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by Nick Snyder
Photos by Sam Sunshine

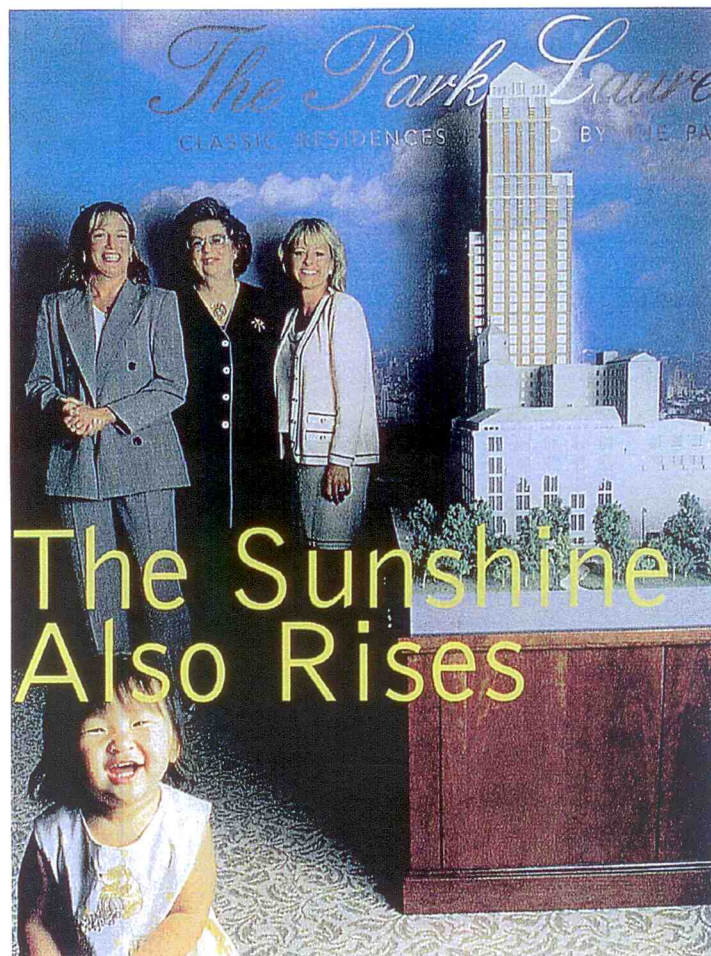
High-end success for a real estate maven and her unique firm.

Right now the real estate market is as white hot as beach sand on a summer day. Standing at the center, radiating heat like one of the suns in the antique pictures that she collects, is Louise M. Sunshine, the President and CEO of the real estate company that bears her name.

Since its inception twelve years ago, The Sunshine Group, Ltd. has set itself apart from its competitors, establishing itself as the pre-eminent force in the marketing, sales and leasing of luxury residential properties and condominium hotels.

Having recently completed the Harbor Club in San Diego, The Sunshine Group is currently working on a host of new projects. They are the sole sales and marketing agents for several prime properties in Manhattan: the Park Laurel at 15 W. 63rd, 66 Leonard Street, 610 Park Avenue, 90 East End Avenue, and 15 East 69th Street. Around the country, they're also developing The Ritz-Carlton in Key Biscayne, the Il Lugano on the island of Palm Beach, and the Park Towers in Las Vegas.

In fact, a great deal of Ms. Sunshine's work involves pushing the envelope of real estate development, whether it's converting unused commercial space into residential properties or offering high-end residences and hotel condominiums to meet consumer demand for five-star luxury. When Ms. Sunshine says "we're creating value...we're creating markets, forging new paths everywhere," she's not kidding.



Louise Sunshine, center, surrounded by co-workers Jeanie Woodbrey-Garfunkel and Judy Banham. Forefront: "The newest Sunshine girl," Hana Rain Garfunkel.

A veteran of the real estate business, Ms. Sunshine joined The Trump Organization in the mid-seventies, rising to the level of executive vice president and partner. She forged a close friendship with her employer while helping to develop many of the landmark properties that now dot the New York landscape.

"Donald Trump is a great teacher," she explains over sandwiches at her crisp, modern midtown offices. "I learned everything I know about marketing from him."

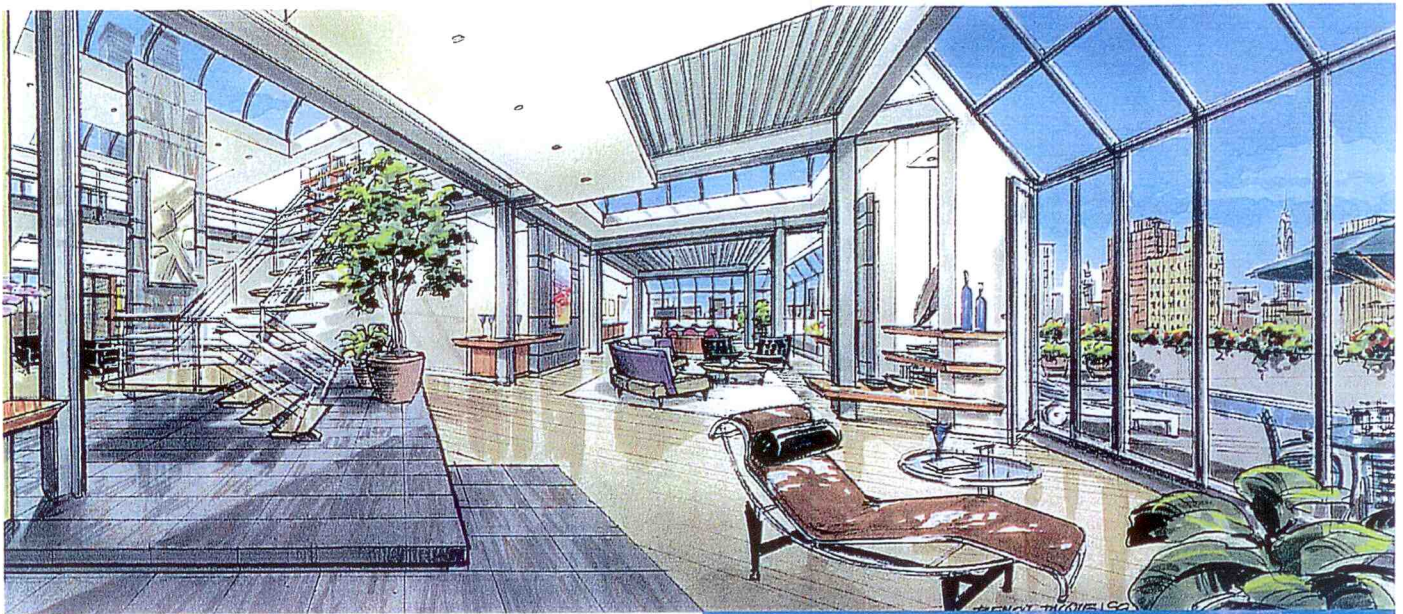
"We're still wonderful friends. We have enormous respect for one another," Ms. Sunshine adds. In fact, she sees part of her job as "trying to pass along the same opportunity that Donald gave me as a woman to other women."

Ms. Sunshine has put her money where her mouth is, too, using her leverage as an employer to help hold open the door to the real-estate profession for women. Currently, all eighty-seven employees of The Sunshine Group are women.

Equally as impressive, at least fifty of them have been with the firm for over seven years. Ms. Sunshine is "hoping to develop a second generation" of Sunshine employees—a far cry from bottom line of most big corporations.

"I live in a world of men," Ms. Sunshine acknowledges about real estate, but she believes that the unique make-up of her firm gives her an edge. Women employees bring loyalty, dedication, and an "intuition, especially in marketing," that can offer a fresh slant to traditional male views.

With \$3 billion of properties currently on the market, and main offices in New York, Miami, Las Vegas and a new office opening this year in London, Ms. Sunshine has not only made a name for herself, but she's burst through any glass ceiling that might have existed. Her advice for women in the workplace: "Look, listen, be heard, and always be a woman—never try to act like a man."



Photos top to bottom:
The 6.5 million dollar view from the penthouse of 66 Leonard Street.
A rendering of Las Vegas' Park Towers.
Louise Sunshine on the job.

"We're creating value.
We're creating markets, forging
new paths everywhere."



A long time resident of New York City, Ms. Sunshine now lives in Bal Harbour, Florida with her husband. But she still divides her time evenly between New York and Miami and loves dining out when in town. Great food, great service, privacy and space make Jean-Georges, Mercer Kitchen, Oceana and the Grill Room at the Four Seasons her favorite hot spots.

The head of The Sunshine Group is also no stranger to the Hamptons or their allure. For years she owned a house in Southampton and her firm still "does a lot of networking in the Hamptons."

"The most qualified client base for our projects come from the Hamptons," says Ms. Sunshine, citing the convergence of internationals, celebrities, and Wall Street tycoons on the East End. "The Sunshine Group deals with people who have two, three, five, six, even eight homes" and the Hamptons provide the very marketplace for her firm's super-lux-

ury developments.

Two upcoming projects on the horizon sound like stunners. Sales offices are opening up in November for a new building adjacent to Beekman Place on 51st and 1st. Modeled on Paris' Plaza Athénée hotel, the building will be "a transition between classical and the year 2000," with garden rooms and interior gardens. The Sunshine Group will also be developing residences in a corporate tower on 56th and Broadway, "hoping to take a commercial area and turn it into a residential one."

So many projects on so many different fronts might sound a bit risky, but Ms. Sunshine sees no coming downturn in the real estate market. "There's great strength, not just in New York City," she opines. Buyers beware—this is for condominiums, not rentals.

To that end, Ms. Sunshine has some sound advice for those scoping out high-end apartments in New York City:



Buy in the right location.

Have a high degree of confidence in the developer and development team.

Buy what you love.

Bear this in mind and you might actually find your dream apartment.