Selling New York: Austin Powers Hits Chelsea

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Last night was another episode of Selling New York, *HGTV's reality show following Manhattan brokerages CORE and Gumley Haft Kleier as they try to sell fabulous properties fabulously. Here, writer Mike Olson's recap of how the NYC real estate industry is portrayed to the world...*



Last night's episode—aptly named "Eye of the Beholder"—reminded us that we all have a different definition of beauty. For some, it comes in the form of a **$3 million Tribeca loft** that could still use a cool million in renovations. Others find it in a staid Chelsea studio that has been transformed into a **shagalicious party palace** with a creepy light show over a creepier round bed. Either way, there

was something for everyone. So put on your favorite velvet suit, fluff up your ascot and head right this way.

Subplot #1: Chelsea development has an identity crisis
The Player: CORE founder and CEO Shaun Osher
The Mission: Poor **650 Sixth Avenue**. Our old friend has a killer location across the street from the resurgent Limelight Marketplace, but sales have flatlined since the economy went to shambles. Enter CORE, who have signed on to market the building. (The fourth company to try to sell this underperformer.)
The Problem: The building's deficiencies are apparent early in Shaun's tour of a **$2.175 million, two-bedroom model unit**. Right off the bat, this whitewashed apartment needs its floors and original iron column stripped. (Somehow he bites his tongue and doesn't say anything mean about the second bedroom.)



Next the boss heads to a **$925K "bachelor pad"** that's got 749 square feet and some funky, pulsating LED light thingy in the ceiling. This unit would have great views—if the windows weren't obstructed by a round bed and retro acrylic swing.



“I just didn’t get it,” says Osh of the gaudy party pad. His verdict? This place is just too Miami. We’re inclined to trust him. (He has an accent!)

The Plan of Attack: Rebrand and restage! Renamed **The Cammeyer**, the marketing campaign has abandoned that vintage ‘70s style to play up the building’s history. Likewise, the model units have been tweaked by a designer to better match the classy exterior. Now the place definitely looks ready for some open house action:



Osher passes the baton to CORE agent Tom Postilio, who shows three would-be buyers around the new and improved (including a shiny new **$1 million price tag**) studio, complete with requisite oohing and aahing.

The Decision: Though the response is "overwhelmingly positive," buyers are reluctant to plunk down so much for a studio. Except, that is, for one who springs for a bigger unit, signing on the dotted line for $1.18 million. Maybe the guy just really likes pizza?