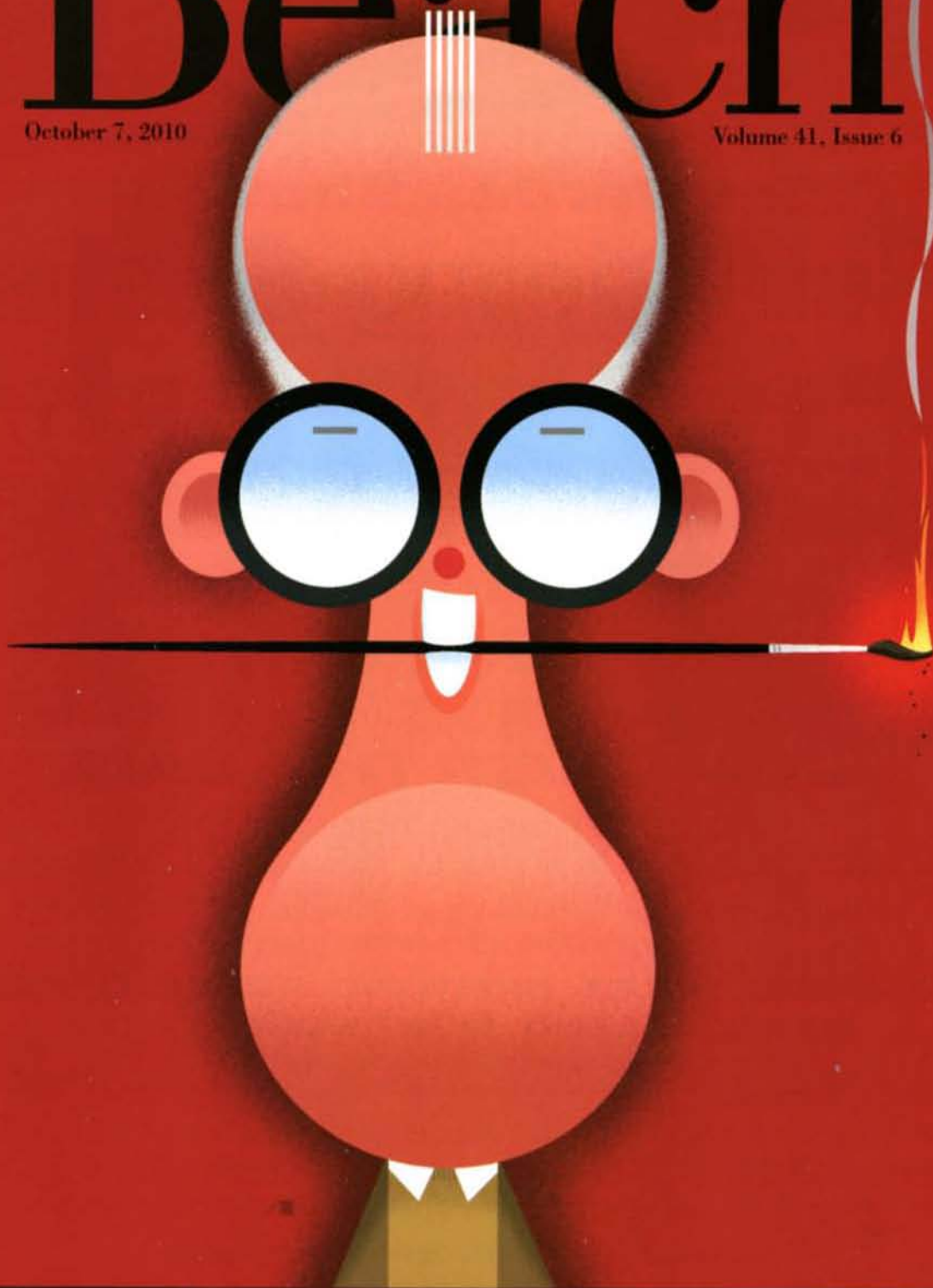


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Office Architect

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**2010** Dining Guide



# A view toward Work

**“It’s for the person who says, ‘I’ve worked hard and want an office in a cool, little village of professionals where I don’t need to drive, can bike or walk to work, bring my surfboard and step out to have drinks if I want.’”**

**– GRANT KIRKPATRICK, ARCHITECT**



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PHOTOS BY MANOLO LANGIS

## by Andrea Ruse

If you haven't noticed a 13,000 sq. ft., 34-unit office condominium complex at the corner of Thirteenth Street and Highland Avenue in Manhattan Beach, then local architect Grant Kirkpatrick has done his job.

Five campus-style buildings situated on the only private parcel of the city's civic center block — the former site of Good Stuff Restaurant — make up 1300 Highland Shops and Work Lofts, an unobtrusive commercial complex that Kirkpatrick designed for a high-end beach town.

“The overall notion here is that we wanted was to scale the building to the neighborhood, which is made up of an eclectic mix of single lot, downtown, commercial buildings,” said

Kirkpatrick of KAA Design Group. “The separate buildings all strung together break it up so it fits into the village-like atmosphere down here. It doesn't just look like one huge office building.”

The three-year project is the brainchild of developer Nick Schaar of Schaar Homes and Buildings, who teamed up with broker Bryn Stroyke of Stroyke Properties to give local professionals the chance to own upscale, downtown office spaces right in their own backyards. The partners brought in Kirkpatrick to design the modern, yet warm, building nestled among the bustling, Highland Avenue restaurants and boutiques.

“Our immediate thought was that if you look at the neighbors, there are no offices,”

Kirkpatrick said. “The business model was being able to work close to where you live. The design is based on the lifestyle of the occupants here. It's for the person who says, ‘I've worked hard and want an office in a cool, little village of professionals where I don't need to drive, can bike or walk to work, bring my surfboard and step out to have drinks if I want.’”

The complex's weathered, gray bleached cedar exterior with random wood patterns offers a subtle nautical theme, complemented by a Neapolitan-like pallet of orange, gray and white toward its center.

A flared roof and clearstory windows immediately raise your eyes to the top of the buildings and also provide natural light to the





- 1** The 1300 Highland Shops and Work Shops complex is broken up into five buildings to fit comfortably into a neighborhood full of single lots. Clearstory windows offer openness and natural light to second-story units.
- 2** Retail units facing Highland Avenue currently serve as a showroom for KAA's Home Escape and Style furniture line.
- 3** Large sliding glass doors provide natural light in every condo space. Exposed wood ceilings and structural framework gives a "raw authenticity" that creates a beach loft feel.
- 4** One of 24 private office suites intended for use by local professionals who want to trade long work commutes for time to enjoy the beach.
- 5** Large windows in front of ground-floor retail units make window-shopping easy for passersby.



second-story units.

"Bringing in light from the roof areas gives a sense of openness while maintaining privacy," Kirkpatrick said. "The clearstories offer natural light and give a lantern effect at night when the lights are on."

The 300 to 320 sq. ft. units include ground-floor retail storefronts with large, mahogany wood-lined windows shaded by awnings made of sail-like stretch white canvas. Additional units facing Thirteenth Street can be used as office or retail spaces.

The remaining 24 units — meant strictly to be used for offices — have large sliding glass doors with white mecco shades that roll up to offer views of the park-like greenery south of

the library, or the whirl of the farmers market (on Tuesdays), or the picturesque scene of the ocean beyond Uncle Bill's Pancake House, depending on where each is situated.

"The idea is to come and get work done," Kirkpatrick said. "You have privacy if you want." Each unit has a sink and the capability to have a restroom installed.

Exposed structural framework and vaulted ceilings in upper units give the feeling of a loft.

"Within the context of what's going on, we did it with a distinctly modern or future flair, Kirkpatrick said. "It stems from a modernist theme with raw authenticity."

Large, communal women's and men's restrooms lined with black ceramic tile pro-

vide spa showers and locker rooms for the condo owners.

An underground parking garage leads to several chain-linked fence lockers available for individual storage space. A nearby sign that reads "surfboard storage" is posted next to a storage closet, rounding out the beach-life theme.

The 22 units still available for purchase are priced at \$599,000 to \$699,000.

"We knew we'd end up doing something that would feel really right for the city," Kirkpatrick said. "It's not style-specific. We don't try to cloak anything in a style. We like to do things that are timeless and authentic."

For more information, contact Bryn Stroyke at (310) 545-9595 ext. 122. **B**