

GORDON B. KAUFMANN

Gordon B. Kaufmann includes a detailed career biography that chronicles numerous residential projects Kaufmann designed, including homes for many legendary Los Angeles families, with names such as Chandler, Adamson, Getz, Hampshur-Jones, and Janss. His design for Greystone, the mansion he created for E. L. Doheny Jr. and Lucy Doheny, catapulted him to the top of his field. At the time, the home was the largest private residence in Southern California, a fitting 55-room manor for the son and daughter-in-law of the richest man in the United States. In addition, Kaufmann designed Hoover Dam, the Los Angeles Times Building, Caltech's Atheneum, Santa Anita Park, and other landmarks.

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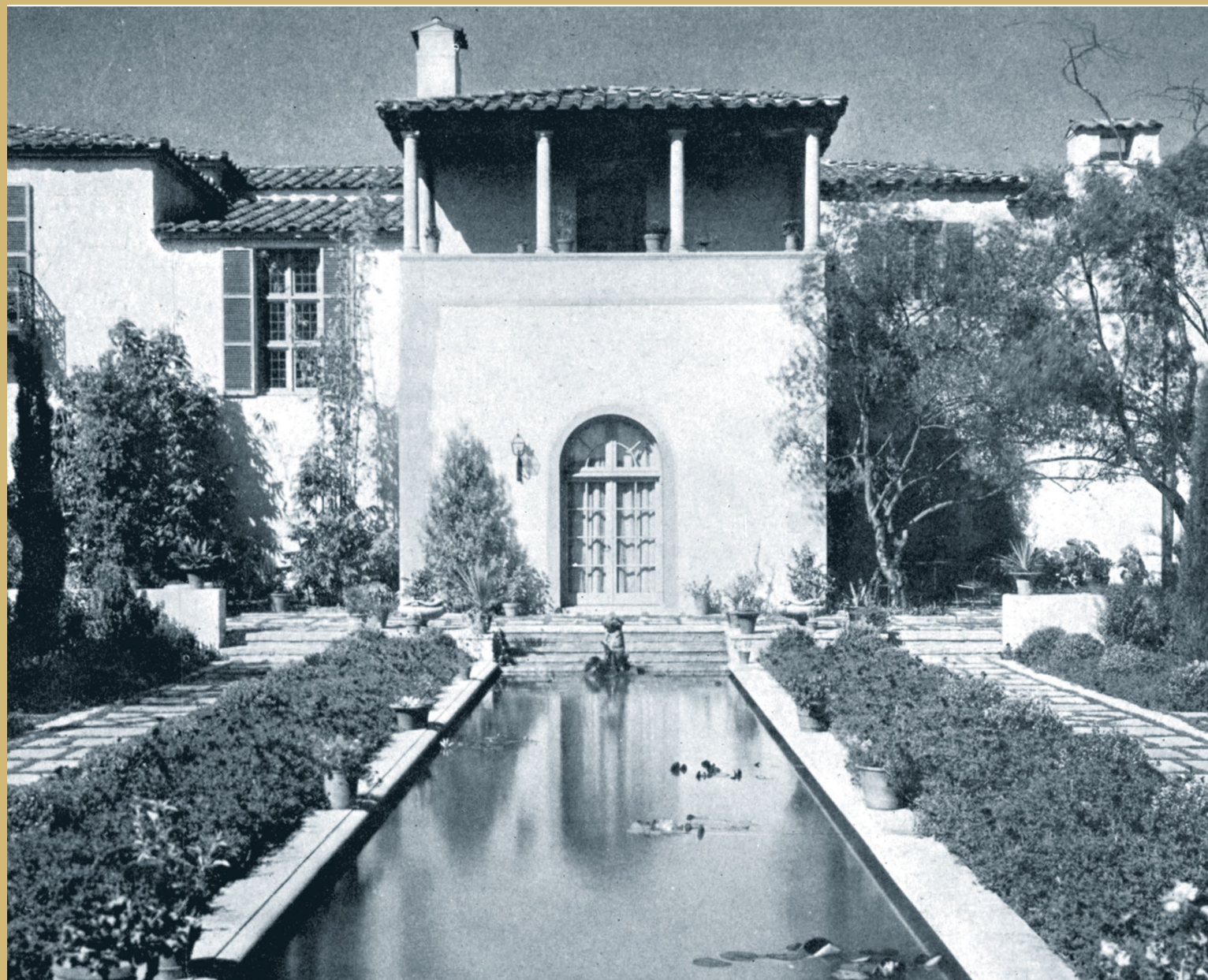
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APPLETON
PARSONS • VAUGHT



MASTER ARCHITECTS — OF — SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA 1920-1940

GORDON B. KAUFMANN



MARC APPLETON • BRET PARSONS • STEVE VAUGHT



House of J. Y. Baruh, Los Angeles—Gordon B. Kaufmann, Architect

Photo, Padilla Co.

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Gordon B. Kaufmann. Photo: Los Angeles Public Library.

A SPIRIT OF RICH AND GRACEFUL ELEGANCE: THE CAREER OF GORDON B. KAUFMANN, F.A.I.A.

In the early twentieth century, a young and peripatetic British architect arrived in Southern California with little more than charm, talent, and ambition. The combination proved to be enough for stunning architectural success. Over the ensuing decades, he left his mark on the region as few architects have done before or since.

Gordon B. Kaufmann leaves a unique architectural legacy. His influence over two distinct periods of Southern California's architectural development is significant. In the 1920s, Kaufmann was hailed as a virtuoso of Spanish, Mediterranean, and other romantic revival designs. Yet when the mania for such designs subsided in the 1930s, he moved in a dramatically new direction, exhibiting the same masterly embrace of modern design as he had with his earlier work. Indeed, the difference in Kaufmann's output between these periods was so distinct that it could have been mistaken for the work of two different architects. His work was so renowned that he was sought after for his stunning private residences and for indelible public landmarks as diverse as Santa Anita Park, Scripps College, the California Institute of Technology's Athenaeum, and Hoover Dam.

However, no matter how historically evocative or modern a Kaufmann structure is, it is always grounded in classic tradition. There is a firm foundation, literally and philosophically, behind each Kaufmann design. In attempting to pinpoint what distinguishes the architect's work, setting him apart—and above—the majority of his contemporaries, Harris C. Allen, F.A.I.A., venerable editor of the *Pacific Coast Architect*, wrote that Kaufmann “showed a creative imagination in the composition and proportion of exterior masses and a subtle mastery of detail and ornament. Pervading all his work was a spirit of rich and graceful elegance—a much-abused word, but it expresses the essential quality which made the output of his office individual and admirable.”

ORIGINS

Gordon Bernie Kaufmann was born in London, March 19, 1888, at Lowther Hill, Forest Hill, in the borough of Lewisham. His father, Gustav, was a well-to-do merchant who had settled in the district with his wife, the former Matilda May Isaacs, after immigrating to London from his native Bavaria in Germany. During the late Victorian era, Forest Hill was home to many affluent businessmen as well as host to a large and vibrant German community. The area was rich in architectural diversity, running the gamut from Gothic to Italianate, and provided young Kaufmann early exposure to an eclectic range of styles. Set upon the crest of the hill, with sweeping views and opening up on a private park, the Kaufmann family's brick-faced villa was Italian in inspiration. Just down the road was one of the most notable architectural achievements of the Victorian era, Sir Joseph Paxton's monumental Crystal Palace, which had been moved to nearby Sydenham Hill after the end of the Great Exhibition of 1851.

Kaufmann's formative years were characterized by travel with his family throughout Europe, including extended trips to Germany. Some of these visits were so long that Kaufmann was enrolled for a time at the Hansa Schule in Bergedorf, near Hamburg. Most of his education, however, took place in London, where Kaufmann attended Whitgift Grammar School, Croydon, beginning in 1903. At Whitgift, Kaufmann showed such promise that he attracted the personal attention of Walter Cross, head of the school's science department.



Entrance Hall

Photo, Hiller

Residence of Mr. and Mrs. E. L. Doheny, Jr., Beverly Hills—Gordon B. Kaufmann, Architect

Interiors and Furnishings by The Cheesewright Studios, Inc.

Marble Floors and Stairs by Bruner Marble & Tile Company



Lower Hall

Photo, Hiller



Library

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Residence of Mr. and Mrs. E. L. Doheny, Jr., Beverly Hills—Gordon B. Kaufmann, Architect

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