

Hi and welcome to our Untitled real estate podcast. This is Brian Berkowitz out of New York

and this is Rich Baum out of Sacramento California.

And we want to welcome you to our new podcast. And I say Untitled because we obviously don't have a title yet but this was an idea that came about between Rich and I about a couple of days ago. I've been thinking about it for a couple of weeks now due to the lack of good podcasts out there for real estate photographers architectural photographers interior photographers anyone that does something of the sort. And then I reached out to Rich just to get his thoughts on it and he said he's been thinking the same thing. And within about two or three days he's like let's get in there and record. We didn't want to kind of talk it out and talk about ideas he's like let's go and let's record the first one and let's see how that goes. So if you're listening to this that means that we were happy with the final product and we decided to release it as an episode one of our new podcasts which will hopefully have a title sometime soon.

So Rich talk to me because when I first brought this idea to you a few days ago you said you were thinking the same thing. You know what's been going on in your head as far as podcasting and the lack of podcasts out there for the people in our industry. Sure

. Brian Yeah. I also want to welcome everybody and I really got to impress that exactly what you said. I am a big Podcast fan and as I recently I was just in Australia and preparing for my trip as I always do I look for new podcasts and I happened to go back and see if there was anything new in the real estate front and there was one podcast I forget exactly what it was called but it was really never really like regular and it was something that was never really really took hold in my podcast organization. So I thought well it would be great always be great to do a podcast. And it was just funny enough that you contacted me and I was actually in Australia. So thank God for technology but Brian and I were able to go back and forth to say hey not only is it a good idea but I'd certainly be interested in exploring this with you because I would love to accompany my YouTube channel and whatever I'm doing and with my teaching in my workshops I'd certainly like to do a podcast and I'm really excited because there's so many directions it can go and we can have guest speakers we can talk about topics we can do questions and answers.

You know there's just it's it's a great opportunity and I will say from experience in my youtube channel. This is a fairly small genre of photography when you compare it to wedding photography your portrait photography there's a zillion wedding photographers out there but there's also a zillion wedding photography videos and podcasts and this and that. So I think this is a really good opportunity to reach maybe it's a smaller group of photographers but I will say I know from experience in fact that real estate and you know commercial real estate interiors as you had mentioned.

It's a very passionate group of photographers and I'm really excited because just with the workshops and everything there's so many people that want to learn and get involved it is a great opportunity. So I compliment you Brian for bringing it up and I'm really looking forward to going somewhere with it.

Thank you. And I think you definitely hit home and what you're saying. As far as there being an influx of information out there for other genres of photography such as wedding photography and portrait for instance where there just isn't. And you know I know there's a lot of information out there on the various face book groups that you know are both part of and I'm sure most of our listeners are part of

but it's a little different when you know you have an interviewer on or an interviewee on and you know you can kind of hear their story from start to finish how they run their business their techniques. And that gives it gives you a sense of you know their entire story as opposed to you know reading random questions here and there and getting tidbits of answers. And I think having that source of information from a technique standpoint or from a business standpoint or from a marketing standpoint and to hear people who are doing it successfully and what they do and how they do it will touch a lot of people.

Yeah and I certainly look forward to reaching out to some of the really extremely talented photographers. That's a great part about the online community which would be the furry Flickr group and the and the Facebook groups which I think I can't I I think I admin about eight groups now but we have some of the best in the business in the world in our fingertips so I'm hoping to reach out to them and bring their insight and their personalities into some of our podcasts in the future.

Sure and besides for the interviews themselves CNN we spoke about this briefly over the last few days.

You know we have a lot of other ideas that we can bring to the table besides the interviews just for this podcast. So you know before we go into all that I mean what are your ultimate goals for this and what are your hopes. You know with a podcast like this that you know as far as the education it can bring to the listeners.

Well the one thing I've been gosh I got to say just blown away with and pleased by and really has given me the energy to do what I do has been the response and the positive response from people that have watched my videos have gotten involved with groups and communities. It's the relationships and it's the the people that are there to help people. It's you me gosh. BROWN We all know that some of the photography groups are less than adequate and have a lot of let's just say negative people and negative comments. Finally Yeah and at least my groups I really try and admin and keep an eye on them but I'll just say in general I would love this to catch on and get a group basis and a family of people that are interested in not only that same thing but also interested in sharing their techniques and I know that there are so many people that are coming into this and we all know from being experience Pathak real estate photographers I'm just can use the term because we haven't even discussed where we're going to go with.

I mean we do a real estate photography commercial real estate photography design photography you know what direction we're going because there are so many and I'm sure we'll touch upon many of them. But you know I just think that we'll just now leave it at real estate photography and you know it's a very specific thing and you and I as experienced real estate photographers we really identify all the things you got to know. I mean heck there are a lot of rules and real estate photography where not even not even nearly as many rules and wedding photography.

I mean gosh I can always tilt my camera sideways and wedding photography but I sure can't do it in real estate. But those are just you know one of the techniques that we all want to you know we want to help people and we want people to identify and I always say you don't know what you don't know so we're going to hopefully bring a lot of topics up to people that can think about it and then they can research it and then they can implement all these things these rules and that just make us proud and produce really good work because gosh knows there are a lot of. There is a fair amount of bad real estate photography out there. Sure

. And

I think I'm I think speaking of rules I think we're as real estate photographers were under even more constraints than many photographers for instance because it's not only the photography rules that you have to abide by but it's your local rules that play a big part into it too whether it's MLS or this and that I think there's you know the real estate photographer not only has to know the technical side and you know you can call them rules obviously rules are meant to be broken especially when you're in a creative art but you know you have to know what your local lawyers are and what you can do and what you can do and what the agents are allowed to do and what they're not allowed to do. So it's it's pretty involved and hopefully we can get all that and cover everything over time. Surely

there are there are so many topics that I can deal with that I'm actually thinking about every day because of not only YouTube videos but but my workshop tech Workshop topics. And what that I mean gosh there are things you know how to how to deal with how to talk with Asians and deal with the MLS how to deal with the ethics of Photoshop removing items not removing items and hopefully will not only you know a lot of people say that I'm kind of one sided it's either Rich's way or the highway but I'm trying to work on that and I'm certainly open to ideas from you and from other photographers who look forward to see where that goes. Sure

and I want to switch gears for a minute because as we start you know getting subscribers and people start listening I think it's important for them to kind of know who who we are and who they're listening to. So I know a little bit of your story and your background Rich and I know you started out in the film the motion picture industry for several years. So why don't you take us through a brief history of rich bound.

Ok I'll try and make this brief because God knows I thought too much. And you just. Anyway let me just get to it man. I just turned 60 years old. I feel I'm a young 60 but man I'm feeling it.

Maybe one of a talk topics can deal with is how us old dogs get by with crouching and carrying and moving equipment. But I know enough old photographers we could certainly interview a few of them. But for me I started photography in 1968 as a child at 11 years old. My father got me SRT 101 Minolta and I've been a photographer all my life. I wouldn't have called myself a professional photographer but I eventually got an opportunity to follow in the family business and my father's a theatrical stage agent the magical actor stage agent he was a producer for movies like Cabaret and they shoot horses don't they. He eventually founded the largest theatrical agency in the world Creative Artist Agency or CAA and he was the production the producer ended the business. I got an opportunity in nineteen seventy seven to go to Europe as a production assistant P.A. and I went as a P.A. to Germany and they hired me as a P.A. but they needed to keep me on the movie.

A movie called Hitler's son a real little movie not a good movie and you probably can't find it but it was a movie in Germany with blood court and Peter Cushing. Anyway

long story short they said get this kid out of the production office put them in the prop department because we got to give him a job because of his dad. Anyway that started my three years in Europe working in the prop department. I got back to the U.S. in 1980 and I got in the union. The local 44 with property craftsman doing props. I at the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees I'm a property craftsman. I can do props set dressing and I ended up doing producing and production design. I

was actively working on movies for almost 30 years and I am just a great great opportunity. And you can you can just do.

And I am deep search Internet movie database search for rich bomb or Richard bar and see the movies I worked on that I've worked on movies like Gandhi Hoosiers Naked Gun beaches a lot of movies did TB. I did Beecher's I did love boat I did dynasty. So many shows but I eventually got out of the business because I met my wife in Northern California and windsurfing I'm a big windsurfer and Cape border. And met my wife in Sacramento. Ended up moving to Sacramento married in 97 and ended up having kids and I was commuting back and forth to L.A. from Sacramento working on TV shows and I just said you know what this is working for my life. I've been doing this 30 years. I'm going to try something else. And I was at that time into about I had about three or four years of digital photography.

And I then started shooting pictures and posting them on Facebook and people started to go oh my god your pictures are amazing. Which when anybody says that don't believe them because they are looking back they were crap. Anyway it made me believe I could maybe take some good pictures and then I I wanted to start doing photography and realized I needed to shoot everything I could to make barely enough money to survive. And I started shooting learning and shooting weddings professional sports. I specialized in Marathon and ultra races and eventually became a spartan photographer and shoot Spartan races but I shoot portraits headshots everything. And one thing I always like was shooting a building shooting. I would go on vacation and shoot hotels that I was there I'd get up at 4:00 in the morning and shoot the hotel when nobody was there.

And eventually started shooting real estate and it kind of caught on. And it's the one genre I can shoot during the week. I am phasing out weddings after ten years 12 years and just loving loving interiors loving this business and going in that direction. So I think that's my history and I've always been into art and I'm going to leave it at that. But I just been really fortunate to have a great career in the film industry. And now I'm just having a great career in and the photography career and now as I turned 60 I'm going to start going towards education workshops YouTube videos and things like that. Yes yes. So I'm not smoke too much kool and i. Why don't you tell me why did you tell me a little bit about yourself.

Yeah well all my I don't have as much of a history as you I'm with you. But nevertheless I graduate you know I actually started photography also as a kid. My father is a professional wedding photographer right now based outside of Philadelphia. I'm out of New York but I grew up here in New York. So I started assisting him on weddings when I was also about 10 or 11 years old you know holding lights and loading Hasselblad backs. So you kind of really have to learn to be on your game when you're loading film backs at a wedding. But I was doing that throughout my teenage years. And eventually when it was time to go to college I went to school of visual arts here in New York. And you know splitted degree in photography and film I wasn't quite sure exactly what I wanted to do if I wanted to go into the film industry and or photography.

And you know looking back about 15 or 16 years later since I graduated college I ended up doing both right after college. I started a video production company with an old friend of mine and we were doing commercial videos as well as weddings because weddings were an easy segue for me to get into the video business as I still had tons of old contacts from my years assisting. And we got into the wedding business very quickly and went off with a bang. I think in our first year of our wedding business we did about 80 weddings. It

was it was pretty insane. But as time went on you know I decided that the hustle and bustle of the wedding industry wasn't for me. It was as I don't have to tell you because you said the same thing you're kind of you know only down to 12 weddings a year now.

So that's yeah that's about what I did last year I think first year. Yeah.

Last year I did about 10 or 11 and as I said about 70 years ago I did I think 60 or 70 weddings. So I'm definitely you know going down and down and hopefully hopefully this year 2018 will be my last year of doing weddings.

But you know gestures. We'll see how that goes. You

know there is good money to be made in weddings as you know every wedding photographer out there knows and as most real estate photographers because I get the sense that a lot of real estate photographers started with a wedding background or a lot of photographers in general because that's a I guess an easy way to get into the photography occupation if you want to call it that and then kind of people find their own and figure out what they want to do which was kind of what happened to me.

You know after I had the video production business I started picking up the camera again and getting back into photography. And I you know I started off with weddings because I was already doing them from the video standpoint so it was an easy segue. And then I went into you know doing some product photography you kind of you know trying a little odds and ends here and there and see what I really enjoyed I was doing headshots I was doing a little product dabbling a little bit not shooting merely enough in any of those categories to call myself a very very experienced pro but was kind of learning on my own. And I would say probably about five or six years now I started getting into HDR by accident I stumbled across some of Trey Ratcliffe's stuff and saw it and I was like wow and got into HDR and started reading some of his courses and just started playing around and doing all that stuff on my own stuff just to play it out going out and shooting landscapes and processing them.

Photo matics and processing the hell out of them till they looked disgusted and cartoony and fake and you know as I'm sure a lot of other people in my boat did as well then I got a call from a randomly a call from a fellow wedding photographer who knew that I was dabbling in HDR and he said to me one of his wedding clients who's an interior designer called him to shoot shoot up property or a house that they just finished designing and he called me because he didn't know anything from that and he knew I dabbled in HDR and he said Hey do you want to come out and shoot this house in HDR.

I like the look that you've been doing with it you know and he's subcontracted me out. And that kind of was my first I guess you call it interior job and that's when I guess the light bulb went off if you want to call it that. I know it's funny because I look back at those images now and they they completely HD art if you want to call it that. Just overprocessed and everything but they loved them. And from there I started looking into interior photography reading and research learning as much as I can. As everyone knows there's just tons and tons and tons of information out there for anything you need let alone real estate photography or interior photography. And you know here Rich we're hoping to provide some more of that.

And then from there it just took off I started calling real estate agents that I knew just from the neighborhood or people I went to high school with or anyone that I bumped into I knew a couple of real

estate agents and you know let them know and you know shot a lot for free at the beginning. As as I'm sure you know and we'll talk about I guess marketing later on but shot a lot for free just to kind of learn and get my work out there and kind of learn the ropes and try to work on my technique and see what works for which clients because I have a lot of different techniques for different clients depending on the job and what they're looking for and then it kind of just snowballed from there.

And about three years ago is when I started doing real estate photography full time. You know I still do like I said about 10 or 12 weddings a year now hopefully this will be my last year and I dabble here and there if you know an old old client will call me for headshots sometimes I'll do it for them here and there. But my bread and butter now is real estate photography and you know architecture and interiors and I'm actually slowly transitioning now into interiors and architecture. I've been doing strictly real estate for the last three four years. And now I'm trying to shift my business model and focus into doing more architectural stuff just for the you know the challenge that is there and obviously the money to be made by doing that type of work is a little bit more than the real estate work.

Sounds great. Awesome. Well listen I'd certainly like to jump in for this first. But can jump in to a couple of questions so it's ok. Let me ask you a question how many shoots are you doing. This is a big topic with people especially people that are getting into this game and I do call it a game and I'll call it a game a lot but how many shoots you do or have you been generally doing. I mean you can say a day or a week or month. What do you what's your schedule like.

Yeah. So this time of year it's the first week of January in New York. It's about. 15 minutes the temperature is 15 degrees outside. We're in one of the craziest cold spells we've had in a while.

And we had a blizzard about four days ago with I think it was 10 or 11 inches of snow here. So I'm not doing anything right now as far as shooting. No agent as I'm sure you know wants to shoot a house with you know 11 inches of snow on the ground. So out here in my area we have Schuetze here and there. But I would say from early December to probably about mid February and February it's pretty slow. We get you know a couple of sheets here and there you know you know i shoot i shoot drone stuff also I'm a licensed drone operator so I do a couple of drone stuff here and there. But you know when there's a blizzard like we had here that kind of knocks you out for literally a week or two till everything else. So we're just kind of sitting there doing nothing you know.

But when you were in that when you were in the in the peak season in the many Kelmendi can you do. How long does it take. Really quickly how long does it take to shoot and what can you say about that.

At my peak in the middle of the summer which is the peak probably for me here I'm probably doing roughly anywhere from 15 to 20 a week depending on what services they're looking for so you know I do some video also as I mentioned of a video production background so I'm trying to sell to my agents or my clients photo video drone photo drone video and full package just because there's a lot more to be made and if I can sell one or two of those in a day I'd rather do one of those in a day than shoot you know for just photo houses obviously. So it really depends. But anywhere from 15 to 20 depending on you know what services clients are offering and you know where I am on Long Island it's a very very strange area because I mean I don't know how familiar you are with Long Island but I was born in Glen Cove Long Island.

Oh that was three years old when I moved.

OK so you know well so I actually I'm out there a lot in the summertime Glen Cove and the North Shore of Long Island over there in that area. But

I live pretty West on Long Island about 12 or 13 miles from Manhattan. But Long Island is pretty long. So if you go all the way out east to the Hamptons and those areas right now there's no one out there. But come May June time everybody from the city heads out to the Hamptons and they're out there all year long. So probably from May till about September October I'm driving about two two and a half hours to the Hamptons once or twice a week to get full days of shooting. And they're all you know line up four or five houses back to back to back and take the drive and just shoot out there all day.

Well we're maybe a little bit calmer there because I have a reputation of taking shoots that are a little further away from my territory that then the other photographers will do and I'm by no means putting the other photographers down but I'm able to kind of absorb it. You know we don't have to talk about it today but nice to talk about how we charged for you know where we're going what we're doing.

You know that extra mileage in stops so one way you said it and I think it's a very valuable tip for people is trying coordinate shoots when I go to San Francisco from Sacramento. I am going got to go for any reason. I will certainly try and line up a shooter too and I'm usually pretty successful if I get a week or so notice so that's a great time lineup shoots.

Exactly that's what I'll do if I have a call for from an agent that wants to get in the Hamptons for instance which is about two hours away from me before I book them. I'll reach out to a couple of other agents out there and let them normally be out there that day and say let me know if you have anything I'd like to put you in the schedule while I'm out there. And before I booked that original call once I get at least three confirmations that they have worked for me then I'll call them all back and book all three because I wouldn't go out there for anything under three three chutes out there because it's a bit of a trip it ends up being you know could be a 10 to 12 hour day between travel and shooting and you know taking a little break here for lunch and all that and it's a tiring days as well as I'm sure you know from doing your travel shoots as well it's not easy.

Wait to get my age kid.

Oh yeah. And let me ask you So what you know. We're going to we're going to eventually wrap in the Spurs podcast down because I think we want to we want to keep it about 30 minutes ever to think we're we're a couple minutes away from that so let me ask you first and then you can ask me what are you. What's going on lately. So you got this podcast idea. When did you start thinking about this podcast seriously.

It was probably about a month and a half ago or two months ago as I mentioned I'm in the car lot as I'm sure every real estate photographer is and especially in the summertime when I'm traveling you know two hours at least two hours each way once a week at least a shoot and I'm just listening to podcasts all day whether it's photography podcasts business podcasts other podcasts for some other businesses I'm involved with. Whatever

the case is I spend my two hours listening to podcast or four hours altogether a day and about two months ago I said there has to be something out there. I know there's a couple of photography podcasts out there about professional photography and all that but there's nothing geared strictly towards our

industry. And you know obviously as you said before it's a much smaller demographic of people which is maybe why no one has done it before but I think it's a demographic of people that are interested and willing to learn. Like to be educated and want to hear people who are successful in this industry talk about it. So I had the idea to potentially do something and I never really seriously thought about it because things got a little hectic around the holiday time I had a baby three weeks ago. So

yeah gradually my wife had a baby I should say no you you had to.

So things got a little hectic. I kind of put it on hold you know for a couple of weeks and I kind of revisited it right after the new year. Once things settle down a little bit. And I was you know I thought to myself hey you know let me go out and let me record a first one as a test as a sample see how it goes and if it's something that works maybe I'll I'll kind of you know look into this and maybe do this so I reached out to you about being a potential interviewee for my first podcast. And as we started talking and got to it you know you were mentioning that you know you were thinking about this for a long time as well. And you know we said Hey why don't we try doing this together and call us and see how it goes and here we are today talking less. Less

than a week from inception.

Not even. I think I reached out to you late last week. And you know we started talking about ideas and you said to me OK let's not talk yet. Let's just go on record. Let's just get to it. Are you available tomorrow. I'm getting you know today's Tuesday you said I'm getting back from Australia on Sunday. Let's touch base Monday we spoke yesterday and you're like let's record tomorrow.

You actually you actually asked me yesterday when we were talking about it you said are you available tonight to record. And it turned out I wasn't but I said let's do it tomorrow. So you know literally a day after our first verbal phone call we are here talking and getting to it and I know there's a lot of information out there so I think God knows I have a lot of information and I get the impression you do too. Yes. And you know we started coming up with lists of different things to discuss whether it's you know the Facebook groups and you know just workflow and technique and equipment and business and marketing. There's just so much out there you know even if it's topics that we're going to talk to our talk about ourselves or bring on different guests who you know get interviewed and we can talk about all those topics as well with interviewees. So

there's so much out there and you know we hope to share it with everyone. Yeah.

And if I can interject just as you had mentioned I just got back from Australia for two weeks had a blast. And you know traveling this is a big passion of mine. I go out on at least one big trip a year. I've gone to six continents in the last four years. So I have one more continent but I don't know what I'm going to get down to Antarctica.

So I'm happy to say I have been to the same six continents as well but not in the last four years. But over the course of my life the article is the one that I have not been to yet. So also maybe one day we'll take a trip down there together.

And I'm stoked about the podcast. I think it's I'm really looking forward to this so the more I even again for everybody this is completely off the cuff not rehearsed. And I got to say I think it's going I don't even

know him. I mean Brian you know. But I'm on his website actually and I see some really nice images. You know we can we can up so many directions as podcasts can go and we can do photo critiquing of interviews we can do. Questions and Answers as Brian had mentioned yesterday as you had mentioned that we can have people call in and leave voice recordings of their questions. So I think that's really fun. And we certainly can take people's suggestions on things that you know topics and things and whatever it's a work in progress.

Sure. Yeah. So I think if people are listening to this that means we decide to release it as our episode one.

So I'm going to ask everyone to subscribe and follow us you'll know when new podcasts are released hopefully at least once a week hopefully more. And that's it. Want you tell rich why don't you tell everyone where they can find you or how they can follow you personally.

Absolutely. And I want to just give my plug for my workshop series it's called The Rich bomb photography trip tips and tricks workshop tour for 2018 and the tour is starting off in Auburn California. These are two day workshops. Very Hands-On workshops and you can find information on that. If you I can be reached at. Rich at rich bomb dot com and you can find me on my YouTube channel which has tips and tricks for real estate photography. A lot of people know about that. But the workshops are starting in February. I have a two day workshop that's just about sold out. It's going to be 10 people max and it's really exciting it's going to be full of everything you need to learn everything you need to know to get going in this business and it's really it's geared towards the active day to day real estate photographer people that have already used lighting or want to get into the use of lighting.

As we discussed there's HDR which both of us I think identified and have chosen to move beyond the HDR and incorporate lights into our photography so that's what I'm dealing with. And the workshops are going to take you there. And again it's it's not for luxury real estate it's not for advanced super high end you know commercial photography whatever.

It's really to get you down to the basics. Everything I teach on my YouTube channel is going to be worked on in the workshops. I'm really excited to help people really getting into this and getting faster and learning all the tricks I am going to be very busy out here in California and although it's raining today and the next day or so we are shooting full bore almost all year it's a little slow in December and January but we keep pretty busy. And we're lucky out here in California. I know it's been really but cold where you are. And I know it affects I know it affects people and that's another thing. I think it's going to be great. This is part gas because you're on the east coast I'm on the west coast.

We have two different sides of it and God knows I don't know have a clue to what slice like trying to deal with Manhattan or New York City working for real estate photography and I hear snickers in the background. But for me in California it's quite different. And I look forward to discussing that. So you can find me all the usual places and even if you just google the rich bomb you can find me easily and contact me at Richet. Rich

Balme dot com Sacramento California and your website or your web your L.F. can we want to share some of your work.

Rich bombed job and if you Google me again you can find my WordPress blog and you can find information out there. Let's just say I don't make it hard to find info on me so just google rich bomb and you'll find anything you need to know.

All right great. And if anybody wants to see some of my work it's Brian Berkowitz photo dot com the RIAA and BTR AK O.W. ITC photo dot com where you can take a look at my stuff on instagram my Instagram handle is Brian Birko B RKO I.A. NBER Akao. And that's how you can find me.

So by the way Brian how many Web site this is a great topic in the future but how many websites do you have. Do you have a specific Web site for each of your genres like a wedding Web site and what else you're doing.

Yeah I only have two websites one geared for real estate photography and one geared towards more high end architectural and interior photography so that is definitely a good topic for discussion in the future. And I did that strategically and we can maybe get into that as one topic for one podcast.

Absolutely great.

All right well it's been a pleasure. We're going to start here internally working on an episode and hopefully come back to you soon so again don't forget to subscribe to the podcast so you can be notified when we release and we'll see you all soon.

Yeah. Have a great week. And as I always say shoot smarter shoot better get better shoot higher list higher end list things make more money so you can spend more time with your family and that's what this is all about. Let's get good at what we do.

Sounds good. Take care. OK. Bye guys.