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## ■ HOLLYWOOD STORY ■

WRITTEN BY CAREN KURLANDER

PHOTOGRAPHY BY DOMINIQUE VORILLON

"THIS HOUSE EVOKES THE GLAMOUR OF OLD HOLLYWOOD," SAYS DAVID BOHNETT OF THE BEVERLY HILLS RESIDENCE HE SHARES WITH HIS PARTNER, TOM GREGORY. But, when the couple purchased the 1930s Paul Williams-style structure, it hadn't quite reached its full star-studded potential. "The previous owner had done a major remodel about 20 years ago," says philanthropist and technology entrepreneur Bohnett.

**INTERIOR DESIGN** Mark Rios, FAIA, FASLA, Rios Clementi Hale Studios

**ARCHITECTURE** Mark Rios, FAIA, FASLA, Rios Clementi Hale Studios

**HOME BUILDER** George Peper, Fort Hill Construction

**LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE** Mark Rios, FAIA, FASLA, Rios Clementi Hale Studios

**BEDROOMS** 4 **BATHROOMS** 11 **SQUARE FEET** 10,000









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"So it was in need of a makeover." And looking to the cinematic pedigree of the storied neighborhood—screen legends such as Lucille Ball and Jimmy Stewart once called it home—Bohnett knew what direction to take. "I wanted people to walk in the house and have the sense that Joan Crawford was going to come down the stairs and say, 'Let's have a cocktail!'"

To carry out that glamorous vision, Bohnett called on his longtime friend and frequent collaborator, architect Mark Rios, principal of the interdisciplinary firm Rios Clementi Hale Studios in Los Angeles. "It was a beautifully proportioned, elegant house," says Rios, whose firm handled the architecture, interiors and landscaping, "but none of the details were particularly spectacular. David wanted to make it unique." Beginning with the architecture, Rios worked with associates Leslie Barrett and Casey Nagel to make subtle but important changes. The kitchen was modernized, baths and powder rooms rebuilt, and a large terrace was added along the second-floor master bedroom.

#### HAUTE DINNER

Architect Mark Rios collaborated with members of his Los Angeles firm, Rios Clementi Hale Studios, to infuse the Beverly Hills house of David Bohnett and Tom Gregory with a dose of classic Hollywood glamour. Rios chose chocolate-hued leather walls for the dining room, where Maison Jansen-style chairs from the 1950s encircle a table by Kerry Joyce for Dessin Fournir; a creamy white rug from Mansour Modern in LA lies underfoot. Pendants from Stellar Union in Southampton, New York, illuminate the space. The vintage screens are from Blackman Cruz.





#### WINDING ROAD

A curved staircase in the entry sets the stage for the sophisticated interiors beyond, while neutral tones evoke a calm atmosphere. A Pollack wallcovering from Donghia and a custom stair runner fabricated by Decorative Carpets in LA offer a subtle backdrop for a whimsical screen by Piero Fornasetti. The glass-top table is from Blackman Cruz.





#### RED SEE

Rios chose a high-gloss tomato soup-red to lacquer the game room's existing paneling. A de Sede sofa sits on a black-and-white, Greek key-patterned rug by Stark, which tempers the red ceiling and walls. The vintage Hollywood photographs are part of Gregory's large collection. The home's millwork is by DPC Woodworking in L.A.





#### **BOTTLED UP**

A 1950s Paavo Tynell for Taito-Iidman chandelier, purchased at auction through Wright 20 in Chicago, and a grouping of Arcade Glass bottles purchased at Micucci in the Pacific Design Center add punches of color to the breakfast room. The same Maison Jansen-style chairs used in the dining room—upholstered here in chocolate-colored leather—pull up to a round marble-topped table found at David Sutherland in L.A. Wood floors throughout the house are from Michael D'Angelo in El Segundo.

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"The house was visually in good condition," says LA-based general contractor George Peper, president of Fort Hill Construction, "but that view was a bit misleading." Peper notes that, while the design changes were made, the house was also brought up to current structural standards.

As the architecture was put in order, so were its surroundings. With firm colleague John Fishback, Rios created grounds that felt "as large and stately as possible" by choosing "very few plant types and repeating them over and over." In the back yard, the two encircled an existing pond and pool with large-leaf





#### HOME COURT

The classic lines of the tennis pavilion echo the traditional architecture of the 1930s main house. The brick-paved outdoor room is comfortably furnished to offer a respite between sets. Manicured hedges and symmetrically planted trees tie in with the pared-down approach to the new landscaping, hardscaping and outdoor lighting, which was installed by Harold Jones Landscape in Simi Valley, JA Framing in Sylmar, and Pat Skinner Lighting, also in Simi Valley, respectively.





#### STYLE SELECTION

Annie Harris Massie and William McKinnon Massie Jr. designed this luxurious chair to evoke a living room feeling outdoors. *Beaufort Club Chair with Cushions*, starting at \$5,560; [mckinnonharris.com](http://mckinnonharris.com)



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plantings to contrast with the expansive lawns, and they lowered boxwood hedges by several feet to let in light and offer a feeling of openness. "Our goal for the landscape was to simplify it and make it feel more grand," says Rios.

While the structure and landscaping were kept classic and tailored, Rios, along with design associate Daniel Torres, set out to make an impact with the interiors. "We wanted to take appropriate risks," says Rios. "So that, when you walk in, you're bowled over by some of the moves." To start, they selected colors and patterns that become more intense as one progresses through the house. The living room, with its linen-covered walls and subdued gold and cream tones, "engages you in the conversation," says Rios. A sectional sofa in the family room was upholstered with a deep rust-colored fabric, while chocolate-hued leather walls build drama in the dining room. The kitchen and adjoining TV room are energized with lemon-patterned wallpaper, and the palette reaches a crescendo in the game room, where existing paneling was lacquered a rich tomato-soup red. "We tried to exaggerate the experience of each room," says Rios.

Though the backdrops of the rooms shift, the approach to the furnishings was kept consistent. "It was important to me that the furniture have an eclectic mix of styles," says Bohnett. "I didn't want it to feel gimmicky." Rios agreed and









#### **GOLDEN AGE**

In the living room, a brass-and-acrylic sofa by Charles Hollis Jones, purchased at Alan Moss in New York, is paired with an Edward Wormley sofa and two Billy Haines chairs—all from Downtown in LA—on one side of the room. A second sitting area is composed of a Giò Ponti sofa and two chairs, covered with Fortuny fabric found at Keith McCoy & Associates, also in LA. The early 1800s rug is from Mansour.





#### NEW LEAF

The property's existing ponds and swimming pool were kept, but the landscaping was reconcepted to achieve "more order and structure," says Rios. Plantings, including acanthus and other big-leaved specimens, were put in around the water features to provide dramatic contrast between the clipped and manicured lawns. Roof by Folger Roofing and Construction in Northridge.





#### LINE ITEM

In a nod to the nearby Polo Lounge restaurant in the Beverly Hills Hotel, a black-and-white Perennials stripe was used liberally in the loggia. A custom cocktail table by Murray's Iron Works complements clean-lined furnishings by McKinnon and Harris, purchased at Janus et Cie. The light fixtures are from Charles Edwards in London. Windows and doors throughout the home are from Old English Milling in Valencia.

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also made a point to find pieces that would work with the house's traditional sensibility while referencing the couple's affinity for modernism. "I think filling the house with traditional furniture would have been expected," says Rios, who hunted down mid-century finds by designers such as Piero Fornasetti, Giò Ponti and Charles Hollis Jones. "The great thing about these pieces is that they have classic roots and proportions but are made in a sculptural and modern way."

That unexpected quality is part of the home's success. "It has a quiet approach," says Rios, "but, as you walk inside, it surprises you. It's like a story; as you move through, you get to know the characters, and they become a little more eccentric." **L**