

ARCHITECTURAL DIGEST

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WINONA RYDER



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A lot of my generation think it's politically incorrect to like beautiful things," says actress Winona Ryder, who, with her dark eyes and china-doll complexion, is a thing of beauty herself. "They're into camp, but it's not for me. Working on *The Age of Innocence* spoiled me, because everything I looked at was a work of art."

But while May Welland, her character in the Martin Scorsese film, lived in a splendid nineteenth-century world portrayed by Edith Wharton, Ryder herself is decidedly contemporary. The actress, who is currently starring in the film adaptation of Isabel Allende's novel *The House of the Spirits* and in the comedy of twenty-something life *Reality Bites*, can dress

"She has very refined taste, and she's drawn to ethereal images," says Kevin Haley of his longtime friend actress Winona Ryder (inset and cover), for whom he renovated a 1920s house in Beverly Hills. ABOVE: Haley added limestone pavers in the entrance hall, which set off the sweeping staircase. The English chest is from Kathleen Spiegelman. RIGHT: Ryder wanted the living room to be a comfortable and informal space for entertaining. Nancy Corzine velvet throw. Rose Tarlow-Melrose House open-arm chair and fabric. Aga John rug.

ARCHITECTURAL DIGEST
VISITS:

WINONA RYDER
COAST TO COAST WITH
A RISING STAR

INTERIOR DESIGN BY KEVIN HALEY
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"The house was very dark, so it was important to lighten it up," says Haley. "I think we tried ten shades of white." A 1908 nude by Emile René Ménard hangs in the living room. The mirror above the Italian console has an 18th-century Italian frame. A 1910 oil by Sir William Russell Flint is in the dining room beyond. Chandelier is 19th-century Czechoslovakian.

up in antique lace and high-heeled slippers one day and dress down in baggy jeans and high-top sneakers the next. On her bookshelves, volumes by Wharton, Jane Austen and E. M. Forster vie for space with first editions by J. D. Salinger and Harper Lee. In other words, Ryder is what you might call a modern romantic.

It's no surprise then that her Beverly Hills house and her New York City pied-à-terre are not only feminine and charming but clean and contemporary. Credit for this balancing act goes to Kevin Haley, an actor (and

good friend of Ryder's) who has recently added decorating to his list of accomplishments. "I was always interested in furniture," he says, "and I want everywhere I live to be perfect and beautiful, so I was always overhauling my apartments. I was great for landlords," he adds, laughing.

For Ryder, who had lived out of suitcases for years before she acquired two residences in relatively short order, Haley came along at the right time. Or, as she puts it, "He saved my life." Ryder's small 1920s house in Beverly Hills had been nearly stripped of

its Mediterranean charm by insensitive modernizations. "It was creepy," she recalls with a grimace. "I could never stay there by myself."

Then she saw what Haley had done with his own apartment, and Ryder knew she had found an aesthetic soul mate. "I would never let anyone else make decisions for me, but I trust Kevin's taste one hundred percent."

Haley's first task was to restore Ryder's house as closely as possible to its original state. He had the orangetoned stain sandblasted from the timbered ceiling in the living room and



ABOVE: Haley turned a small space upstairs into an open dressing room for the actress and had the glazed closet doors etched in a lace pattern. The mirror dates from the 1940s. The Louis XVI bench is covered in Old World Weavers fabric.

"I can't stand houses where you're afraid to touch anything," says Ryder. "There's an authenticity about everything in this house. Anybody would be comfortable here." BELOW: Haley decorated the master bedroom in soft tones. Aga John carpet.



rescued graceful wrought-iron hardware and curtain rods from the garage. He also turned the tiny patio and steeply sloping backyard into a romantic garden where Ryder loves to sit and paint.

Haley often finds inspiration in the first piece that he buys for a house. In this case, it came from a nineteenth-century Czechoslovakian chandelier with amethyst crystal drops that now graces the dining room. Similar jewel-toned accents—in the rich green velvet on the dining chairs or the ruby red of the cut velvet on a living room chair—punctuate a palette based primarily on the warm whites of walls and slipcovers. Antique, reproduction and contemporary furnishings coexist easily under Haley's direction, highlighted by such whimsical touches as the lace-patterned glass doors that he designed for Ryder's dressing room.

In contrast, the actress's New York apartment in a landmark downtown building offered Haley the chance to create a different mood entirely. "The word that came to mind was *glamour*," he says. While the rooms have little architectural detail, their high ceilings and tall windows lend them an urbane and sophisticated feel.

There, Haley's inspiration for the décor came from a French low table from 1940 whose wrought-iron base is adorned with musical notes. "I had a moment of panic until I found it," he admits. He went on to locate a parchment-covered bar, painted with a still life of musical instruments, that recalls the work of Italian designer Gio Ponti. Then he happened upon a striking set of panels, also painted with musical instruments, that had been made for the legendary Manhattan dance hall Roseland. A few pieces of furniture covered in a mohair fabric, a grand piano, and Haley had orchestrated an elegant arrangement of color and texture.

In the dining room and bedrooms, Haley organized similar mixtures of contemporary furniture and pieces from the 1930s and 1940s, with luxurious textures adding richness to the rooms' muted, pale colors.

Since Ryder's career seems only to continue its upward trajectory, the moments she spends at home are more precious than ever. "In my work I'm often physically uncomfortable—wearing tight corsets or standing around in the freezing cold," she says. "So it's important to have a place to retreat to." In this respect too, Ryder has found a kindred spirit in Haley, who hopes to go on balancing his acting and decorating careers. "I like being able to create an environment where people can feel safe to be creative," he says. "The world can seem so dark and out of control—it keeps me sane to focus on beauty." □

Haley completely landscaped the tiny garden, using sandstone, river rock and lush plantings. "It was basically a square of cement," he recalls. "But since the house is centered around it, I wanted it to be pretty."



