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INTELLIGENCER

Hot Refrigeration Plant Goes for \$34 M

Vogue photog sells, swears it won't become condo tower.

By **S.Jhoanna Robledo** Published Mar 16, 2008



(Photo: Patrick McMullan)

Albert Watson, who's shot 250 *Vogue* covers and photographed subjects from Alfred Hitchcock to **Kanye West**, sold his 20,000-square-foot residence and studio at 777 Washington Street last month for \$34 million, just shy of the record for a single-family home downtown. "It was just too huge," says Watson, who lived in the 70-foot-wide former refrigeration plant with his wife, **Elizabeth**. He bought it for a reported \$850,000 in 1985, when a sign was hung that read, HOOKERS AND JOHNS BEWARE: WE TAKE YOUR NUMBERS." The purchaser was 777 Washington Street LLC, which lists its address on city records as a Rockefeller Center law firm. The firm and Watson's listing agent wouldn't identify the new owner, and neighbors worry condos will rise on the site. Watson, who's moving into a Tribeca penthouse, says the new owner is a "super-duper" English financier who will do some construction but keep it a single-family home. "This is not a Superior Ink," insists Watson, referring to the nearby factory-turned-condo. "It'll be a better-looking corner than it was."

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