

URBAN VILLAGE

With their sculptural forms and interactive sustainable design, the residential towers on these pages take apartment living to the next level



ART OF ARCHITECTURE

Melbourne's iconic arts precinct helped shape the design of the new Triptych apartment tower, which was conceived as an artwork in itself

Any new high-rise in an area renowned for its innovative architecture has a lot to live up to. Melbourne's arts centre – home to the Arts Spire, Melbourne Recital Centre and National Gallery of Victoria (NGV) – is exactly such a precinct.

It was this backdrop that influenced the design of the newest building on the block, the Triptych residential tower developed by RI Investment Trust and Stable Group.

Danny Flynn, Stable Group managing director, says that right from the start the development team was conscious of a sense of responsibility.

"We knew the project had to be something that reflected its position and reiterated its value within the heart of a thriving and creative space," he says.

"We were motivated to create a building that could be a living work of art, and consequently sought the creative talent that could make this happen."

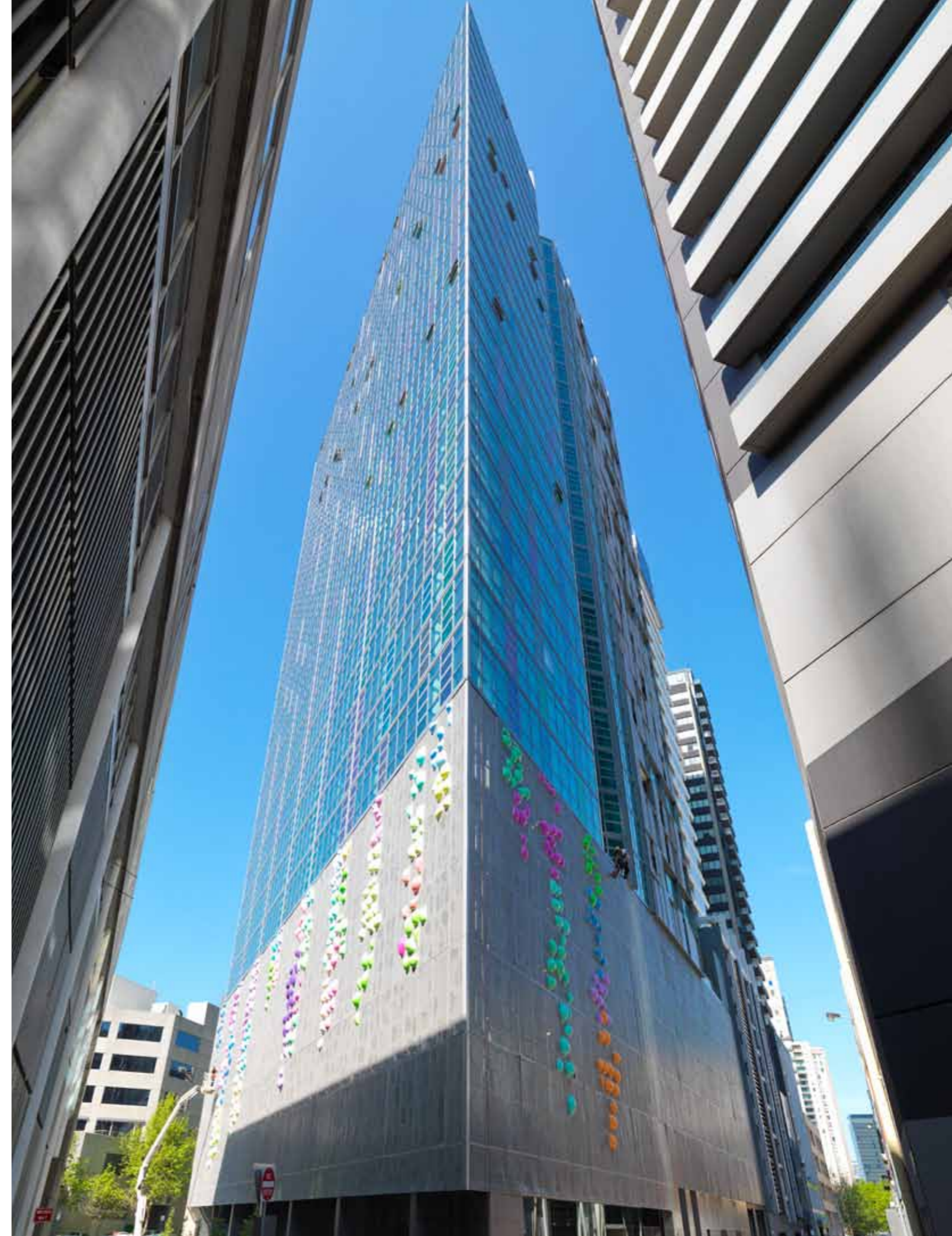
Nettletontribe was contracted to design the building, with substantial input from renowned Australian artist Robert Owen.

Architect Jeremy Bishop says the design was also strongly influenced by the awkward triangular shape of the site, which has two street frontages.

"We wanted to take advantage of a view east to the NGV and the Royal Botanical Gardens," he says. "This dictated the main axis of the building and the strict grid arrangement of the apartments, which provided the most flexibility for the developers. This axis also allowed for a view back to the

Preceding pages and right With its decorative art facade and vertical gardens, the Triptych residential tower engages with its location in the heart of Melbourne's arts precinct. The podium level features an enclosed pool house that is cantilevered out from the front facade.

Below Triptych (to the right of the Arts Spire) is positioned to maximise key views in two directions.



city from the other street frontage, and meant the building could effectively turn its back to the third side of the triangle. The result is an arrow-shaped building, with an open space in the middle where we could put a podium deck and pool.”

Due to a high water table, the car parking needed to be above ground, which in turn created a need for architectural screening of the parking podium.

“We initially thought we could use the podium as the basis of a large-scale artwork, but the idea evolved over time to become something much more dramatic,” says Bishop. “Working with Robert Owen, we were able to develop the glass facade in line with his artistic vision, which allows the building to make the most of its unique edges in a simple, sleek design.”

Owen’s artwork, titled *Digital Showers*, presents a prism of colours cascading down the building’s exterior. The coloured glass panels are reminiscent sun-lit raindrops, which flow down to disperse in three-dimensional coloured puddles at the base.

The design also incorporates an organic cellular pattern that is repeated in key areas of the building, including the precast concrete facade. The pattern reappears on the metal screen at the entry, on the soaring glass walls in the lift lobbies, and on the metal gates that lead to the apartments.

“The cellular pattern is like the building’s DNA,” says Bishop. “It’s a very organic artistic overlay for a building that is quite angular and rigidly gridded, which makes an interesting juxtaposition.”

The organic forms are reinforced by a vertical garden on the front of the podium, which is a tapestry of grasses and plants specifically selected to thrive in the urban setting. Inside, a series of vertical gardens provides greenery for the lift lobbies.

“Another of the key points of difference for this project is the way we explored a new way of treating the lobby spaces,” says Bishop. “In a traditional apartment building, residents take the lift and step out into a dark lobby and a series of closed doors. We wanted to do something different, so came up with the idea of urban villages, which resemble a series of three-storey buildings stacked on top of each other.”

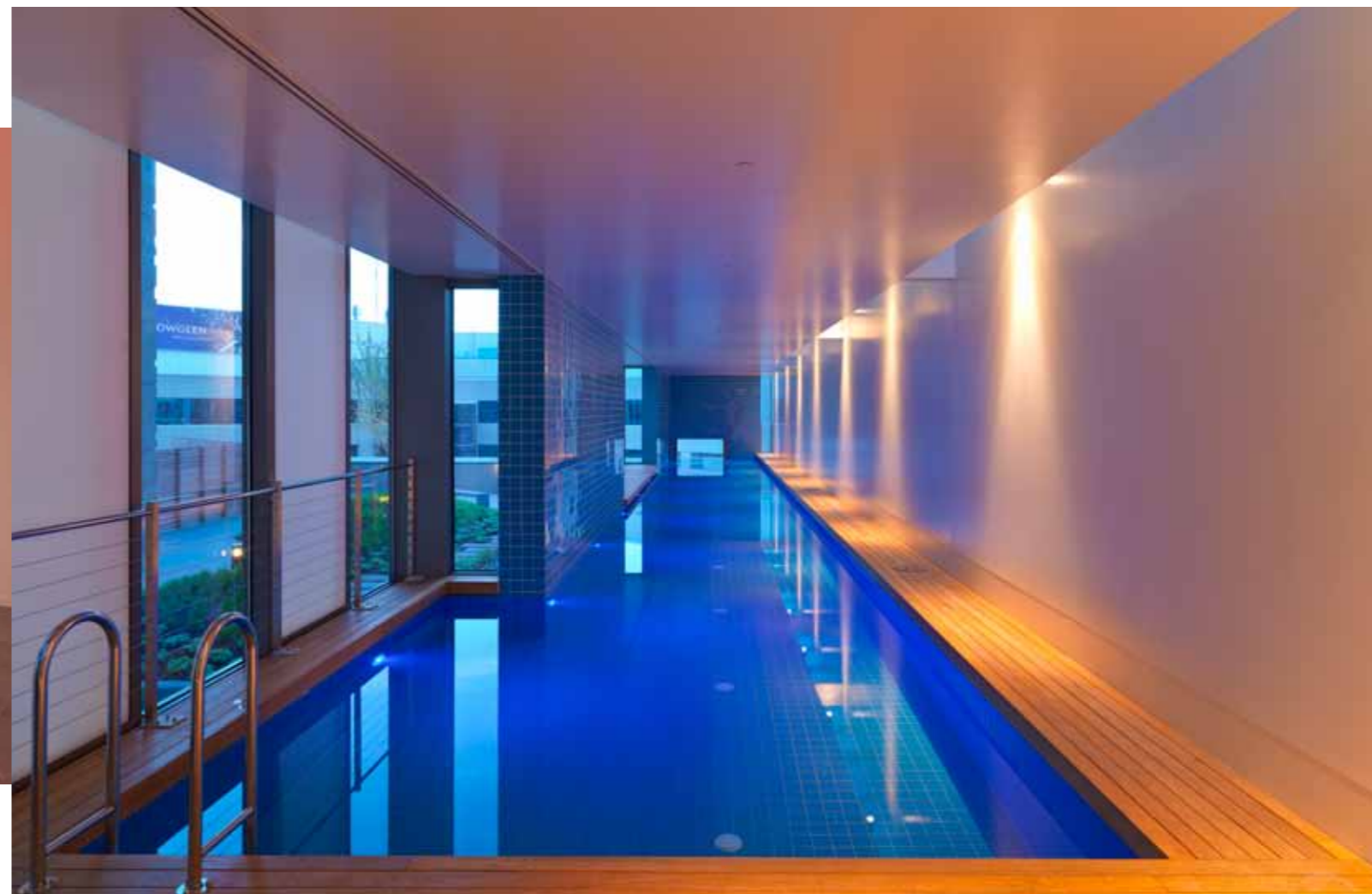
Bishop says the vertical villages group the 157 apartments, with each unit opening off a three-storey atrium that features fully glazed walls and a vertical garden. “These spaces are the antithesis of a dark lobby and passageway. They are light and airy, and allow fresh air into the building.”

Windows in the atriums are controlled by a motorised system that automatically opens and closes the windows depending on the weather.

Below The metal screen at the entry features an organic, cellular pattern that is repeated on the precast concrete of the facade, and in key areas inside the building.

Top right Designed as a place to escape the bustle of the city below, the podium rooftop garden features plants that will thrive in the urban environment.

Lower right The cantilevered pool has windows at the end and on the bottom that provide glimpses of the street below.



In addition, the apartment entranceways allow fresh air to flow into the units, without compromising security. The design, inspired by old European houses, provides a private foyer for each apartment, with a lockable gate and aerated screen.

The cross ventilation is just one of a large number of sustainable design initiatives. Danny Flynn says Triptych needed to set a new benchmark for environmentally sustainable apartment design. Rather than just tout the sustainability tag, the project needed to incorporate the highest ESD principles.

"In optimising sustainable development, we have delivered both passive and active solutions. The passive solutions include the intelligent future proofing of the design, and the active solutions address a number of specific areas."

As well as the natural cross ventilation, the ESD

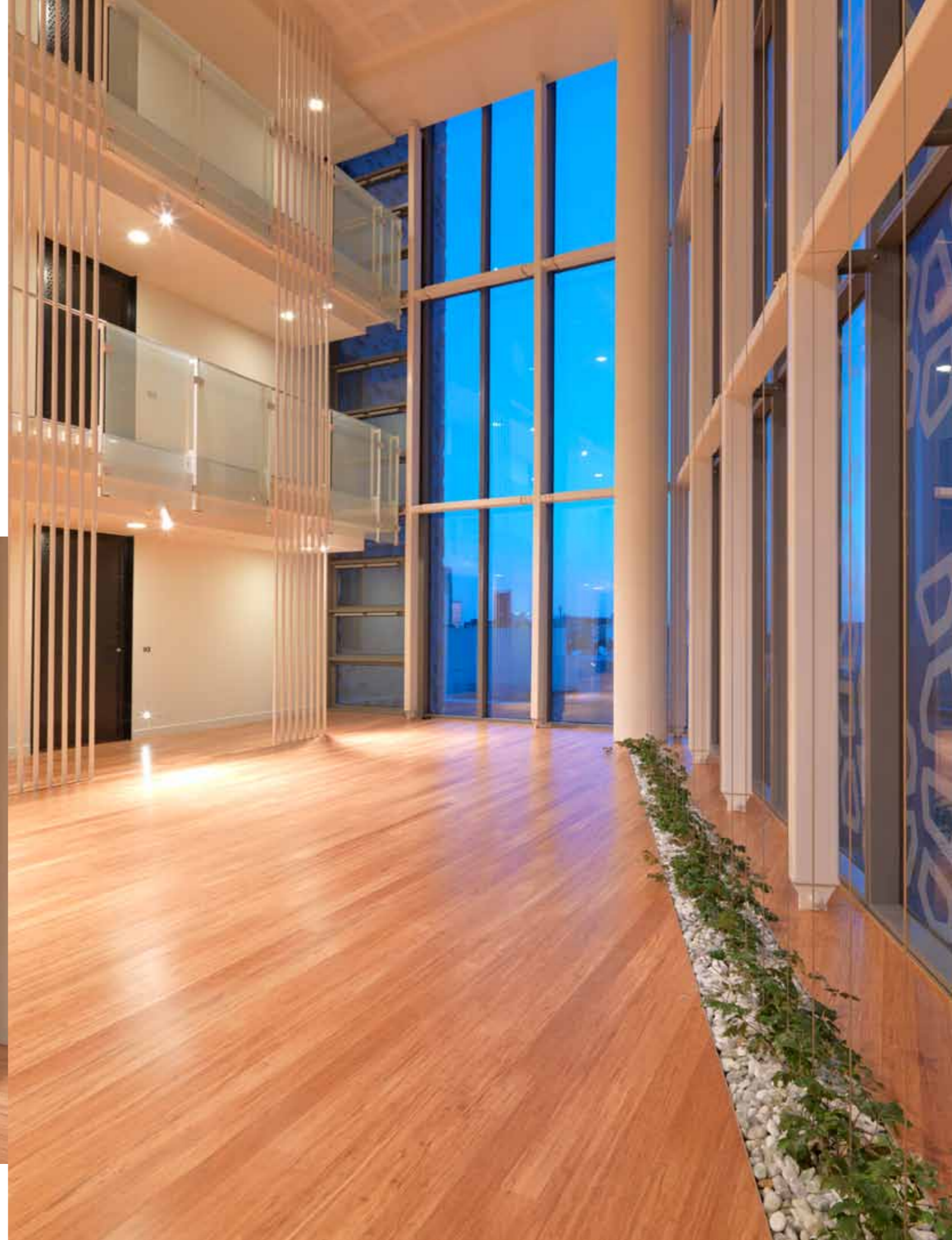
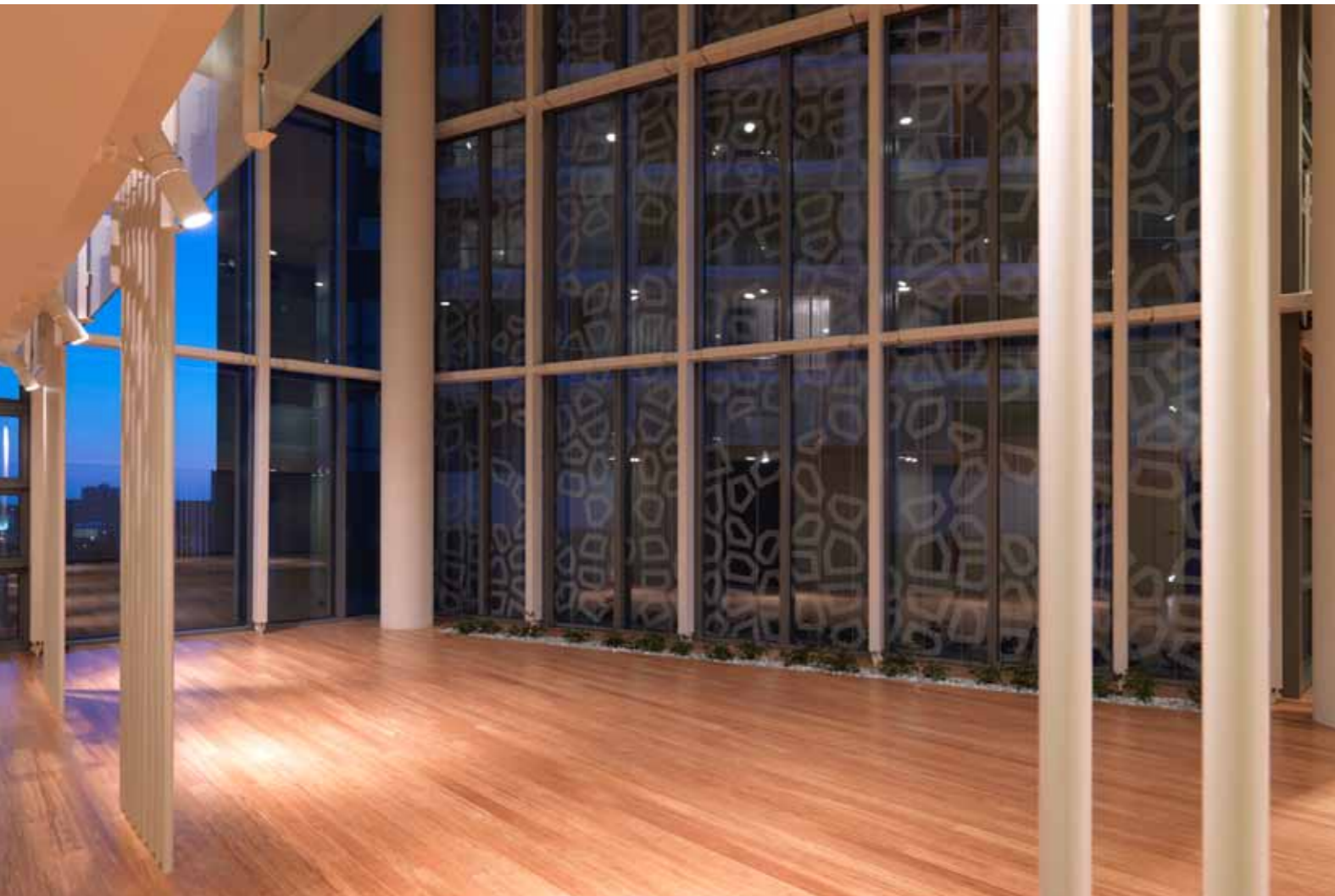
initiatives include electricity co-generation, low-e double-glazed windows, water harvesting and the use of sustainable flooring materials.

Triptych is designed to reduce its impact on the electricity grid by generating its own power through co-generation. This process uses gas turbines to create electricity, which is then used to supply power to the common areas. The heat by-product of the co-generation process is used to warm the vertical villages via a hydronic heating system. It also supplements the heat for the domestic hot water system and swimming pool, ensuring little is wasted, and reducing costs to residents.

Rainwater is collected from the rooftop and level six podium, and stored on site, so it can be used to replenish the swimming pool. It is also used to irrigate the indoor and outdoor gardens, which were designed by Jamie Durie of Patio.

Below The organic cellular pattern, often referred to as the building's DNA, features on the full-height windows in the three-storey atriums. Apartments are grouped either side of these atriums, which create a series of vertical villages.

Right Each atrium also features a vertical garden, with creepers that will grow the full height of the windows. Motorised windows automatically open and close to provide cross ventilation to the atriums.





Top left To improve the cross ventilation, each apartment has an exterior lobby behind a lockable gate with an aerated metal screen.

Lower left and below The spacious apartment interiors provide a sleek, contemporary backdrop for artworks, and the city views.

The podium rooftop garden incorporates a 25m pool, landscaped outdoor living area, yoga deck and gymnasium. The pool is cantilevered out from the building with windows in the end wall and on the bottom providing glimpses of the street below.

RI Investment Trust chairman Tony Ott says the open space is an important part of the building.

“The design maximises the use of greenery to provide a relaxing space away from the hustle and bustle of the city. We also wanted to offer the residents of Triptych an open space where they could meet their neighbours and enjoy being part of a community.”

Similar attention has been paid to the apartment interiors by Carr Design. Director of interiors design Daniel Stellini says the company deliberately

created welcoming, home-style interiors. Taking into account the arts precinct, apartments have been designed with style and simplicity. This gives residents a canvas to showcase art and furniture, so they can personalise the spaces.

Other special features of the interiors include high ceilings and Italian-designed Poliform kitchens with high-end European appliances.

“Triptych is a collaboration of great Australian designers, all of whom have been sympathetic to the arts precinct,” says Danny Flynn. “This has ensured the building and lifestyle on offer are deeply in tune with the location.”

➔ See apartment interior images online at [Trendsideas.com/go/30601](https://www.trendsideas.com/go/30601)



Location Triptych, Melbourne, Vic
Developer RI Real Estate Funds Management; with Stable Group
Architect Nettleontribe, project director Jeremy Bishop
Interior design Carr Design
Landscape designer Jamie Durie, Patio
Public space design Peter Geyer, Geyer
Collaborating artist Robert Owen, through Arc One Gallery
Civil engineer Robert Bird Group
Quantity surveyor Napier and Blakeley
ESD consultant Cundall
Mechanical and electrical engineer Medland Metropolis
Mechanical services RKH Air-conditioning
Fire services Active Fire
Project manager Clifton Property Group
Main construction company Lu Simon Builders
Landscaping Julian McCarthy Landscapes

Metal deck roofing PBR Roofing Services
Rheinzink cladding Specialized Roofing Services
Aluminium windows and glazing CSF Aluminium
Automated louvres Winco Systems
Lifts Kone Elevators
Sliding screens DBM Handrails
Joinery manufacturer Poliform
Wood flooring Bamboo from Style Australasia; Floors by Greensborough
Carpets Aurora Floor Coverings
Window coverings Design Live
Stone benchtops and ceramic tiling TTI Stone Contractors
Ovens and cooktops Miele
Refrigeration and dishwashers Miele; Fisher & Paykel

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