

HOME is where the art is

Real estate developer enjoys *MANHATTAN views, modern art in his living room*

By EVELYN LEE

The colorful "Free Beer" sign at the entrance to the living room in David Barry's Hoboken penthouse is just the start of things to come in this space filled with striking visuals.

Barry, president of Ironstate Development, also based in the Mile Square City, is an avid collector of contemporary art, an interest he makes abundantly clear on the walls of the room.

"I like art a lot," said Barry, 45. "It resonates with me emotionally. ... There's something about art that's more engaging, and you see it in different ways, depending on what your mood is, what the light is."

Prominently displayed above the fireplace — across from windows with sweeping, panoramic views of Manhattan — is a piece that was part of the "Pictures of Junk" series by Brazilian artist Vik Muniz.

At first glance, the work appears to be a Renaissance oil painting of Apollo and Daphne, but upon closer inspection, the figures actually are composed of pieces of junk carefully arranged on a warehouse floor and photographed from above, said Barry, who has been collecting for about 10 years.

Inside a recess along the same wall is

a series of images relating to "On the Waterfront," the 1954 Marlon Brando film that was shot in and around the docks of Hoboken. "It was kind of cool to be able to have some Hoboken references" in the living room, said Barry, who purchased the work by Drew Heitzler, at Renwick Gallery, in New York.

On another wall, behind a grand piano that belonged to the grandfather of his wife, Kyra Barry, hang a pair of magenta and gray paintings Barry commissioned artist Sarah Crowner to create. "I felt like this room needed a little bit of pop," he said. "We wanted something that was a little bit abstract, that wouldn't compete with this," he added, gesturing toward the views of Manhattan.

As for the "Free Beer" painting, Barry said, that was done by a Danish art group called Superflex as part of a project that involved publishing free recipes for beer. "It was more their social viewpoint that everything should be open-sourced," he said. "If you have a formula for technology or a recipe, it should be shared with the world, because that makes the world better."

Barry also happens to like beer, he added with a smile, and "I thought it was a little funny and humorous that when you walk into this nice apartment, the first thing you see is 'Free Beer.'"

Although his wife also is an art lover, "we don't have exactly similar tastes — but similar enough that we can find a lot of crossover," Barry said. "I like things that are a little bit crazier and more aggressive. She probably generally prefers things that are a little bit calmer and more abstract."

Barry likes to work with the same galleries for art acquisitions, such as Renwick, Nicelle Beauchene and Hasted Kraeutler, in New York. "I'm not so much into random galleries," he said. "I like to have a little bit of reference." He also travels with Kyra and four or five other couples every year to Art Basel Miami Beach, an art show where Barry usually acquires new pieces.

Barry said he doesn't always know where he will hang a new piece of artwork in his home. "I just buy it if I like it, and then I try to figure out where to put it."

Barry grew up in Maplewood, and later lived in New York for several years, during and subsequent to attending Columbia University. But after his children were born, he wanted his home to be closer to the office. "I'm very busy, I work a lot," he said. "It really is nice for me to literally be 10 blocks away, to be able to come home at a moment's notice."

Unlike their last home, the Barrys' current apartment was custom designed by architect David Collins, who previously worked on Avenue, a restaurant located in Ironstate's Pier Village development in Long Branch.

"My family and I decided that we would get some more space and do an apartment that really reflected our lifestyle," with a contemporary feel, a lot of natural materials and plenty of outdoor space, Barry said. "We transitioned into a real home."



Photos: by Christopher Mezza

Barry and his wife have lived in their two-floor penthouse at the Sovereign with their three children, ages 15, 13 and 11, for the past three years. Previously, the family lived in another building in Ironstate's The Shipyard, the redevelopment of the former Bethlehem Steel shipyard into five buildings, comprising about 1,200 residential units and ground-floor retail space along the Hoboken waterfront.



