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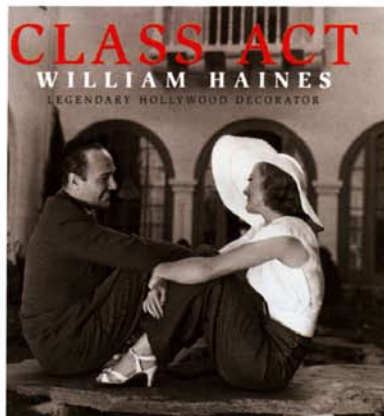
Biographies of Two of the Country's "Most Celebrated" Designers Top the List for Holiday Reading

Class Act:
William Haines, Legendary
Hollywood Decorator

William Haines came to Hollywood after winning a new talent contest in 1922. He appeared in more than twenty films as a leading man to many of Hollywood's most famous stars, including Joan Crawford, Marion Davies and Constance Bennett. As Haines' film career faded, his self-taught skills as a decorator flourished and many of his co-stars became his first clients. Within a few years, he was designing the homes of the elite crowd of the movie industry including Jack Warner, director George Cukor, and producer William Goetz.

Over the next forty years, Haines' style of decorating evolved to complement the lifestyles of his glamorous, well-heeled clients, who were often art collectors and patrons. After his death in 1973, his associate and heir apparent, Ted Graber, took over the firm and from 1981 to 1989 was in charge of one of its most important commissions, the decoration of the private residence at the White House for President Ronald Reagan and his wife Nancy. Despite the celebrity and wealth of his clients, Haines was never too impressed by it all. At one point he said: "I can only tell you this—I would rather have taste than either love or money."

Class Act: William Haines—Legendary Hollywood Decorator draws on an extraordinary treasure trove of photographs and drawings, many of which have never been published before. The authors, Peter Schifando, Graber's associate who joined the Haines firm in 1986, and Jean H. Mathison, who was



the assistant to both Haines and Graber for thirty years, have faithfully preserved the archives of William Haines Inc. Five experts — film historian Anthony Slide, antiques dealer Liz O'Brien, museum curator Joseph Rosa, Vanity Fair contributor Bob Colacello, and New York Times design editor Pilar Viladas—add their insights into the importance and influence of William Haines and his legendary career.

Mathison is a treasure herself. Now eighty years old, she is an ebullient storyteller with lots of yarns about Hollywood's golden age. Her papers and memorabilia

fill a two car garage, and her memory contains even more, also very neatly arranged. She not only ran the business end of things, she participated in almost all of the major jobs including the makeover at the Reagan White House, and the totally renovated and redecorated Winfield House, the 144 room Georgian mansion set on twelve and one half acres in London's Regent's Park that serves as home to the United States Ambassador to the Court of St. James. It was done during the residency of Ambassador Walter Annenberg and his wife, Lee Annenberg. "Before people at the embassy knew who was who, they thought that Billy was the new ambassador because he was so distinguished and polished," says Mathison. "He used to say that if he had been born during the time of Louis XVI, he would have decorated Versailles."

More than three hundred photographs, archival drawings, and personal mementos bring together for the first time all of the decorator's most important projects. The book is sure to become a primary source for decorators, furniture designers and anyone interested in the unique career of one of the twentieth century's truly original and creative personalities.

Class Act:
*William Haines, Legendary
Hollywood Decorator*

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