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Selling New York: The Broker's Covenant

HGTV's Selling New York rides along with brokerages CORE, Gumley Haft Kleier 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 Molly Reisner. Episode air date: 7/14/2011.



Season 3 of *Selling New York* returned from summer vacay last week with two deals and some funky tan lines. Not bad for a show that seemed sluggish in the sales department last season...but will the contract craziness continue?!?!

Brokers on this show like to emphasize not only their penchant for snazzy jeweled bangles on Hamptanned arms (need I Kleier-ify who I'm talking about?), but also their passion for providing exceptional service to their prospective buyers AKA commission givers.

In the first story of last night's *Brokers: The Call Of Duty* episode, a dedicated agent enrolls his hesitant first-time buyers in a **Financial District's Rebuilding Itself OK? 101 Seminar**. Then, a no-nonsense broker must make several phone calls to find a **millionaire's manger** for an Upper East Side animal lover and his menagerie.

Do these brokers have *any* limits when it comes to customer satisfaction? You'll have to read this required summer recap (book report due on this episode in September) to find out!

CRISIS #1: BROKER MUST LITERALLY SELL NEW YORK TO FI-DI FICKLE COUPLE

Core agent **Tom Postilio** is feelin' fine about showing (potential) buyers **Brooke and John Britton** an apartment in the Financial District's Setai building at 40 Broad Street. It's their third visit to their maybe-partment which Tom thinks "**is clearly an indication that a customer likes the apartment.**" Orrrr....they could just be really indecisive. The trio head into the Setai (we like to call it the building that caused ire in Ireland) so BroJo can thrice again tentatively totter around this 1,115-square-foot 1BR, 2BA sleek set-up:

I love how Tom presents the his n' hers sinks to BroJo—like he magicked 'em up from a rarely used broker's wizard spell. Or is he trying to levitate a deal? I can't decide:



It's not the **\$1.62 million** pricetag that's got BroJo third-guessing this pad. They say they love it but Bro's "**not sold on living in the Financial District**" and Jo feels that "**half of it seems to be a construction site.**" Sensing this issue is blocking the buy, Tom triages the sitch by asking a favor from his bud Chrissy Brennan. She's a PR gal at Maloney & Fox—the firm working with World Financial Center developers Brookfield Properties. Chrissy sets up a meeting for BroJo and Tom there so everyone can get edjamucated about the FiDi. His goal? For his clients to "**see the value of the neighborhood as an investment in the future.**" Aaaaand, to not have to start the search all over again.

Care to learn about the layout of the best city in the world? There are mini-models and slideshows! By watching this, you will receive 2 credits towards your W.U.W.L.M. (What's Up With Lower Manhattan) doctorate.

Brookfield President Ric Clark plants **1 World Trade Center** in new NYC like he means business (which he does!):



Rejuvenated by the revitalization of the FiDi, BroJo are perked up to the possibility of settling into the Setai. But Tom doesn't want them mulling over the decision all night—so he offers them an invite to the hottest ticket in town: **a Core Customer Appreciation Party!** It's how Tom and his colleagues say "why thank you very much" to their clients, and they do it classy-style with dinner, drinks, and... CABARET! Later that eve, BroJo head to the Feinstein Nightclub at the Loew's Regency to hear Tom croon some tunes while legendary NYC entertainer Michael Feinstein tickles the ivories. Tom used to be a profesh singer if you dare to care:

Post-show, BroJo invite Tom for a drink to deliver the downtown news: they want the Setai! The field trip to the WFC helped them gain perspective on the nabe! With that outcome, Tom owes Chrissy *at least* an Edible Arrangement. The update informs BroJo bought their apartment for **\$985k**, and love their lower Manhattan lives.

CRISIS #2: WILL TURTLE CAUSE TOO MUCH OF A HURDLE FOR APARTMENT APPROVAL?

Break out the kazoos kuz this segment is all about Michele "Mama Bear" Kleier gettin' her listings on! Her klient? Publishing entrepreneur Dan Rattiner - founder of the free Hampton's rag Dan's Hamptons and all kinds of profitable ventures which have made him extremely wealthy. He's renting in the Upper East Side but wants to lay out some dough in the \$8-11 million (holy advertising in the free paper dollars!) range for a spot nearby. Dan, who thinks Mama B is **"one of the best brokers in the city"**, brings her to his rental where he tells her he has a surprise waiting for her...

Meet Dribble the Tortoise! The slowest-moving surprise ever. Mama B reaches down for a shell-shocked stroke:



Dan's looking for **viewtastic pre-war digs with a separate zoo room** to keep Dribble and Hank—the cat he's allergic to but can tolerate as long as he snoozes in the animal wing. Mama B's not so sure it'll be easy to find listings that will take turtles. Really? Turtles don't shed or make noise, and they can be trained to turdle where you want 'em to. For freaking EIGHT MILLION DOLLARS, Dribble should be allowed to have a vote in the co-op board!

Later in their kitchen, Mama B's hubs, Ian, proclaims "**a tortoise is not a pet.**" Close your ears (if you have them), Dribble! Actually, Ian's right. A tortoise is more than a pet. He's like your grandpa. Always old, usually slow, but sometimes weirdly fast.

Mama B. is in a tizzy about all the "200" calls she has to make to find pro-turtle pads to show Danimals. Fortunately, her cute lil' doggies help her pound the phone pavement:



Soon enough, she scores a viewing at 1280 Fifth Avenue in East Harlem, a building well known around these parts. The building manager there says turtles are fine as long as, I kid you not, they **"don't walk in the lobby."** I can't even.

This 4,963-square-foot abode is really a fiefdom of three penthouses that can be made into one humungo home. And bonus! The developer is willing to pay to do the conversion. And it's way below Dan's budget at \$6.92 million!

While Dan thinks the Central Park views are "sensational," he finds it hard to imagine the three separate spaces functioning as one. Plus, it's too far from his buddies on the Upper East Side. Mama B kvetches about how it's hard to find pet-friendly places where he wants, but Dan's all "it's your job!" and so they go forth...

to an undisclosed 5th Avenue manse in the mid-'80s. With 3,000 square feet, 2BRs, and 3BAs there's more than enough room for Dribble and his feline sibling. And it's only \$7.75 million:

This is way better than staring at the shower curtain. A view from the bathroom:



The views, the address, the woodwork...Dan's sold! As long as his wife approves...which, ultra-phew, she does. The update says he bought it for the listed price, and the wife is remodeling. Hooray for millionaires not compromising on what they want or throwing out turtles!