

ROLAND E. COATE

In a remarkable career that spanned more than three decades, Roland E. Coate produced hundreds of exceptional designs from Santa Barbara to Bel-Air, Hollywood, Hancock Park, and Pasadena that ranged from quaint bungalows to grand mansions. Coate's ability to work in a variety of styles from English Tudor to Monterey Colonial with equal grace made him a favorite with those seeking the very best. His client list—with names like Doheny, O'Melveny, Hoover, and Hertz—reads like a "Who's Who" of the most important and influential figures of the era. The Coate-designed mansion in Hancock Park of aviator/film producer/oil magnate Howard Hughes remains one of the most famous houses in Los Angeles.

MARC APPLETON is the principal of Appleton Partners LLP, an architectural firm in Santa Monica and Santa Barbara. He has written, published, or contributed to many books including: *George Washington Smith: An Architect's Scrapbook* (2001), Robert Winter's *Myron Hunt at Occidental College* (2012), and *Ranches: Home on the Range in California* (2016). Marc lives in Santa Barbara.

BRET PARSONS has written five books, including *Colcord Home* (2008), the biography of the beloved Southern California architect Gerard Colcord. A residential Realtor, he founded Bret Parsons Real Estate in 2008. He is associate manager of the Hancock Park office of Compass, specializing in architectural properties. Bret resides in Los Angeles.

STEVE VAUGHT is an author and historian who specializes in Southern California architecture and social history. He has written about Palm Springs's rich history in *The Committee of Twenty-Five, The First 65 Years, 1948–2013* (2014); *Sentinels in Stone, Palm Springs Historic Tennis Club Neighborhood and its Iconic Walls* (2015); and *Einstein Dreamt Here, The Willows Historic Palm Springs Inn* (with Tracy Conrad) (2015). Steve lives in Palm Springs.

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APPLETON
PARSONS • VAUGHT



MASTER ARCHITECTS — OF — SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA 1920-1940

ROLAND E. COATE



MARC APPLETON • BRET PARSONS • STEVE VAUGHT



House of Jacques Vinmont, Los Angeles—Roland E. Coate, Architect

Photo, Padilla Co.



Photo, Padilla Co.

*House of Jacques Vinmont, Los Angeles
Roland E. Coate, Architect*

Katherine Bashford, Landscape Architect



Photo, Padilla Co.



Beach Residence of Mrs. Roland E. Coate, Emerald Bay—Roland E. Coate, Architect

Eric Barclay, Builder



Photos Haight

Electric Air and Water Heaters: Thermador Electrical Mfg. Company
Finish Hardware: West & Company
Hardware Manufacturers: Rite Hardware Manufacturing Company
Lighting Equipment: C. W. Cole & Co., Inc.
Painting and Decorating: P. J. Wright
Rough Lumber: E. K. Wood Lumber Company
Weather Strips: Monarch Weatherproofing Corporation

COATE BEACH HOUSE
 EMERALD BAY, LAGUNA BEACH
 1931

The Great Depression wreaked havoc on the building trades and brought a near collapse to construction projects across the country. Scores of once-successful architects and designers were unable to find work and were forced to close up shop. In Southern California, some—like Carl Jules Weyl, Stephen Goossen, and Lyle Wheeler—were able to start new careers as Hollywood set designers, but others were less fortunate. Coate was among the few who were able to carry on, and although his work flow may have slowed for a time, it never came to a complete halt. He managed not only to survive; he ultimately prospered.

In 1931, while a number of his contemporaries were shuttering their offices, Coate was embarking on the construction of a new beach house for himself and his family. Three years earlier, Coate had remarried, and he and his wife Gladys had a growing family. Coate originally considered building a bigger house in Pasadena, but he ultimately opted for a getaway at the beach.

The location was Emerald Bay, an exclusive new residential development in Orange County surrounded by hills and seaside coves. Coate was one of a group of investors involved in the project, which was first announced in 1929. He had joined forces with a stellar group of talent in laying out the scheme: architect and landscape designer Mark Daniels; architect H. Palmer Sabin; contractor/engineer Fritz Ruppel; and artist Alson Clark. For his part, Coate drew the plans for the community's picturesque Spanish-style gate house—perhaps one of the most significant aspects of the project, since it

BUILT: 1931
SIZE: 2,495 square feet; 0.11-acre parcel
FORMER OWNERS INCLUDE:
 Roland E. Coate
 Howard C. and Carrie K. Richardson
 Jack D. and Judith P. Perry
 William P. and Barbara H. Harwell
 James D. and Glenys N. Slavik

The Architectural Digest original publication: 1937; Vol. IX; No. 3





Entrance Court

Photos Maynard L. Parker

Residence of Mr. and Mrs. Van Cott Niven, Beverly Hills, California

ROLAND E. COATE, Architect

Decoration Under Personal Supervision of MR. EDGAR J. CHEESEWRIGHT of CHEESEWRIGHT, MASON & COMPANY

- Doors and Window Sash: Sugar Pine
- Fireplace Fixtures: Colonial Shops
- Interior Trim and Cabinet Work: Ponderosa Pine
- Large Specimen Trees: R. W. Hamsher
- Wall Paper: C. W. Stockwell Company, Ltd.
- Wood Carving: H. A. Foth



Garden

NIVEN HOUSE
BEVERLY HILLS
1939

Southern California's classical revivalist architects had varied reactions to the rise of modernism in the 1930s. Coate's former partner, Gordon B. Kaufmann, wholeheartedly embraced the change, transitioning to an entirely second phase of his career with such modernistic landmarks as the Los Angeles Times Building and Hoover Dam in Boulder City, Nevada. Coate, on the other hand, took a different approach. Rather than discard classical revivalism outright, he sought to update and refine classical forms to appeal to a modern aesthetic, as he did in the house he designed for the newly married Lucy and Van Niven, giving a classic Colonial a new twist.

He boldly created a series of geometric volumes with the central mass thrust forward toward the street. The hipped roof was so low it looked flat. Coate added shingled bands that flared out toward the bottom between the second-floor windows, giving the vague impression of a Mansard roof. The most notable exterior feature was the grand covered porch on the second story, with its delicate wrought-iron pillars and balustrades. It is possible that Coate emulated the work of James E. Dolena, who was achieving great success during this period designing modern Hollywood Regency houses for some of the biggest names in the entertainment business. While perhaps not wholly successful as an architectural statement, the Nivens' house was nonetheless a charming and gracious home, surrounded by terraced gardens laid out by Florence Yoch and Lucile Council to capitalize on the impressive views across the Los Angeles basin.

Van, an attorney, became a senior partner with the white-shoe firm of Gibson, Dunn,

BUILT: 1939

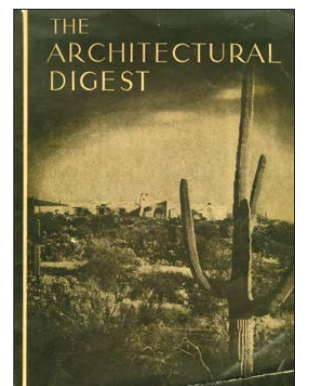
SIZE: 6,940 square feet; 1.37-acre parcel

FORMER OWNERS INCLUDE:

Marie Antoinette O'Melveny

Lucy Doheny Niven, Leigh M. Battson, and Olin Wellborn III

Doheny Road Partners II, LLC



The Architectural Digest original publication: 1942; Vol. X; No. 4