

Thinking Outside The Box

An Interview with Peter Zaitzeff, Sales Director of New Development, SERHANT.

EDITORS' NOTE Peter Zaitzeff is one of New York City's most renowned and top-selling real estate agents, widely recognized as a leading authority on luxury and new development properties. Over the course of his career, Zaitzeff has closed more than \$4.8 billion in sales across 500+ transactions, with more than \$300 million sold in the past 12 months alone. Zaitzeff represents an elite roster of clients and consistently delivers record-breaking results, including the highest sale ever recorded below 34th Street: 150 Charles Street #9A, which sold for \$60,000,000 in 2025. Zaitzeff has launched and sold many of the city's most architecturally significant and high-profile projects. He has driven sellouts at marquee developments, including 111 Murray, 150 Charles, and 200 Amsterdam – the Upper West Side's most buzzed-about condominium tower. The Art Deco-inspired building has appeared in Succession, Zero Day, and Babygirl starring Nicole Kidman. At 200 Amsterdam, Zaitzeff oversaw a 50 percent year-over-year sales surge, bringing the building down to its final four homes and closing multiple record-setting deals in 2025, including the \$20.1 million sale of Residence 42, the neighborhood's highest at the time. Beyond real estate, Zaitzeff is the co-founder of The Kabuki Syndrome Foundation, created on behalf of his son, through which he has helped raise more than \$5 million for groundbreaking medical research. An accomplished long-distance runner, Zaitzeff has completed the New York City, Chicago, and Philadelphia Marathons, as well as the Marathon des Sables, a 150-mile ultramarathon across the Sahara Desert in Morocco.



Peter Zaitzeff

Washington, DC with more than 1,300 agents, and includes residential real estate and specialty divisions SERHANT. Signature, focused on high net-worth clientele and properties priced over \$10 million, and SERHANT. New Development, focused on the sales and marketing of new construction projects, complete with its complementary ID Lab which forms the brand identity and marketing for developments. SERHANT. Studios, its full-service film studio and production division, concepts and distributes all content

from social assets to the streaming channel LISTED on YouTube. SellIt.com, the global digital education and innovation arm of the company, has more than 40,000 members across more than 130 countries. SERHANT. was founded in September 2020 by top real estate broker Ryan Serhant, with a commitment and vision to amplify the success of others: executives, brokers, developers, clients, global course members, and the industry as a whole.

Will you discuss your career journey?

From an early age, I always wanted to be an investment banker. When I graduated college, I didn't think I would land a job in that industry because my grades weren't the best, but I was able to prove myself and get a job at Merrill Lynch in the private wealth division through a connection who was willing to vouch

for me. Around the same time, my family was opening a restaurant in downtown New York City, and I had to make the choice between continuing my banking path or working with my family, and of course, I chose family.

The restaurant industry is very challenging, and I worked there for five years before I felt like I needed a change. My start into the real estate industry wasn't a straightforward path. I was living on Bond Street at the time, and a well-known broker, Dennis Mangone, lived on my block. I could see that he was a rainmaker and wanted to learn more about the industry. I persuaded him for six months to give me a chance and told him I'd work for free if he gave me an internship for the summer. After that experience, he connected me with another new development broker who basically gave me a role as a glorified admin – but everyone starts somewhere. During this time, I was introduced to so many people and incredible projects, and began working at 150 Charles, and under Leonard Steinberg, Madeline Hult Elghanayan, Raphael De Niro, and Darren Sukenik. I grew to know so much about that project and memorized all the details (offering plan, square footage, unit views, etc.) that they put me onto showings early on, and we sold out the building in three months. It felt like I got 10 years' worth of education during that time. After that, I had some experience under my belt and a



One Williamsburg Wharf on the Brooklyn waterfront



200 Amsterdam Penthouse (above) and its Upper West Side location as seen from Central Park (below)

track record to speak to, and Steve Witkoff hired me to sell 10 Madison Square West, and 111 Murray, and then as the sales director at the West Hollywood EDITION, where I commuted back and forth to LA for a time to sell out that project. I worked at Corcoran and sold 70 Vestry, the Zaha Hadid building, and focused on my resale business. After several years there, I landed at SERHANT, and started focusing on selling out 200 Amsterdam, an incredible building on the Upper West Side, and One Williamsburg Wharf in Williamsburg, and continue working on selling out some of the most amazing new development buildings and continuing my resale business.

How do you describe SERHANT's culture?

SERHANT is an enlightening, fast-paced, nimble newer company, and it was built on the premise of offering what other brokerages don't. We have the opportunity to be creative and have the freedom to work in non-traditional ways, and the company is filled with some of the most hardworking people which drives you to want to be even more successful.

What have been the keys to SERHANT's industry leadership, and how do you define the SERHANT difference?

SERHANT is about empowering agents to think outside the box, which is our competitive advantage. The leadership at SERHANT is supportive and cultivates an environment that thrives on creativity and challenging the status quo which allows you to see things differently.

Will you provide an overview of some of your recent projects?

SERHANT took over sales at 200 Amsterdam, which is right around the time I joined the company, with about \$300 million left to sell. We got to work right away, and as a team sold 20 units at higher price points than what the previous brokerage was able to achieve. We



repositioned the building in the marketplace of Billionaire's Row and started catering our marketing to that clientele, and now it has become the most successful new development building on the Upper West Side. In addition to 200 Amsterdam, we also launched sales for One Williamsburg Wharf, which is the most successful building in Brooklyn, on the waterfront. My team also has a number of boutique new development properties coming to market soon, like 32 Walker in Tribeca, that I'm really excited about.

How do you see the role of the real estate agent evolving over the next decade?

I see the role of the real estate agent becoming even more personalized over the

next decade. Clients expect you to understand them deeply, sometimes to know what they want before they do. The agents who thrive will be the ones who can anticipate needs, add meaningful value, and offer an experience that can't be replicated by technology alone. For me, building a strong network across the city has been essential. Access to trusted relationships and off-market opportunities is something no platform can replace, and it's where great agents will continue to differentiate themselves.

What was your vision for creating the Kabuki Syndrome Foundation, and how do you define its mission?

Established in 2018, the Kabuki Syndrome Foundation is a nonprofit organization dedicated to accelerating research efforts to treat or cure Kabuki syndrome, a genetic disorder. Our vision was to provide the best quality of life that we could possibly give to our son, Walter. We partner with a Medical & Scientific Advisory Board composed of the world's leading Kabuki Syndrome clinicians and research experts. These diverse perspectives help us to identify and prioritize the most important areas of research to fund.

How do you approach your leadership style?

I've always believed that leadership is demonstrated through actions, not words. I try to set the tone by how I work, how I treat people, and how I follow through.

What advice do you offer to young people interested in pursuing a career in real estate?

Persistence is key, a great work ethic is paramount, and you can't give up, no matter how hard you want to. It's a dynamic industry; you must have humility and know that nothing is below you. You have to do what you need to do to keep going, and at your core maintain being a good person. ●