vault (the original still exists in the ground-level restaurant Bobby Van’s). In 1997 the building was converted from commercial use to residential rental units. Swig Equities purchased it in 2005, by which time it had been designated a federal historic landmark.

No other building in the neighborhood boasts such grand turn-of-the-century craftsmanship and elegance—an original carved-marble lobby with soaring 18-foot ceilings and terrazzo floors, for starters. But what really sets this property apart is the distinctive, innovative, and downright sexy approach to interior design. Liz infused the building and model apartments with her personal aesthetic, transforming a gorgeous piece of historic architecture into modern, thoroughly creative, and visionary luxury dwellings.

“I was trying to create something fresh, fun, and whimsical—not your average apartment,” Liz says. “Obviously the building is spectacular and speaks



FROM BOTTOM LEFT: The baby's room is pitch-perfect, right down to the Barbies and children's rain boots, the colorful Calypso Home appliques on the wall, and a crib and bedding from Calypso Child. The dining room table comes from the Conran Shop, and the vintage-inspired Lucite and stainless steel chairs hail from Kartell.

for itself, so I wanted to play off that in a completely unexpected way.”

That unique design blend is reflected in funky contemporary black Murano glass chandeliers juxtaposed with the historic sweeping marble staircases. Or the bright-orange rings that pop on the electric-purple carpet that stands in stark contrast to the traditional coffered ceiling of the majestic entrance hall. “Everything has a complete logic,” Liz says. “The circles in the carpet mirror the circular light fixtures. I felt that everything should have a relationship—colors, materials, and shape.”

But it's in the model apartments—“the three or four little homes,” as Liz

refers to them—that her personality and vision really shine. “I'm giving you a *lifestyle*,” says Liz. “The pink and orange apartment with Warhol's *Marilyn*—it's about a time period, about pop culture. I can imagine the woman who'll live here—hip, in her 20s, hitting Bungalow 8.” Liz's use of funky materials, bold colors, and genre-specific furnishings are spot-on. Most evident is her sharp eye for detail, as seen in the “musician's pad.” Vintage guitars, seventies album covers, and photos of Led Zeppelin dot the apartment and eloquently evoke a culture and era. Most charming is the baby's room, with a bubbly-bright color scheme, frilly crib bumper, and children's rain boots.

Liz has funkyed-up the musician's model apartment, adding authentic touches like vintage guitars, a bed with a furry headboard, framed albums from the seventies, and original concert photos. The ponyskin rug is from ABC Carpet & Home, and the sofa and chair are from Ligne Roset.





Liz found most of the simple yet chic furnishings at Ligne Roset, the Conran Shop, and Crate & Barrel. The matching graphic paintings on the wall are by Lydia Bassis.

Liz studied at Parsons the New School for Design, but her method seems born of an innate sensibility rather than some corporate storyboard. “My approach to my personal life is human and fun,” says Liz. “The common themes are always clean lines and warmth, and having a blast making it happen. That’s why I used the Tiffany and Hermès boxes [in one of the model apartments]. I thought that was a fun and whimsical way of incorporating the growing retail environment of Downtown.”

The most discriminating buyers—one could imagine both Lee Radziwill and Diddy as residents—will also be wowed by 11- to 14-foot ceilings, Poliform cabinetry, doors imported from Italy, quartz kitchen countertops, Miele and Bosch appliances, and Waterworks fixtures. The most outré accoutrement is probably the solid Nero tongue-and-groove wide-plank wood flooring that rests on a bed of felt, which allows it to expand and contract—attention to detail indeed. Most furnishings in other areas of the building were designed by Liz and custom made, from the Lucite wine racks to the furniture in the viewing garden.

To match the sophisticated design aesthetic, the Swigs have created a seriously over-the-top list of building amenities and services usually found only in high-end luxury hotels, and they hired a Plaza and W Hotel veteran as general manager. Features include a private residents’ lounge, a screening room, uniformed housekeeping, a 24-hour concierge provided by legendary firm Abigail Michaels, room service through Bobby Van’s, a complete spa and gym, a kids’ playroom—the list goes on and on.

But with the amount of construction competition in Fidi (the Financial District), will all of this really differentiate 25 Broad Street from, say, William Beaver House? Kent thinks so. “I had our brokers [he owns Brown Harris Stevens and Halstead] make a list of the amenities their wealthiest clients look for, and they all said prewar, proximity to shopping, and no noise. Most important, they ultimately want what holds value—and that’s prewar, marble, and the best buildings.”

Even with all their success, it’s obvious that Liz feels fortunate to have the life she and Kent share. “I have great respect and admiration for Kent’s real estate deals,” Liz says. “I’m probably more interested in the art and design than in the real estate, but I get to play with the interiors of his buildings and we have fun. It’s a really wonderful marriage of the two things.” [G]