

# TOP WOMEN IN REAL ESTATE



**Annemarie DiCola**  
**Debra Duneier**  
**Kelly Gedinsky**  
**Roxana Girand**  
**Nicky Heryet**  
**Cheryl McKissack**  
**Anita Konfederak**  
**Audrey Novoa**  
**Dana Panzarino**  
**Alexis Tener Petrus**  
**Laura Yablon Rapaport**  
**Bonnie Schnitta**  
**Lina Telese**  
**Esther Zar**  
*and one man...*  
**Kenneth Levien**

*(l to r) Audrey Novoa, Esther Zar, David Greene,  
Roxana Girand of Murray Hill Properties*



## Roxana Girand, Audrey Novoa, Esther Zar Murray Hill Properties

417 Fifth Avenue

### Roxana Girand

Murray Hill Properties owns, leases and manages more than seven million square feet of commercial office space in New York, and these three women (Roxana Girand, Audrey Novoa, and Esther Zar) have contributed significantly to the company's growth through the successful building of their own commercial real estate portfolios.

Roxana Girand, Executive Managing Director, considers commercial sales to be "enticing". "Each building has a unique architectural design, and I enjoy figuring out how to reinvent it and position it. It is incredibly appealing," she says. A real estate professional in New York City for more than 17 years, Roxana has represented owners of major office buildings and prominent tenants in leasing, management and investment sales.

Among her list of Blue Chip clients is Sterling National Bank, El Universal of Venezuela, Lloyd Goldman of BLDG, David Werner and Flexis Capital to name a few. In addition to her burgeoning tenant representation practice, Ms. Girand currently represents 417 Fifth Avenue and 10 West 56th Street. Roxana also represents the residential building located at 1009 Fifth Avenue, and was instrumental in the



417 Fifth Avenue staff

sale of 236 Second Avenue and the purchase of 10 West 56th Street. Over her seventeen-year career, she has represented more than 3.7 Million square feet in New York City.

In 2010, Roxana became the owner's representative for 417 Fifth Avenue, a 400,000 square foot building located in Midtown. Since then, she has successfully leased over 160,000 square feet in the building completely repositioning and stabilizing the asset. Her branding of 417 Fifth Avenue has made it a familiar and recognizable commodity among brokers and tenants in the crowded midtown Manhattan commercial market. "My decision to market directly to prospective tenants in addition to brokers has yielded an increase in "client requested" space tours as well as proposals from the prospects and their brokers, Roxana says. "Further, as a part of my leasing strategy, I have successfully attracted technology and new media tenants to the otherwise traditional office district. Today 417 Fifth

Avenue has a very well-balanced tenant roster." Roxana is currently supervising substantial capital improvements to the property that include improved security systems, elevator refurbishment the creation of an outdoor terrace for the 10th floor, as well as lobby upgrades that enhance and preserve the architecturally historic décor, long associated with the building.

Ms. Girand discovered and presented 10 West 56th Street as an attractive investment vehicle to its current owners. She also negotiated a price which was widely recognized by industry observers as a purchaser-friendly transaction. The property value has since appreciated tremendously in the few years since it was purchased with leasing and purchase offers exceeding expectations.

At 1414 Avenue of the Americas, Roxana exclusively represented Murray Hill Properties in the acquisition of this 140,000 square foot corner office building, a part of the Murray Hill Properties portfolio of buildings. "It was a very complicated transaction that involved securing debt and equity partners." Roxana says. "It also included emptying the building for a potential conversion to a hotel." After all of this was accomplished, the property was successfully sold to a hotelier to be developed into a five-star flagship property. Roxana Girand's motto stands tall when she states, "I am dedicated to providing my clients with the highest level of service."

### Audrey Novoa

As a former ballet dancer, Audrey Novoa, Executive Managing Director, says that her training in dance taught her "how to focus." And it is this level of focus that has contributed to Audrey's 30 years of success as a real estate profes-



photo by CoStar

One Park Avenue





135 West 50th Street



60 Hudson Street

photos by CoStar

## S. Esther Zar

Esther Zar, Senior Managing Director of Murray Hill Properties, views her business as “her soul mate”. Her significant success shows she’s found a life-long friend. “When I find my clients the right location, I feel like I am part of their success.” It is no wonder then, that 90% of Esther’s clients come to her through referral, and why she has successfully completed over 1,000,000 square feet of office, retail leasing and sales transactions. Esther has significant building agency representation experience having represented such buildings as 1412 Broadway, 485 Seventh Avenue, 155 Fifth Avenue, 60 Madison Avenue and 101 Fifth Avenue.

At the recent MHP broker award ceremony Ms. Zar won the top two awards for her performance in 2012. Her success is partly due to an innate ability to bring owners together in ways that others may not have considered. For example, in 2011, she set up a meeting between two



sional in New York City’s commercial real estate market. “I have always felt that if I were to be a landlord’s agent I also had to be the tenant’s agent...and I represented these buildings as if I owned them myself.”

Throughout her illustrious 33 year career, Audrey has represented highly prominent tenants in providing real estate solutions to the vast number of questions they have in the acquisition and disposition of their office space. She has also represented owners of major office buildings in the leasing and asset management of more than 6 million square feet of space. Her tenant representation has included such major companies as The Loews Corporation in the leasing of 225,000 square feet, American Musical and Dramatic Academy in the purchase of 80,000 square feet, CBS Inc. in the sale of 49 East 52nd Street, Magna-Sound in the negotiation of its 80,000 square foot lease, Fiber Media in the leasing of a 35,000 square foot data center. Audrey’s Landlord representation has included the leasing of 750,000 square feet for the ownership of One Park Avenue, the leasing of 1,000,000 square feet for the ownership of 60 Hudson Street, the leasing of 400,000 square feet for the ownership of 810 Seventh Avenue and the leasing of 400,000 square feet for the ownership of 135 West 50th Street.

At One Park Avenue, Audrey represented Murray Hill Properties in the negotiation of the 8th largest deal of 2011, the 419,813 square-foot lease for NYU Langone

Medical Center and the School of Medicine transaction. “This transaction was very complicated as it involved a recapitalization of the property, a renewal of an existing lease of 187,000 square feet and the negotiation of a new lease of 233,813 square feet,” Audrey says. NYU Langone Center now occupies almost half of the building.

At 135 West 50th Street, Audrey represented UBS Realty Investors LLC in the negotiation of a 240,000 square foot lease with Time Inc., a 220,000 square foot lease with Alliance Bernstein, another lease for 86,000 square feet with Alliance Bernstein, a 52,000 square foot lease with BDO Seidman, and a 45,000 square foot lease with Mizuho Trust & Bank Co. Ultimately, Audrey leased a total of 643,000 square feet, which amounted to more than half the building.

At 211 West 61st Street, Audrey exclusively represented CoFinance Inc. in the purchase of 13 Commercial Condominium units at 211 West 61st Street and then sold those same units to the Gateway School. At 60 Hudson Street, Audrey again exclusively represented the ownership of this building, creating the first Telecom Hotel in the United States. Audrey recognized the emergence of a new industry and converted the former Western Union Building at 60 Hudson Street into a 1,000,000 square foot telecom hotel; she successfully leased the entire building to the telecom industry. “I treat every building as if they were one of my babies,” Audrey proudly says.

photos by CoStar



530 Fifth Avenue



60 Madison Avenue



photo by CoStar

155 Fifth Avenue 🍷

owners with very different styles which ultimately turned into a dramatic negotiation for the sale of the 540,000 sq. ft. 530 Fifth Avenue. The block-long building on 44th and 45th Streets sold for \$390,000,000, a transaction which was one of the top building sales of 2012.

Though Esther Zar prides herself on her tenant representation business, she has often been hired to represent significant buildings. After her success at 1412 Broadway and 485 Seventh Avenue, she won the leasing assignment for the boutique building 155 Fifth Avenue and then again at 101 Fifth Avenue. She also recently won the leasing assignment for 60 Madison Avenue. “By concentrating on the technology and new media tenants in the Flatiron and Madison Square Park area, I was able to successfully bring 155 Fifth Avenue to zero vacancy, and 101 Fifth Avenue to

1% vacancy,” Esther says.

Some of her noteworthy clients have included DSquared, Escada, Richard Chai, RGE Monitor, Corbel Communications, Lab49, RightMedia, Did-it.com, KravMagaAcademy and Dots.

But perhaps the strongest and most sincere quote in support of each of these three women comes from David Greene, Principal / President of Brokerage Services at Murray Hill Properties, “Each of these women bring different talents and skills to the table, but they are all able to look at the larger picture and think big. They all work very hard and they live and breathe Real Estate 24/7 though in Esther’s case 24/6. Their passion for the business is their primary reason for success.