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Above: Mr. Novotny's photograph of the completed living room of movie star Kyle West's Malibu house, built onstage in Vancouver, BC. Right: Sketches by Mr. Novotny, showing the early stages of designing how the house would look if it were to rest on the Point Dume bluff. Opposite page: Elevations of the house from Myleen Baesa's construction drawings based on her original SketchUp® model.

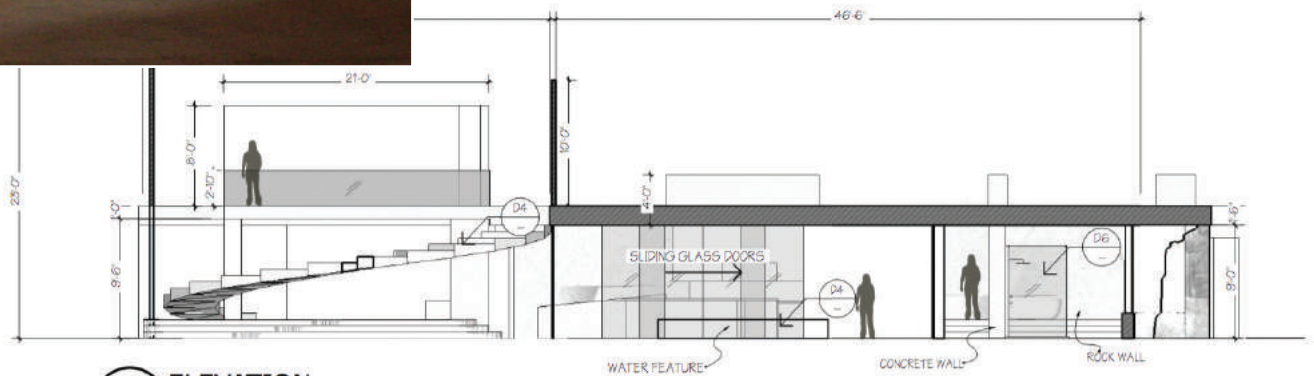




BUILDING A MALIBU DREAM HOUSE IN VANCOUVER

by Daniel Novotny, Production Designer

"When Los Angeles was in the midst of a heat wave, Vancouver offered the perfect space to build a Malibu dream house."



E ELEVATION
1 1/8" = 1' 0"



E ELEVATION PERSPECTIVE
1 1/8" = 1' 0"



Above: A fully rendered previsualization of Kyle's living room, drawn in SketchUp by Myleen Baesa. **Below:** Kyle's house under construction, with its backyard, sandstone cliffs sculpted of bead foam, and the massive 12-inch custom pipe supporting the dramatic curved staircase.

The Arrangement is only the second original scripted series for the E! network. Not knowing what to expect from a network built on reality shows and celebrity buzz, I was pleasantly surprised by the pilot. It had authentic dialogue, a believable cast and a story that just made sense. The plot revolves around an A-list actor, Kyle West, who falls for an aspiring actress auditioning for a roll in his next blockbuster movie. She is swept off her feet with his celebrity lifestyle and handsome charm, but the romance turns dark with

Kyle's dedication to an organized philosophy, the IHM (Institute of the Higher Mind).

“My first day off was a good day to surf. I carried my board down a chaparral path and descended the cliffs to access the surf below. Standing on the sand, I was directly under the spot where I had successfully built a virtual Malibu dream house in Vancouver.”

Although the series takes place in Los Angeles, the majority of production would, of course, be shot in Vancouver. The script required a few permanent sets; one would be the home of movie star Kyle West, located somewhere on the coastal bluffs of Malibu. Designing a celebrity's residence with an ocean view would be an architect's dream. This opportunity was particularly special for me as I have a personal connection to the small beach town. I once lived in the



Point Dume mobile home park and still surf the local beaches. I proposed to my wife on the Point Dume Marine Preserve and my son graduated from Malibu High School. As well, being a designer, I had already sussed out the prime locations where I would build a dream house.

The show had the potential to be something unique, but I had reservations about the tone of the show. I pitched a look-book for color palette, lighting style and design to see if the studio and network were interested in my vision. After meeting writer/creator Jonathan Abrahams and executive producer Jimmy Fox, I felt confident we were on the same page.

As my plane departed LAX, I could see the smoldering grid of asphalt below. Los Angeles was in the midst of a record-breaking heat wave and I was eager to fly north. Three hours later, my plane descended into Vancouver, and I was greeted with a cool misty rain. The dense forests and snow-capped mountains loomed over a modern city skyline.

For many years, Vancouver has been a locale for production but has recently seen unprecedented growth. The hustle to pull a strong crew together was by far my most difficult challenge. When I arrived, there were fifty-three productions in Vancouver. The demand for crew overshadowed the supply of talent, and many of the bigger features had the budget to attract the most seasoned Vancouver locals.



I needed to start the drawing process immediately and Vancouver's IATSE Local 891 introduced me to an up-and-coming Assistant Art Director/Set Designer named Myleen Baesa. Based on her reputation and portfolio, I hired her over the phone. She turned my initial sketches into practical plans and 3D models. She was fast, reliable and had a good sense of design.

Above: The fully dressed kitchen onstage. Right, top to bottom: Kyle's living room in mid-construction. The living room and curved staircase, now complete. The raised living room seating area with fireplace and modern art. A screen capture from the series, looking out to sea across the bluff.





With Myleen on the drawing table, I could focus on finding a construction coordinator. I eventually located the right man in Chris Thompson, who agreed to do the job with the understanding that he would be coordinating two other shows simultaneously. His crew was an impressive mix of builders, painters and sculptors, and they didn't waste a moment. They moved so fast that Myleen and I worked overtime to keep up with their appetite for blueprints.

I was also fortunate to bring a talented set decorator onboard. Renée Read had a fantastic crew and the city at her fingertips. She understood the tone of the show, her taste was impeccable and I was relieved to have her decorate the home of a famous movie star, Kyle West.

After a few weeks, it became apparent that I would need to import a Supervising Art Director from Los Angeles. I had a long working history with Mia Cho, who arrived with one small suitcase and a skill set we had refined over ten years working together. The Art Department was taking shape. After all, we still had to deliver a completed set in six weeks.

The first requirement of any luxury home in Malibu is an ocean view. The biggest technical challenge was creating this illusion on a soundstage with limited space. I needed a large photo-backing of that luxurious ocean vista for the background. To execute this, I engaged Phil Greenstreet of Roscoe Backings to shoot a high-resolution photo from a vista that I had scouted near Malibu High School, back in California.

The set had floor-to-ceiling windows that opened to a grass lawn on a coastal bluff overlooking the ocean. Creating this distant vista felt nearly impossible with the limited stage space. For this technical challenge, I revamped an old-school concept, using miniature theatrical scenery to give the illusion of distance. The photo-backing included trees and houses in the foreground, so I ordered an extra print of the bottom portion of the backing to cut out those elements into free-standing images. These two-dimensional miniature trees and houses were strategically placed between the landscape and the photo-backing to create the appearance of distance.

As the stage construction proceeded, the next hurdle was finding suitable locations to keep the show grounded in Los Angeles. Vancouver has a beautiful skyline of glass and metal, surrounded by forest and mountains. Unfortunately, this serene landscape bears no resemblance to Southern California...not to mention it faces the

Top: A view of the finished set from the ocean, shot on the soundstage in Vancouver, including the backyard and glass wall into the open-plan interior. Above: A previsualization rendering of the ocean side of Kyle's house, drawn by Myleen Baesa in SketchUp.



constant threat of rain. To make matters more difficult, with fifty-plus productions in one small city, the best locations were double, often triple-booked. To sell the illusion of a celebrity lifestyle in Los Angeles, as much as possible needed to shoot in Southern California or on soundstages. With two stages full of permanent sets and locations at a premium, the location team struggled to find environments to create a Hollywood setting for the show.

As the end of production neared, aerial shots were still needed to establish Kyle's home on the Malibu coastline. It became apparent that the best tool would be a drone to capture aerial-motion plate shots of the coastal bluff to match the house onstage in Vancouver. The visual effects team at Artifex Studios would then superimpose a computer-generated image of Kyle's house over the plates.

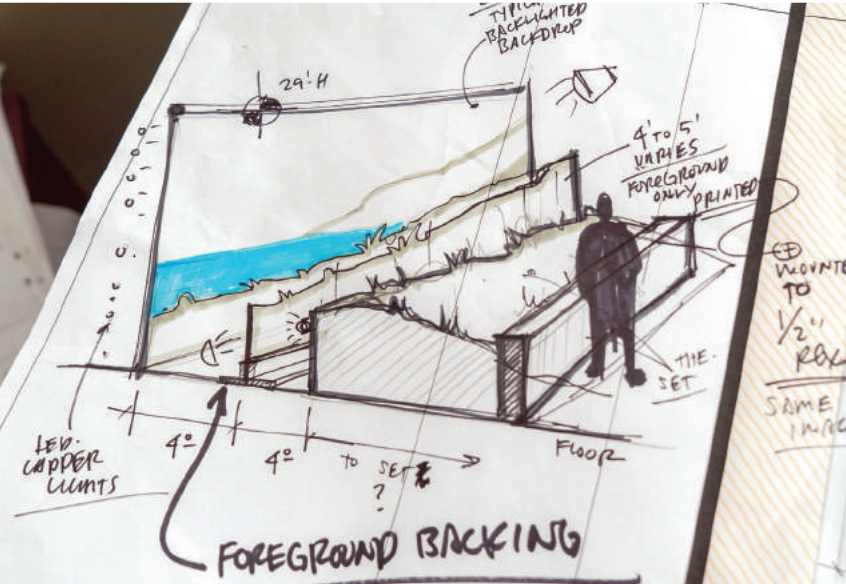
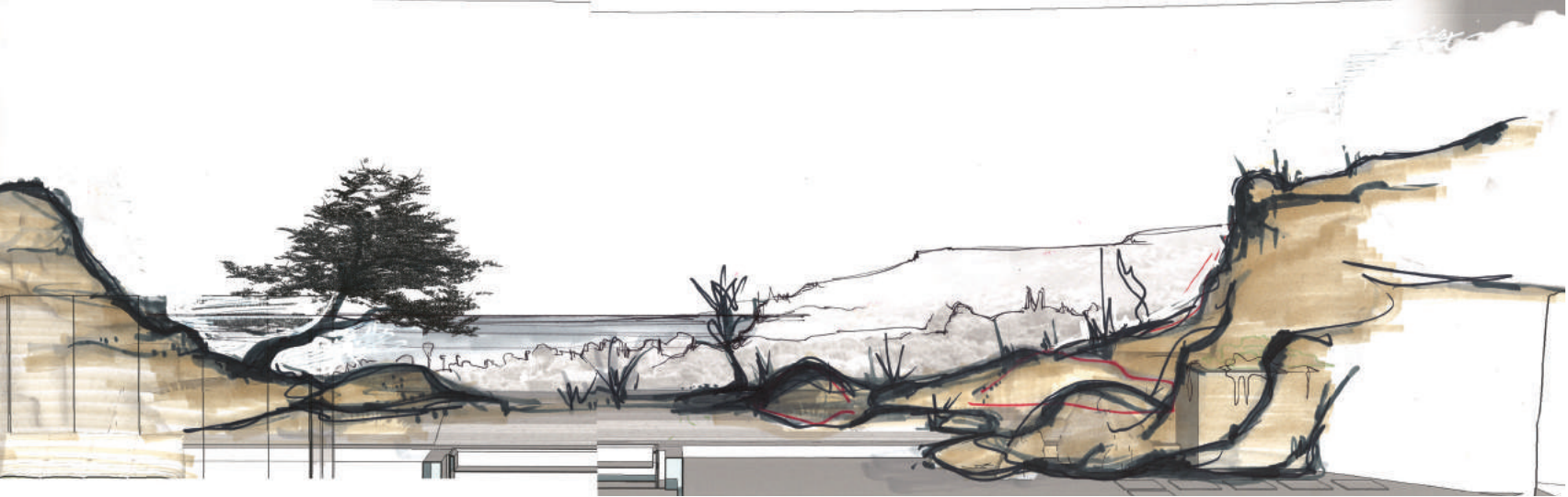
Since I had lived in Malibu before, finding the right coastal bluff was easy. I had already worked out the

perfect location to build a house. The Point Dume State Marine Reserve is a beautiful coastal bluff protected from development, so to toy with the idea of building a house there was, in my case, a unique opportunity.

Next, I needed to design a virtual 3D model of the entire property, including the architecture, landscape and driveway. For me, the challenge was designing a home that felt architecturally significant. In the real world, a firm would have years to develop the architectural esthetic of a project like this. However, within a few weeks, Myleen Baesa and I created a 3D model ready for the VFX team to import into their virtual reality. All they needed were the aerial plate shots.

I wrapped the Vancouver office, packed my bags and flew home. Back in Malibu, the drone pilot arrived early with his crew for the usual epic sunrise over Point Dume. This familiar coastal bluff was now a movie set with a small crowd of park rangers and sheriffs to keep everyone off the endangered flora. It was showtime.

Top: Another SketchUp rendering by Ms. Baesa, this time of Kyle's bedroom. Above, left and right: A photograph of the bedroom from the same perspective as the rendering above. The completed set for the lavish bathroom in Kyle's house.

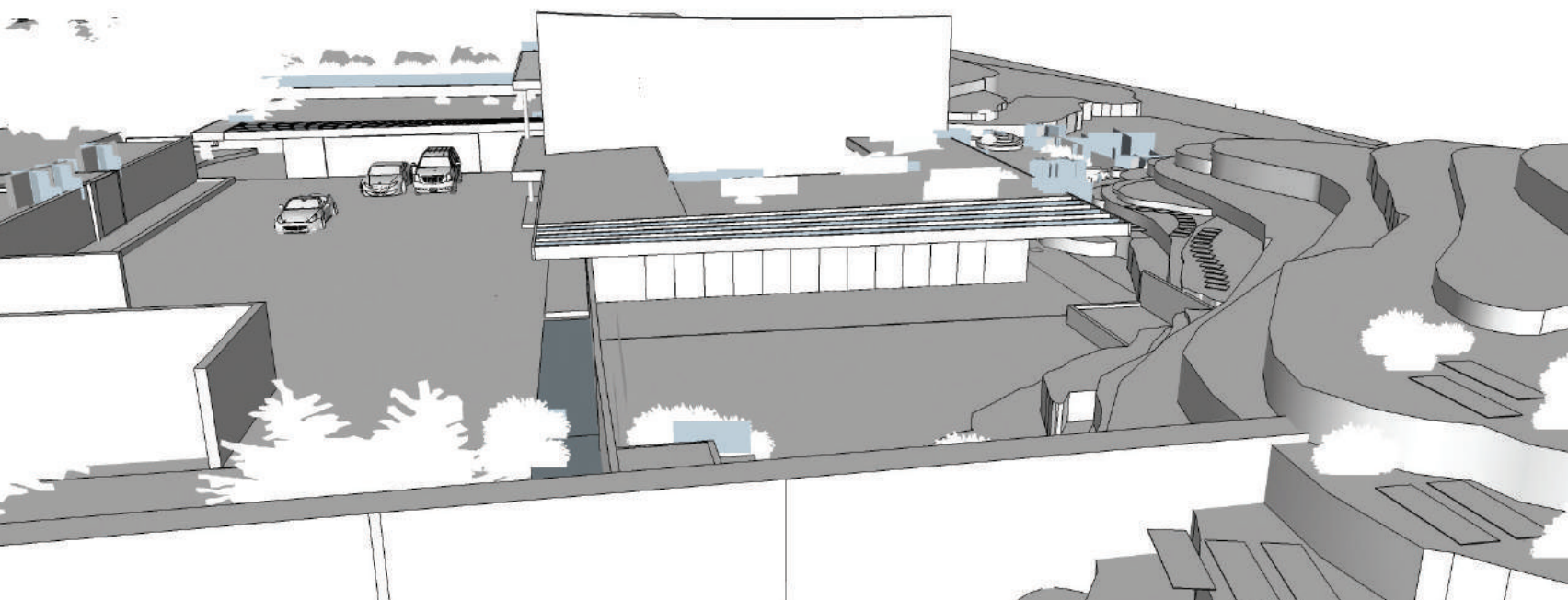


Top: A sketch by Mr. Novotny, part of a siteline study of the backyard on the soundstage. This drawing was scaled and given to the sculptors to build foam rocks from. Above, left and right: A production sketch, again by Mr. Novotny, to demonstrate the basic idea of the multilayered backing A behind-the-scenes photograph showing the miniature two-dimensional tree backings. Below, left and right: Kyle's bedroom showing the view out the window toward the ocean, with grass, pebbles, gravel and decorative natural plants, and miniature cutout trees, all in front of the large photographic backing. The view from Kyle's kitchen at the ocean vista with grass lawn and miniature trees in the foreground.

The six-foot-wide drone required a small army to manage the circus of cables and video equipment. I had arranged for a local construction crew to place tall pink markers to help the drone pilot visualize where the home would be built later by the visual effects team. Using Myleen's 3D model as a shell, the effects artists would give it life, texture and movement to match the drone's plate shots.

After six months, production wrapped in Los Angeles and I was officially fun-employed. My first day off was a good day to surf. I carried my board down a chaparral path and descended the cliffs to access the surf below. Standing on the sand, I was directly under the spot where I had placed Kyle's virtual house. I paddled past the break to get a clear view of that familiar bluff above the beach.





A few months later, I watched the finished aerial clips with my house superimposed below. With the help of a magnificent crew, I had successfully built a Malibu dream house in Vancouver. Mission complete. **ADG**

Daniel Novotny, Production Designer
Mia Cho, Supervising Art Director
Myleen Baesa, Art Director
Patrick Lo, Assistant Art Director
Houman Eshraghi, Set Designer
Renée Read, Set Decorator

Top: A preliminary SketchUp model of Kyle's house by Myleen Baesa. Above, left and right: Ms. Baesa's fully rendered model showing the automobile courtyard and entrance of the house. Mr. Novotny's final design of Kyle's house as rendered by Artifex Studios in Vancouver, composited over a drone shot of the Point Dume bluff. Below, left and right: The camera drone, resting quietly in the early morning, on Point Dume State Marine Reserve in Malibu. Mr. Novotny and the aerial camera crew on Point Dume. The pink markers indicate to the drone pilot where the virtual house will be placed.

