

Artwork at The Cullen is more subdued than the artist's signature pieces – but the Adam Cullen flavour is still clear



The Cullen Hotel

DUBBED the enfant terrible of the Australian art world for his controversial paintings, the irony of a “Do Not Disturb” sign on the door of a room filled with Adam Cullen artwork is not lost on guests of Melbourne’s newest luxury hotel.

The \$48 million, 115-room Cullen Hotel is the first in a series of six art-themed boutique hotels in Melbourne.

Created by prominent developers the Deague family, the independent Art Series Hotel Group was inspired by their frequent European travels and passion for collecting art.

The venture also includes hotels named after artists Jasper Knight, David Larwill and Charles Blackman. Launching in early 2010, the group’s flagship hotel will be named after “Australia’s greatest living painter”, John Olsen. There are whisperings the sixth will be a Whiteley.

The hotels occupy central sites across Melbourne, with each artist linked to a location corresponding to their

style. The Cullen has been matched to busy, alternative Prahran.

Prahran’s famous produce market is across the road, shopping mecca Chapel Street is nearby, and the culturally inclined will love the in-house curator offering hotel tours and information on Melbourne’s galleries.

While the subjects of Cullen’s works – roadkill, ghouls, violence – are not exactly the stuff of chocolates-on-your-pillow dreams, tamer pieces grace the hotel. A life-sized cow grazes in the foyer; glass screens in bathrooms are watermarked with an original design.

The interior is a riot of vibrant paintings featuring Cullen’s trademark fluorescent drips and rainbow smears outlined in wobbly black brushstrokes. Each room is furnished with a kitchen, iPod dock, Kartell Ghost armchairs, glossy design books and plasma TV (with dedicated Art Channel).

It’s the perfect blend of glunge: sleek and minimalist with Cullen’s disturbingly beautiful grunge style.

www.artserieshotels.com.au ■

