

TOP AGENT MAGAZINE

Rose + Chang

Real Estate by Design: Rose + Chang



If names like Neutra, Koenig, and Neff mean anything to you, then you'll find two like minds in Billy Rose and Blair Chang. As founders and executive directors of Prudential California Realty's Los Angeles Architectural Division, Rose + Chang (as their business is called) represent buyers and sellers of architectural homes in a city whose history can be told in 1930s Spanish homes in Hollywood, mid-century moderns in Brentwood, and classic Georgian colonials in Hancock Park.

Their understanding of design extends far beyond their business—Rose + Chang live and breathe architecture. Not only do they count some of the city's most renowned architects among their friends, but they are also members of the Los Angeles Conservancy, a nonprofit organization that works to recognize, preserve, and revitalize the historic architectural and cultural resources of Los Angeles County. Additionally, they sponsor

modernism showcases from L.A. to Palm Springs, and lead architectural home tours on the weekends. Their new website, launched earlier last month, gives users a lifestyle-driven look at architectural real estate in Los Angeles, from their personal listing picks and cool local architecture events to resources for home restoration.

“We want people to come and enjoy the Rose + Chang experience,” says Chang of their website and architectural tours. “We want to be a resource for people who are enthusiastic about historic design, but also for those who want to learn more about design and become more educated about homes on the market.”

The L.A. natives do not simply see themselves as real estate agents, but also cultural “historians.” Their work gives them rare insight into how Angelinos lived in their homes, from generation to generation.

“We've been able to see an evolution in architecture geographically,” says Rose, a designer and developer who has also designed homes for celebrities such as Halle Berry, Diana Ross, Beck, and Frankie Muniz. “If you look at East Coast styles, they can get reflective of the inclement weather. The design directs you inward and provides you with smaller intimate spaces to spend more time together in the house. In Southern California, the weather is so mild that the architecture turns outward. The design envisions a bit more of an indoor-outdoor entertaining lifestyle.”

As self-described “treasure hunters” of architecture, Rose + Chang built their real estate business model on a different foundation. Their partnership grew from their mutual appreciation for architecture, after seeing each other at the same open houses weekend after weekend. When it came time to set up their own shop together in 2005, they decided to focus on representing homes of great design as opposed to specializing in a specific area or neighborhood. To Rose + Chang, it doesn't matter if the home is located in Malibu or Silver Lake; it's about representing

homes that are collectible works of art.

“We both gravitate towards authentic architecture,” explains Rose. “We don’t want to represent run of the mill shelter. We like to represent those magical and special properties. Authentic architectural homes often exhibit that specialness.”

Adds Chang: “We can also distill that down even further by representing a special piece of land that has a magical quality to it. We want to be passionate about everything we sell.”

The evidence of their passion is easy to see: they have produced nearly \$450 million in sales over the course of their five-year alliance. Between the two of them, they possess more than 20 years of experience, a talented team of five staff members, and a love for real estate, architecture, and Los Angeles history that defines every client relationship they have. Not surprisingly, about 90 percent of their business comes from referrals or repeat clientele.

“Our ultimate goal is to maintain a client for life,” says Rose. “We are not afraid to give them a different point of view, even if it might not be the most popular view. For example, sellers often think their house is worth more than it is. Some agents will go along with that view, even though it isn’t supported in reality. Listing a property at too high an initial asking price can mean a lower eventual sales price. We believe that it’s our job to tell them the good news, as well as the bad. We try to be very reasoned in our thinking. We give them the reality, even if it is not what they want to hear.”

Rose + Chang not only deliver their unique brand of honesty, integrity, real estate expertise, and market guidance to clients, but also their distinct architectural vision. They understand the



importance of finding, building, or restoring a home that synergizes with the land so that each are made better as a result.

“We have become skilled at understanding what kind of a house will work and not work on a site, as well as what the design and construction process will be in terms of timing, engineering, permits, and cost,” says Chang. “Clients are often intimidated by the remodeling process, but we tell them it’s not as onerous or as difficult as they might think. We’ve actually launched some developers’ careers by spelling out a vision through the process.”

Like many of the architects they work with, they are constantly learning new elements about the design process in order to better advise their clients. After Chang sold a Wallace Neff house in 2001, for example, he learned how site selection affects the architecture of the home. Rose also gained a greater understanding of site selection through his design and remodeling experiences. He recalls teaming up with Case Study House architect Pierre Koenig to remodel the Gantert House, a home originally designed by Koenig, who passed away in 2004.

“I saw how an architect like Koenig sites the



house, and thinks about details like where the sun rises and sets, how the wind blows, and circulation patterns within the house,” he says. “It helped me have a deeper understanding of the architect’s mind during the design process.”

As a team, Rose + Chang are just as yin-yang as the residences (and home sites) they represent. Clients love working with Chang because of his calm and reassuring demeanor, and also appreciate his knowledge of the different architectural styles found in Los Angeles. Rose, by contrast, is especially skilled at negotiations and contracts due to his entertainment and real estate law background. However, both possess a strong work ethic, serving their clients around the clock with the highest level of professionalism and integrity.

“Our personalities might be different, but we overlap in terms of our core values,” notes Rose. “One client may gravitate more towards me, while another client will gravitate towards him. We both provide professional representation, though we each may do so with a different look and feel.”

When they’re not selling real estate or attending architecture showcases, they’re enjoying Los Angeles, an experimental city that never stops changing. Rose prefers to spend quality time with his wife, Amy, and their two young children in their restored 1940s moderne home in Westwood, while Chang races Porsche 911s in the IMSA GT3 Challenge.

“Los Angeles is a unique city,” says Chang. “Because of the many different neighborhoods and architectural choices here, L.A. is the kind of place where everyone can find a special place to call ‘home’ that satisfies their lifestyle, as well as their emotional and intellectual needs and desires.”

For more information about Rose + Chang, please visit their website at www.RoseandChang.com or contact them at (310) 777-2887 or info@roseandchang.com.