

You won't believe this furniture is made of cardboard

By Jackie Cooperman

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inFormedSpace produces "faux-niture" like this round table.

Peter Rodgers

An apartment on the market has to look good — really good — to get the best price. But most homeowners don't want to break the bank to doll up a place they're about to sell.

Enter design-obsessed, environmentally conscious attorney Douglas Pinter. He is on a quest to make urban home staging quick, inexpensive and even elegant ... as long as visitors don't actually sit on his sleek, modernist-inspired polypropylene sofas.

Instead of using actual furniture, Pinter produces twelve components at upstate New York's Adirondack Studios, which also makes sets for Disney. The studio packs the panels in origami-like packages, which Pinter assembles on site, using embedded magnets to build mostly white faux beds, sofas, tables and even wall panels to suggest gallery-level artwork.

Pinter can completely furnish an empty two-bedroom apartment with his pieces, akin to cardboard, in under four hours, he says, building everything from bassinets to L-shaped sofas on the spot, and adding sheer white curtains, bedsheets and lighting.

Douglas Pinter.
Handout

He charges about \$2,000 for the first two months of staging, and around \$800 for each month thereafter. A “traditional” Manhattan staging job, with real furniture you can sit on, would cost about \$10,000.

“I love conventional staging, but it’s cumbersome and expensive. Our process is far more effective *and* cost-effective,” says Pinter, whose three year-old company inFormedSpace has staged over 100 apartments in New York City.

Brokers and architects say that they still prefer luxe European furniture to lure buyers for the highest-end pads, but for most apartments, Pinter’s Noguchi- and Le Corbusier-esque polymer creations fit perfectly.

“It allows people to visualize the space and get a feeling of how it looks with furniture. You can also move it around very easily, because it’s so lightweight,” says real estate developer Adrien Déséglise, whose company Alodium Group has staged two apartments with inFormedSpace — including his own two-bedroom condo at 235 E. 40th St., which is currently on the market with Compass’ Jonathan Weiner and James Morgan. “It’s a great middle ground between computer-generated imagery, which is hard to make look real, and traditional furniture staging.”

Instead of costly “regular” furniture, this Midtown condo has been staged with pieces that are easy to assemble and recycle.

Compass

Pinter, whose own home is filled with furniture from decidedly top-of-the-line brands like B&B Italia, Roche Bobois and Ligne Roset, is looking to expand his psychologically canny, wallet-friendly work to cities across the country and possibly overseas.

“Our blank surfaces help buyers imagine a space,” says Pinter, sounding like a one-man Rorschach test. “It makes a space accessible to the mind.”

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