

# THE CLOSER

## Flips and splits of New York's real-estate community

✿ It's "**Design Star**" time of year again. Monday at 9 p.m., **HGTV** premieres the sixth season of its hit series where 12 contestants compete for the top prize, their own show on HGTV. Four New York-area residents are among those competing. **Cathy Hobbs**, a designer and Emmy-winning journalist formerly with WPIX/Ch. 11, is from Williamsburg. **Bret Ritter**, a "handsome hipster" as described by network publicists, is also from the cooler-than-thou Brooklyn nabe. He's

a world traveler with a military background who works as a construction manager for an eco-friendly builder.

Two New Jerseyans made it, too. Montclair's **Blanche Garcia** has designed more than 80 homes and two nightclubs in the tristate area. **Tyler Wisler**, who works for a design firm in New York City, lives in South Orange. Tune in to the first episode to watch contestants design a triplex penthouse in Manhattan. Go to HGTV.com for more.

"Design Star's" season six finalists with hosts



HGTV: (INSET) MATT FRIED/MF VISUAL SOLUTIONS



Inside the Krug soiree last week at 632 Hudson St.

BILLY FARRELL/BFANVC.COM

✿ The execs at **Krug** know how to pick a spot for a party. Last week, they took over **632 Hudson St.**, for the **Krug House**, an event celebrating the quality and craftsmanship that comes from the French Champagne manufacturer. Guests waltzed from room to room, listening to acoustic guitar players, huddling on stairwells and mingling on the furnished roof of the private event space used for small weddings, corporate receptions, media parties and food events.

A combination of upscale bohemian chic and ethereal Gothic (lots of angles and constellations on the ceiling), the multifloored space with nooks and crannies has a fairytale-like cast-iron center stairwell at its core. The 1847 house, once a general store and then a sausage factory, is also the site of many film, television and magazine shoots. Now, it's the perfect

place to throw a thank-you party for drinkers of their Champagnes, which are deliciously dry. Krug USA director **Carl Heline** personally hand-picked the venue.

"At Krug, individuality means distinction, uniqueness, originality and singularity: everything that is expressed by Krug Champagnes," says Heline of the company founded by a Krug in 1843. "It is also the pursuit of character. Knowing no bounds, Krug invites the adventurous to dream up and share their own vision of happiness."

To see more of the house, go to [632onHudson.com](http://632onHudson.com). For the Champagne and company, go to [Krug.com](http://Krug.com).

✿ Talk about a first deal. **New Platinum** agent **Pamela Oelerich** defined what it is to go out of your way for clients. The story goes like this:

Two young women wanted a true two-bedroom with large rooms in a top downtown neighborhood. They wanted to live in the West Village, Tribeca, SoHo or the Village proper. Working with fellow Platinum agent **Andrew Scheck**, Oelerich showed an apartment at 97 Fifth Ave., where two-bedrooms rent for more than \$3,000. It was the first day of open houses for the apartment, and only one could make it to the showing. She loved it. She and Oelerich rushed to the leasing office for approval and signatures.

Only problem was the leasing company wanted two notarized signatures for the lease, and only one of the women was in Manhattan. The other worked out of town in Somers, N.Y. What's a motivated agent to do?

Just what you think. Forget FedEx or next-day delivery, Oelerich rented a car and drove to northern Westchester with lease in hand. Four hours later she was back in the city hand delivering the lease to the leasing agent.

Now that's white-glove service.



Pamela Oelerich