

REAL ESTATE

Sotheby's International Realty pairs artists and homes to showcase extraordinary

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Weehawken, NJ home

By FORREST CARDAMENIS

Brokerage firm Sotheby's International Realty is inviting consumers to take a look around with its new video series.

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"HouseGuest" will follow influencers and celebrities as they become houseguests in Sotheby's International Realty homes, matching the lifestyle of the guest with the style of the home. Immersive content offers viewers another way into real estate shopping while building a personality around the brand.

"This video series allows the opportunity for the Sotheby's International Realty brand to feature extraordinary properties around the world by showcasing them in a creative way that captures a lifestyle and tells a story," said Wendy Purvey, chief marketing officer of Sotheby's International Realty Affiliates LLC. "By highlighting the properties in a different way, we can intrigue our audience and appeal to their senses by wanting to see more on sothebysrealty.com."

Be my guest

The first episode stars Kevin Red Star, whose paintings focus on aspects of Native American culture. He becomes the houseguest of a Weehawken, NJ home with clear views of the New York skyline, which shape and inspire his work.

The video begins with shots of the New York metropolitan area as Mr. Red Star narrates the differences the city and his upbringing in the small town of Lodge Grass, MT. Mr. Red Star notes that despite the culture shock, he visits around twice a year to paint.



Houseguest promotional image

Inside the home, the camera lingers on long hallways and woodcarvings, chandeliers and spiral staircases, with light that Mr. Red Star says is his ideal for painting. He begins to work, taking the viewer through his process.

Mr. Red Star explains that he begins with a sketch and plays with colors in a manner that departs from photographic realism, aiming for a more surprising impressionism instead.

More shots of the house and its surroundings punctuate glimpses of Mr. Red Star painting as he transfigures the clouds he has drawn to fill out the skyline visible from his window into buffalo.

To conclude the episode, Mr. Red Star describes the house as "a work of art." He explains the appeal of the home briefly, and offers a word of encouragement for aspiring artists as the camera settles on Mr. Red Star's painting set against the skyline it depicts.

The video is hosted on Sotheby's International Realty's Extraordinary Living blog and was linked to on social media. Below the video, there is also a link for consumers to learn more about the house.

Houseguest: Episode 1 - Kevin Red Star

By crafting a story around the house, Sotheby's International Realty is able to showcase its properties in a more discreet manner, nudging them to do more investigations on their own.

The four-bedroom house with six full and two partial bathrooms is available for \$35,000 monthly.

Three more episodes will follow throughout 2016 and will include properties in Turks and Caicos Islands and Tuscany, Italy.



83 Kingswood Rd Weehawken, NJ

"The featured talent is chosen through a selection process between WSJ. Studios and Sotheby's International Realty," Ms. Purvey said. "We were on a mission to locate fascinating people and then pair them with a property that would ignite their passions.

"The whole series is brought to life by sending the talent to a location where they could find new inspiration to unleash their imagination," she said.

Digital leaders

Other recent initiatives by the firm indicate a heavy focus on creative digital content.

In February, Sotheby's International Realty provided affluent readers of Elle Dcor access to high-end real estate content in a native advertising push.

Led by media agency SwellShark, Sotheby's launched its partnership with Elle Dcor on the Hearst-owned title's Web site beginning on March 1. The creative campaign uses Elle Dcor as a starting point and includes innovative content elements that will then be expanded across Hearst Magazines Digital Media portfolio for broader reach ([see story](#)).

Other real estate firms have also sought to make real estate shopping online more personable.

Last month, Houlihan Lawrence joined the ranks of those capitalizing on digital tools to help its clients move "North of NYC."

The Christie's International Real Estate affiliate and digital agency King & Partners have designed the North of NYC Web site that organizes properties according to lifestyle personas, offering curated recommendations alongside each. The method more directly services consumers on an individual level, helping to forge the strong bonds that help sell properties ([see story](#)).

"Amazing properties and the lifestyles they represent go hand in hand," Ms. Purvey said. "The goal is to take a person from a completely different background and watch as they immerse themselves into the lifestyle of the home where they are the houseguest' all while sharing their unique talent.

"It's what we've always done: Artfully uniting extraordinary homes with extraordinary lives," she said.

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