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DAVID WALLACE SHOWS.



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HOLLYWOOD RESTORED

BY STACIE HOUGLAN



Gloria Swanson Residence

Famous homes in Hollywood cast a long shadow over history's landscape, yet even they, like many things, are not missed until they're gone (all too often refurbished beyond recognition, or, sadly, bulldozed for a strip mall). But thanks to some who love and appreciate Hollywood's Golden Age, a few of that era's stars' homes have been lovingly preserved, just as the actors themselves continue to live on celluloid. Author David Wallace pays homage to these homes and the people who love them in his new book, **Dream Palaces of Hollywood's Golden Age** (Abrams Books), which gives readers an all-access tour of 25 of Los Angeles's most noteworthy celebrity homes, all restored magnificently. Among them are the Spanish-style residence Cary Grant and Randolph Scott first shared near Griffith Park, a spectacular Moderne manse in the hills that legend says Carole Lombard once owned and Gloria Swanson's Whitley Heights home, which was also once occupied by William Faulkner. "Los Angeles gets a really bad rap for plowing under our built environment and building something better," Wallace says. "A lot gets lost along the way, obviously, but here and there, there's an awful lot still left...you just have to look around for it a little bit."

Illusion and reality may have been blurred in the classic *Sunset Boulevard*, but the real dream is this 3,000-square-foot Whitley Heights house the movie's star Gloria Swanson was so taken with that she rented it first in the early or mid 1940s and again while filming *Sunset*. In 2002, well-known Hollywood interior designer Martyn Lawrence-Bullard purchased the place and gave it a major overhaul, discovering (and

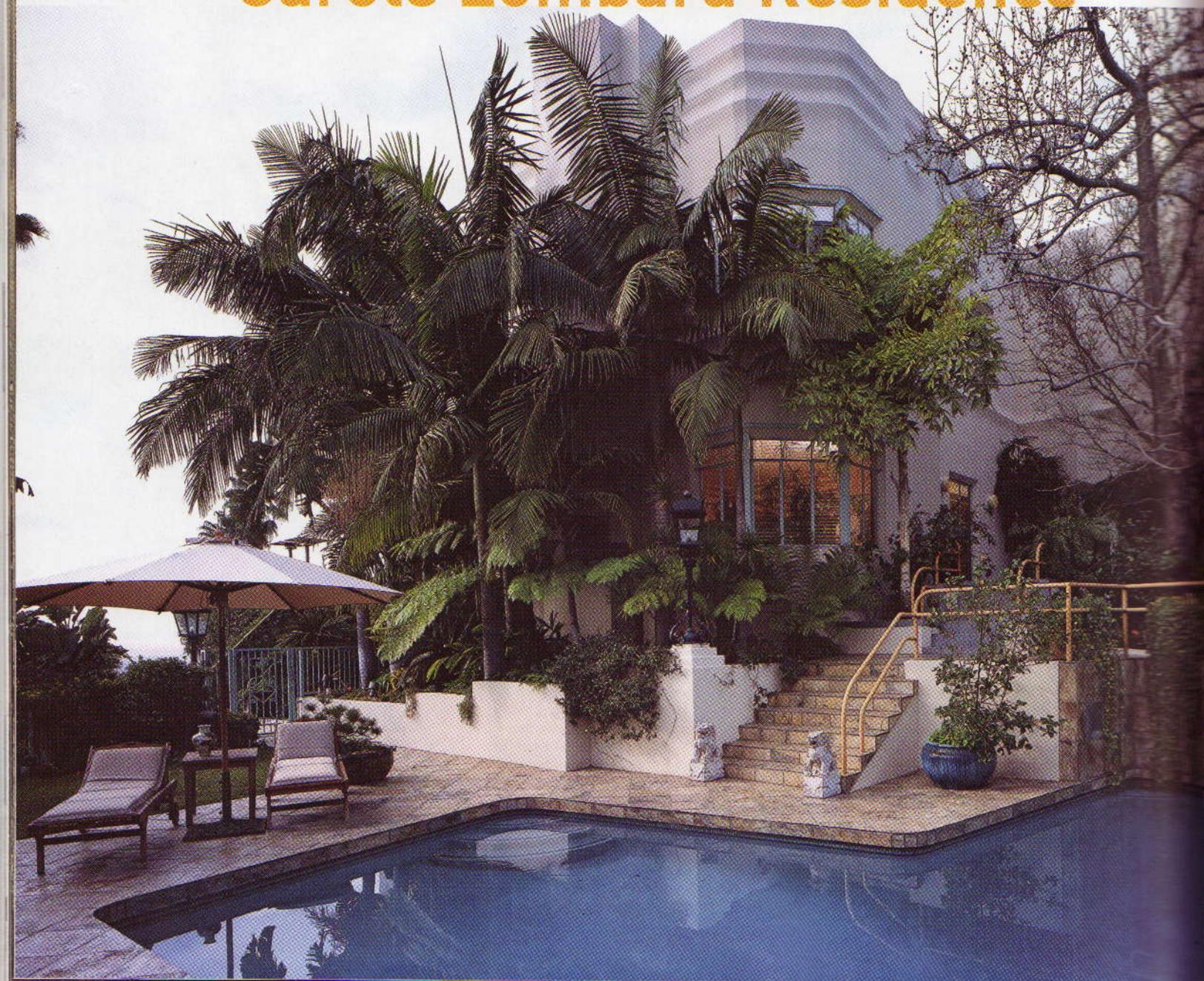


preserving) small but neat touches like a tiny fireplace in a bedroom and several marks left by the diminutive actress, one being the master bathroom sink she had raised so she would not have to bend over (pictured left). "The place was replumbed from the outside to keep the inside intact and when it was all done, the bathtub fell straight down through the floor into the living room—and it didn't break a thing!" Wallace says. Author William Faulkner also lived there briefly, using the balcony outside the master bedroom as his writing study. Frequent visitor (never resident) Rudolph Valentino bestowed upon the house a now-unreadable angel plaque that still remains on the entryway fountain (pictured on previous spread); it, like the chandelier said to have been Swanson's, can never leave the house by historical decree.



Rudolph Valentino, the source of the angel plaque in Gloria Swanson's patio

Carole Lombard Residence





C

Carole Lombard



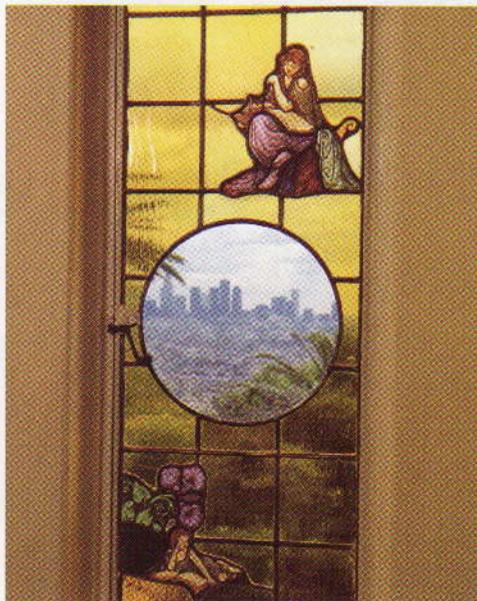
alling the glorious, 7,300-square-foot Moderne-style house in Hollywood's Laughlin Park Lombard's is somewhat misleading. It's one of several she purportedly lived in, but other than the word of a later owner, no records exist verifying that—a situation Wallace says is common. "The problem with all of these houses is that most of the stars at the time rented so there are no records, or the records could be in the name of their manager to protect their privacy. So it's sometimes next to impossible to establish when stars lived in these places; that's why I said that she may or may not have lived here—but she should have." Lombard certainly was a big enough star at the time to have afforded the place and enjoy its many amenities that still remain, like the wood-inlay fireplace in the massive living room and the quaint, tulip-shaped his-and-her washstands in two of its eight bathrooms. The house was in good shape when developer Lyle Low and his Realtor wife Rosemary bought it in 1985, but even in their modernization they kept the spirit of the home in such additions as the kitchen's black tile floor and cabinetry made of bird's-eye maple, popular in the 1930s, and a Moderne-styled deck overlooking the swimming pool. "The interesting thing is the house has a heavily symmetrical design, which [the current owners] furnished very symmetrically," Wallace says. "It's a very comfortable house."

Cary Grant/Randolph Scott Residence





Cary Grant and Randolph Scott



R

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swirled in the 1930s about Cary Grant's sexuality, and although we'll never know the truth, we do know that he and actor pal Randolph Scott set up house in a traditional Spanish Colonial Revival near Griffith Park from '32 to '35. By 1994 when it was bought by film production designer Charles Breen and his wife Monique, the house had degenerated to such an appalling condition that one's feet would literally stick to the living room floor. It took the couple seven years to restore the house, Monique going so far as to actually spend a year razor-blade-scraping layers of paint off the front hall's Malibu tiles. "The idea was to get through all the dirt and the muck and the paint to bring the house back to what it was at the time. When they sold it, it was probably as close to being in the original condition as any house in the book is," Wallace says, adding that other than a few minor changes, much of the original touches remain—like the wall-mounted brackets in a bathroom that once held a reducing belt the actors would use to stay in shape, some of the stained glass windows and a chandelier someone offered \$30,000 for. The offer, if you're curious, was declined.

