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Selling New York S6E7: Taking a Gamble

HGTV's *Selling New York* rides along with brokerages CORE, Kleier Residential, and Warburg as they try to sell fabulous properties fabulously. Here's our recap of how the NYC real estate industry is portrayed to the world, penned by Angela Bunt. Episode air date: 1/17/2013.



On this episode of *Selling New York*, we meet up with Gumley Haft Kleier agent Margo Fall for the first time this season. She's working with Nell and Chris Stephenson to find them the perfect space as they make the move from California to New York. Their only major requirement is a working kitchen. Shouldn't be too tough—everybody cooks in New York, right? We also join Core hotties Elizabeth Kee and Lindsee Silverstein as they try to sell a client's \$4M East Village property...with a fratty appearance and a slide sitting in the middle of the living room. Can they spruce up the space and make it worth the four mill?

The episode kicks off with a lunch date between Kleier Residential agent Margo Fall, and nutritionist/author/buyer Nell Stephenson. Nell's husband, Chris, has been commuting back and forth from L.A. to New York for the last year, not to mention her agent and publisher are also NYC-based. While they love their California digs, it's time to make the move to the Big Apple. The first stop is at The Indigo in Chelsea. Chris is stuck in a meeting, so it's just Margo and Nell hittin' the streets. As they enter the \$2.25M, 2BR, 2.5BA apartment, they're instantly blown away by the humongous kitchen. Because Nell is a nutritionist, having a working kitchen is a must. I mean, look at those guns!

She's also impressed by the outdoor space of the apartment, as every bedroom has its own private terrace. Seems like the perfect pad, but Nell has something on her mind. She doesn't know how to tell Margo...but she's having cold feet about buying a property. Can they look at rentals instead?

Margo forces a smile as she watches the dollar signs crumple around her, and through gritted teeth tells Nell not to worry.

In an attempt to bring a little California love to New York City, Margo takes Nell to the Metal Shutter Houses at 524 West 19th Street. It's a breathtaking 2BR, 3BA, and only \$12,900 a month! Clearly, writing is a very lucrative career and this is pocket change for the health author.

The selling point of this apartment are the windows, which fold into themselves, leaving the entire living room wall open to the outdoors. The apartment is huge, filled with light and exposures, and has tons of storage for these furniture-less nomads. Plus, the kitchen is just perfect. Nell loves it and is ready to pull the trigger, but her gut is telling her to look at one more property just in case. Margo's reaction.

"I'm so sick of having to explain the harsh reality of New York real estate to these fun-loving Californians."

Although it seems Nell is sold on the Metal Shutter House(s), she still heads to 200 Chambers Street in Tribeca to check out a 2BR, 2BA, listed at \$12K a month.

The best feature of the apartment is the large, open living room that's lined with windows. The sleek, contemporary apartment has the non-cluttered look that the Stephensons are into, but Nell's not compelled. She still wants Shutter House. Time to bring hubby Chris in to get his blessing!

Chris loves the apartment, and with a sick view of the Empire State Building, what's not to love? But Margo doesn't have time to celebrate yet: She needs to get all the paperwork ready for the apartment so the Stephensons can get board approval before they head back to California.

When we next catch up with Margo, she's making her way over to the Stephensons' awesome new pad to eat some of Nell's delicious cooking that she won't shut up about, and to make sure they're all settled in their new place (which is completely undecorated and they obviously haven't moved in yet). Bottle of wine in tow, she arrives and is ready to dig into Nell's fancy meal. Mmm, I love... lettuce.

As a present to Margo for finding them the perfect space, Nell gives Margo a gift. A bonus? A referral? Nope: An autographed copy of her book, "Paleoista." It's just what she's always wanted.

One rental crisis averted, one more to go. This time it's with Core agents Elizabeth Kee and Lindsee Silverstein (not to be confused with Lindsay). They're working with online poker player Phil Galfon to try and sell his East Village apartment, located at 425 East 13 Street, aka the A Building. Phil couldn't be there for the initial meeting because online poker was made illegal in America last year, so he's hiding away in **gulp** Canada. His manager, Michael Stoltz, shows them around the 4BR, 4BA property.



Over Skype, Phil tells the ladies that he's spoken to three other agents who have all priced the apartment at \$4M. But is he bluffing? Ms. Kee and Ms. Silverstein think that in order to hit the \$4M mark the apartment needs some minor repairs and a complete restaging, because, as Elizabeth says, "Right now the apartment looks more like a frat house." I don't know what college she went to, but unless they forgot to show the urine-and-vomit-stained rugs during the tour, it doesn't look like any frat house I've ever seen.



I will crush you in Mario Kart.

After getting the go-ahead from Phil to do a little redecorating, it's time for these ladies to go shopping! They head to Lazzoni to pick up furniture that will hopefully turn this bachelor funhouse into a suitable four-million-dollar home.

The girls meet up with Phil and Michael at Bowlmor to discuss business. You can tell Elizabeth is horrified yet fascinated by the meeting spot. It's so different from where her other clients usually take her. First the slide, now the bowling...Phil's unlike any man she's ever met. He's so intriguing..

The dudes clearly took the girls here in an effort to try and pick them up. It's the same type of non-date that a guy asks you on when he's like, "Hey, want to meet up and have some food?" but never actually comes out and says it's a date so he doesn't have to deal with the potential rejection. Or paying.



The ladies explain their marketing plan, which is essentially just having a party filled with "influential trend-setters" aka any of their clients who have more than 1,000 Twitter followers. Phil's like, "Yeah yeah, that's great, now come sit on my lap and let's eat some more of this chicken strip basket."

The next time we see the budding couple is when Elizabeth and Lindsee are showing off the renovated apartment to Phil. The new décor and furniture have really transformed the space, and while Phil says it's not how he'd decorate it, he can see the vision. Wow, Lizzy, is that a new dress? And your hair and makeup – so fresh! It's almost like you're trying to impress somebody.

Did he really just say, "Let's sell it, I like to win?" We get it, you're a professional poker player. It's the day of the shindig, and bottles are poppin' and hors d'oeuvre are rockin'. The party filled with "influential trendsetters" is a big success, and people seem to love the slide. In fact, it almost became a trending hashtag on Twitter! Finally, the property has generated the buzz it needed to get some offers. Or has it? So far the press has been amazing, but no bids yet. Via Skype, Elizabeth reassures Mike that because of the unique space it might take some time for people to make offers.

Then, in an effort to use as many poker puns as possible in the last two minutes of the show, she says that she knows they took a *gamble* hiring them as agents, but they're sure once they get the apartment sold it'll be a *jackpot* for them all. Lindsee is just like, "WTF did she just say? God, I hope I get to work alone next time."



After holding a broker open house at the property, the ladies receive an offer on Phil's apartment which the update says is currently in negotiations. Since this episode went into production, the place has actually sold, to someone who doesn't want to keep the slide.

It was easy sales all around in this episode, and we even got to see some potential young love blossom. For that reason, this episode gets 4 out of 5 cackling Kleiers.