



thesis on tall buildings and how they become part of the city.’ They were sort of horrified by my decision.”

So, it should be no surprise that Keating is the architect behind the new 2811 Maple, the tallest residential building in Uptown Dallas, stretching up 31 floors, and the first all-residential high-rise developed by Crescent Real Estate LLC and Keating has built a five-decade career by making tall buildings sing, from the Gas Company Tower in Los Angeles to Trammell Crow Center, Dallas Arts Tower (formerly Chase Tower, known as the keyhole building for its distinctive top) and the renovation/reimagining of Renaissance Center in

Dallas, plus Wells Fargo Plaza, El Paso Energy Building, CenterPoint Energy Plaza, and San Felipe Plaza in Houston. Keating has shaped the skylines of some of America’s greatest cities. “If all the tallest buildings are identical, you wouldn’t have much,” he says.

2811 Maple fits Keating’s drive to create something distinct that also fits into the fabric of its neighborhood and looks like it belongs. The exterior, with its limestone-clad entry drive, stretches up to windows and long balconies that protrude from the tower, giving a very vertical building movement and accentuating the corner units, leading to something of a canopy top. Joseph Pitchford, Crescent’s managing director of development, sees it as something new for Dallas. “Rick’s work is infused with a sense of warm modernism that is so appealing in Southern

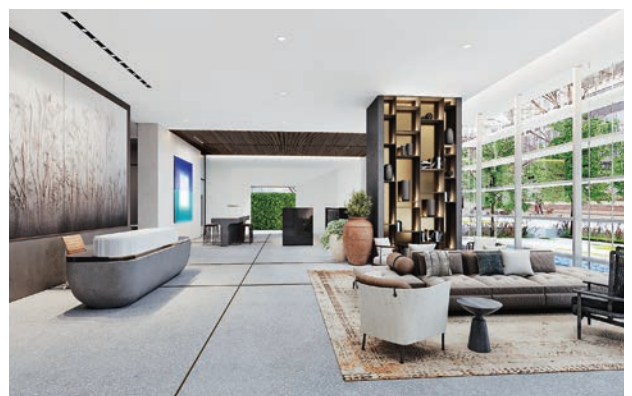
Architect Richard Keating’s Climb to the Top

The Tower Whisperer Returns to the Dallas Skyline with 2811 Maple

By Chris Baldwin

Architect Richard Keating designed some of the most iconic skyscrapers in Dallas and Houston, helping shape the skylines of Texas’ two biggest metropolises. Now he’s back with 2811 Maple, set to open in May as the tallest high-rise in Dallas’ coveted Uptown neighborhood. It comes from Crescent Real Estate LLC and aims to blur the distinction between sky-high residences for purchase and rent while invoking visions of a Los Angeles tower filled with glittering names.

Towers always spoke to Richard Keating, with the tallest of man’s cloud-nuzzling creations holding particular appeal. Sometimes to the chagrin of his architecture professors. Keating remembers that at the University of California at Berkeley, they wanted him to “undoubtedly write my Ph.D. on classical architecture of some sort. And I came back with ‘I’ve been thinking about this, and cities are really the most interesting cultural artifacts of mankind. Throughout history, they are much more important than individual buildings. I really want to write my



California,” Pitchford says. “We wanted to bring that contemporary, light-filled aesthetic to urban Dallas. The result is a design featuring floor-to-ceiling glass and a bright, open feel that fills a need in the market. As anticipated, Rick delivered beautifully.”

Keating spent a decade in Houston after being charged with opening an office of SOM in the mid-1970s, but his own firm, Keating Architecture, is based in Los Angeles. Texas remains one of his favorite canvases, though, and he sees this new tower in Uptown (where units will rent from \$4,175 to \$19,500 a month) as Dallas getting something that other cosmopolitan cities already possess. “With high-rise residential that I’ve done in either Los Angeles or Chicago, you can’t tell the difference between a condo and an apartment,” he says.

This tower whisperer compares 2811 Maple favorably with Beverly West in Los Angeles, a 22-story high-rise with only 35 total residences that he designed overlooking the storied Los Angeles Country Club. “You’d probably recognize the names of almost everybody who lives in a building like that,” he says of Beverly West. He calls 2811 Maple the closest thing he’s done to that exclusive enclave, where units start at around \$4 million at Beverly West and quickly skyrocket from there (a Beverly West penthouse sold for \$24 million last year).

One does not need to be quite that wealthy to live at 2811 Maple. Still, Keating will tell you that the intentionality with which he approached the two high-rises remains the same. He wanted a dignified lobby and the type of setback drive with lightning that creates a sense of arrival in his new Dallas creation. “The lobby is one of those things that’s terribly important in a high-rise building, even if it’s underused,” he says. “Residents of a building almost never go there except to get their mail. But when your grandma comes to visit, or your friends, they go through the lobby. It becomes the first message for all those people who live in the building. This is what my building is about.”

Of course, a creator of skylines is obsessed with the views. Why live in the sky if you’re not going to see anything worthwhile. Keating took on the challenge of a nearby office building potentially limiting the views of 2811 Maple by making more than 60 percent of its 177 residences corner units to “exaggerate the views of the downtown skyline.”



WHY GOING HIGHER IS MORE HUMANE

To Keating, building vertically represents making a choice for much more livable, safer cities. The current race to go taller and taller in New York City takes that expression to the extreme, leaning towers and all. “How many Russian oligarchs are there, my gosh?” Keating muses. “On the other hand, I think that building tall is something we’ve technically advanced in my lifetime. The elevators from The Sears Tower (to now) have advanced. We can sustain these buildings energy-wise much more successfully. But the most important thing is the land use. We cannot have cities sprawl all over. That’s Los Angeles, and it’s a mess ... Driving is awful. It’s not an urban life you want to live. The favorite place to live in all of mankind has always been the walk of the city ... After the recent fires in L.A., we’re also realizing that building taller and more dense allow us to be safer.”

The king of artfully designed high-rises obsesses over giving his towers a sense of timeliness. Skyscrapers should

not be trendy; these aren’t influencers or reality TV stars. “The worst thing you can do is build a building where you have a situation, in a year or 20 years, where people look back and say, ‘That’s kind of a crappy addition to the city,’” he says. “I probably can come up with a few in Dallas.”

Timelessness serves as one of the long-term economic drivers of a high-rise like 2811 Maple.

Crescent Real Estate — which owns and developed Hotel Crescent Court, The Crescent, Canyon Ranch, The Crescent Hotel Fort Worth and The Ritz-Carlton, Dallas — turned to Keating for his ability to build towers that still matter across the generations. He focused on making the amenities level at 2811 Maple as luxurious as possible, creating a private garden and areas around the pool that almost become personal retreats. (Keating Architecture also handled the landscape architecture for 2811 Maple, with MaRS crafting the interiors.) “You can characterize high-rise buildings if they’re additive to the fabric of the city,” Keating says.

His old professors might not agree. But Richard Keating always thought civilization gets much more interesting in the sky. *2811 Maple, 888.548.2811, 2811maple.com.*

2811 Maple, the tallest residential building in Uptown Dallas, is 31 floors.

The limestone-clad entry drive of 2811 Maple.

Opposite page:
2811 Maple is Richard Keating's new Dallas skyscraper.

The dignified lobby of 2811 Maple.