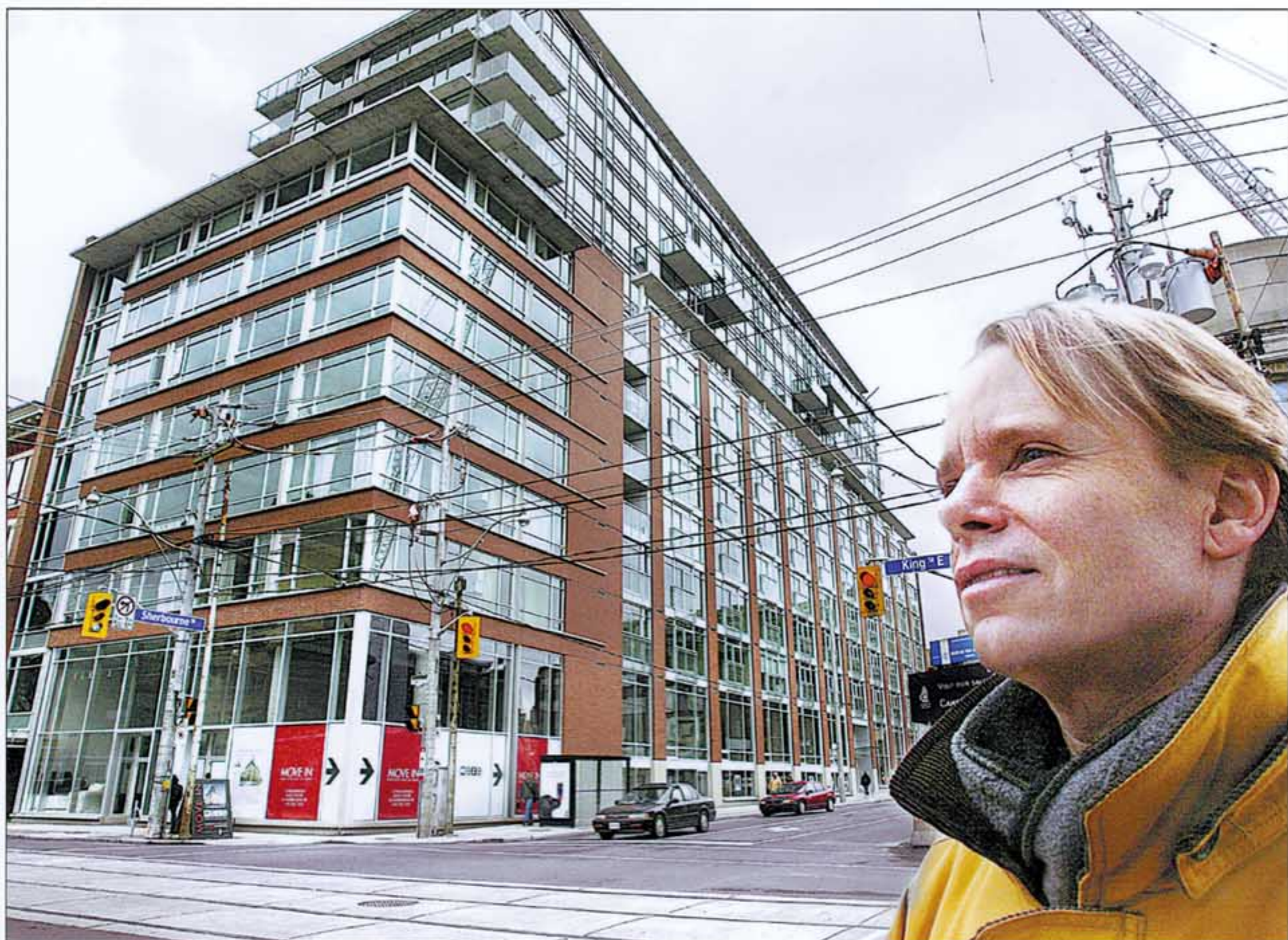


# Condo Living



RON BULL/TORONTO STAR

Toronto architect Peter Clewes outside MoZo, the building he designed at King and Sherbourne Sts. Clewes has raised the level of condominium design in the city, writes Christopher Hume.

## *A new wave in design*

*Toronto condo developers are discovering that good architecture can be selling point*



Christopher Hume

No one doubts that the condo boom has changed the face of Toronto. But whether for better or worse is still up in the air.

Since the residential floodgates opened in the 1980s, few developers seem to have given this much thought. Most are so busy, they're happy to opt for quantity over quality.

Recently, however, there are signs of change. If developers have been willing to settle for mediocrity, it's because there's little reason not to. Or so they say. Design costs money and the object, of course, is to build as cheaply as possible and sell as dear as possible.

But now, it seems, it's design that's selling.

Not that those developers have lost interest in the banal — just look at those kitsch classics, the Chedington and, more recently, the N.Y. Towers complex on

Bayview Ave. — but now they're considering other options, including excellence.

Toronto architect Peter Clewes has almost single-handedly raised the level of condo design in the city to the point where it has become respectable. MoZo, the mid-rise complex that appeared recently at King and Sherbourne Sts., is one of Clewes' most successful efforts. It proposes a thoroughly urban solution to the problem of inner-city residential architecture. Compact but not cramped, it pays homage to its historic surroundings but without trying to copy them.

It also takes its role as a corner building seriously, addressing both sidewalks and creating a stronger sense of place in this long-neglected area. Best of all, perhaps, Clewes has designed a building that fits effortlessly into the context of a busy downtown neighbourhood but which also enhances it. In other words, it gives as much as it takes. This can be seen in the attention to detail, as well as the emphasis on scale and decent materials.