



**THE HOSTS** Roger Hazard and Tanya Memme

# SELL THIS HOUSE

**No one bidding? How about a few good pointers from the stars of this hit A&E home improvement show. WRITTEN BY DORI FERN**

THESE DAYS, THERE'S hardly a person over 30 who doesn't get a little loopy over real estate: buying it, selling it, flipping it, and flipping over it. And when that real estate is your own home, the stakes—both financial and emotional—are high. What you want to do is to make a quick sale and get the greatest possible return, which shouldn't be a problem, right? It's a sellers' market; other

houses in the neighborhood are being snapped up; who wouldn't love that pink shag carpeting or the tons of family photos you always thought made the living room look homey? But week after nervous-making week, there you and your house sit, without a single offer. *What's wrong?*

Happily, the folks at A&E saw the need for an informative but lively, unstuffy show that would help desperate-to-sell viewers figure out just that.

"Some shows you tune into for the voyeuristic pleasure, but people who watch *Sell This House* get something real out of it. It offers something they can use, whether they have a lot of money or they don't," says executive producer Dave Severson.

When you want a television show to appeal to a lot of people, you hire someone with host Tanya Memme's *je ne sais quoi*. Nothing in recent memory quite matches the sight of this former Miss World Canada down on her knees in skintight jeans, scraping duct tape off a parquet floor. "The basic structure of the show is solid but a big reason the show is entertaining is Tanya," Severson comments.

Her outfit changes, which occur after each commercial break, offer

dual purposes: eye candy appeal and a practical opportunity for this hard-working host to clean up after getting down and dirty painting, cleaning, and whatever else needs doing to turn a home around.

She may be sexy, but Memme's no girly-girl. Growing up in rural Ontario, she rode dirt bikes with the boys on the sod farm where she was raised. Her family also owned a house building company, so from an early age Memme saw construction workers, roofers, painters, and plumbers constantly coming and going—which helps her in her current role.

Cohost Roger Hazard's role is no less important. The show's buff-bodied home decorating guru studied environmental design and landscape architecture at Texas A&M, then started his own landscaping company, which led to a new career in home design. Hazard is in love with design, period. He's created interiors for many celebrity clients.

Each week, a different home in a new locale is featured. The unifying factor is that all the houses chosen have been on the market for some time with nary a nibble. An open house is set up and prospective buyers



**ON THE SET** Behind the scenes with the cast and crew of *Sell This House*

tour the property, weighing in with their opinions about what works and—more likely—what doesn't, about the place. And these impressions form the jumping-off point for the ensuing makeover.

A great deal of trouble is taken to spend as little of the homeowner's money as possible on upgrades, which tend to involve such basics as rearranging existing furniture, new slipcovers, a fresh coat of paint. Hazard is a

big proponent of the "less is more" approach: Get rid of clutter, mess, and dirt. When something extra is needed, to define or divide a room, say, he makes cost-effective suggestions, like renting rather than buying a new sofa or sideboard.

While Hazard views most decoration as personal clutter that has to go, Memme is there to hold the homeowners' hands and nudge them into relinquishing their sentimental attachments for the sake of the sale. When a Hoboken woman was finally persuaded to toss her husband's grungy beer stein collection, Memme offered a reassuring pat on the head and a "Way to go, Nancy! I'm proud of you."

Next up for the dynamic design duo: *Move This House*, the follow-up to *Sell This House*, which is scheduled to air on A&E this summer. In it, new homeowners will be spared the task of setting up their empty abode and instead relinquish creative control to—that's right—Hazard and Memme, who'll pull it *all* together in style.

 *Sell This House* can be seen on A&E. See Highlights on pages 62–63. Log on to [BIOGRAPHYCLUB.COM](http://BIOGRAPHYCLUB.COM) for a complete listing.



Before



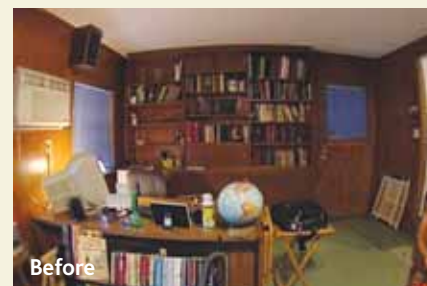
After

## BEFORE & AFTER

# Ready to Sell?

Some easy ways to make your home a star:

- Keep your house neat and shiny-clean. Make sure it smells fresh, too.
- Highlight architectural details, e.g.: Burn large, fragrant candles on your mantel. Leave curtains open, shades up; be sure windows are sparkling.
- Remove personal items like family photographs, stacks of magazines, and kids' artwork on the fridge. —Dori Fern



Before



After