

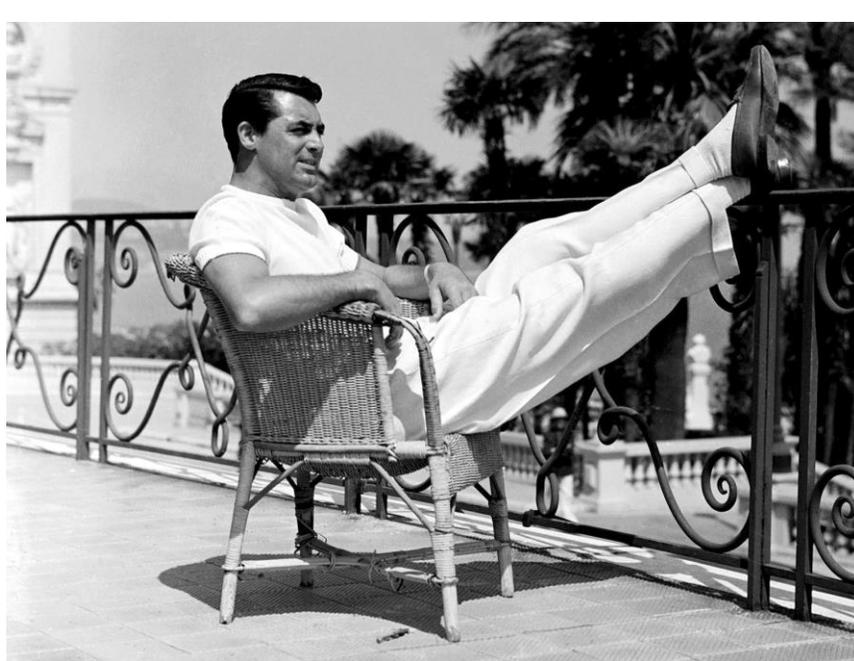


THE

Nick Zegarrac's

Hollywood

ART



There ought to be an annotation in Webster's Dictionary next to the words 'suave' and 'debonair' denoting each as a synonym for Cary Grant. The word movie star might have been invented for him. Most certainly, he worked like mad to fashion it to his public persona; the quintessence of glamor, wit and attractiveness. He just seemed to fit that mold perhaps better than any of his contemporaries.

Yet, the persona we believe to be Cary Grant, ingrained in the public consciousness by repeat viewings of his films and by Grant's own indomitable desire to maintain this image both on and off the screen, has arguably done irreprehensible damage to our basic understanding of the man; an impoverished Cockney and free spirit who never really knew his own mother, riddled with childhood angst and guilt that dogged him throughout his adult years; who left home before the age of consent to join a traveling troop of play actors, and, who hit the ground running in America at the tender age of eighteen – without money, family or even friends to recommend him – but who by good fortune and an imperious work ethic carved a lasting niche for himself out of virtually nothing at all.



These are the aspects of Cary Grant's life that have all but vanished from our appreciation of him; eclipsed by the urbane sophisticate who seems utterly at home in 'polite society': the arbitrator of chic good taste in all of the masculine arts. But this is not *really* Cary Grant, as Grant himself astutely pointed out.

Arriving for the AFI Tribute to the legendary John Ford in 1971, accompanied by director Peter Bogdanovich, Grant apologetically admitted to the young woman attending the door that he had left his invitation at home. Asked his name and replying in kind, the woman proceeded to give Cary the once over before replying, "You don't look like Cary Grant!" Without pause, Grant casually replied, "Well, nobody does!"



Cary Grant

elegance personified



by Nick Zegarac



(Previous page: clockwise from left): Grant poses with Grace Kelly for a publicity photo to promote Alfred Hitchcock's **To Catch A Thief** (1955); relaxing on the Riviera in between takes – soaking up the sun and the good life; looking discontented in 1956, emerging from London's Savoy – a rare occasion where Grant appears to be revealing more of his feelings and less of the trademarked Cary Grant; mugging for the cameras, calling for quiet on the set of **North By Northwest** (1959); with Eva Marie Saint for their first love scene in that film – this one aboard a train. "Who is going to follow Cary Grant?" Eva Marie mused decades later, "Nada!"; Grant and co-star James Stewart compete for a kiss with Kate Hepburn in this publicity still from **The Philadelphia Story** (1940). Hepburn had wanted MGM to give her Clark Gable and Spencer Tracy as her costars. She accepted Stewart and Grant, whom Hepburn had already costarred with in **Sylvia Scarlett** (1935), **Bringing Up Baby** (1938) and **Holiday** (1939): a trio of highly regarded movie classics today that were little more than box office disappointments at the time of their premieres; relaxing on the Paramount back lot in 1962. Grant always looked unruffled and immaculate whatever the occasion. There is a continuity to his publicity stills that belies the passage of time. Not only did he age gracefully, his wardrobe remained relatively the same.

(This page: top row from left): Elias Leach circa 1901, three years before his son Archie was born. Elsie Kingdon (nee Leach) in 1900. Over the years there has been some discrepancy over Elsie, with biographers questioning whether or not she was, in fact, Archie's real mother. In fact, she was – infrequently referenced by her middle name 'Lillian'. In 1943, after learning that Elsie was still alive (Elias had long ago told Archie that she had died) Cary went back to England for a very awkward reunion. The woman he met barely knew him and treated his gift of a full-length fur coat with perplexing disdain. The fact that Elsie had spent a good deal of her time away from him in and out of various mental institutions may have had something to do with her erratic behavior. Regardless, Grant was heartbroken by this encounter. Although he would continue to look after Elsie financially until her death in 1974 at the age of 94, the two rarely had contact after this reunion. Archie Leach, age five – a sad-eyed child. He grew up in lower middle class surroundings – hardly privileged, though never starving. Archie, age fifteen, the year he decided to steal away with the Pender Group on his first lark into acting.

(This page: bottom row from left): Bob Pender, the manager of the Pender Group. "He changed my life," Cary would later muse affectionately, "Gave me a place to be and for the first time in my life I felt as though I belonged somewhere." Life in the group was pleasant, if vagabond. An early handbill announces the pending arrival of The Pender Group, the picture showing off 'the mighty Pender Giants' – actors who walked on various sized stilts. Cary would infrequently appear as one of the giants, a skill that immensely informed his early acting style – able to perform handstands and pratfalls without the benefit of a double. Cary, leaning up against a Model T Ford. In 1920 he was barely eighteen when he made the decision to leave the Pender Group and remain behind in New York City – a bit of daring that would extend into seven long years of working odd jobs of every kind just to pay the rent. Cary, all smiles on the Paramount back lot in 1932. Paramount offered a reprieve after an outright dismissal from 20th Century-Fox.

And yet for the bulk of his 82 years, Cary Grant did epitomize a sort of untouchable masculinity. He aged magnificently, and was, in fact, still considered the touchstone in male attractiveness at the time of his passing. Eulogizing his importance in the annals of screen legends, director Billy Wilder astutely noted, "*The model is gone...who can we emulate now?*" Who indeed?

While the world of popular entertainment has decidedly moved on since Cary's time, and other pretenders to the throne like Hugh Grant and George Clooney have been laughingly referenced as '*the new*' Cary Grant, virtually none have been able to surpass, or arguably even match the intelligent class act that *was* Cary Grant.

They say an actor's life is his work and vice versa. But in Grant's case, the precept goes much further – the line between work and this private individual calculatingly blurred. Cary Grant was *on* all the time; the impoverished Bristol lad known as Archibald Alexander Leach relegated to the dust bins of a personal history that was quietly set aside after 1929 and never revisited.



(Top left): a double exposure of Cary set against a poster for Harbach & Hammerstein’s **Golden Dawn** (1928); a minor Broadway effort that nevertheless began Cary’s ascendance as a congenial male ingénue on the stage. (Top middle): John Hay ‘Jock’ Whitney circa 1929. Independently wealthy, publisher of New York’s Herald Tribune and personal friend of producer David O. Selznick, Whitney had his fingers in a lot of pies throughout the early part of the last century. He was an avid thoroughbred horse racer/breeder, produced and/or co-funded several Broadway shows and bought early shares in both the Freeport Texas Co. – a sulfur mine - and the Technicolor Corp. He also collected priceless art and gave generously to causes that were his passion; providing considerable endowments to President Eisenhower’s election campaign, New York’s Presbyterian Hospital and Public Library and Yale University – his alma mater to whom Jock bequeathed monies to build the Payne Whitney Gymnasium.

(Top right): Henry Ford circa 1929; the visionary industrialist whose ‘Fordisms’ were responsible for revolutionizing mass production and making the process affordable to everyone. Both Ford and Whitney became Grant’s personal friends in the days when America’s elite enjoyed dabbling in the arts and meeting artists from all walks of life. Grant used his fifteen minutes wisely, making friends easily and quickly and keeping virtually all of them close at hand for the rest of his lucrative career. He was undeniably, one of the most connected individuals in all of Hollywood...and why not? Picking up on the mannerism of the socially mobile gave the actor at least part of the persona we today understand to be ‘Cary Grant’.

(Bottom left): Grant, center, looking tan and relaxed among the cultured set in the Hamptons circa 1922. Grant worked tirelessly to cultivate a nature so infectious and free-spirited that he was readily sought out as ‘the extra man’ for a social gathering and/or party given by the *hoi poloi*. He may not have had their bank account but he certainly had their connections. (Middle left): rehearsing for **Sinners in the Sun** (1932), off camera with director Alexander Hall as an unidentified lighting technician casually looks on. That’s Carol Lombard staring longingly back at them. (Middle right): a very early posed publicity still of Grant taken at Paramount. Stills like this one emphasized Grant’s obvious good looks but leant no air to the young man as anything more than stultified ‘eye candy’. (Bottom right): Identified as only ‘*first sailor*’ in the little seen **Singapore Sue** (1932) – a short where Grant was given screen time to sell himself as a comedian. He was as stiff as a board, leering into the camera and uttering painful lines like “*You and me...we go chop suey round the block? We chow mein...what do you say? Hong Kong? Ping-pong? Mmmm?*”

“*When you talked to Cary...*” Dina Merrill once surmised, “*...you never could get past the Cary Grant persona.*” Friends Peter Bogdanovich and Ralph Lauren wholeheartedly agreed. “*What looked easy was actually a terrible emotional complication for him,*” Lauren suggested. “*There was no way he could embody all the facets he portrayed on the screen,*” Bogdanovich concluded.

Yet somehow, Grant did exactly that; miraculously and exhaustively. The critics of his own time never came around to acknowledging Cary for this carefully crafted persona, perhaps because it always seemed like Grant was playing himself. In a way this is both true and yet a myth. He was playing to his own public perceptions about himself – that much is true; variations on a series of cleverly concocted character traits designed to shield his more vulnerable side from the outside world. Grant, who rarely gave his fans a glimpse into that other sense of self, did offer some remarkably astute observations in a rare 1963 interview.



(Top left): Grant as Capt. Cummings, being tempted by Mae West's Lady Lou to come back and see her sometime in *She Done Him Wrong* (1933). He is little more than background, a good-looking straight man for West to tease and emasculate with her inimitable sass and penchant for double entendre. (Top middle and right): quick study, Grant reading up on his part for 1932's *Merrily We Go To Hell*, and examining a piece of celluloid by holding it up to the light. (Bottom): scenes from a flop. (Left): Grant is caught off guard by a photographer during an impromptu food fight on the set of *Sylvia Scarlett* (1935). He plays Jimmy Monkley, a disreputable con artist who decides to take the new guy – 'Sylvester' – under his wing. Problem: the new guy is actually a girl, played by Katharine Hepburn, seen herein defending herself in the far right-hand corner. (Middle): Monkley and Sylvester prepare to bed down for the night in the awkward undressing sequence from the film. Both Hepburn and Grant give rather fascinating performances; hers gender ambiguous, Grant's - a thoroughly relaxed variation on his Cockney roots. It didn't matter. The public stayed away in droves. (Right): rehearsing at the piano with Edmund Gwenn (*Miracle on 34th Street's* Santa Claus) herein cast as Henry Scarlett (far left) and director George Cukor. It was a very happy set at least.

"For more than half my fifty-eight years I have cautiously appeared from behind the façade known as Cary Grant. The protection of that façade proved both an advantage and a disadvantage. If I couldn't see out...how could anyone see in?"

But the illusion of Cary Grant is further shrouded in mystery when given pause to critique his four failed marriages (He was married five times). It's no secret that Grant's troubled relationships with women remained at the crux of a personal failing he never quite conquered. Grant's first wife, Virginia Cherrill once commented *"I was in love with Cary. Cary was in love with himself. I didn't stand a chance."* Subsequent wives Betsy Drake and Dyan Cannon were even less conciliatory in their critiques of Cary's marital failings – although each eventually attained a level of acceptance that effectively retracted some - if not all - of the vitriol and bitterness they once expounded him in the tabloids.

Adding to this hysteria was a persistent rumor regarding Grant's own sexuality – first spawned in the late 1930s when he and fellow actor Randolph Scott shared a bachelor pad near Santa Monica. Yet, it is important to recall that many Hollywood alumni from this period shared homes together for purely platonic purposes. David Niven, as example, and Errol Flynn were roomies for several years, shacking up together in a fashionable home they affectionately nicknamed, Cirrhosis-by-the-Sea because liquor of every kind flowed liberally through its doors. In Cary and Randolph's case the highly-prized commodity was women; coming and going in the middle of the night.

In the interim since Grant's passing too many puff pieces have emerged with a social bias to enhance and promote Scott and Grant as a homosexual couple. Photos first taken for **Modern Screen** and **Look Magazine** in 1933-34 have long since been endlessly circulated and earmarked as 'proof' that the two were lovers in between their cumulative seven trips to the altar with members of the opposite sex. Even in 1933 these photos created a nervous buzz in the front offices of various studios, the PR



**"He's three years old, gentle as a kitten, and likes dogs...
...I wonder if that means he eats dogs or is just fond of them?"**

- Katharine Hepburn (Bringing Up Baby)



(Previous page): The hit that never was. Howard Hawks' **Bringing Up Baby** (1938) is today justly regarded as a cultural touchstone in screwball comedy. At the time of its release it was a costly disaster for RKO, a studio that could not afford one. (Top row): Grant's David Huxley attempts to explain to a thoroughly obtuse Susan (Kate Hepburn) that not only has she chipped his golf ball on the fairway but now she is attempting to drive off in his car. "You mean this is 'your' car... 'your' golf ball. Is there anything in this world that doesn't belong to you?" she inquires, to which he condescendingly replies, "Yes, thank heaven – you!" Kate's socially affluent scatterbrain doesn't get it, and drives off with Grant's paleontologist riding on the running board.

"The love impulse in man frequently reveals itself in terms of conflict," Susan tells David. He is unconvinced of her psycho-babble, more so when she manages to accidentally tear the coattails of his tuxedo. (Second from top): moments later David inadvertently returns the favor, sheering the backside of Susan's lame gown. Unaware that her backside is showing, David attempts his own damage control by using his top hat. Realizing what has occurred, Susan whispers, "Don't just stand there. Get behind me." "I am behind you," he whispers back. "Then get closer..." she tells him. A road trip to Connecticut; just David, Susan and 'Baby'. "The only way you'll ever get me to follow another of your suggestions is to hold a bright object in front of my eyes and twirl it," David tells her.

(Middle): the moment of truth, "Well who are you?" Aunt Elizabeth (May Robson) inquires, "Why are you dressed like that?" "I just went 'gay' all of a sudden!" David frustratingly shouts back. Trying to convince George (played by Asta, the wire-haired terrier, to divulge the location of David's dinosaur bone, "You've just had a bad day," Susan tells David. "That's a masterpiece of understatement!" he confirms. (Bottom rows): Serenading 'Baby' who is perched on a rooftop after skulking about in the dark in search of George and David's bone. Rescuing Susan from her perilous fall after the bones of David's beloved Tyrannosaurus Rex have collapsed. "Oh David," she declares, "You do love me. And you can forgive me. Oh, David!" (Bottom): Director Howard Hawks and Grant listen to suggestions from Kate on the set. Hepburn and Grant look rather weary in between takes of the famous night prow through the forest in search of Baby. Insert, Susan attempts to explain to her aunt about David. "What are you doing?" Elizabeth demands to know. "Sitting on the corner of 42nd Street waiting for a bus," is his glib reply.

(This page from left to right): Grant with first wife Virginia Cherrill and frequently roomie, Randolph Scott, taken at a Hollywood house party in 1933. After photos like the two featured at middle and far right appeared in Look Magazine rumors began to circulate that Randolph and Cary were more than friends. These photos are obviously posed and at face value offer no such 'definitive proof' that either actor was gay or involved in a homosexual affair. Regardless, the rumor has persisted ever since – unconfirmed and often vehemently denied by Grant and his ex-wives.

departments encouraging Grant and Scott to dissolve their living arrangement permanently. But lest we forget that these photos are not candid. They were not taken by paparazzi hiding in the bushes.

Grant and Scott are rather obviously posed and photographed under staged lighting conditions; the accompanying story covered by journalists on the dole for the big studios deliberately designed to make each star look good at any and all costs. Given the intense anti-homosexual climate in Hollywood back then, it seems highly suspect that any studio would have sanctioned a photo-op to expose a homosexual liaison between two of their most highly bankable male stars. It would have ruined Grant and Scott's respective careers and deprived the studios from making millions of dollars in revenue off of each. The debate, however, continues to rage.

"Dad liked the mystique surrounding his sexuality," daughter, Jennifer (from his marriage to Dyan Cannon) has professed in her memoir, "He said it made women want to prove the assertion wrong."

But was Cary Grant *really* gay and does it *really* matter? The answer to the latter half of this question should be an unequivocal 'no' – particularly from today's more tolerant vantage. But the answer to the first half is a bit more difficult to discern. In the



(Above): Randolph Scott (left) and Cary (right) enjoying their plush bachelor's pad near Santa Monica. (Right): Grant mugs for the camera, seemingly disinterested that he's about to get a medicine ball full in the chest from his roommate. (Below): singing a chorus or two? I wonder who took harmony. (Bottom): enjoying their swimming pool on a hot afternoon. At the time these photos were taken Scott had the more prominent and busier career. Both men's movie stardom would kick into high gear by 1940. Today, few except his diehard fans remember Randolph Scott. But the world continues to be spellbound with admiration for Cary Grant.

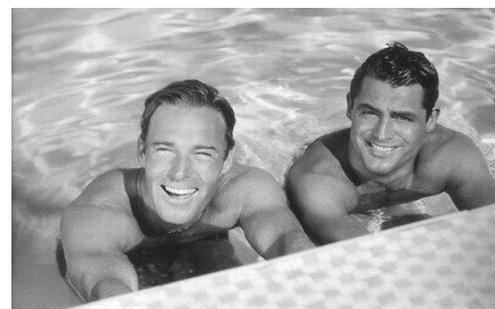


late 1970s comedian Chevy Chase publicly out-ed Grant as part of his rather crass standup routine and was publicly sued by Grant for his arrogance. But actress Betty White, who made a similarly double-edged comment about Grant – done less from spite and more tongue-in-cheek, was all but ignored by both Grant's lawyers and the press.

Third wife, Betsy Drake has insisted that Cary was 'all man' and also claims that there was nothing wrong with his libido – as a later affair during their marriage with actress Sophia Loren attested. In the end, Grant's heterosexual iconography has remained largely preserved, though speculation has never entirely waned and probably never will.



The more endearing aspect to Cary Grant's public persona is twofold: first and most obviously predicated on his dashing good looks that were not entirely or even immediately apparent when Grant did his first screen test for 20th Century-Fox in 1932. He was told then that there was no future for him in the movies because his neck was too thick and he was slightly bow-legged. Neither condemnation seemed to prevent Cary from landing a contract over at Paramount almost immediately – a move he quickly became disillusioned by when his parts proved to be little more than window-dressing. After his contract expired Grant took it upon himself to become one of the first 'free agents' in Hollywood, forgoing a fixed salary on a picture by picture basis for





(Previous page): Director Leo McCarey clowns with Cary and co-star Irene Dunne on the set of **The Awful Truth** (1937), one of the zaniest screwball comedies ever filmed. Jerry Warriner (Grant) works on his artificial tan to convince his wife, Lucy (Dunne) that he's been in Florida for two weeks, as his good friend, Mr. Barnsley (Scott Kolk) looks on. But who is deceiving who? Upon returning home Jerry discovers that Lucy isn't home. Moments later her Aunt Patsy (Cecil Cunningham) arrives, followed by Lucy on the arm of her piano teacher, Armand Duvalle (Alexander D'Arcy), looking like the proverbial cat who has swallowed the canary. Challenge by Jerry to explain himself, Armand cordially replies, "I am a great teacher – not a great lover" to which Lucy glibly replies, "That's right, Armand. No one could accuse you of being a great lover!" Jerry is petulant as he accuses Lucy of infidelity; a moment later made to eat his own words when Lucy discovers that an orange in a fruit basket Jerry has supposedly brought back from Florida has the California Farmer's stamp of approval on its skin. "You didn't say anything about being rained out in Florida," Lucy teases, "The papers were full of it."

So is Jerry. But it's no use. The couple divorce in anger. Lucy begins seeing Texas bumpkin, Daniel Leeson (Ralph Bellamy) and Jerry, a nightclub singer named Dixie Belle Lee (Joyce Compton) whose song 'My Dreams are Gone With The Wind' includes some 'wind' effects that raise her billowy skirt to expose her panties. Humiliated in Lucy and Daniel's presence, Jerry replies, "I just met her." Jerry crashes Lucy's recital and some furniture (by accident). The couple seems on the verge of reconciliation. But then Lucy inadvertently gives Jerry the bowler belonging to Armand. (This page): believing his wife to still be unfaithful, Jerry becomes engaged to society maven, Barbara Vance (Molly Lamont). In a last ditch effort Lucy crashes their engagement party to perform her own rendition of Dixie Belle's song; pretending to be Jerry's drunkard sister.

a percentage of the gross and even a percentage of the films themselves; a lucrative venture virtually unheard of in the era of the 'star system'.

And yet, Cary Grant continued to work – steadily and with some of the finest directors from his generation, including George Cukor, Howard Hawks, Leo McCarey and Alfred Hitchcock. He also frequently came to be known as the romantic ideal opposite a stellar roster of leading ladies; Irene Dunne, Katharine Hepburn, Jean Arthur, Deborah Kerr and Mae West among them. This latter association – one of Grant's earliest, became an irksome subject when West claimed she not only 'discovered' Cary Grant, but had, in fact, made him a star.

The truth is that Cary had already appeared in a half dozen movies before co-starring as West's straight man in **She Done Him Wrong** (1933). While one can endlessly debate the merit of these early ventures (in point of fact, they were forgettable tripe), the reality is that Cary was already considered a highly marketable commodity by Paramount at the time he withstood the hurricane of double-entendre heaped upon his Capt. Cummings by West's lusty Lady Lou in the film.

Grant was a fast learner. In essence he put together 'Cary Grant' by gleaning character traits and bits of business from his interaction with members of high society who would ultimately shape his onscreen image into that of a charming bon vivant. From Leo McCarey, Grant learned how to hone his comedic timing – already considerable and plied in his pre-Hollywood career on the Broadway stage. From George Cukor, Cary acquired an inner sophistication and outward carriage that added to his confidence. Howard Hawks contributed an air of rugged masculinity to this malleable patina. But it was Alfred Hitchcock who was able to manipulate all these facets within Grant's persona; bringing each subtly to the surface with a moodier, darker subtext. Perhaps more than any other director in Cary Grant's career, Hitchcock brought forth the all-around image of the real 'reel' Cary Grant that is best remembered today.

Their alliance began on the set of **Suspicion** (1941); Cary cast as utterly unscrupulous gigolo, Johnnie Aysgarth, who marries demure, love-struck wallflower, Lina McLaidlaw (Joan Fontaine) in the hopes of bleeding her inheritance dry. Unluckily, the girl's father has wisely labeled Johnnie a sponge and cuts Lina out of his Will, thereby forcing Johnnie to contemplate murder as his only alternative to collect on a very plush insurance policy. It might have worked, except that Hitchcock was hamstrung by a



(Above): preparing with Alfred Hitchcock and co-star Joan Fontaine to shoot the sequence in which newlywed Lina Laidlaw (Fontaine) begins to suspect that her husband, Johnny (Grant) has spurious intentions. (Right): the ominous glass of milk that came to not in the final edit was actually tinted water with a battery-operated light bulb submersed. **Suspicion** (1941) is a disappointment, in that Hitchcock was not allowed to realize his original vision for the story on the screen because of the Production Code. Behind the scenes Grant wasn't particularly fond of his co-star, though judging by this photo Fontaine seems utterly at ease in his presence. Perhaps by this point in the production they had reached some sort of understanding.

(Right): Nigel Bruce as Beaky Thwaite casts an ominous glance for this publicity still, thoroughly not in keeping with the way the this scene plays in the final film. In the movie, Lina and Beaky are playing a game of Scrabble while he and Johnny benignly discuss their new plans for a land development venture. During their conversation Lina grows more pensive as she forms the word 'murderer' from the letters almost by chance, then suddenly has a vision of her husband pushing Beaky over the side of a cliff to gain access to his insurance policy. The sequence, as filmed, ends with Lina's collapsing on the floor. In this publicity still it appears as though Lina has something to hide, Johnnie is slightly amused, and, Beaky is the one with the sixth sense about the somber fate that awaits him.



In the film's ending a wild-eyed Johnnie manages to pull his frantic wife back into her passenger seat when her car door inexplicably swings open during a speeding drive along a winding precipice. Until this penultimate moment Lina, as the audience, is certain Johnnie intends on doing away with her. Hitchcock's compromise, sparing us the sight of Cary Grant as a cold-blooded killer, also emasculated the story of any real tension and plausibility. It wasn't his fault. The code of censorship forbade him any alternative. But the patchwork replacement ending quite simply did not work.

Production Code that emphatically refused him his 'hero' also be a cold-blooded killer. Nevertheless, Grant is chilling in the part. Five years later the pair reunited with a slight variation on this premise, this time for **Notorious** (1946) – Grant playing another unrepentant son of a bitch, but one whose heart remains virtuous despite his outwardly cruel exterior. By the mid-1950s Grant and Hitchcock had refined these





(Above): Woolworth heiress Barbara Hutton, the archetype for whom the old cliché “*money can’t buy happiness*” might have been written. At the tender age of seven Hutton discovered her mother’s body in an upstairs bedroom – a suicide that would haunt her for the rest of her life. Hutton’s inheritance was one third of a billion dollars – a perverse sum that did not translate into common sense when it came to acquiring either friendships or husbands. Imperious to a fault, Hutton married seven times to men who were Counts, Barons or high-born, self-proclaimed royalty with titles bought. None of her marriages panned out, leading Hutton into further despair and misery.

Cary Grant was a blip on Hutton’s radar – a fascination that took three months to spark and four years to cool. Hutton’s first two marriages ended in disgraceful embarrassments and the birth of one son, Lance, whom Cary positively adored and looked after as his own. In fact, Lance preferred Cary to his own father who had verbally and physically abused Hutton throughout their marriage and had squandered a hefty portion of her seemingly bottomless fortunes to satisfy his lavish expectations and their ever-expanding entourage of sycophantic worshipers whom Cary later came to despise. Of all Hutton’s hubbies, Grant was the only one never to rely on her monies to furnish him with a good time. Instead, he satisfied her incessant need for parties by committing himself to doing more movies and working harder than ever to keep up with her needs, wants and desires. He was a devoted husband to her, but she never forgave him his work ethic. When Lance died in a plane crash in 1972 Hutton was inconsolable, but Cary rushed to her side to comfort her and share in the loss. He had never stopped being a father to the boy and the death was cause for mutual mourning.

elements (some would argue ‘dumbed them down’) to cater to the star’s lighter side; yielding two more memorable performances from Grant in **To Catch A Thief** (1955) and their penultimate collaboration, **North By Northwest** (1959).

The other aspect about Cary Grant that audiences continue to gravitate to is his seemingly devil-may-care attitude toward life in general and his ability to set aside his looks for the sake of a good part. Yet, this too was an element of the Cary Grant mythology rather than his actual make-up as a human being. Cary once told his third wife Betsy Drake, “*Always smile. If you allow them to see how you really are they’ll eat you alive.*” When Betsy began taking LSD under the supervised treatment and advice of a psychiatrist, Grant followed suit. Sadly, his attempts to forget Sophia Loren and remain a faithful husband eventually imploded.

In his later years Cary was more circumspect about his own failings to which fame and success had ultimately contributed. “*I strove to make everything at least appear relaxed,*” he admitted in 1963, “*Perhaps by relaxing outwardly I could eventually relax inwardly too.*”

But did this actually ever happen for Cary Grant or was his only real peace to be found in the hereafter that he now occupies? Perhaps, we will never know for sure. In his own time Cary Grant was an enigma as well as a contradiction. But removed from his movie persona he quite simply ceases to exist. Like a shadow briefly glimpsed out of a corner of the eye or some distant memory made more generous and pure through the rose-colored advantages of time having lapsed in his absence – the sheer presence that we think of as Cary Grant has remained a cultural touchstone, near perfectly preserved, and a very tough act to follow indeed.





“What other life could there be then that of an actor? They were classless and cheerful. I had a place to be and people who let me be there.”

– Cary Grant

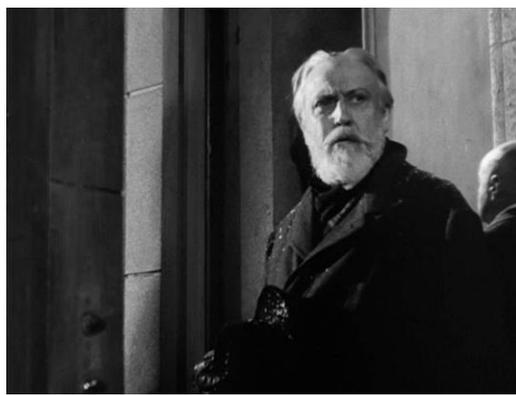
He was born Archibald Alexander Leach in Bristol England on Jan. 18, 1904. His father, Elias made a modest living by pressing clothes, his mother, Elsie, as a seamstress. Bristol was a working class community. In between school Archie grew up on the streets; his childhood playtime a brief reprieve from his disastrous home life. There was constant bickering between Elias and Elsie – a mismatched pair whose mounting mutual animosity became an ominous precursor that left young Archie guilt-ridden, haunted and insecure. By Grant’s own account he was ‘a terrible student’. *“School held absolutely no interest for me,”* Cary mused years later, *“It seemed to occupy my time with things I had little to no interest in at all. I was bored by it.”* At the tender age of nine Archie was informed by Elias that his mother had gone to the seaside. It was, of course, a lie. The couple had, in fact, separated.

In absence of a more concrete explanation, Archie’s inability to grasp why his own mother never returned home tore a hole in the young boy’s heart that refused to heal. He was consumed by a sense of responsibility for this abandonment; a feeling that never entirely left him - even as an adult.

“There was a void in my life,” Grant has written, *“A sadness of spirit that affected each daily activity...and no further explanation of my mother’s absence.”* In the meantime, Elias Leach began an affair with another woman with whom he eventually had an illegitimate child. In absence of any real parenting, Archie’s young academic life at Fairfield Academy began to unravel. He hated school which now seemed to him nothing better than an extension of the interment of his home life, and sought refuge by sneaking off to various stage shows to watch local actors rehearse and perform. Working up the gumption to press the stage manager at the Empire Theater for a job, simply to be nearer to his new love, Archie was reluctantly hired as a lighting assistant.

It was during this brief tenure that he discovered Bob Pender and the Pender Group – a travelling act performing skits and pantomime, songs and dances, a bit of juggling and plenty of acrobatics. They were a versatile troupe and Archie was instantly smitten. Forging his father’s signature on a letter to promote himself as a contender to join the group, Bob Pender’s acceptance of Archie led to a minor quandary when the troupe packed up to travel the provinces. Made frantic by his son’s unexplained disappearance Elias tracked Archie down, dissolved his contract with the Pender Group and forced the boy back into school. But it was no use. The acting bug had bitten and hard.





(Previous page): Henry Koster's **The Bishop's Wife** (1947), an often lyrical and beautifully understated Christmas offering from Samuel Goldwyn. Initially, Grant was to have played the part of the Bishop and David Niven, the angel who comes to earth to teach a man of the cloth the true spirit of giving. After nearly two weeks shoot under a different director, Goldwyn could see the writing on the wall. It wasn't working. Out with the old and in with Koster; the roles switched around and everything clicked – despite Grant's strenuous objections to playing the part. Grant's angel is a fascinating character study. Nicknamed Dudley, he appears first amidst a crowd of children gathered to gaze with excitement at the lavish department store window displays, saves a runaway baby carriage from being struck by a delivery truck, then helps a blind man (David Leonard) cross the street. Next, he spies Julia Brougham (Loretta Young) admiring a hat in a shop window.

Intuitively recognizing her great sadness, Dudley uses one of Julia's old friends, the atheist Professor Wutheridge (Monty Woolley), pretending to be a former student of his from the good old days in Vienna. Dudley startles the Bishop, Henry Brougham (David Niven) with an outright confession; that he is the answer to Henry's prayer. Next, Dudley makes Julia's happiness his personal project, surprising her and daughter, Debbie (Karolyn Grimes) in the snowy park, teaching Debbie how to throw a curve ball before taking Julia to Michel's – a restaurant that has fond memories for her. Reading her palm with sincerity Dudley surmises, *"I see a great deal of happiness. I see a woman who is adored. I see a rich and full life. I was just thinking...the world changes but two things remain the same – youth and beauty. They're really one in the same thing."* When Julia reminds Dudley that people must grow old he astutely points out *"Not everybody. The only people who grow old are the ones who were born old. You were born young. You'll remain that way."*

Conducting the Mitchell Boys Choir in 'Hearts of Gladness', and later, entertaining Julia's desire to go ice skating with her new hat. *"I feel so wicked,"* she explains with glee. *"If you are then so am I and that's an impossibility"* he points out. *"Whenever I'm with you I have a distinct feeling that everything's going to be alright,"* Julia tells Dudley. *"It could be if only people learned to behave like human beings,"* he reasons. Throughout the film Grant plays his angel with an air of darkness lurking beneath the light, a penetrating, often unsettling notion that at any moment his disposition might swing the other way.

(This page): decorating the Bishop's tree with a little divine inspiration. Plucking a harp as well as the heart strings of the caustic Mrs. Hamilton (Gladys Cooper), whose faith in humanity is restored after Dudley stirs her emotions from a near forgotten love affair with the man she ought to have married instead of her husband – the deceased composer, Alan Cartwright. In the final moments of the film, Dudley is seen observing parishioners returning to Henry's old church, St. Timothy's. Having lured Professor Wutheridge back into the fold, and subsequently erased all memory of his visit from their hearts and minds, Dudley instead remains outside, listening with pride as Henry delivers the midnight mass benediction Dudley has heavily rewritten to reflect the true spirit of Christmas.

"Tonight I want to tell you the story of an empty stocking. Once upon a midnight clear, there was a child's cry, a blazing star hung over a stable, and wise men came with birthday gifts. We haven't forgotten that night down the centuries. We celebrate it with stars on Christmas trees, with the sound of bells, and with gifts. But especially with gifts. You give me a book, I give you a tie. Aunt Martha has always wanted an orange squeezer and Uncle Henry can do with a new pipe. We forget nobody, adult or child. All the stockings are filled, all that is, except one. And we have even forgotten to hang it up. The stocking for the child born in a manger. It's his birthday we're celebrating. Don't let us ever forget that. Let us ask ourselves what He would wish for most. And then, let each put in his share, loving kindness, warm hearts, and a stretched out hand of tolerance. All the shinning gifts that make peace on earth."

In many ways, **The Bishop's Wife** marks a turning point in Cary Grant's movie career – away from the carefully crafted and varied performances of the late 1930s and early 40s to a more bland and stock characterization of the 'Cary Grant' persona. Only a year before Grant had given a superb performance in Hitchcock's **Notorious** (1946) as the manipulative FBI man, Devlin opposite Ingrid Bergman's put upon party girl, Alicia Huberman. It would take another Hitchcock movie, **To Catch A Thief** (1955) to stir Cary Grant's movie career out of the pabulum of 'light family-orientated comedies'. During the late 40s and early 50s Cary turned down prime roles in Billy Wilder's **Sabrina** and George Cukor's classic remake of **A Star Is Born** to do disposable entertainment – seemingly contented not to overtax himself. The formula worked. **Operation Petticoat** (1959) – a B-programmer with A-list production values was Grant's most successful movie in terms of box office dollars. Today however, Grant is best remembered for other films in his body of work – a list as distinguished as his manner and deportment throughout that lengthy career.



Cary's penchant for screwball comedy increasingly became watered down throughout the late 1940s and particularly by early 1950s. He seemed to fall back on the double-take and playing the confused romantic fop. (Above left): as thoroughly perplexed newly engaged Mortimer Brewster to Patricia Lane's squeaky Elaine Harper in Frank Capra's **Arsenic and Old Lace** (1944); about a congenial man who discovers his two beloved spinster aunts have actually been poisoning their aged bachelor friends, and his brother, Jonathan (Raymond Massey) is a career criminal. (Middle): Screenwriter Sidney Sheldon won an Oscar for his pedestrian screenplay **The Bachelor and the Bobbysoxer** (1947) that cast Grant as a fashionable playboy who is pursued by a teenage, boy-crazy Shirley Temple. Grant eventually winds up with her much older sister, played by Myrna Loy. (Right): poolside with Marilyn Monroe in between takes on **Monkey Business** (1952) as Dr. Barnaby Fulton, who discovers a youth serum that turns his head for his much younger secretary, Lois. Earlier, Fulton encourages Lois to go for a ride in his new sports car. She asks "Is your motor running?" to which he glibly replies, "Is yours?"

Archie had seen a world apart from the tyranny imposed on him by both Elias and higher education. After Archie was expelled from Fairfield Elias gave up trying. Archie rejoined the travelling menagerie in London, by now planning their grand debut in New York City. It was a prospect too good to pass up. Archie made the trans-Atlantic crossing with the Pender Group. However, at the end of their engagement at New York's Hippodrome the enterprising young lad made a fortuitous decision; electing to remain behind. He had no family, no friends and virtually no career apart from what he had known with the group. The year was 1920 and Archie Leach was all of eighteen years old.



"It's important to know where you've come from so that you can know where you're going. I probably chose my profession because I was seeking approval, adulation, admiration and affection."

- Cary Grant

It would be too easy to gloss over the transformation from Archie Leach into Cary Grant – and quite untrue to suggest that it was anything less than smooth if buffeted by a lengthy fallow period. Whether from inspiration or – perhaps – perspiration, young Archie proved remarkably resilient, versatile and enterprising. Without means, he did odd jobs of every shape and kind to pay the rent. He walked on stilts at Coney Island and sold men's ties as a vendor on the street corner, all the while incessantly auditioning for bit parts on the legitimate stage. "It was exhilarating," Grant later mused, "I couldn't wait for the day to begin. It really was an exciting time in my life."

Hope may have sprung eternal, but it did not immediately equate to success. Seven uneventful years would pass, roughing it in various professions before he came to the attention of the Hammerstein Organization; put under contract in 1927 and given



(Top row): Grant as the escapee Leopold Dilg and Ronald Colman as the brilliant legal mind, Michael Lightcap in George Steven’s **The Talk of the Town** (1942) - an exceptionally underrated classic in each of their respective careers. The somewhat aloof and thoroughly unconventional Dilg has been wrongfully accused of arson and is being framed by the local corrupt judge as the perfect patsy for the crime. Nora Shelley (Jean Arthur) believes in Dilg’s innocence. Together, she and Dilg – masquerading as the caretaker Joseph - attempt to sway Michael’s opinion to take the case, all the while keeping Dilg’s true identity from him. *“What is the law?”* Dilg proposes to Michael in front of the fire, *“It’s a gun pointed at somebody’s head. All depends upon which end of the gun you stand, whether the law is just or not...I don’t approve of, but I like people who think in terms of ideal conditions. They’re the dreamers, poets, tragic figures in this world, but interesting.”* The film is a deft blend of screwball comedy, light melodrama romantic comedy, and, social commentary – an exemplar of what the studio system was capable of at its zenith.

In the penultimate moment, Michael Lightcap defends Dilg from a mob come to crucify him based solely on the rumors they have heard spread by a corrupt system, rather than thinking through the situation for themselves. Michael admonishes the crowd with *“This is your law and your finest possession - it makes you free men in a free country. Why have you come here to destroy it? If you know what’s good for you, take those weapons home and burn them! And then think... think of this country and of the law that makes it what it is. Think of a world crying for this very law! And maybe you’ll understand why you ought to guard it. Why the law has got to be the personal concern of every citizen...to uphold it for your neighbor as well as yourself. Violence against it is one mistake. Another mistake is for any man to look upon the law as just a set of principles. And just so much language printed on fine, heavy paper. Something he recites and then takes for granted that justice is automatically being done. Both kinds of men are equally wrong! The law must be engraved in our hearts and practiced every minute to the letter and spirit. It can’t even exist unless we’re willing to go down into the dust and blood and fight a battle every day of our lives to preserve it - for our neighbor as well as ourselves!”*

(Bottom row): Grant’s stern flyer, Geoff Carter is reunited with an old flame, Judy (Rita Hayworth) in Howard Hawks’ **Only Angels Have Wings** (1939). Earlier in the film Carter and his men (John Carroll, middle, and Thomas Mitchell, right) maintain a glib stoicism after the death of one of their own. Newly arrived Bonnie Lee (Jean Arthur) cannot understand their seemingly callous attitude. So Geoff explains, *“That’s right. He’s dead. He died twenty minutes ago and all the weeping and wailing in the world won’t make him any deader twenty years from now!”* Geoff comforts a dying Kid Dabb (Thomas Mitchell) – his one true friend who has been fatally wounded in a harrowing flight. Earlier, Bonnie had asked the Kid *“Why can’t I love him the way you do? Why couldn’t I sneer when he tries to kill himself, feel proud when he doesn’t? Why couldn’t I be there to meet him when he gets back? Why couldn’t I... What do you do when he doesn’t come back when you expect him to?”* *“I’d go nuts,”* the Kid replies. *“Gee whiz, you’re a great help!”* Bonnie tells him. In this penultimate farewell Grant’s Geoff is ‘going nuts’ inside. Grant gives a remarkably restrained performance – a high point in his career.

his first bit part in a disposable entertainment entitled, **‘Golden Dawn’**. The play was a hit and Archie suddenly found himself thrust in the middle of high society. He made good use of his proverbial fifteen minutes, befriending millionaire playboy Jock Whitney and automobile pioneer Henry Ford. A congenial *‘extra man’* at any party, Archie was frequently invited to elegant Long Island affairs, learning all that he could from the wealthy; their behaviors and mannerisms, the way they conducted themselves in a conversation, losing the remnants of his cockney accent, curiously converted into a rather faint New England drawl.

Encouraged to do a screen test for Fox Pictures in 1929, Archie was quickly disillusioned when the footage came back with an outright rejection. *‘Neck too thick. Eyes too far apart, dimpled chin and bow-legged’* was the way one talent scout described



**"When I find myself in a position like this, I ask myself what would General Motors do?
...and then I do the opposite!"**
- Cary Grant (Holiday)



(Previous page): George Cukor's exceptionally progressive-thinking, **Holiday** (1938). At the height of the Great Depression Cukor's film dared to reexamine the capitalist system of doing business – poking fun at its venerable models and challenging the status quo to rethink the meaning of life apart from acquiring more things. Grant is Johnny Case, an exceptionally free spirit who meets Julia Seton (Doris Nolan) while on one of his 'holidays'. The couple become engaged, he completely unaware that Julia is heiress to a fortune. Introduced to her sharp-shooting sister, Linda (Katharine Hepburn), who takes an immediate liking to him, and to their brother, Ned (Lew Ayres) – to whom the privilege of wealth has robbed him of initiative and even his interest for self-preservation - the couple eventually gains the approval of Julia's reluctant father Edward (Henry Kolker) whose first order of business is to set Johnny up in one of his offices with more permanent employment. Earlier, however, Johnny has made his true intentions known to Linda.

"I've been working since I was ten," he tells her, "I want to find out why I'm working. The answer can't just be to pay bills, to pile up more money." "Yes," Linda agrees, "But what is the answer?" "Well, I don't know," Johnny admits, "That's what I intend to find out. The world's changing out there. I want to find out where I stand, how I fit into the picture, what it's all going to mean to me. I can't find that out sitting behind some desk in an office, so as soon as I've got some money together I'm going to knock off for a while. I want to save part of my life for myself. There's a catch to it, though: it's got to be the young part — you know, retire young, work old. Come back to work when I know what I'm working for. Does that make sense to you?"

In a world desperately trying to keep body and soul together it didn't. But today, **Holiday** rings more prophetically true and makes a lot of sense indeed, even if its precepts fly in the face of Grant's own ensconced and tireless work ethic. In the film, Edward gives a lavish New Year's Eve party in which Julia's engagement is announced to a glittering assemblage of the Seton's lifelong friends and business associates. These include Johnny's best friends, Prof. Nick Potter (Edward Everett Horton) and his wife, Susan (Jean Dixon), and Julia's rather morbidly stuffy cousin, Laura Cram (Binnie Barnes) and her husband, Seton (Henry Daniell) whom Linda has affectionately nicknamed 'the witch and Dopey.' Johnny is only interested in Julia. But she seems more fascinated by the spectacle of the gathering – a first hint to Johnny that he may have made the wrong choice in a prospective mate. Pushed to the realization that he and Julia quite simply want different things out of life, Johnny decides to take 'a holiday' with the Potters; Linda's impromptu decision to join them leaving Johnny flat on his back but suddenly aware that he has found the soul mate who ultimately wants to share in his dream.

(This page): Grant and third wife, Betsy Drake. She had given up a promising Broadway stage career to marry Cary on Christmas Day, 1945 – a move that would eventually lead Drake into ever-increasing depression and unhappiness. Grant quickly co-starred his wife in two lackluster light romantic comedies, 1948's **Every Girl Should Be Married** and 1952's **Room For One More** (above left, pictured in a publicity still with child actor, George Winslow as Teenie, and right, on the set with director Norman Taurog). Drake tried everything to make the marriage work, indulging in mysticism, yoga, hypnosis, and finally, prescription LSD under a psychiatrist's care. Nothing worked, particularly after Cary's notorious affair with co-star Sophia Loren on the set of **The Pride and The Passion** (1957) became public. *"He was a street fighter,"* Drake would later remark, *"I trusted him."* Naively, the couple stayed together for thirteen long years. Drake did not fit into Hollywood, however, and her career stagnated. She segued into writing; her novel *'Children You Are Very Little'* published in 1971. She also earned a Master of Education degree from Harvard University. But after Cary, Drake never married again.



(Above): the years roll on (left): Cary reads a newspaper on location in the Sierra Nevada during the making of **Gunga Din** (1939). (Middle): imprinting his hands, feet and signature in cement at Sid Grauman's Chinese Theater in 1956. (Right): looking exhausted on location in Jamaica for 1964's **Father Goose**, costarring Leslie Caron. Grant had a lifelong interest in the way movies were made. While many of his costars simply went back to their dressing rooms in between takes and setups, Grant could often be found among the camera crew and lighting technicians, studying their craft. Grant's first job had been at London's Empire Theater where he was hired as a lighting assistant and, in fact, helped to build a diffuser that offered a softer glow to the actor's on stage. In later years, Cary claimed a small regret for never having tried his hand at directing. But he held the people behind the scenes in very high regard indeed. "They make me look good," he once said.

him, 'He will never photograph.' It was disheartening news, but quickly shrugged off when Paramount Pictures hired the actor for six days work at \$150. The film was **Singapore Sue** (1931). It's probably best forgotten, since Archie is painfully out of step with the more subtle requirements of the camera. Reviewing his brief appearance in this movie today one can definitely see why Fox didn't rush to put him under contract. As the overzealous Seabee, his neck is 'too thick', his eyes 'too far apart' as he leers and jeers his way through some feeble dialogue, wooing a concubine to his table inside a seedy nightclub. No spark and no presence and none of that Cary Grant megawatt charm or personality that would dominate the rest of his career.

Nevertheless, Paramount liked what they saw – enough to put Archie under contract. Like so many who had gone through the studio gristmill before him and were yet to follow, Paramount's first order of business was to launch their new acquisition under a 'brand' name. Archie Leach wouldn't do. Choosing 'Cary' from the character 'Cary Lockwood' he had played on Broadway, and 'Grant' from a list of last names preselected by the studio's PR department, 'Cary Grant' was born and Archie Leach ceased to exist.

Now a Paramount contract player, Cary was pushed through eight forgettable films in less than a year – his parts uninspired, disposable and bland. It wasn't working, at least for Grant, although to his everlasting surprise his popularity with fans had begun to form. Still, he had no presence – just a run-of-the-mill male beauty, congenial but hopelessly average. Things were about to change, however, both in his professional and private life. Mae West personally selected Grant as her straight man in 1933's **She Done Him Wrong**. West, whose bawdy/gaudy on screen persona was cause for considerable consternation, particularly after the Will Hayes Office began to enforce their morality in the form of censorship on Hollywood product, was something of a tyrant on the set.

She quarreled frequently with director Lowell Sherman and incurred Cary's quiet animosity after the film's triumphant release, claiming to have 'discovered' her male co-star and even molding him into a star. "I made eight movies before Mae West came into my life," Grant frustratingly reiterated, summing up his performance in the movie as an ill-fitted combination of posturing and impersonation, "I tried to copy other actor's styles until I became a conglomerate of people and then ultimately myself. I put my hands in my pocket because I didn't know what else to do with them. I tried to look relaxed. Instead,



(Above): a 'real' affair to remember: with Sophia Loren in Spain on location for the aptly named **The Pride and the Passion** (1957) – his wounded pride, her wavering passion. Loren was already seeing producer Carlo Ponti at the time she began her liaison with Grant behind the scenes. Things reached a fevered pitch when Grant proposed, telling Loren that as soon as production wrapped he would fly to America to ask Betsy for a divorce. Ponti, who was 38 when he began pursuing the 16 year old beauty pageant contestant, also made his pilgrimage to Spain – professed his undying love and thereafter let the chips fall where they may. The cards were in his favor, despite the fact that Ponti was already married and would later be accused of bigamy for wedding Loren. Sophia's choice of Carlo over Cary left him devastated. He had already convinced Paramount to option one of Betsy Drake's screenplays – **Houseboat** (1958) as a costarring vehicle for himself and Loren. Drake had hoped to costar in the film with her husband. After Loren's marriage to Ponti in Mexico, Grant rather obviously pursued the romance but to no avail. As a single woman Loren may have been willing to play the field. As a newlywed she was faithful in her vows. This led to tensions on the set of **Houseboat** – a minor programmer than advanced neither career nor managed to rekindle that spark of romance between the two.

I just looked stiff with my hand stuck in my pocket wet with perspiration. I was trying to imitate what I thought a relaxed man looked like."

Although **She Done Him Wrong** did respectable business, the accolades afforded the movie mostly went to West. In retrospect, Grant's Captain Cummings really is a thankless part – someone for West to coo and spark off, to mistreat and well...manhandle the way men usually treated women, and to suggest in her inimitable way that he should come up and see her sometime. Cary would later think on the experience as one of his least favorite in Hollywood.

As for Cary's private life; this had already begun to heat up considerably after a chance meeting with actress Virginia Cherrill at a house party given by Marion Davies. Cherrill had gained notoriety as the blind girl in Charlie Chaplin's **City Lights** (1931). Newly divorced, Cherrill was also a Chicago sophisticate and somewhat more worldly than Grant, particularly in terms of what married life 'could' and 'did' offer. She had no illusions about romance, but did fall in love with Cary almost from the moment their eyes met across the crowded room.

Although friends cautioned the headstrong couple to delay their plans for marriage neither could be convinced of any looming disaster and so, Cary married Virginia on February 10, 1934. The couple divorced exactly a year and one month later, on March



"If it had to happen to one of us, why did it have to happen to you?"

- Cary Grant (An Affair to Remember)



(Previous): The affair that ‘everyone’ remembers: Deborah Kerr and Grant in Leo McCarey’s **An Affair to Remember** (1957) – a blockbuster in its own time, resurrected from near obscurity when its plot became a pivotal premise in Nora Ephron’s **Sleepless in Seattle** (1993). Grant is Nicky Ferrante, a bon vivant and notorious womanizer who meets his match in a quick-witted kept woman, Terry McKay, played by Kerr. *“And what did your nurse read you as a bedtime story, The Adventures of Don Juan?”* she coos over dinner. After taking Terry to meet his grandmother (actually played by Grant’s real-life aunt, Cathleen Nesbitt), Nicky and Terry share a moonlit romance that leads each to break off their former engagements; his to rock and gravel heiress, Lois Clark (Neva Patterson), hers to ever-loyal Park Ave. investor, Kenneth Bradley (Richard Denning). Tragedy strike when Terry, in her zeal to make it to a rendezvous atop the Empire State Building, is struck by an automobile.

The accident leaves her paralyzed from the waist down. Months later, an embittered Nicky tracks Terry down, presuming that she has stood him up. He’s petulant and condescending, all the while testing to see exactly where the truth of her love for him lies. Remembering that he had the owner of an art gallery give away one of his paintings to a paralyzed woman who greatly admired it, Nicky barges into Terry’s bedroom, discovers the painting hanging on her wall and the truth about why she never made it to their pre-arranged rendezvous. *“Oh darling, don’t look at me like that,”* a tearful Terry says, *“If you can paint, I can walk. Anything can happen.”* Based on McCarey’s own **Love Affair** (1939), **An Affair to Remember** is a watered down version of that classic love story; one that miraculously has eclipsed the original in the public’s estimation as the classic four-hanky weeper that can still wring out the tears.

(This page): scenes from a Hitchcock classic. Grant and his director reunited for **Notorious** (1946); a harrowing tale of espionage. Grant is a devious FBI agent who forces ex-party girl, Alicia Huberman to infiltrate a Nazi stronghold in Buenos Aires helmed by father’s former friend, Alexander Sebastian (Claude Rains). Having seduced Sebastian into marriage, Alicia places herself in peril when Sebastian begins to suspect her of infidelities, leading him to a deeper understanding: that he has married a double agent. Now there is only one solution: to gradually poison Alicia and make it look like an accident. Grant’s performance is tinged full of hidden meaning, pathos, self-loathing and bruised romantic ego – in short, a tour de force. Hitchcock is said to have preferred Cary as the ultimate hero of his thrillers. The pair would reunite twice more in the mid to late 1950s for two of Hitchcock and Cary’s biggest hits yet: **To Catch a Thief** (1955) and **North By Northwest** (1959).

26, 1935. *“I doubt either of us was sufficiently relaxed to trust the happiness either of us might have had,”* Cary later mused, *“My fear of losing her brought about the very condition I feared.”*

Following his separation from Virginia, Cary moved back into the beach house with Randolph Scott. Professionally, he was a popular leading man, appearing in thirteen movies between 1933 and 1935. But these and his performances in them were disposable entertainments at best. He had broken through to audiences, but felt no satisfaction at his craft. Then came **Sylvia Scarlett** (1935); a last ditch effort made by RKO to stem the tide of growing animosity against Katharine Hepburn. Only two years earlier Hepburn had emerged with her Bryn Mawr accent and New England blueblood confidence as a certified box office sensation in **A Bill of Divorcement** (1932). But after a string of high profile flops Hepburn’s reputation with both the critics and the public had soured and was at an all-time low.

George Cukor’s movie promised to resurrect her sagging career. It never happened. What did happen was that Cary emerged more reassured than he had ever been on the screen. Cast as the devious cockney scrapper, Jimmy Monkley who cannot see that the con artist in his midst, Sylvester (Hepburn) is really a woman in disguise, the role played to Grant’s strengths as well as his past life. He knew Jimmy as a variation of his former self; better still, feeling the character in his bones and his intuitiveness shows in every frame of the film. Regrettably, the public saw little to appreciate. Before the year was out Katharine Hepburn would be branded box office poison.



(Above): Master and mate? It is difficult to assess who contributed more to their four filmic collaborations - Grant or Hitchcock? Certainly, Hitch' gave Cary an edge in his films that he otherwise lacked in his prolific career, and yet Grant equally brought new and revealing nuances to his varied personal traits on their projects; his deft blend of light charm and the more serious undercurrent of a man who is not all that he at first appears. "If he could have, Hitch' would have starred Cary in every movie he made," art director/production designer Henry Bumstead has said. But Hitchcock usually hand-picked talent as he felt was absolutely right for the part. In his decision to cast Cary in two of his biggest movies from the 1950s, Hitchcock was looking for a type - the lady's man, immaculate, unruffled, yet unknowing, who suddenly finds himself in uncharted territory; a victim by his own design. A more perfect union has yet to be attained in the thriller genre.

While Hepburn's movie career seemed to be coming to an end much too quickly, Cary's was on the cusp of greatness, thanks to a pair of seemingly effortless screwball comedies; Norman Z. McLeod's **Topper** and Leo McCarey's **The Awful Truth** (both made and released in 1937). In the former, Grant is George Kirby, a loveable drunkard who accidentally kills himself and his wife (played by Constance Bennett) in a horrible wreck. The pair return to earth as devious spirits intent on making Kirby's stuffy banker boss, Mr. Topper (Roland Young) realize that there is more to life than simply counting money.

The Awful Truth is a wholly more unique offering, in that the part of the reluctant scatterbrain usually ascribed to the female lead in a screwball comedy, (Irene Dunne in this instance) is instead given to Cary, cast as Dunne's disillusioned husband, Jerry Warriner. After lying to his wife, Lucy about being in Florida and returning home to discover her on the arm of oily music teacher, Armand Duvalle (Alexander D'Arcy) Jerry gives Lucy an ultimatum. Rather than have any ultimatums put to her, the headstrong Lucy decides to divorce Jerry, then spends the bulk of the movie trying to win him back.

It all clicks with an intuitive verve for the truly unhinged. But behind the scenes the magic almost did not happen. Both Cary and Irene Dunne were at odds with McCarey's meandering direction. It is rumored that McCarey spent hours - occasionally days - tinkering at the piano and daydreaming up plot devices on the fly for the actors to improvise. Until the final day when McCarey hollered "Cut, that's a wrap", Viña Delmar's screenplay remained a work in progress. Nobody knew their lines with confidence because they seemed to change hourly - or their character's motivations for that matter, leaving costar Ralph Bellamy to explain many years later, "It was the craziest picture I ever made."

And yet what came through all this backstage chaos was nothing short of movie magic. After a lengthy gestation period, **The Awful Truth** finally gave us Cary Grant - or Grant as we all know and love him today. Not only is his timing impeccable; his sense of comedy could not be more extraordinary. He gets most, if not all, of the laughs; his chemistry with Dunne utterly charming and memorable. Grant channels whatever frustrations were occurring behind the scenes into even more riotous and apocryphal irritations fleshed out on the big screen. Whether coaxing a wired-hair terrier to sing while he plays the piano or losing his balance and falling off a chair with the loudest of thuds right in the middle of a music recital, Cary Grant is on top of his game - perhaps for the first time in his career. The film's overwhelming success ensured that Grant and Dunne would be paired again.



***"What you need is something I have neither the time nor the inclination to give you...
...two weeks in Niagara Falls with a good man!"***

- Cary Grant (To Catch a Thief)



"Not only did I enjoy that kiss last night, I was awed by its efficiency."
- Cary Grant (To Catch a Thief)



(Previous pages): Scenes from a memorable classic. Hitchcock's **To Catch A Thief** (1955) is perhaps the most stylish American thriller ever conceived. At least half the footage was photographed on the French Riviera with Hitch' seamlessly blending his locations to studio set pieces and process shots. The film is also notable for the director's foray into Paramount's patented VistaVision widescreen process. Exposing the film horizontally, VistaVision's 8 perf frame exposure yielded a total negative area 2.66 times greater than the conventional 35mm format with a 1.66:1 aspect ratio. Paramount refused to follow the pack after 20th Century-Fox's debut of Cinemascope was snatched up by virtually every other studio in Hollywood. Instead they invented their own widescreen process, far superior to the aforementioned anamorphic lens developed by Bausch & Lomb. Although VistaVision had a short shelf life – mostly because it proved costly to retool theaters with the new projection – the process continues to be used to this day to shoot SFX and background plates. VistaVision truly was, as Paramount had dubbed it, 'Motion Picture High Fidelity'.

The occasion was bittersweet for Hitchcock in that Grace Kelly had already announced her retirement from movies to marry Prince Rainier of Monaco. Kelly was Hitch' favorite 'cool blonde' and in viewing the rest of the director's career one can definitely see the obviousness of his later determination to ape Kelly's inimitable ice princess, particularly in his incarnations of Kim Novak (**Vertigo**), Eva Marie Saint (**North by Northwest**) and Tippi Hedren (**The Birds**).

Cary Grant plays reformed jewel thief, John Robie who becomes the prime suspect in a new series of cat burglaries on the Riviera. Hitchcock's cameo, aboard a bus Robie uses as his escape from a police inquiry is one of his most memorable. Lynn Murray's musical underscoring is superb, as is the adroit screenplay by John Michael Hayes that features some of the most sexual risqué dialogue ever in a Hitchcock movie. The title of the piece is misleading and drawn from the axiom 'set a thief to catch a thief'. However, the real plot point of interest is not whether Robie will be caught by the police, but how clever the film's love interest, American socialite Francie Stevens (Grace Kelly) will be at landing the new love interest in her life – Robie. The two 'cute' meet – deliberately – in a casino, the predestined rendezvous orchestrated by H.H. Hughson (John Williams), an insurance agent whom Robie has reluctantly engaged to help prove his innocence. Everyone, including Danielle Foussard (Brigitte Auber) believes he is guilty. The coquette slyly encourages Robie to become her lover, insisting that the two could run away together to South America. "People say it's a virgin country," she teases. Robie is unimpressed by the offer, regarding Danielle as a 'mere child'. Instead, he uses a gambling chit dropped down the front of a stranger's dress at the tables to create a scene. It mildly amuses everyone and sends Francie's mother, Jessie (Jessie Royce-Landis) into fits of laughter. Royce-Landis would play Grant's mother again in Hitchcock's **North by Northwest** (1959).

Francie is standoffish at first, but quickly sets her cap to seduce Robie. Eluding a police escort the duo stop at a villa where Robie inquires, "What gives you a thrill out of life?" to which Francie coyly replies, "I'm still looking for that one." Later, as they prepare for their picnic lunch she asks him, "Do you want a leg or a breast?" to which he flirtatiously suggests, "You decide." That evening she strokes his ego, plying her feminine wiles to coax him into a confession during the justly famous and iconic 'fireworks' seduction sequence, beginning with "I have a feeling that tonight you're going to see one of the Riviera's most fascinating sights...I was talking about the fireworks." Robie stands his ground, but not for long. She lures him onto the couch with the prospect of fondling the diamond necklace around her throat. "You know perfectly well that these are imitation," he informs her. "But I'm not," she assertively replies. The scene ends with a burst of bombshells outside the window of Francie's apartment and a swell up on the music to signify their sexual consummation.

Only hours later Jessie's jewels have been stolen and Francie, believing that Robie is responsible, attempts to confront him. In a setup at another villa where Robie is certain the real cat burglar will strike, he is almost murdered by an unseen attacker. The man he throws over the side of a steep cliff turns out to be Foussard (Jean Martinelli), one of his old cronies – and Danielle's father - currently working as a wine steward at a restaurant run by Bertani (Charles Vanel). Attending the funeral, Robie is accosted by Danielle who accuses him of being a murderer. Robie slaps her face before departing for the Sanford villa where he believes 'the real cat' will strike next. Sure enough, after the party Robie is confronted by the burglar atop the villa's steep roof. It's Danielle and Robie apprehends her with a bag full of baubles, thus clearing his name from the police investigation. Racing after Robie to his villa, Francie professes her love. He reluctantly concedes the attraction and the two embrace, leaving Francie to utter the prophetic and equally as hilarious final line of dialogue, "So this is where you live. Oh, mother will love it up here!"

To Catch a Thief is often misperceived as one of Hitchcock's 'light' movies – but in fact, it is a densely packed and slickly packaged romantic comedy/thriller with so much to recommend it that it continues to rank among the director's most popular and commonly resurrected entertainments. Cary gives one of his most stylish performances, varying between moments of almost screwball comedy and introspective sequences of a much darker tone and spirit. Reportedly, Grant attempted to convince Hitchcock to try a scene 'his way' – Hitchcock, wisely plying his crew beforehand to applaud only after the sequence was shot the way he wanted it, thus convincing Cary that he had been mistaken in his presumptions. An ominous postscript, the perilous winding road where Francie drives at breakneck speed to help Robie escape from the police is the same stretch where Grace Kelly would meet with her untimely fate in a horrific auto accident in September, 1982.

(This page): Grant looking introspectively away to some fixed point on the horizon in between shooting at the Cannes Beach Club, the Carlton Hotel in the background, as Grace listens intently to Hitchcock's direction. Celebrating Hitchcock's birthday on the set, an ebullient Grant looks on as the director blows out his candle for good luck.



(Above): The disorientating ‘hangover’ sequence from Hitchcock’s **Notorious** (1946). Having partied all night with a mysterious house crasher, Alicia Huberman (Ingrid Bergman) awakens to find him looming over her bed. Hitchcock copied his own the ‘poisoned milk’ effect from **Suspicion** (1941), this time with an ominous glowing glass of orange juice and a morbid and aloof Grant encouraging his helpless subject to drink to relieve the buzz from her hangover. Hitchcock tilts his camera almost 360 degrees to achieve the unnerving equilibrium-destabilizing effect as Grant’s Devlin approaches, his expression unchanged, his demeanor suggesting that the party is definitely over.

But before the inevitable could occur, Grant was recalled to work with Katharine Hepburn, this time for Howard Hawks’ in **Bringing Up Baby** (1938). Regarded today as one of the outstanding screen achievements in classic screwball comedy, the film was yet another financial disaster for RKO who could not afford such costly flops. In the film, Cary plays paleontologist David Huxley, a stuffy and somewhat effete scientist whose pursuit of a particular fossilized bone leads him straight into the arms of scatterbrained heiress, Susan Vance (Hepburn) and her devotedly passive pet leopard - Baby. Susan is so obtuse to anyone’s needs except her own that she easily infuriates David to wild distraction, particularly after her dog buries David’s missing dinosaur bone somewhere on the vast property of her Connecticut farm.

The plot, such as it is, makes positively no sense at all. But that doesn’t really matter – or shouldn’t. A classic screwball comedy isn’t about continuity, per say, but keeping all the juggling balls in the air at the same time and deliberately smashing some of them into one another. **Bringing Up Baby** does this magnificently and is justly famous for two sequences of breathtaking hilarity; the first involving David and Susan inadvertently tearing off a portion of each other’s clothes. It all starts rather innocently inside a fashionable restaurant with Susan needing to apologize to David for a prior indiscretion. He isn’t particularly interested in her apology, especially after she tugs at the coattails of his tuxedo and accidentally causes a rip right up the middle. Perturbed beyond reconciliation, David admonishes Susan who decides she has had quite enough of him too. Unfortunately, David’s foot is standing on the train of her evening gown, shearing off the backend and exposing Susan’s lacy panties. To spare her the embarrassment of having to walk the length of the restaurant in this condition David presses himself against Susan, the two marching in stride and in step idiotically like a pair of chorus boys about to break into song, attracting even greater attention and laughter from the crowd of patrons.

There are conflicting back stories about the impetus for this sequence. Director Howard Hawks has always maintained it was in the script from the very beginning. But Grant and Hepburn each claim the scene was improvised after Cary told everyone a story about his inadvertently unzipped fly catching on the back of the dress of a girl he was dating at the time while the pair were attending a private dinner party. Whatever the motive for this sequence, it remains an undisputed highlight in the movie.



(Above): giving Kate Hepburn her comeuppance at the beginning of **The Philadelphia Story** (1940). In 1937 Hepburn, along with other long-standing Hollywood alumni, had been branded Box Office poison in an article for Variety. Undaunted, Hepburn took to the stage in Philip Barry's classy comedy, encouraging Howard Hughes to buy the property outright for her. Thus when MGM elected to turn the play into a movie they were forced to take Hepburn as its star under her own terms and conditions – the result: a sterling example of the witty and joyous romantic comedy. The film's director, George Cukor felt something was needed to set the record straight on Hepburn's indomitable New England stubbornness. So together with screenwriter Donald Ogden Stewart, they came up with this now famous re-introduction of Hepburn to movie audiences. Brittle socialite Tracy Lord (Hepburn) is throwing her husband out of the home they once shared. With relish she breaks his nine-iron over her bended knee, tossing the rest of his gear at his feet as he attempts to pack up the car. Without hesitation, hubby C.K. Dexterhaven (Grant) charges up the front steps. At the last possible moment he thinks better on striking her with his fist, instead using his whole hand to squeeze her face and force her to the floor. That's about all it took. Audiences roared with acceptance, forgave Hepburn, embraced the movie and made both a colossal sensation.

The other iconic moment from **Bringing Up Baby** has Grant's David forced to slip out of his wet clothes into one of Susan's frilly negligees. Unfortunately, for David, this is precisely the moment he happens to get introduced to Elizabeth Random (May Robson), the dowager aunt whose million dollar endowment is required to fund his on-going research at the museum. *"Why are you dressed like that?"* Random demands to know, to which Grant, pressed into an impossible corner, hops to his feet, exploding *"I just went gay all of a sudden!"* Time has given this line and Grant's delivery of it a more Picaresque quality than it perhaps deserves, and yet, given the rumors and speculation over Cary's relationship with Randolph Scott the joke seems decidedly barbed in its bit of well-placed wit.

Given the film's failure, Columbia Picture's decision to acquire the services of both Grant and Hepburn for another comedy seems downright curious. But without their foresight we wouldn't have George Cukor's **Holiday** (1938); a refreshingly original, often astute, and always charming romantic yarn about free-spirit, Johnny Case (Grant) who becomes engaged to wealthy socialite, Julia Seaton (Doris Nolan) but instead falls madly in love with her socially-repressed sister, Linda (Hepburn). **Holiday** is a movie ahead of its time; its premise of a man only working for the pleasure that the monies he earns can buy, and thus frequently quitting game employment to pursue his passions; **Holiday** plays far more progressively from today's vantage than it did in 1938 with the specter of the Great Depression barely set aside.

If **Holiday** offered Cary the opportunity to excel at some joyous acrobatics (hold overs from his days with the Pender Group), then his next movie, George Stevens' **Gunga Din** (1939) gave him full reign to exercise his prowess as a virile swashbuckler. Second only in revenues to David O. Selznick's **Gone With The Wind**, **Gunga Din** would also be regarded by Cary as one of his favorite film. Shot mostly in the Sierra Nevada Mountains, Grant and co-star Douglas Fairbanks Jr. reportedly drew straws for



(Above): a pair of publicity stills for one of the zaniest romantic comedies Grant ever committed to film, Howard Hawks' **His Girl Friday** (1940). Based on Ben Hecht and Charles McArthur's famed Broadway play, **The Front Page**, the original premise of a pair of newshounds feuding and fusing over the same story was turned on end when Hawks decided to make one of them a woman – and not only that, but the soon-to-be ex of the other. Walter Burns (Grant) and Hildy Johnson (Rosalind Russell) were once happily married. Well, maybe not happily. Still, he harbors feelings of a sort for her, particularly when she informs him of her pending marriage to insurance salesman, Bruce Baldwin (Ralph Bellamy). Charles Lederer's screenplay is 180 pages; the movie, a scant 92 minutes. Translation – Hawks was shooting approximately 2 pages of dialogue per on screen minute – an exhausting pace that really kept his stars on their toes.

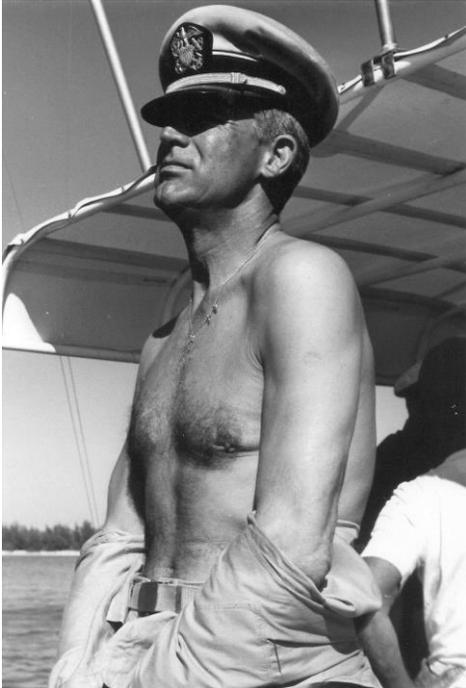
Frequently, Hildy's better judgment is overwhelmed by her level of frustration over Walter's frequent badgering. *"Now, get this, you double-crossing chimpanzee,"* she sputters, *"There ain't going to be any interview and there ain't going to be any story. And that certified check of yours is leaving with me in twenty minutes. I wouldn't cover the burning of Rome for you if they were just lighting it up. If I ever lay my two eyes on you again, I'm gonna walk right up to you and hammer on that monkeyed skull of yours 'til it rings like a Chinese gong!"* Grant's Walter Burns is an irrepressible son of a bitch, but a loveable one at that, wooing Hildy back to his side by the sheer audacity of his inability to be anything more than what he is – a heel in love.

their roles; Cary getting the more choice part of Cutter – a cockney legionnaire with a fighting spirit, but who loses the girl to Fairbanks' Ballantine.

The same year, Cary threw himself into another outstanding performance in Howard Hawks' **Only Angels Have Wings**; an often grim depiction of pilots flying dangerous missions over a tropical mountain range. The back to back success of these two movies catapulted Grant to the pinnacle of stardom in one fell swoop. But they also served to mask Cary's own private turmoil which unfortunately was debilitating. In 1935, just as he was preparing for **Sylvia Scarlett**, Grant had learned that his mother was still alive. Elias had died of alcoholism five months earlier. Since the age of nine Cary had not known a mother at all. But now he was to learn that Elsie had been institutionalized for a nervous breakdown.

Rushing to England for what he hoped would be a welcomed reunion, Cary was quickly disillusioned when the woman who met him at the train station bore no earthly resemblance to the faint memory he had been carrying around with him these many years. *"I was a full grown man, living half way around the world – known by sight to millions of fans but not to my own mother,"* Cary would later write. The reunion was strained at best. After seeing to her financial needs and comfort Grant left Elsie and England for the last time before WWII. It was a bittersweet parting and one that left an indelible mark on his character and his subsequent relationships for the rest of his life.

The 1940s were particularly lucrative for Cary Grant. He bounded from one mega hit to the next, beginning with Howard Hawks' **His Girl Friday** (1940) and culminating with two Oscar-nominated turns for **Penny Serenade** (1941), costarring Irene Dunne and **None But The Lonely Heart** (1944) with Ethel Barrymore. Interestingly, these two movies depart from the iconography of Cary's already well-established on screen persona. In the former, Grant plays a working stiff fallen on hard times, whose bittersweet love for the girl next door and the child they hope to adopt together is heartrending. In the latter, Grant is cast as a cockney reprobate who has come home to look after his cancer-inflicted mother (played with embittered resolve by Ethel Barrymore). Neither movie was a box office success. Yet each illustrates just how much more Cary had to offer as an actor.



(Above): Three of Grant's most uncharacteristic roles. (Left): as the uncompromising submarine commander Capt. Cassidy in 1942's **Destination Tokyo**; as Ernie Mott, the embittered and resolute cockney scrapper opposite the great Ethel Barrymore in 1944's **None But the Lonely Heart**, and as Roger Adams, the struggling, working stiff desperately in love with a shop girl (Irene Dunne) in the eloquent and sincere romance, **Penny Serenade** (1941). Grant was Oscar-nominated as Best Actor for these latter two roles. He never won, but did receive an honorary award in 1970. Cary knew the limitations of the framework he had concocted as his public persona. In the early 1940s he frequently challenged himself beyond this artificially concocted brand. But the public's inability to accept him in roles that deviated too far from their preconceptions of who and what 'a Cary Grant' was, convinced Grant that in order to remain popular he would have to toggle back his aspirations. From 1946 to 1955 he remained 'Cary Grant' on the screen in some thoroughly tepid and largely forgettable movies that nevertheless made money and gave the public what they wanted.

The decade also began with a resurrection of Katharine Hepburn's movie career. Buying out her RKO contract in 1938, Hepburn had made a resounding success of Philip Barry's **The Philadelphia Story** on Broadway. Encouraging Howard Hughes to buy the property outright for her, Hepburn used the play's formidable clout to coax MGM's L.B. Mayer into casting her in the film version; making the demand for Spencer Tracy and Clark Gable to be her costars. Mayer gave Hepburn Jimmy Stewart and Cary Grant instead – forgivable second choices, and welcomed by Hepburn who particularly looked forward to working with her frequent movie costar once again.

The film version of **The Philadelphia Story** (1940) begins with Katharine Hepburn's comeuppance; Cary's harangued C.K. Dexterhaven, having watched as his soon to be ex-wife Tracy Lord (Hepburn) gleefully breaks his prized nine irons over her knee, smashes his open hand - rather than clenched fist – up against Hepburn's face, thus forcing her rather violently to the ground. Anybody else; and the scene might have played as sadistic spousal abuse. But given Cary's public persona and the chemistry built between him and Hepburn over four films, audiences roared with glee when the movie debuted. Today, the moment still gets its chuckles and cheers, perhaps because we mostly suspect that Cary could never really be that mean to any of his leading ladies.

All evidence to the contrary however in 1941's **Suspicion**; Cary's first film for director Alfred Hitchcock. A year earlier Joan Fontaine had had her breakout performance in Hitchcock's **Rebecca**, and in viewing **Suspicion** back to back with her performance in the aforementioned film it becomes immediately clear that the chief purpose of **Suspicion** is to earn Fontaine another crack at the Best Actress Oscar she so rightfully deserved for **Rebecca** but was denied when Ginger Rogers won the coveted statuette for **Kitty Foyle** instead. **Suspicion** is a fracture masterpiece. Grant's Johnny Aysgarth reverts to righteous indignation before the final reel and saves his petrified wife, Lina (Fontaine) from jumping out of their moving car after she rightfully suspects that her husband is, in fact, trying to murder her.

In the original draft of the Samson Raphaelson, Joan Harrison, Alma Reville screenplay Cary was supposed to kill his wife with a poisoned glass of milk; Lina knowing that the milk is poisoned, but drinking it anyway because she loves Johnny beyond all self-preservation and/or logic. However, knowing that she will be dead by morning, Lina asks Johnny to mail a letter she has written to her mother. The letter is actually a confession of the crime that will send Grant's diabolical gigolo to his own just



(Above): a very coy 'cute meet' in Stanley Donen's elegant romantic/dramady **Indiscreet** (1958). Grant plays the suave financial analyst, Philip Adams and Ingrid Bergman, famed London actress, Anna Kalman. Brought to Anna's apartment by her sister, Margaret Munson (Phyllis Calvert) and her husband, Alfred (Cecil Parker), to change clothes before a monetary summit, Anna is unprepared to be struck by the lightning bolt of romance with cold cream all over her face. She quickly changes her mind and decides to attend the summit. Margaret willingly confesses, "I can't understand a word" but Anna is smitten and absorbed in Philip's every nuance. The romance progresses despite the fact that Philip tells her he is married. It's a lie though, designed to keep his love interests at bay because they assume there can be no prospect for lasting happiness outside of a brief affair. Anna eventually learns the truth. Attending a dance, Philip indulges in an adlib of a traditional Irish reel. At bottom right, Philip catches Anna in a lie – her staged tryst with devoted butler Karl (David Kossoff) masquerading as her paramour to make Philip jealous. She reveals to him that she knows he is not married. The two reconcile and make plans to become husband and wife. **Indiscreet** is a stylish bauble, imbued with Donen's light touch and impeccable performances by both Grant and Bergman who had not worked together since Hitchcock's **Notorious** almost a decade earlier. Their on-screen chemistry was still in evidence this time around.

reward. Unknowing of its true contents, Johnny drops the letter in the post the next morning, thereby sealing his fate. The censors would not approve this ending, nor did RKO acquiesce to Hitchcock's request to film it as originally written, citing that movie audiences would never accept Cary Grant as a murderer.

Another highpoint in Grant's career was George Stevens' **The Talk of the Town** (1942) in which Cary once again performed the delicate balancing act between light comedy and brooding menace. The film co-stars Jean Arthur (Grant's costar from **Only Angels Have Wings**) as the delightfully obtuse, Nora Shelley who rents a house to prominent attorney and law professor Michael Lightcap (Ronald Colman) before realizes that escaped prisoner, Leopold Dilg (Grant) is hold up in the attic. Dilg masquerades as the property's caretaker, all the while hoping to convince Michael to take on the case against him and thus threatening the professor's chances at becoming a Supreme Court justice.

Behind the scenes Grant's concentration was being divided by a new and burgeoning romance with Woolworth heiress, Barbara Hutton. She was decidedly a woman of influence in social circles, but her emotional state had already begun to spiral out of control by the time she met Cary at a house party. Newly made an American citizen, Grant began squiring the two-time divorcee about Hollywood; the gossip rags unflatteringly labeling the couple 'Cash and Cary'. However, it is important to recognize that the attraction to Hutton did not stem from Grant's desire to possess her millions. By 1942 Cary was more than solvent and living quite comfortably on his own means. Although it is certainly true that his fortunes paled to Hutton's ancestral wealth, Cary never took advantage of Hutton's oft' misguided philanthropy or her monies while they were married. In fact, throughout the marriage Grant worked tirelessly making movies; his profession and popularity at odds with Hutton's need for a more privately moneyed existence.



"I'm an advertising man, not a red herring. I've got a job, a secretary, a mother, two ex-wives and several bartenders that depend upon me, and I don't intend to disappoint them all by getting myself 'slightly' killed."

- Cary Grant (North by Northwest)



"Hello...mother, this is your son - Roger Thornhill. No mother. No I have not been drinking...no...no, these two men poured a whole bottle of bourbon into me. No - they didn't offer me a chaser."

- Cary Grant (North by Northwest)



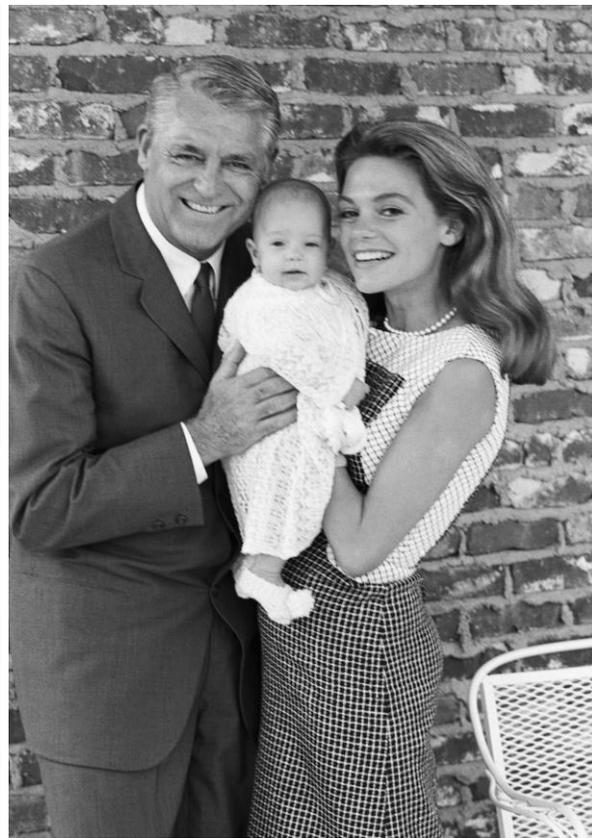
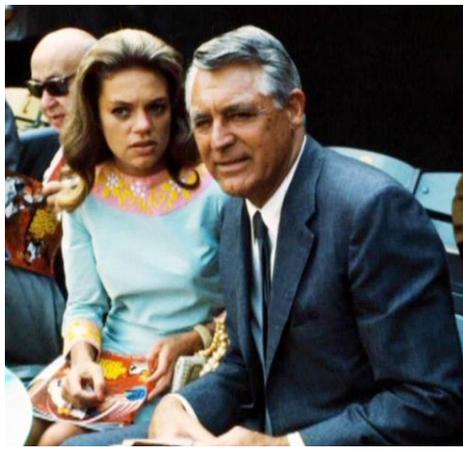
(Previous pages): Cary's penultimate movie for Hitchcock is also probably his best; as harried ad man Roger Thornhill in the ultimate case of mistaken identity. Ernest Lehman's screenplay is a deft and articulate blending of just about every Hitchcockian cliché ensconced in the director's repertoire, producing two enduring and iconic moments of original brilliance, the crop duster sequence and the finale, presumably taking place along the stone faces of Mount Rushmore. The National Parks Service would not allow Hitchcock to shoot anywhere near the famed monument so MGM built a full scale facsimile inside one of their soundstages back at Culver City out of plaster and wood, with matte paintings seamlessly substituting for the steep ravine. Our story begins when Roger whisks his secretary off to the Plaza Hotel. Observing his own girth in a taxi he instructs her to leave him a memo on his desk – *"Think thin."* In a few moments, Roger will be abducted by a pair of henchmen (Adam Williams and Robert Ellenstein) – *"mere errand boys carrying concealed weapons. His is pointed at your heart so no errors of judgment I beg of you!"*

Roger is taken to the Glenn Cove estate of Lester Townsend and confronted by Philip Van Damm (James Mason) who has mistaken him for FBI agent, George Kaplan. Van Damm informing Roger that he is about to meet with a very unpleasant end. Van Damm's men (that also includes Martin Landau as Leonard) force Roger to drink an entire bottle of bourbon and then set his car to drive off a cliff into the ocean. Roger survives this ordeal, however, but cannot elude police in his drunken state. He is taken to the Glenn Cover station to sleep off his apparent self-imposed drunkenness. The next day the county detectives investigate Roger's claim of abduction but find no evidence. Determined to clear his name, Roger remembers that Townsend is addressing the United Nations. However, the man he meets in the public lounge is not the man he expected and moments later will accidentally be murdered by one of Van Damm's men with a knife meant for Roger. Once again Roger is framed for the crime.

Escaping by train, Roger meets Eve Kendall (Eva Marie Saint), a woman who seduces him in the dining car before exposing to Roger that she knows his real identity. *"Why are you so good to me?"* Roger inquires after Eve repeatedly helps him dodge the police. *"It's a nice face. We've a long night ahead of us...and I'm not particularly interested in the book I've started,"* she coos. Unbeknownst to everyone, including Van Damm and Roger, Eve is the double-agent that everyone is looking for. The narrative gets a bit muddled when Eve sends Roger to an abandoned North Dakota cornfield in the middle of nowhere, Roger being accosted by a biplane that crash lands into an oil tanker, setting it ablaze. Yes, Eve is supposed to be Van Damm's girl. But why she should send an innocent man to his doom and merely pray for his survival is a plot entanglement that Lehman's screenplay never quite explains away. Nevertheless, the crop duster sequence is brilliantly conceived by Hitchcock; eleven a half minutes of nail-biting tension with practically no dialogue. Later, Roger confronts Eve in her hotel suite. *"I want you to leave right now,"* Eve tells him, *"Stay far away from me, and don't come near me again. We're not going to get involved. Last night was last night, and it's all there was, and it's all there is. There isn't going to be anything more between us. So please. Goodbye, good luck, no conversation, just leave."*

Roger learns that Eve is the double agent from her superior contact, 'The Professor' (Leo G. Carroll) and involves himself in forewarning Eve that Van Damm is on to her, thus leading into the dramatic climax along the faces of Mount Rushmore. After nearly plummeting off the edge of the cliff, Roger pulls Eve to safety, Hitchcock jump-cutting from the precipice to an upper berth on a moving train, the last Freudian shot - the train speeding into a tunnel - leaves little doubt as to where the affair between Eve and Roger is headed. **North By Northwest** is the last of Hitchcock's slick and stylish, rambunctiously fun-loving thrillers. With the introduction of **Psycho** (1960) Hitchcock would turn the corner toward grittier and ultimately more perverse entertainments. It was the end of an era and a swan song for Grant's lucrative alliance with his most famous director.

(This page): when director Stanley Donen initially approached Cary to star in **Charade** (1963) he was immediately turned down. Donen was made 'sick' by the rejection. But Cary had begun to feel he could no longer go on playing the romantic lead. He was 59 in 1963 – undeniably well-preserved and still quite handsome but seemingly ill-suited to be Audrey Hepburn's potential lover in the movie. When plans for another project fell through, Grant sheepishly approached Donen, saying *"If you still want me, I'd like to do it."* Donen was overjoyed by the turn of events and diligently set about crafting the best non-Hitchcock thriller of the decade. Peter Stone's screenplay is superb. Shot mostly in France, **Charade** is an exceptional concoction of the espionage/thriller and romantic comedy with elements of the screwball and some light drama thrown in for good measure. Grant made only one request of Donen: to tweak the plot ever so slightly so that the girl, Regina Lampert (Hepburn) chases him instead of the other way around. *"Every time I see you you're with a younger woman,"* Donen reportedly told Grant. *"Yes, I know,"* Cary openly admitted, *"But that's my life – not who I am on the screen."* (Bottom right): Donen and Grant discuss his doing the movie in New York a month before principle photography begins.



(Above): the wrong turn with a happy ending. Grant had first seen actress Dyan Cannon on a short-lived television drama. She agreed to meet him and later go on record as saying she firmly believed she was instantly in love with Grant despite the disparity of 33 years in their respective ages. Grant told Cannon about his experiences with LSD and under a doctor's supervision she agreed to take the drug for her own explorative therapy. This incident would later be revised by Cannon in divorce court as *"My husband force fed me LSD and it nearly killed me."* The bitter divorce that ended their turgid and turbulent three year marriage (1965-68) filled the tabloids with lurid tales of Grant's possessive streak and destructive temperament. Despite her portrait of a bitter, angry and unstable man, the courts gave Grant rights to see their daughter, Jennifer whenever he wished and Grant, who by now had become an active board member at fragrance manufacturer, Faberge, exploited the use of their private plane to follow Cannon around the world to be with Jennifer as much as possible.

Years later, the vitriol set aside, Cannon attempted to cast a more glowing light on both the man and their marriage in an autobiography. She had made a first attempt to pen the memoir in 1974 but abandoned the effort until 2009. The book was published in 2011. The pall that Cannon's court room antics cast upon the actor's reputation was damaging to say the least. Yet, she – like Betsy Drake before her – never once questioned rumors of Cary's sexuality. In fact, Cannon has recounted a luncheon date she had with Cary and Noel Coward – the latter being openly gay. After Cary excused himself to go to the bathroom Coward reportedly leaned in, took Cannon by the hand and reassuringly offered, *"You know, my dear, I am wildly in love with that man. Alas, there are so many who ardently hoped he would come over to play on our team. But I think it's safe to say he's solidly set in his ways."*

Hutton's two previous marriages had been a disaster; particularly her second to Count Kurt Heinrich Eberhard Erdmann Georg von Haugwitz-Hardenberg-Reventlow with whom she had a son, Lance. Reventlow abused Hutton, took advantage of her social connects and ran through her fortunes as though pouring water from a tap. Not surprising, by the time Cary and Barbara became an item she was known for having a *'difficult'* personality. Worse for the relationship was the fact that most of Hutton's entourage was comprised of individuals whom Grant quickly came to regard as sycophantic sponges. They did not work or contribute to society, but merely relied on Hutton to pick up the tab for their expensive outings, luncheons and dinner parties. *"Our marriage had little foundation for a promising future,"* Cary would later say, *"Our backgrounds were completely unlike."*

But Grant adored Barbara's son, Lance whom he continued to be a father figure to even after he and Hutton divorced in 1945. *"Cary was devoted that way,"* actress, and Hutton's first cousin, Dina Merrill has said, *"He adored Lance and vice versa. They were really like father and son."* In fact, Lance preferred Cary to his own father. The two would remain extremely close until 1972 when Lance tragically died in an airplane crash. So too did Cary remain loyal to Barbara until her death in 1979; always there to take her phone calls; their friendship outlasting their marital partnership by thirty-nine years.

Throughout the mid-1940s Cary continued to toggle between light-hearted screwball comedies (1942's **Once Upon a Honeymoon** and 1944's **Arsenic and Old Lace**) and, probing wartime melodramas (**Destination Tokyo** and **Mr. Lucky**, both



(Above): still showing off his acrobatic agility first honed by the Pender Group, this time on the edge of his hotel balcony overlooking the Champs-Élysées and Arc de Triomphe during a brief stay in France in 1955, and (right) preparing for rain on New York's upper east side in 1951. Grant was always immaculately attired, and like his looks, his wardrobe never seemed to change. He was an impeccable dresser, and in retrospect it seems rather odd that no fashion designer ever tapped him to become their spokes model for a line of men's apparel. So many years after his passing, Grant is still frequently referenced as the epitome of masculine chic in magazines like Vogue and GQ.

made in 1943). In 1944 he made a daring departure with Clifford Odets' **None But the Lonely Heart** – making a clean break from the 'Cary Grant' persona in a tale as true to his cockney roots as it was unrelentingly grim. The film was not a hit with audiences but it did earn Cary his second and final nomination as Best Actor. He lost the Oscar to Bing Crosby for **Going My Way**.

Grant also tried his hand at a musical for Warner Bros., **Night and Day** (1946), a totally fictionalized account of Cole Porter's life story and a truly leaden and uninspired movie besides. Hitchcock came to call again, this time with **Notorious** (1946), the harrowing espionage thriller that had Grant cast as a wholly unsympathetic FBI man, R.H. Devlin, who forces a former party girl, Alicia Huberman (Ingrid Bergman) to bed and then marry a Nazi-sympathizer, Alexander Sebastian (Claude Rains) in order to infiltrate and break up his spy ring in Buenos Aires. **Notorious** is one of Hitchcock's most refined masterpieces; Grant's performance dark and mysterious and hypnotically compelling. He is a bastard, but one with a subtext of conflicted emotions that threaten to wreck the entire operation and expose Alicia to Sebastian. In hindsight, **Notorious** also marked the end of Grant's first progressive period in film-making. Having taken the Cary Grant persona as far left or right of center as he possibly could, Cary would increasingly become complacent about never veering too far in either direction ever again.

"He had a most unexpected vulnerability. If I said 'fear' that wouldn't be right. But he had a weariness of relationships."

- Deborah Kerr on Cary Grant

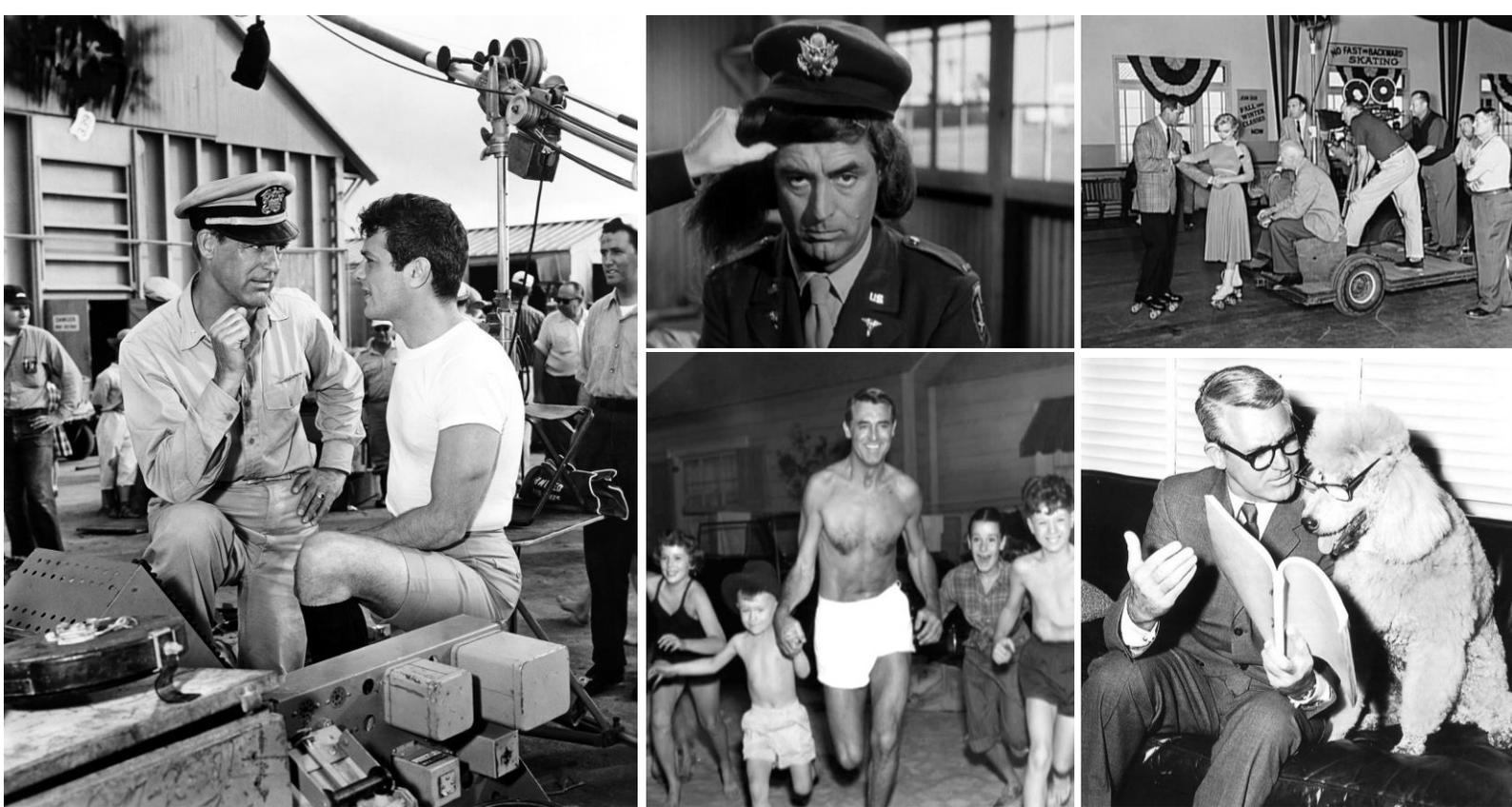




Cary Grant came to increasingly trade on the public's perception of his ensconced persona; his string of movie hits from 1946 to 1955 in no way challenging him to expand his horizons as an actor. The films from this period are a very mixed bag indeed. Henry Koster's **The Bishop's Wife** (1947) cast Grant as a moody 'angel' heaven-sent to teach Bishop Henry Brougham (David Niven) a thing or two about sacrificing his own principles for the sake of having a cathedral built at the behest of wealthy dowager, Mrs. Hamilton (Gladys Cooper). The film also co-stars Loretta Young as the bishop's wife, Julia. Cary's performance is one of his best from this period; his Dudley - the angel - a curiously amalgam of saintly purpose and earthly desire. We are never entirely certain whether Dudley's affections toward Julia in the final act are meant to bring the Bishop to his senses through jealousy or are, in fact, the frustrated, legitimate feelings of a spirit unable to consummate an affair despite having taken on the continence of a man.

But 1947's **The Bachelor and the Bobbysoxer** begins Grant's spiral into thoroughly bland entertainment. Grant's playboy, Dick is brought to heel by a stern judge, Margaret's (Myrna Loy) suspended sentence after a charge of drunk and disorderly is brought against him, but only if Dick will diligently endeavor to break her younger sister, Susan (Shirley Temple) of her school girl's puppy love for him. As shocking as it seems today, Sidney Sheldon won the Oscar for Best Original Screenplay for this rather pedestrian effort that also co-stars Ray Collins and Rudy Vallee; the latter as Margaret's simpering and jealous beau. The film was directed by Irving Reis, whose untimely death at the age of 47 from a heart attack that same year prompted Cary to quietly write a \$10,000 check to help out his widow and young child.

Grant, who was widely known to charge twenty-five cents for autographs, was often thought of as something of a tight wad. But if anything, he was a concerted philanthropist who carefully picked his charitable endeavors. Good fortune may have smiled on him. But his years of childhood poverty had taught Cary the value of a dollar. Though hardly frugal, he did not mindlessly indulge those whom he believed were more than able and capable to help themselves.



(Above): discussing a scene with co-star Tony Curtis on the set of **Operation Petticoat** (1959) Cary's most successful movie in terms of box office but hardly a classic. Looking doleful has he has his wig pruned by co-star Ann Sheridan in **I Was A Male War Bride** (1949). Teaching Marilyn Monroe how to roller skate in **Monkey Business** (1952) as director Howard Hawks and his camera crew look on. Just a big kid himself, racing with the children on the set of **Room for One More** (1952), and also, mugging with the dog from that movie during a...uh...script consultation.

Grant rounded out the 1940s and began a new decade with a slew of decidedly dull movies. Although profitable, none were particularly memorable. 1948's **Mr. Blandings Builds His Dream House** marked Cary's return to featherweight comedy, cast as a harried ad executive who moves his family from the clutter of Manhattan to a Connecticut farm at the behest of his wife (again played by Myrna Loy) only to discover that he has purchased a money pit in desperate need of repair. In 1949's **I Was A Male War Bride**, Grant attempted to go back even further to his days of classic screwball, masquerading in drag as a WAC in order to return to America with his war bride (played by Ann Sheridan). 1952's **Monkey Business** cast Cary as a stuffy middle-aged scientist who invents a youth serum that causes him to go on a tear with his secretary, played by a very buxom Marilyn Monroe. In 1953's **Dream Wife**, Grant's playboy enters into an arranged marriage with a Middle Eastern princess (Betta St. Johns) for the sake of diplomacy, all the while falling in love with the American Ambassador, Effie (Deborah Kerr) who is orchestrating their affair.

Kerr and Grant would be reunited on film again, this time for the infinitely superior, **An Affair to Remember** (1957); remade by director Leo McCarey from his own classic, **Love Affair** (1939) costarring Irene Dunne and Charles Boyer. In the almost shot for shot remake, Grant is Nickie Ferrante, a big 'dame' hunter who is engaged to an heiress he does not particularly love, but who falls headstrong and heart-first instead for retail shop clerk Terry McKay – herself a kept woman by another man. The film's enduring popularity today was resurrected virtually from oblivion by Nora Ephron's pivotal reference to its plot points in 1993's **Sleepless in Seattle**, but in comparing **Love Affair** with its remake it becomes rather obvious that the original is a better movie. The chemistry between Kerr and Grant is undeniable in the remake, but McCarey's direction infrequently stalls the plot to insert several production numbers, his use of the expansive Cinemascope frame rather static for the most part.

By 1955 Cary had already begun to contemplate retirement from the movies. After all, he was not getting any younger. Arguably, he was also not thinking very clearly about the movies he chose to do either. As example, he turned down such high profile projects as Billy Wilder's **Sabrina** and George Cukor's **A Star Is Born** (both in 1954) and had to be heavily



(Top left): going over some script changes with screenwriter Sidney Sheldon on the set of **The Bachelor and the Bobbysoxer** (1947). Sheldon, a noted writer elsewhere in his prolific career, actually won an Oscar for this tepid family comedy about a man who buys a quaint Connecticut farmhouse to escape the frantic pace of Manhattan, then realizes what a money pit it is. (Bottom left): in the penultimate moment from that movie, Grant is seen enjoying the simple pleasures of a family man with wife, Myrna Loy and daughters at his side. In real life, this idealized portrait of domesticity never quite materialized for Cary. (Right): being squired by Judy Garland to invest himself in her pet project – George Cukor's **A Star Is Born** (1954). The part of drunkard and fallen idol Norman Maine eventually went to James Mason who specialized in such bleak depictions of doomed masculinity. Possibly, Cary refused because he felt the role was not in keeping with his carefully crafted persona. But third wife, Betsy Drake has suggested that Judy's predilection for being chronically late or indisposed was something Grant openly revealed he could not abide. Although he shared Judy's passion for the movie and posed for these 'work in progress' power lunch photos, he ultimately turned both star and the role down.

cajoled into accepting Hitchcock's invitation to costar in **To Catch A Thief** (1955) – the one decidedly outstanding movie from this extremely fallow period. **To Catch A Thief** is a lush and romantic light-comedy/thriller; Hitchcock's affinity for the cool blonde never more obviously on display than in the embodiment of Grace Kelly, who oozes sex appeal as she relentlessly pursues Cary's retired jewel thief, John Robie, while suspecting that he has not entirely given up his former profession to settle down and raise flowers.

By now Cary was quite a wealthy man, and seemingly contented in his third marriage to actress Betsy Drake. The couple had married in 1949 when Drake was only 26 years old. Grant and Drake had costarred in two movies; 1948's **Every Girl Should Be Married** and 1952's **Room For One More**. On the surface, it all looked good. But Drake was deeply unhappy. She had given up a promising career on the Broadway stage. But her movie career had quickly stagnated. A man with nineteenth century views irreconcilable in the twentieth century, Grant preferred Drake to remain at home, although he staunchly refused to acquiesce to her desires to have a baby.

Naïveté kept their marriage together for much longer than it ought to; Drake indulging in yoga and mysticism to discover and regain her own center of gravity. In desperation she turned to the advice of a psychiatrist who prescribed medicinal LSD as part of her regression therapy. Arguably, to lend support to his wife, Grant also chose to take the drug under a doctor's care. *"My intention in taking LSD was to make myself happy,"* Cary later explained, *"I took it with a group of men, one of whom was Aldous Huxley...we were truly interested in how this chemical could help humanity. I found it a very enlightening experience, but it's like alcohol in one respect: a shot of brandy can save your life, but a bottle of brandy can kill you."*



(Above right): Cary had back-to-back smash hits with George Steven's **Gunga Din** (1939), costarring Victor McLaglen and Douglas Fairbanks Jr., and George Cukor's **The Philadelphia Story** (1940 above left) seen here in a publicity still alongside, costars Katharine Hepburn, James Stewart and John Howard. Hepburn remains the costar most frequently paired with Grant. They made four films together beginning with **Sylvia Scarlett** (1935) and ending with this movie. Of Grant, Hepburn once pointed out, "He was just sweet...you know...easy-going. No sense of ego - none at all. And he could be great fun on the set...but deadly serious when it came to the work...knew where to place the emphasis on comedy. It's not easy, you know. Try it sometimes."

Yet this explanation flies in the face of Betsy Drake's claim that the only reason Cary chose to partake in these sessions was to learn all he could about what Drake had been divulging about him during her own sessions with the doctor. Whatever the reason, the couple's happiness continued to deteriorate, particularly after 1957's **The Pride and the Passion**. On the set in Spain, Grant began a rather arduous affair with co-star Sophia Loren, one that ended for Loren when production wrapped but continued to plague Cary's infatuations for some time thereafter.

During this period Betsy had been working on a screenplay that she hoped to turn into a movie that she could co-star in with her husband. Cruelly, the project that eventually became **Houseboat** (1958) was quietly taken away from her at Cary's behest and heavily rewritten to accommodate Sophia Loren. When Drake learned of this betrayal, and of their affair, despite Loren's outright rejection of Cary for film producer Carlo Ponti, Betsy finally left their marriage, bitter and heartbroken. Amidst all this personal turmoil Cary starred opposite Ingrid Bergman again; this time in Stanley Donen's elegant romance, **Indiscreet** (1958); the tale of an attractive financial analyst who comes to call on a famed London actress, but lies to her about being a married man in order to keep their 'indiscreet' affair at a distance. Grant and Bergman got on famously on the set; she being most sympathetic to his infrequent bouts of depression after he had learned of Sophia Loren's marriage to Carlo Ponti.

Then in 1959 Cary received a much needed boost to his career and his outlook when Alfred Hitchcock offered him the choice part of Roger O. Thornhill in **North By Northwest**. Grant plays a henpecked ad exec mistaken for an FBI agent who, in fact, does not exist. After repeatedly eluding the criminal mastermind, Phillip Vandamm (James Mason) and his militia of murderous henchmen, Roger falls in love with the mysterious Eve Kendall (Eva Marie Saint) whom he first meets on a train, and who also turns out to be the real agent working right under Phillip's nose, thus placing both she and Roger in imminent peril. Penned by Ernest Lehman, **North By Northwest** is the ultimate 'wrong man' Hitchcock thriller; its ever-shifting locales and spirited set pieces (the famed crop duster sequence and penultimate chase across the Presidential faces of Mount Rushmore) earmarking the movie as a highpoint for both Hitchcock and Grant.

But when director Stanley Donen initially approached Cary to star in **Charade** (1963) he was politely turned down, Grant insisting that he had already committed to another project, **Man's Favorite Sport** with director Howard Hawks. Unexpected delays, however, caused Grant to reconsider Donen's offer. In retrospect, **Charade** is the last great movie in Cary's career – a Hitchcockian thriller better than most of even Hitchcock's own from this same vintage, and with comedic elements ideally suited to Cary's varied talents. The film costars Audrey Hepburn, twenty-four years Cary's junior as a



(Above): with Kate Hepburn for the Lux Radio Broadcast of **The Philadelphia Story**. During Hollywood's heyday stars in general – and MGM's in particular - were contractually obligated to perform on the radio, recreating their famed movie performances in truncated audio broadcast format to satisfy the millions of fans who perhaps were unable to be exposed to their craft in any other media. (Middle): locked in a panged clench with Jean Harlow for **Suzie** (1936) – a movie that advanced neither actors career. Grant plays a downed French pilot – without a French accent - who falls madly for an American cabaret singer. Harlow had barely a year left to live. Stricken with uremic poisoning she died in 1937, age 26. (Right): with Irene Dunne in this publicity still for **Penny Serenade** (1941). Both stars had done drama apart from one another, but together Dunne and Grant had made such a sensation of **The Awful Truth** (1937) that audiences found it particularly difficult to embrace the pair in a serious melodrama. Although critics recognized Cary's performance – he was Oscar-nominated – the film was a moderate success at best.

French-to-English translator who becomes embroiled in a million dollar heist after the death of her own husband. In recognizing the inevitable toll that the natural progression of age had taken on his abilities to convincingly portray a leading man, Grant made one request for a revision to Peter Stone's screenplay. The girl, Regina Lampert (Hepburn) would have to chase him – not the other way around.

Charade's success at the box office also coincided with a new relationship in Cary's life. He had seen Dyan Cannon on television in the forgettable series, **Malibu Run** and had felt an immediate attraction to her. But at age sixty-one, Grant was hardly the amiable suitor of a young girl's dreams. Nervously, he popped the question and to everyone's amazement, Cannon accepted, though arguably the feelings were hardly mutual. The couple eloped to Vegas on July 22, 1965. It was the start of a very rocky relationship to say the least. *"Cary did everything to please her,"* friend Peter Bogdanovich has commented, *"But I often though the love was one-sided."*

1965 was a banner year in Grant's life for another reason; for it marked a self-imposed end to his movie career without flourish or even an announcement on Cary's part to alert his fans that **Walk, Don't Run** would be his last movie. More circumspect about the Cary Grant persona he had worked so diligently to craft and maintain, Grant astutely assessed, *"You can never go back. It's no use. I could have gone on making other movies. But I would have been playing another man. It would have been a great disappointment for the audience to see."*

Instead, Cary poured all of his efforts into his fourth marriage, and more intensely into the care and love of daughter Jennifer, born to the couple on February 26, 1966. Grant, who by his own admission had selfishly staved off fatherhood to concentrate exclusively on his career, was now for the first time experiencing paternal love; the strength of its sentiment catching him completely off guard. He doted on Jennifer with a genuineness of affection, ironically contributing to the ever-widening rift in his already strained marriage. Cannon had placed her career before the union and was perhaps resentful of Cary's insistence that she now choose between it and being a wife and mother; an impasse the marriage could not withstand.

But the divorce two years later was very bitter indeed, with Cannon lobbing accusations in the press and revealing candid stories to the tabloids about Grant's private life before and during their marriage – told in confidence – and that Cary had thus far managed to keep hidden from public view: all in her attempts to win custody of Jennifer. Custody was eventually



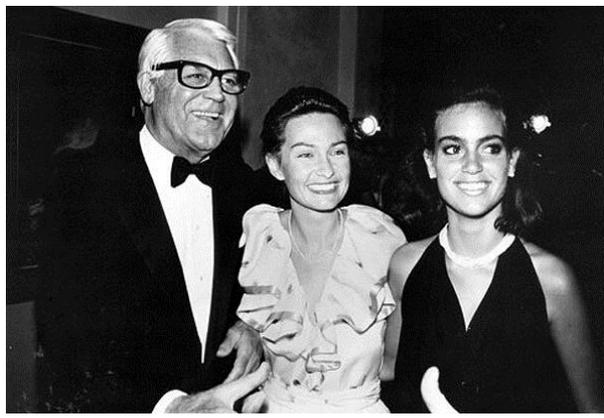
(Above): things were not exactly copasetic on the set of **Houseboat** (1958). Grant had obligated himself to the project at the start of shooting **The Pride and the Passion** in Spain, perhaps believing that his hot and heavy affair with Loren would continue after shooting on that movie wrapped. Regrettably, it didn't. Loren moved on in her own love life with Carlo Ponti, leaving Cary bewildered and hurt. For months he tried to finagle some sort of reconciliation that, on occasion was tantamount to stalking. For the press the two behaved amicably, even smiling in jest when questioned by journalists. (Top left): but this B&W photo taken on the set, as well as the two color reproduction frames from the party sequence in the movie reveals a subtext of animosity lurking beneath each cultured façade. Loren literally had to dodge Cary by declining invitations to parties. When Betsy Drake found out about the affair her faith in their marriage was shattered. The couple stayed together, but things were never quite the same afterward. As for Sophia Loren – at least as far as Cary Grant was concerned – she was very much 'the one that got away.'

granted to Cannon with visitation rights for Cary. But the battle in the tabloids had done a great deal of harm to Grant's public image.

Nevertheless, perfume and cosmetic giant Rayette-Fabergé approached Cary with an offer to sit on their Board of Directors; an unusual request met with even more startling amazement by Grant's acceptance of the offer. After a lifelong career and wise investments, Cary did not need the money the company was offering. What did appeal to him was the prospect of having a private jet at his disposal that he could use at his discretion to follow Cannon around the globe to be with Jennifer. Being a presence in the young girl's life was extremely important to him now and he took every opportunity to fulfill his obligations as a parent. The relationship between father and daughter blossomed. Despite the separation of her parents, Jennifer Grant became extremely close to Cary in these later years.

In 1970 the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (AMPAS) finally came around to honoring Cary with a life-time achievement statuette for what they coined as his "*unique mastery in the art of screen acting.*" Frankly, it was about time. Grant had been nominated only twice for Best Actor and had lost each time. It seems unfathomable to think he was never even nominated for **The Awful Truth**, **The Talk of the Town**, **Notorious**, **To Catch a Thief**, **An Affair to Remember**, **North By Northwest** or **Charade**; but such is the slight and oversight of academy voters who, like the rest of the world, probably believed that in these aforementioned movies Grant was merely being himself rather than playing a part.

The night of the Oscars was marked by an ebullient and slightly teary-eyed Grant graciously accepting the award to a standing ovation (in the years when standing ovations actually signified a resounding respect for lifetime achievement). "*I want to thank you very much for signifying your approval of this...*" Grant addressed his peers, "*I shall cherish it until I die because probably no greater honor can come to any man than the respect of his colleagues.*"



(Above): They say that *'third time's the charm'*...but in Cary's case the magic number seems to have been 'five'. Grant met publicist Barbara Harris while on one of his routine conventions for Faberge and it was love at first sight. Whether out of some great enduring devotion or simply alerted by the fact that their time together was limited by Grant's advancing years, Harris positively doted on Cary with the deepest admiration and affections he had ever known in marriage. She embraced Cary's relationship with daughter Jennifer (top left) – the two becoming very good friends. (Bottom, second from right): with publicist Nancy Nelson who pursued Cary for almost a year to convince him to do the live Q&A travelling show, *'An Evening With Cary Grant'*. Grant didn't think he would be any good at the free-flowing format, dealing with audience questions, but on opening night he received a standing ovation and such a reception of goodwill that he instantly fell into character to become the star of the show. For the next two years Grant travelled the provinces in this one man routine, Barbara with him every step – the two enjoying in his renewed fame and each other's company during the twilight of his life. *"He was an extraordinary man,"* Harris has said, *"I loved him dearly."*

It was a rare night and an even rarer occasion for Grant who all but shunned invitations of every kind to accept any further accolades, honors and awards for his body of work. Quite simply, Grant had wisely assessed that it was not worth his time and/or effort to make the rounds. Moreover, he detested the inevitability of having to give a speech at such affairs. Instead, his tenure at Rayette-Fabergé sparked a new interest to becoming an active board member at other companies as well, most notably MGM and Hollywood Park. *"He was the youngest eighty year old I ever met,"* friend Ralph Lauren admitted, *"He had the coolest, youngest walk, so spritely...it inspired me to say 'remember what you just saw'."*

Cary loved to travel. But in 1981 Rayette-Fabergé's annual trade show at London's Royal Lancaster Hotel came with unexpected perks. The hotel's PR person Barbara Harris met Cary for the first time and became instantly smitten. Cary was forty-seven years her senior. But before long the couple began to be seen together everywhere and on April 11, 1981 they were married in a quiet ceremony attended by their closest friends and colleagues. *"I had never envisioned having a relationship with him other than friendship,"* Harris would later confess, *"But he was such an extraordinary individual, regardless of age, I couldn't help myself. Even though I recognized that our time together was limited, the quality of that relationship was so extraordinary I wouldn't have changed it for the world."*

If judging the relationship solely on age, then Grant and Harris were the unlikeliest of prospects for a happy union. And yet everything about their marriage clicked as though it had been preordained. The adoration was obviously mutual and heartfelt and Cary experienced true marital contentment for the first and only time in his life. He had, at long last,



(Above): accepting his well-deserved lifetime achievement Oscar in 1970 to a standing ovation, a tearful Grant was touched by the resounding affection from his peers. He had come full circle, his respect justly acknowledged by those in an industry that had changed so much since his retirement in 1966. (Middle): one of the last posed stills of Cary Grant, still looking every bit the part of the gentleman, his weather-beaten features curiously still showing trademark flashes of the young man who had charmed us all. (Right): taking a jaunt around Hollywood Park in 1977. Grant actively occupied a seat on their Board of Directors. Cary relished the role of elder statesman and his opinions and participation were valued here, at Faberge and at the then newly amalgamated MGM/UA.

discovered his soul mate. The couple also remained close to Jennifer. Grant even found it in his heart to forgive Dyan Cannon. For all the vitriol that had existed between them for so long, in the waning years of Grant's life, Cannon came to have a fondness for the man she had once decried as a terrible tyrant in the tabloids. *"I can still smell his aftershave,"* she recollected fondly in a 2001 interview for **Entertainment Weekly**.

1981 was a busy year for Grant; one that sparked a lawsuit when comedian Chevy Chase took it upon himself to make unflattering comments on NBC's **Tomorrow** TV show (a precursor to **'Today'**) calling Grant *'a homo'*, *'a great gal'* and *'what a nice guy'*. More concerned over how Barbara and Jennifer would react to this news, Grant instructed his attorneys Trope and Trope to sue Chase for \$10,000,000 – but this was later settled out of court. At the same time Cary was approached by publicist Nancy Nelson to do a Q&A styled live show. She had similarly promoted Ginger Rogers to great success; a show that Grant had, in fact, attended and been immeasurably impressed by. Still, Cary politely declined Nelson's offer. It would take two years of gentle coaxing on Nelson's part before **'An Evening With Cary Grant'** finally became a reality.

Cary's one insistence in doing the show was that no seat in the house cost more than \$25.00; something of a reversal of his own rather enterprising effrontery to charge twenty-five cents for an autograph. Grant proved a natural in the Q&A format – relishing his interaction with audience members who were overjoyed to see a living legend in the flesh. The adulation received from the audience was perhaps the most genuine affection Grant had ever experienced in his life. Most definitely, it signified for Cary just how far his reputation had preceded him. Lest we forget that in the days before home video the only way fans were likely to see a great star at work was through attending rare screenings of his movies at a revival house or staying up to watch them being run in truncated/commercial-interrupted broadcasts as midnight fill-in fodder on TV.

Cary hadn't made a movie in more than fifteen years. Still, the audiences came in droves – perhaps on nothing more substantial than their fond memories of seeing Grant in some of his best work nearly forty years earlier. By now his name alone carried its own weight and cache. They might have come for the legend. But they stayed to cheer and applaud the man.

Playing the same theaters he had begun his stage career in almost sixty years earlier, Grant was with Barbara rehearsing for another engagement in Davenport Ireland on November 26, 1986 when she suddenly noticed a change in his behavior. *"He had been at the top of his game in the morning,"* Barbara recalled, *"But it was only in the late afternoon that I suddenly realized something was terribly wrong. He couldn't concentrate and began to slur his words."*

Grant was rushed to a nearby hospital where he suffered a massive stroke. He died at 11:22pm that night.





“Everybody wants to be Cary Grant...even I want to be Cary Grant!”

- Cary Grant

In the years since his passing Cary Grant’s reputation has not diminished one iota. The boy who pulled himself up by his own bootstraps and rose like cream to the top of his profession remains one of the most iconic star presences ever to grace the movie screen. Even those among us who have never seen a movie in which Grant appeared – and there are *regrettably* those among us even today – instantly know his photograph by sight and have a point of reference (albeit limited) when his name is mentioned in passing. This alone is an extraordinary accomplishment. For it unequivocally attests to Grant’s staying power; his star presence and his ability to have transcended the mere flesh and blood trapping of a mortal, entering the realm of sheer movie-land mythology.

Thus, when we think of the man we only see the meticulously crafted image he gave us both on and off screen. That, at least to us, seems to be Cary Grant. Cary once said that he spent the better part of his life fluctuating between Archie Leach and Cary Grant, unsure of either and suspecting each. Perhaps in choosing to live within this carefully crafted persona, Grant had entombed his own understanding of exactly *who* and *what* he was, could be, or might have been - both to himself and to those who shared at least some part of him in closeness.

But oh, what a magnificent illusion it was, is, and, remains to this day – prone to extremes, relatively untarnished and practically galvanized: Teflon-coated even, and, undeniably ever-present without any viable contender on the horizon to challenge, much less surpass his iconography as the nonpareil of social grace, elegance and immeasurable style. He remains Cary Grant: no contest/no equal - the pluperfect example of the movie star.