

Malibu

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One leading example is Paul Kim, owner of Images Locations — not to be confused with Malibu Locations which is another top representative in the location market business. From his spacious concrete loft near Downtown in the landmark Americas Cement building, to a multimillion-dollar Malibu mansion, Kim is constantly juggling prestigious clients and locations.

Included in the more than 700 registered properties in the Image Locations library are architectural gems designed by Richard Neutra, Steven Ehrlich and Frank Lloyd Wright. Clients can choose from cutting-edge modern to Norman Rockwell Americana, European secret garden to California coast, and funky warehouse to luxury mansion. They can even rent the Los Angeles Times building, which features a round conference table a la Stanley Kubrick's *Dr. Strangelove*, for their next production.

Kim is an L.A. native who oozes boyish charm. After college, he took some time out to work as a substitute teacher in Maui, but after working as a production assistant on *Inventing the Abbotts* (starring Joaquin Phoenix and Billy Crudup), Kim fell into location scouting and management work. A licensed real estate agent who almost fell prey to a 9-to-5 gig at Coldwell Banker, Kim began representing the houses and became a self-described "location agent."

Kim's clients include production powerhouses 20th Century Fox, DreamWorks, MTV, as well as corporate giant American Express, high-end fashion house Prada, and magazines including *Finey Fair*, *Condé Nast*, *Teen* & *Country* — among countless others.

Some of the properties that fall under the Image Locations banner have a controversial or intriguing past. "Legend has it that the Pasadena Princess was once owned by the Philippine dictator Ferdinand Marcos, and his mistress lived there. The property was involved in some mysterious fire and was under construction for a very long time," says Kim. Now, the spectacular gardens have been the location site for Bebe clothing shoots. While the grounds look very pristine and inviting, the inside of the house is still hollowed out and is now owned by a family that lives in Hong Kong. Far less controversial — well, sort of — are Frank Sinatra's old house in Chatsworth, fellow rat packer Dean Martin's former house in Malibu and Cher's old digs on a private bluff nearby. More than 50 percent of Paul Kim's business is in Malibu, 30 percent is in the Hollywood Hills and Hancock Park, and 20 percent in Pasadena. Most of the locations come to Kim by word of mouth.

This varies from Malibu Locations. Of the firm's 4,000 properties, there are 3,000 in Malibu alone. No more than 30 percent of its business is outside of the Malibu perimeters, and ranges from Pasadena to the Palisades.

Malibu Locations has been in business for 16 years and was recently purchased from Diane Klein by local residents Marshall Cohen and Rob Dohan. Cohen was a former film and television executive at Paramount Pictures, and Dohan has been a location manager for *Malibu in the Middle* and *The Bernie Mac Show*. The two men are childhood friends and used to play together on the nearby beaches. According to Cohen, "To succeed in this business you need to be a local and



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Park has seen Ron Howard's daughter Bryce Dallas Howard, Eve Mendes, Kate Beckinsale and Rachel McAdams all traipsing through its rose bushes. The bungalow friendly "Beach 31" has been used for a big Versace campaign, and producer Robert Evans' quirky home was used for the HBO hit *Entourage*. The palatial "Mediterranean 16" lies near Paradise Cove in Malibu — the spot where Peggy Lipton chose for her book launch with Dateline NBC dropping by for an interview. And what do Tori Spelling and Anna Nicole Smith have in common? They were both photographed at "Retro 26" behind the Chateau Marmont in Hollywood.

Kim doesn't only work with Hollywood elite. He has also worked with legendary snappers including Steven Meisel, Steven Klein and Annie Liebowitz. In an interesting twist, Kim not only works with British super photographer Tim Street-Porter, but represents his home in the Hollywood Hills as well.

Perhaps one of Paul's funniest stories is about "Spanish 03" where he was working with Maria Shriver for a magazine project. "I got this call from the L.A. Sheriff's office one morning at 6 a.m. asking for me. I thought, Oh no! What have I done? But then the voice said, "We're escorting Ms. Shriver to the shoot today." I forgot that she is the first lady of California and needs extra security."

"Private homes are the most controllable once you are under contract. In a public place you can't really control people walking in. Most production companies want to use a private house rather than build a set — they have time constraints, privacy issues with celebrities and it's more cost-effective," Kim explains. "Much of the talent lives in Malibu already, and there is the diversity of architecture here." Still photo or print is king. "You don't have 60 people walking around your home with ladders. It's far less complicated with print."

Coben says he books far more commercial projects "because there is just more of that work around. There are more magazines out there than film and television shows being made." Having said that, he adds, "We have worked with every major studio in the past six months. We get really involved with the director and the story. Right now we are looking for the ultimate bachelor pad for a new Matthew Perry series."

And, look for Paul Kim to take over the national market soon. "We are looking into expanding. Most of our clients are in L.A. or New York, but we've been contacted by well-known architects in Colorado and Miami recently. We are dipping our toe into the water for expanding across the country."

All images provided by Image Locations

For more information:

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