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For Lenny Kravitz, a Hard Hat Is More Than a Fashion Statement

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Lenny Kravitz, who decorated several of his own shagadelic bachelor lairs, took his love of design public in 2003, starting Kravitz Design. Since then this New York company, which focuses on residential and commercial design, has completed a number of projects, from a chic residence in Paris to takeout boxes for a Madison Avenue sushi shop.

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Kevin Scanlon for The New York Times

Lenny Kravitz

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But there's a lingering misconception that Mr. Kravitz's involvement is vague and dilettante-ish, he said — the design world equivalent of a celebrity-written novel.

"People are often surprised when I'm at the building with the hard hat on," said Mr. Kravitz, 47, who took a break from his day job as a touring musician to speak to a reporter by phone. "I'm completely involved. There'd be no reason to do it unless I'm 100 percent committed."

In its latest project, Mr. Kravitz's company designed the public spaces and three model units for **Paramount Bay**, a 47-story condominium in downtown Miami overlooking

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Troy Campbell

His New York company created the public spaces and three model units for **Paramount Bay** in Miami. "I design as though I'm going to live there," he said.

Biscayne Bay. Mr. Kravitz's signature macho touches abound, from the quarry of marble in the lobby to the dark wood panels in an apartment bathroom.

It's a look meant to evoke, as he put it, "the sophistication, but yet the fun style" of Brazil, where he has one of his four homes (the others are in Paris, New Orleans and the Bahamas).

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Troy Campbell

A model unit.

Mr. Kravitz recently discussed his approach to design and the tricky logistics of owning homes spread across the globe.

How does your design for Paramount Bay reflect the vibe of Miami?

I've been in Miami on and off for many years, since I was a child. It's a very easy lifestyle. But there's a very urban quality that I love there.

What I like about **Paramount Bay** is that it's on the bay; it's not in South Beach. A lot of people tend to think that if you're not in South Beach, it's not happening. But in the downtown area, you've got this whole world happening in Miami proper now. So the design is elegant. It has more of an urban feel. Also, the idea is to bring in texture and color and not have the typical Miami white box, which you see a lot of.

I like the huge chandelier in the lobby.

I've actually been making chandeliers for a while now. I made a couple for Swarovski. I love bold strokes. If you look at the lobby you

see the big stairway, the huge slabs of stone. I like these big masculine statements.

You're known for that über bachelor-pad aesthetic. How do you make spaces welcoming to women or families?

When I say masculine, I don't think it means only manly. It may be very bold and big, but there's always the feminine side to it. There's a lot of sensitivity to the space and to the way you would live in it. The main thing is comfort.

What have you learned over the years as a designer?

I learned, early on, working with other people when I was beginning, that a lot of things look great in a photo, but if you had to live in it you wouldn't want to. So, for me, function had to be first. When I design these places, I design as though I'm going to live there. They have to be done in a way where you can spend an entire day and never want to leave.

Whose house really impressed you when you were growing up?

Joe Namath lived across the street from me, and growing up I used to look into his apartment. He had this great apartment with a pool table and chandeliers and mirrors, a quintessential bachelor pad.

Sid Bernstein, the guy who brought the Beatles to America — that was the first house I saw on Park Avenue that had 15 rooms and was really decorated.

I moved to Los Angeles for junior high and high school. Berry Gordy's house — that was the first mansion I'd ever been in. I was completely blown away.

I've always wondered how people who own several homes distribute their stuff among them. Can you break down the logistics?

I have to make it to where I can do what I do in all of these places. In Brazil, I've got instruments, I've got books. As I do in Paris, New Orleans and the Bahamas. But you can't have everything in one place, so I end up splitting things up.

For instance, my vinyl collection is in Brazil. I decided being at this farm, in the middle of nowhere, you want as much stimulation as you can. I also have a typewriter there. I don't have that in the other places. Paris has my art.

Do you ever reach for something in your Paris house and say, "Oh, damn, it's in Brazil"?

A lot of times, I have to purchase things, because I have put the book collection here, the other collection there. But I don't like acquiring too many things. Especially at this point in my life.

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