

Missing Element

There is a curious mix of esthetic values at the corner of 79th Street and Park Avenue now that a Henry Moore sculpture has been installed, with conspicuous fanfare, in front of a big, new apartment house. It could be called throwing good art after a bad building, since the event forces on the spectator a comparison of the art of sculpture and the art of architecture. There are a few notably handsome and well-handled examples of apartment-house design currently visible in New York, but the trend, particularly in the high-rent category, continues to be to offer corn for class.

Since the Moore cost nobody anything—it is apparently “on loan”—it is a free art ride for the neighborhood and free publicity for the builder. One wishes he had put his good intentions where the building is. Plaza dressing does nothing more than disguise a standard speculator product with fancy trim. Architecture is still the missing element. It's a cultural con game from the ground floor up.