

TOP AGENT

MAGAZINE



Aaron Kirman



Architectural Record

“Selling houses is as individual as the person is.” Herein lies the real estate wisdom of Aaron Kirman, Executive Director of the Architectural Division for Hilton & Hyland in Beverly Hills. Of course, the same could also be said of Kirman, who has set records for selling hundreds of architectural homes by Neutra, Koenig, Shindler, Lautner and other famed architects over the course of his career. In other words, his approach to real estate is as unique as the clients he represents, which range from A-list celebrities and the international elite to Fortune 500 CEOs and Hollywood socialites. With over \$125 million in active listings, he has been known to sell funky modern abodes to 70-year-old art aficionados or 1920s traditionals to 22-year-old socialites. In a city as diverse as Los Angeles, there are no limits for Kirman—the only constants are design integrity, real estate

market knowledge and understanding clients’ needs.

“There are 100 different ways to be innovative and creative in this business,” says Kirman. “That’s what I find really inspiring.”

His take on architecture is equally as liberal (“good architecture comes in many styles”). He personally identifies with midcentury modern but appreciates traditional Mediterranean styles and other historic architecture. At the end of the day, he enjoys “working with people with a sophisticated sense of style.” After all, he says, “there will always be a demand for architectural homes in this city.”

Architects certainly had (and still have) a love affair with this town. From the Hollywood Hills to Brentwood, Case Study Houses and historic estates unfold as if they were from the pages of an architecture book. Kirman should know—he is as much a fixture of the Los Angeles architecture scene as any designer. He keeps friends among modern architects such as Marmol Radziner, Studio of Architecture and Shubin & Donaldson; he is a member of the California Historical Society and Los Angeles Conservancy; and had a hand in the historic preservation of the only Oscar Niemeyer original in North America. In addition, he sits on the Board of Directors of Roundhouse, an organization that builds prototype houses for people in need around the world. He is also a bonafide L.A. native, born and raised.

“Ever since I was a little kid, I wanted to get involved in real estate,” recalls Kirman, a University of Southern California alum. “When other kids were playing soccer and baseball, I was pestering my parents to go to open houses. I always knew I wanted to have a career in real estate because I had a passion for homes and architecture.”

While he was studying business and communications at USC, Kirman worked for several

by Alyson Pitarre

top developers and real estate brokers. After graduating in 2000, he earned his real estate license and immediately started working for a boutique architecture brokerage firm. In 2005, he moved to Hilton & Hyland to lead the firm's architectural division, where he has earned a position as one of the top producers. Real estate allows him to blend his two greatest passions: homes and people.

“One of the thrills of real estate is the social aspect,” he notes. “It’s a relationship-based business. I spend a lot of time with potential clients and other agents at dinners and networking lunches. It’s amazing what can come out of an hour lunch.”

Deals might be made over chopped salads at La Scala, but Kirman skillfully mixes business with pleasure. It is no accident that 90 percent of his business is referral-based (clients often turn into friends). Conversations aren’t relegated to just real estate either. Kirman shows his appreciation for the good life by covering the topics his clients care about, whether it’s design, art or the latest restaurants and hotels.

“My clients appreciate that,” says Kirman. “I take my job seriously, but I don’t view it as a job. It’s a passion, and I have fun with it. Because I’m diligent with my business, I see a lot of opportunity for growth.”

Aaron not only serves his existing client base at an extremely personal level, but he also makes sure he is always growing his network. In a short amount of time, he has built a strong team behind him: five staff members, a public relations agency, architects, developers, investors, as well as a comprehensive database of buyers and sellers who appreciate art and architecture.

“We are constantly building new partnerships and alliances with other agents to ensure we remain the number one resource when it comes to architectural homes,” he says. “Our agent relationships have become an extremely

important part of our business, especially now in this economy. We can help each other.”

His social prowess has also given him a keen ability to mix and match personalities with homes. He knows the real estate market from every angle—what properties are currently on the market, what has sold, what is overpriced and what homes possess the architectural integrity his clients seek.

“It’s important to understand my clients, and what they are looking for,” he says. “I think a home has an intrinsic value to any given person. A home that is built by a well-known architect might have value to one client, while others find value in the architectural pedigree of a historic property. I like to narrow down my clients’ property searches. It’s not always a numbers game. It’s about working smart.”

It might mean providing them with pricing information or design details; or it might mean





putting them in touch with movers, local contractors or designers. His non-stop work schedule starts early (but not before he has a triple soy cappuccino from Starbucks) and covers everything from inspections and showings to meetings and client communications. His listings (which range from \$800,000 to \$56 million) cover territory from Silverlake to Malibu and all the way to the South Bay, and he often receives requests from out-of-state agents who have a distinct architectural property his clients might be interested in.

“If have to fly to Moscow to meet a client for a listing presentation, I will do it,” he declares.

Though Kirman is always working, he still leads a balanced life. He enjoys traveling to international cities with iconic architecture like Rio de Janeiro, Paris and Rome. At home, he hits the gym, plays tennis and hikes Runyon Canyon with his Havanese, Lucy. Yet real estate

is never far from his mind; he has been known to chat it up with a potential client on a Paris flight or tour Saturday open houses “just for fun.”

Kirman might be young, but he is no less ambitious. “I would like to continue to grow the business on a national and international scale and continue to work with the most dynamic client base in the country,” he concludes. Few doubt he’ll get there...while breaking a few more records along the way.

For more information
about Aaron Kirman,
contact him at
(310) 858-5479 or
aaronkirman@yahoo.com