

= Cary Grant =

Cary Grant (born Archibald Alexander Leach ; January 18 , 1904 ? November 29 , 1986) was a British @-@ American actor , known as one of classic Hollywood 's definitive leading men . He began a career in Hollywood in the early 1930s , and became known for his transatlantic accent , light @-@ hearted approach to acting and comic timing , and debonair demeanor . He became an American citizen in 1942 .

Born in Horfield , Bristol , Grant became attracted to theatre at a young age , and began performing with a troupe known as " The Penders " from the age of six . After attending Bishop Road Primary School and Fairfield Grammar School in Bristol , he toured the country as a stage performer , and decided to stay in New York City after a performance there . He established a name for himself in vaudeville in the 1920s and toured the United States before moving to Hollywood in the early 1930s . He initially appeared in crime films or dramas such as *Blonde Venus* (1932) and *She Done Him Wrong* (1933) , but later gained renown for his appearances in romantic comedy and screwball comedy films such as *The Awful Truth* (1937) , *Bringing Up Baby* (1938) , *His Girl Friday* (1940) , *The Philadelphia Story* (1940) . Along with the later *Arsenic and Old Lace* (1944) and *I Was a Male War Bride* (1949) ; these films are frequently cited as among the all @-@ time great comedy films . Having established himself as a major Hollywood star , he was nominated twice for the Academy Award for Best Actor , for *Penny Serenade* (1941) and *None but the Lonely Heart* (1944) .

In the 1940s and 1950s , Grant forged a working relationship with the director Alfred Hitchcock , appearing in films such as *Suspicion* (1941) , *Notorious* (1946) , *To Catch a Thief* (1955) and *North by Northwest* (1959) . Hitchcock considered Grant to have been the only actor that he had ever loved . Towards the end of his film career , Grant was praised by critics as a romantic leading man , and received five Golden Globe Award for Best Actor nominations , including *Indiscreet* (1958) with Ingrid Bergman , *That Touch of Mink* (1962) with Doris Day , and *Charade* (1963) with Audrey Hepburn . He is remembered by critics for his unusually broad appeal , as a handsome , suave actor who did not take himself too seriously , possessing the ability to play with his own dignity in comedies without sacrificing it entirely . His comic timing and delivery made Grant what *Premiere* considers to have been " quite simply , the funniest actor cinema has ever produced " .

Grant was married five times ; three of his marriages were elopements with actresses ? Virginia Cherrill (1934 ? 35) , Betsy Drake (1949 ? 62) and Dyan Cannon (1965 ? 68) . He has one daughter with Cannon , Jennifer Grant (born 1966) . After his retirement from film acting in 1966 , Grant pursued numerous business interests , representing cosmetics firm Fabergé , and sitting on the board of MGM and others . He was presented with an Honorary Oscar by his friend Frank Sinatra at the 42nd Academy Awards in 1970 , and in 1981 , he was accorded the Kennedy Center Honors . In 1999 , the American Film Institute named Grant the second greatest male star of Golden Age Hollywood cinema , after Humphrey Bogart .

= = Early life and education = =

Grant was born Archibald Leach on January 18 , 1904 at 15 Hughenden Road in the northern Bristol suburb of Horfield . He was the second child of Elias James Leach (1873 ? 1935) and Elsie Maria Leach (née Kingdon ; 1877 ? 1973) . Elias , the son of a potter , worked as a tailor 's presser at a clothes factory , while Elsie , who was from a family of shipwrights , worked as a seamstress . Grant 's elder brother , John William Elias Leach (1899 ? 1900) , died of tuberculous meningitis . Grant considered himself to have been partly Jewish . He had an unhappy upbringing ; his father was an alcoholic , and his mother suffered from clinical depression .

Wanting the best for her son , Elsie taught Grant song and dance when he was four , and was keen on him having piano lessons . She would occasionally take him to the cinema where he enjoyed the performances of Charlie Chaplin , Chester Conklin , Fatty Arbuckle , Ford Sterling , Mack Swain and Broncho Billy Anderson . Grant entered education when he was four @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half and was sent to the Bishop Road Primary School , Bristol .

Grant's biographer Graham McCann mentions that Maureen Donaldson, a lover of Grant in the 1970s, claimed in her book that his mother "did not know how to give affection and did not know how to receive it either." Another biographer, Geoffrey Wansell, notes that Elsie blamed herself bitterly for the death of Grant's older brother John, and never recovered from it. Grant later acknowledged that his negative experiences with his fiercely independent mother affected his relationships with women later in life. She frowned on alcohol and tobacco, and would reduce pocket money for minor mishaps. Grant later attributed her behavior towards him as down to her being overprotective, fearing that she would lose him as she did John.

Grant's father later placed his mother in Glenside Hospital (a mental institution) and told the 9-year-old that she had gone away on a "long holiday", later declaring that she had died. Grant grew up resenting his mother, particularly after she left the family. After Elsie was gone, Grant and his father moved into the home of his grandmother in Bristol. When Grant was 10, his father remarried and started a new family that did not include his son. Grant did not learn that his mother was still alive until he was 31, when his father confessed to the lie, shortly before his own death. Grant made arrangements for his mother to leave the institution in June 1935, shortly after he learned of her whereabouts. He visited her during a break to England in October 1938, after filming for *Gunga Din* was completed.

Due to alienation from his parents, he found it difficult to socialize and had a nervous disposition. He enjoyed the theatre, particularly pantomimes at Christmas which he would attend with his father. Grant befriended a troupe of acrobatic dancers, known as "The Penders" or the "Bob Pender Stage Troupe". He subsequently trained as a stilt walker and began touring with them. During a two-week stint at the Wintergarten theatre in Berlin circa 1914 he was noticed by Jesse Lasky, who was a Broadway producer at the time.

In 1915, Grant won a scholarship to attend Fairfield Grammar School in Bristol, although his father could barely afford to pay for the uniform. With his good looks and acrobatic talents Grant became a popular figure among both girls and boys. Though he was able at most academic subjects He excelled at sports, particularly fives, and developed a reputation for mischief; he frequently refused to do his homework. A former classmate referred to him as a "scruffy little boy", while an old teacher remembered "the naughty little boy who was always making a noise in the back row and would never do his homework". His evenings were spent working backstage in Bristol theatres, and in 1917, at the age of 13, he was responsible for the lighting for the magician David Devant at the Hippodrome. Grant began hanging around backstage at the theatre at every opportunity. In the summer he volunteered for work as a messenger boy and guide at the military docks in Southampton, to escape the unhappiness of his home life. The time spent at Southampton strengthened his desire to travel; he was eager to leave Bristol and tried to sign on as a ship's cabin boy, but learned he was too young.

On March 13, 1918, Grant was expelled from Fairfield. Several explanations were given, including being discovered in the girls' lavatory, and assisting two other classmates with theft in the nearby town of Almondsbury. Wansell claims that Grant had set out to intentionally get himself expelled from school to pursue a career in entertainment with the troupe.

Grant rejoined Pender's troupe three days after being expelled from Fairfield. Elias now had a better paying job in Southampton; Grant's expulsion from the school brought local authorities to his door with questions about why his son was living in Bristol and not with his father in Southampton. Upon learning that his son was once again with the Pender troupe, Elias co-signed a three-year contract between his son and Pender. The contract stipulated Grant's weekly salary along with room and board, as well as dancing lessons and other training for his profession until the age of 18. There was also a provision in the contract for salary rises based on job performance.

= = Vaudeville and performing career = =

Without school to attend, Grant rejoined the Pender Troupe, and accepted a salary of 10 shillings a week from Pender. The group began touring the county, and Grant developed the ability in pantomime to broaden his physical acting skills. On July 21, 1920, at the age 16, Grant travelled

with the group on the RMS Olympic to conduct a tour of the United States , arriving a week later . Biographer Richard Schickel claims that Douglas Fairbanks and Mary Pickford were aboard the same ship , returning from their honeymoon , and that Grant played shuffleboard with him . He was so impressed with Fairbanks that the actor became an important role model . After arriving in New York , the group performed at the New York Hippodrome ? the largest theatre in the world at the time with a capacity of 5 @,@ 697 ? for nine months , putting on twelve shows a week ; their production of Good Times was successful .

Grant became a part of the vaudeville circuit and began touring . After performing in places such as St. Louis , Missouri , Cleveland and Milwaukee , he made the decision to stay in the US with several of the other members , while the rest of the troupe returned to Britain . He remembered becoming fond of the performances of the Marx Brothers during this period and Zeppo Marx was an early role model for him . In July 1922 , Grant performed in a group with seven others , the " Knockabout Comedians " , at the Palace Theatre on Broadway . He formed a group that summer , " The Walking Stanleys " , with several of the former members of the Pender Troupe , and starred in a variety show named " Better Times " at the Hippodrome towards the end of the year . After meeting George C. Tilyou , the owner of the Steeplechase Park racecourse on Coney Island at a party , Grant was hired to appear there on stilts and attracted large crowds , wearing a bright @-@ great coat and a sandwich board which advertised the race @-@ track .

Grant spent the next couple of years touring the United States with " The Walking Stanleys " . He visited Los Angeles for the first time in 1924 , which left a lasting impression upon him . After the group split up he returned to New York , where he began living and performing at the National Vaudeville Artists Club on West 46th Street , juggling , performing acrobatics and comic sketches and having a short spell as a unicycle rider known as " Rubber Legs " . The experience was a particularly demanding one , but gave Grant the opportunity to improve his comic technique and develop skills which would benefit him later in Hollywood .

Grant became a leading man alongside Jean Dalrymple , and decided to form the " Jack Janis Company " , which began touring vaudeville . He was sometimes mistaken for an Australian during this period , and was nicknamed " Kangaroo " or " Boomerang " . Grant 's accent seems to have changed as a result of moving to London with the Pender troupe and working in many music halls in the UK and the US , eventually becoming what some term a transatlantic or mid @-@ Atlantic accent . In 1927 he was cast as an Australian in Reggie Hammerstein 's musical , Golden Dawn , for which he earned \$ 75 a week . Although the show was not well received , it lasted for 184 performances , and several critics started to notice the " pleasant new juvenile " or " competent young newcomer " . The following year he joined the William Morris Agency and was offered another juvenile part by Hammerstein , in his play Polly , an unsuccessful production . One critic wrote that Grant " has a strong masculine manner , but unfortunately fails to bring out the beauty of the score . " Wansell notes that the pressure of a failing production began to make him fret , and he was eventually dropped from the run after six weeks of poor reviews . Despite the set back , Hammerstein 's rival Florenz Ziegfeld made an attempt to buy Grant 's contract , but Hammerstein sold it to the Shubert Brothers instead . J. J. Shubert cast him in a small role as a Spaniard opposite Jeanette MacDonald in the French risqué comedy production of Boom @-@ Boom at the Casino Theatre on Broadway , which premiered on January 28 , 1929 . MacDonald later admitted that he was " absolutely terrible in the role " , but exhibited a charm which endeared him to people and effectively saved the show from failure . The play ran for 72 shows , and Grant earned \$ 350 a week before moving to Detroit , then Chicago .

To console himself , Grant bought a 1927 Packard sport phaeton . He visited his half @-@ brother , Eric , in England , and upon returning to New York later in the year , he played the role of Max Grunewald in a Shubert production of A Wonderful Night . It premiered at the Majestic Theatre on October 31 , 1929 , two days after the Wall Street Crash , and lasted for 125 shows until February 1930 . The play received mixed reviews ; one critic criticized his acting , likening it to a " mixture of John Barrymore and cockney " , while another announced that he had brought a " breath of elfin Broadway " to the role . Though he began to gain recognition , Grant still found it difficult forming relationships with women , remarking that " In all those years in the theatre , on the road and in New

York , surrounded by all sorts of attractive girls , I never seemed able to fully communicate with them . "

In 1930 , Grant toured for nine months in a production of the musical , The Street Singer . After the production came to end in the spring of 1931 , the Shuberts invited him to spend the summer performing on the stage at The Muny in St. Louis , Missouri ; he appeared in twelve different productions , putting on 87 shows . He received praise from local newspapers for these performances , gaining a reputation as a romantic leading man . Significant influences on his acting in this period were Sir Gerald du Maurier , A. E. Matthews , Jack Buchanan and Ronald Squire . He later admitted that he was drawn to acting because of a " great need to be liked and admired " . Grant was eventually fired by the Shuberts at the end of the summer season when he refused to accept a pay cut because of financial difficulties caused by the Depression . His unemployment was short lived ; impresario William B. Friedlander offered him the lead romantic part in his new musical , Nikki , in which Grant starred opposite Fay Wray as a soldier in post World War I France . The production opened on September 29 , 1931 in New York , but was stopped after just 39 performances due to the effects of the Depression .

= = Film career = =

= = = Early roles (1932 ? 36) = = =

Grant 's role in Nikki was praised by Ed Sullivan of The New York Daily News , who noted that the " young lad from England " had " a big future in the movies " . The review led to another screen test by Paramount Publix , resulting in appearance as a sailor in Singapore Sue (1932) , a ten minute short film by Casey Robinson . Grant delivers his lines " without any conviction " according to McCann . Through Robinson , Grant met with Jesse L. Lasky and B. P. Schulberg , the co founder and general manager of Paramount Pictures respectively . After a successful screen test directed by Marion Gering . Schulberg signed a contract with the 27 year old Grant on December 7 , 1931 for five years , at a starting salary of \$ 450 a week . Schulberg demanded that he change his name to " something that sounded more all American like Gary Cooper " , and they eventually agreed on Cary Grant .

Cary Grant set out to establish himself as what McCann calls the " epitome of masculine glamour " , and made Douglas Fairbanks his first role model . McCann notes that Grant 's career in Hollywood immediately took off because he exhibited a " genuine charm " , which made him stand out among the other good looking actors at the time , making it " remarkably easy to find people who were willing to support his embryonic career " . He made his feature film debut with the Frank Tuttle directed comedy This is the Night (1932) , playing an Olympic javelin thrower opposite Thelma Todd and Lili Damita . Grant disliked his role and threatened to leave Hollywood , but to his surprise a critic from Variety praised his performance , and thought that he looked like a " potential femme rave " .

In 1932 Grant played a wealthy playboy opposite Marlene Dietrich in Blonde Venus , directed by Josef von Sternberg . Grant 's role is described by William Rothman as projecting the " distinctive kind of nonmacho masculinity that was to enable him to incarnate a man capable of being a romantic hero " . Grant found that he conflicted with the director during the filming and the two often argued in German . He played a suave playboy type in a number of films : Merrily We Go to Hell opposite Frederic March and Sylvia Sydney , Devil and the Deep alongside Gary Cooper , Charles Laughton and Tallulah Bankhead , Hot Saturday opposite Nancy Carroll and Randolph Scott , and Madame Butterfly with Sidney . According to biographer Marc Eliot , while these films did not make Grant a star , they did well enough to establish him as one of Hollywood 's " new crop of fast rising actors " .

In 1933 , Grant gained attention for appearing in the pre Code films She Done Him Wrong and I 'm No Angel opposite Mae West . West would later claim that she had discovered Cary Grant . Pauline Kael noted that Grant did not appear confident in his role as a Salvation Army director in

She Done Him Wrong , which made it all the more charming . The film was a box office hit , earning more than \$ 2 million in the United States , and has since won much acclaim . For I 'm No Angel , Grant 's salary was increased from \$ 450 to \$ 750 a week . The film was even more successful than She Done Him Wrong , and saved Paramount from bankruptcy ; Vermilye cites it as one of the best comedy films of the 1930s .

After a string of financially unsuccessful films , which included roles as a president of a company who is sued for knocking down a boy in an accident in Born to Be Bad (1934) for 20th Century Fox , a cosmetic surgeon in Kiss and Make @-@ Up (1934) , and a blinded pilot opposite Myrna Loy in Wings in the Dark (1935) , successive poor box office takings and press reports of his fledgling marriage to Cherrill , led Paramount to form the conclusion that Grant was now expendable .

Grant 's prospects picked up in the latter half of 1935 when was loaned to RKO Pictures . Producer Pandro Berman agreed to take him on in the face of failure because " I 'd seen him do things which were excellent , and [Katharine] Hepburn wanted him too . " For his first venture with RKO , playing a raffish cockney swindler in George Cukor 's Sylvia Scarlett (1935) , he began the first of four collaborations with Hepburn . Though a commercial failure , his dominating performance was praised by critics , and Grant always considered the film to have been the breakthrough for his career . When his contract with Paramount ended in 1936 with the release of Wedding Present , Grant decided not to renew it and wished to work freelance . Grant claimed to be the first freelance actor in Hollywood and the lack of central contract helped increase his salary to \$ 300 @,@ 000 per picture . His first venture as a freelance actor was The Amazing Quest of Ernest Bliss (1936) , which was shot in England . The film was a box office bomb and prompted Grant to reconsider his decision . Critical and commercial success with Suzy later that year in which he played a French airman opposite Jean Harlow and Franchot Tone , led to him signing joint contracts with RKO and Columbia Pictures , enabling him to choose the stories that he felt suited his acting style . His Columbia contract was a four @-@ film deal over two years , guaranteeing him \$ 50 @,@ 000 each for the first two and \$ 75 @,@ 000 each for the others .

= = = Hollywood stardom and Oscar recognition (1937 ? 44) = = =

In 1937 , Grant began the first film under his contract with Columbia Pictures , When You 're in Love , portraying a wealthy American artist who eventually woos a famous opera singer (Grace Moore) . His performance received positive feedback from critics , with Mae Tinee of The Chicago Daily Tribune describing it as the " best thing he 's done in a long time " . After a commercial failure in his first RKO venture The Toast of New York , Grant was loaned to Hal Roach 's studio for Topper , a screwball comedy film distributed by MGM , which became his first major comedy success . Grant played one half of a wealthy , freewheeling married couple with Constance Bennett , who wreak havoc on the world as ghosts after dying in a car accident . Topper became one of the most popular movies of the year , with a critic from Variety noting that both Grant and Bennett " do their assignments with great skill " . Vermilye described the film 's success as " a logical springboard " for Grant to star in The Awful Truth that year , his first film made with Irene Dunne and Ralph Bellamy . Though McCarey reportedly disliked Grant , who had mocked the director by enacting his mannerisms in the film , he recognized Grant 's comic talents and encouraged him to improvise his lines and draw upon his skills developed in vaudeville . The film was a critical and commercial success and made Grant a top Hollywood star , establishing a screen persona for him as a sophisticated light comedy leading man in screwball comedies .

The Awful Truth began what film critic Benjamin Schwarz of The Atlantic later called " the most spectacular run ever for an actor in American pictures " for Grant . In 1938 he starred opposite Katharine Hepburn in the screwball comedy Bringing Up Baby , featuring a leopard and frequent bickering and verbal jousting between Grant and Hepburn . He was initially uncertain how to play his character , but was told by director Howard Hawks to think of Harold Lloyd . Grant was given more leeway in the comic scenes , the editing of the film and in educating Hepburn in the art of comedy . Despite losing over \$ 350 @,@ 000 for RKO , the film earned rave reviews from critics . He again appeared with Hepburn in the romantic comedy Holiday later that year , which did not fare well

commercially , to the point that Hepburn was considered to be " box office poison " at the time .

Despite a series of commercial failures , Grant was now more popular than ever and in high demand . According to Vermilye , in 1939 Grant played roles that were more dramatic , albeit with comical undertones . He played a British army sergeant opposite Douglas Fairbanks , Jr. in the George Stevens @-@ directed adventure film Gunga Din , set at a military station in India . Roles as a pilot opposite Jean Arthur and Rita Hayworth in Hawks 's Only Angels Have Wings , and a wealthy landowner alongside Carole Lombard in In Name Only followed .

In 1940 , Grant played a callous newspaper editor who learns that his ex @-@ wife and former journalist , played by Rosalind Russell , is to marry an insurance officer in the comedy His Girl Friday , which was praised for its strong chemistry and " great verbal athleticism " between Grant and Russell . Grant reunited with Irene Dunne in My Favorite Wife , a " first rate comedy " according to Life magazine , which became RKO 's second biggest picture of the year , with profits of \$ 505 @,@ 000 . After playing a Virginian backwoodsman in the American Revolution @-@ set The Howards of Virginia , which McCann considers to have been Grant 's worst film and performance , his last film of the year was in the critically lauded romantic comedy The Philadelphia Story , in which he played the ex @-@ husband of Hepburn 's character . Grant felt his performance was so strong that he was bitterly disappointed not to have received an Oscar nomination , and joked " I 'd have to blacken my teeth first before the Academy will take me seriously " .

The following year Grant was considered for the Academy Award for Best Actor for Penny Serenade ? his first nomination from the academy . Wansell claims that Grant found the film to be an emotional experience , because he and wife @-@ to @-@ be Barbara Hutton had started to discuss having their own children . Later that year he appeared in the romantic psychological thriller Suspicion , the first of Grant 's four collaborations with director Alfred Hitchcock . Grant did not warm to co @-@ star Joan Fontaine , finding her to be temperamental and unprofessional . Film critic Bosley Crowther of The New York Times considered that Grant was " provokingly irresponsible , boyishly gay and also oddly mysterious , as the role properly demands " . Hitchcock later stated that he thought the ending of the film in which Grant is sent to jail instead of committing suicide " a complete mistake because of making that story with Cary Grant . Unless you have a cynical ending it makes the story too simple " . Geoff Andrew of Time Out believes Suspicion served as " a supreme example of Grant 's ability to be simultaneously charming and sinister " .

In 1942 Grant participated in a three @-@ week tour of the United States as part of a group to help the war effort and was photographed visiting wounded marines in hospital . He appeared in several routines of his own during these shows and often played the straight @-@ man opposite Bert Lahr . In May 1944 , the ten @-@ minute propaganda short Road to Victory was released , in which he appeared alongside Bing Crosby , Frank Sinatra and Charles Ruggles . On film , in 1942 Grant played Leopold Dilg , a convict on the run in The Talk of the Town , who escapes after being wrongly convicted of arson and murder . He hides in a house with characters played by Jean Arthur and Ronald Colman , and gradually plots to secure his freedom . Crowther praised the script , and noted that Grant played Dilg with a " casualness which is slightly disturbing " . After a role as a foreign correspondent opposite Ginger Rogers and Walter Slezak in the off @-@ beat comedy Once Upon a Honeymoon , in which he was praised for his scenes with Rogers , the following year he appeared in Mr. Lucky , playing a gambler in a casino aboard a ship . The commercially successful submarine war film Destination Tokyo (1943) was shot in just six weeks in the September and October , which left him exhausted ; the reviewer from Newsweek thought it was one of the finest performances of his career .

In 1944 , Grant starred alongside Priscilla Lane , Raymond Massey and Peter Lorre , in Frank Capra 's dark comedy Arsenic and Old Lace , playing the manic Mortimer Brewster , who belongs to a bizarre family which includes two murderous aunts and an uncle claiming to be President Roosevelt . Grant took up the role after it was originally offered to Bob Hope , who turned it down owing to schedule conflicts . Grant found the macabre subject matter of the film difficult to contend with and believed that it was the worst performance of his career . That year he received his second Oscar nomination for a role , opposite Ethel Barrymore and Barry Fitzgerald in the Clifford Odets @-@ directed film None but the Lonely Heart , set in London during the Depression . Late in the

year he featured in the CBS Radio series *Suspense* , playing a tormented character who hysterically discovers that his amnesia has affected masculine order in society in " *The Black Curtain* " .

== = Post @-@ War success and slump (1946 ? 54) == =

After making a brief cameo appearance opposite Claudette Colbert in *Without Reservations* , Grant portrayed Cole Porter in the musical *Night and Day* (1946) . The production proved to be problematic , with scenes often requiring multiple takes , frustrating the cast and crew . Grant next appeared with Ingrid Bergman and Claude Rains in the Hitchcock @-@ directed film *Notorious* (1946) , playing a government agent who recruits the American daughter of a convicted Nazi spy (Bergman) to infiltrate a Nazi organization in Brazil after World War II . During the course of the film Grant and Bergman 's characters fall in love and share one of the longest kisses in film history at around two @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half minutes . Wansell notes how Grant 's performance " underlined how far his unique qualities as a screen actor had matured in the years since *The Awful Truth* " .

In 1947 , Grant played an artist who becomes involved in a court case when charged with assault in *The Bachelor and the Bobby @-@ Soxer* , opposite Myrna Loy and Shirley Temple . The film was praised by the critics , who admired the picture 's slapstick qualities and chemistry between Grant and Loy ; it became one of the biggest @-@ selling films at the box office that year . Later that year he starred opposite David Niven and Loretta Young in the comedy *The Bishop 's Wife* , playing an angel who is sent down from heaven to straighten out the relationship between the bishop (Niven) and his wife (Loretta Young) . The film was a major commercial and critical success , and was nominated for five Academy Awards . *Life* magazine called it " intelligently written and competently acted " . The following year , Grant played neurotic Jim Blandings , the title @-@ sake in the comedy *Mr. Blandings Builds His Dream House* , again with Loy . Though the film picture lost a lot of money for RKO , Philip T. Hartung of *Commonweal* thought that Grant 's role as the " frustrated advertising man " was one of his best screen portrayals . In *Every Girl Should Be Married* , an " airy comedy " , he appeared with Betsy Drake and Franchot Tone , playing a bachelor who is trapped into marriage by Drake 's conniving character . He finished the year as the fourth most popular film star at the box office .

In 1949 Grant starred alongside Ann Sheridan in the comedy *I Was a Male War Bride* in which he appeared in scenes dressed as a woman , wearing a skirt and a wig . During the filming he was taken ill with infectious hepatitis and lost weight , affecting the way he looked in the picture . The film proved to be successful , becoming the highest @-@ grossing film for 20th Century Fox that year with over \$ 4 @. @ 5 million in takings and being likened to Hawks 's screwball comedies of the late 1930s . By this point he was one of the highest paid Hollywood stars , commanding \$ 300 @, @ 000 per picture .

The early 1950s marked the beginning of a slump in Grant 's career . His roles as a top brain surgeon who is caught in the middle of a bitter revolution in a Latin American country in *Crisis* , and as a medical @-@ school professor and orchestra conductor opposite Jeanne Crain in *People Will Talk*. were poorly received . Grant had become tired of being Cary Grant after twenty years , being successful , wealthy and popular , and remarked : " To play yourself , your true self , is the hardest thing in the world " . In 1952 , Grant starred in the comedy *Room for One More* , playing an engineer husband who with his wife (Betsy Drake) adopt two children from an orphanage . He reunited with Howard Hawks to film the off @-@ beat comedy *Monkey Business* , co @-@ starring with Ginger Rogers and Marilyn Monroe . Though the critic from *Motion Picture Herald* wrote gushingly that Grant had given a career 's best with an " extraordinary agile and performance " , which was matched by Rogers , it received a mixed reception overall . Grant had hoped that starring opposite Deborah Kerr in the romantic comedy *Dream Wife* would salvage his career , but it was a critical and financial failure upon release in July 1953 . Though he was considered for the leading part in *A Star is Born* , Grant believed that his film career was over , and briefly left the industry .

== = A romantic leading man and final roles (1955 ? 66) == =

In 1955 Grant agreed to star opposite Grace Kelly in *To Catch a Thief*, playing a retired jewel thief nicknamed "The Cat", living in the French Riviera. Grant and Kelly worked well together during the production, and marked one of the most enjoyable experiences of Grant's career. He found Hitchcock and Kelly to be very professional, and later stated that Kelly was "possibly the finest actress I've ever worked with". Grant was one of the first actors to go independent by not renewing his studio contract, effectively leaving the studio system, which almost completely controlled all aspects of an actor's life. He decided which films he was going to appear in, often had personal choice of directors and co-stars, and at times negotiated a share of the gross revenue, something uncommon at the time. Grant received more than \$700,000 for his 10% of the gross of the successful *To Catch a Thief*, while Hitchcock received less than \$50,000 for directing and producing it. Though critical reception to the overall film was mixed, Grant received high praise for his performance, with critics commenting on his suave, handsome appearance in the film.

In 1957 Grant starred opposite Kerr in the romance *An Affair to Remember*, playing an international playboy who becomes the object of her affections. Schickel sees the film as one of the definitive romantic pictures of the period, but remarks that Grant was not entirely successful in trying to supersede the film's "gushing sentimentality". That year, Grant also appeared opposite Sophia Loren in *The Pride and the Passion*. He had expressed an interest in playing William Holden's character in *The Bridge on the River Kwai* at the time, but found that it was not possible because of his commitment to *The Pride and the Passion*. The film was shot on location in Spain and was problematic, with co-star Frank Sinatra irritating his colleagues and leaving the production after just a few weeks. Grant's attempts to woo Loren during the production proved fruitless, which led to him expressing anger when Paramount cast her opposite him in *Houseboat* (1958) as part of her contract. The sexual tension between the two was so great during the making of *Houseboat* that the producers found it almost impossible to make. Later in 1958, Grant starred opposite Bergman in the romantic comedy *Indiscreet*, playing a successful financier who has an affair with a famous actress (Bergman) while pretending to be a married man. During the filming he formed a closer friendship and gained new respect for her as an actress. Schickel stated that he thought the film was possibly the finest romantic comedy film of the era, and that Grant himself had professed that it was one of his personal favorites. Grant received his first of five Golden Globe Award for Best Actor ? Motion Picture Musical or Comedy nominations for his performance and finished the year as the most popular film star at the box office.

In 1959 Grant starred in the Hitchcock-directed film *North by Northwest*, playing an advertising executive who becomes embroiled in a case of mistaken identity. Like *Indiscreet*, it was warmly received by the critics and was a major commercial success, and is now often listed as one of the greatest films of all time. Weiler, writing in *The New York Times*, praised Grant's performance, remarking that the actor "was never more at home than in this role of the advertising man on the telephone" and handled the role "with professional aplomb and grace". Grant wore one of his most iconic suits in the film which became very popular, a fourteen-gauge, mid-gray, worsted wool one custom-made on Savile Row. Grant finished the year playing a U. S. Navy Rear Admiral aboard a submarine opposite Tony Curtis in the comedy *Operation Petticoat*. The reviewer from *Daily Variety* saw Grant's comic portrayal as a classic example of how to attract the laughter of the audience without lines, remarking that "In this film, most of the gags play off him. It is his reaction, blank, startled, etc., always underplayed, that creates or releases the humor". The film was major box office success, and in 1973 Deschner ranked the film as the highest earning film of Grant's career at the US box office, with takings of \$9.5 million.

In 1960 Grant appeared opposite Robert Mitchum, Jean Simmons and Deborah Kerr in *The Grass Is Greener*, which was shot in England at Osterley Park and Shepperton Studios. McCann notes that Grant took great relish in "mocking his aristocratic character's over-refined tastes and mannerisms", though the film was panned and was seen as his worst since *Dream Wife*. In 1962, Grant starred in the romantic comedy *That Touch of Mink*, playing suave, wealthy businessman

Philip Shayne romantically involved with an office worker , played by Doris Day . He invites her to his apartment in Bermuda , but her guilty conscience begins to take hold . The picture was praised by critics , and it received three Academy Award nominations , and won the Golden Globe Award for Best Comedy Picture , in addition to another Golden Globe Award for Best Actor nomination . Deschner ranked the film has the second highest grossing of Grant 's career .

Producers Albert R. Broccoli and Harry Saltzman originally sought Grant for the role of James Bond in Dr. No (1962) but discarded the idea as Grant would be committed to only one feature film ; therefore , the producers decided to go after someone who could be part of a franchise . In 1963 , Grant appeared in his last typically suave , romantic role opposite Audrey Hepburn in Charade . Grant found the experience of working with Hepburn " wonderful " and believed that their close relationship was clear on camera , though according to Hepburn , he was particularly worried during the filming that he would be criticized for being far too old for her and seen as a " cradle snatcher " . Author Chris Barsanti writes : " It 's the film 's canny flirtatiousness that makes it such ingenious entertainment . Grant and Hepburn play off each other like the pros that they are " . The film , well received by the critics , is often called " the best Hitchcock film Hitchcock never made " .

In 1964 , Grant changed from his typically suave , distinguished screen persona to play a grizzled beachcomber Walter Eckland who is hired by a Commander (Trevor Howard) to serve as a lookout on Matalava Island for invading Japanese planes in the World War II romantic comedy , Father Goose . The film was a major commercial success , and upon its release at Radio City at Christmas 1964 it took over \$ 210 @, @ 000 at the box @-@ office in the first week , breaking the record set by Charade the previous year . Grant 's final film , Walk , Don 't Run (1966) , a comedy co @-@ starring Jim Hutton and Samantha Eggar , was shot on location in Tokyo , and is set amid the backdrop of the housing shortage of the 1964 Tokyo Olympics . Newsweek concluded : " Though Grant 's personal presence is indispensable , the character he plays is almost wholly superfluous . Perhaps the inference to be taken is that a man in his 50s or 60s has no place in romantic comedy except as a catalyst . If so , the chemistry is wrong for everyone " . Hitchcock had asked Grant to star in Torn Curtain that year only to learn that he had decided to retire .

= = Later years = =

Grant retired from the screen at 62 , when his daughter Jennifer was born , to focus on bringing her up and to provide a sense of permanency and stability in her life . He had become increasingly disillusioned with cinema in the 1960s , rarely finding a script that he approved of . He remarked : " I could have gone on acting and playing a grandfather or a bum , but I discovered more important things in life " . Grant knew after he had made Charade that the " Golden Age " of Hollywood was now over . He expressed little interest in making a career comeback , and continued to respond to invites or mention of it with " fat chance " . He did , however , briefly appear in the video documentary for Elvis 's 1970 Las Vegas concert Elvis : That 's the Way It Is , in the audience . When he was gifted with the negatives from a number of his films in the 1970s , Grant sold them to television for a sum of over two million dollars in 1975 .

Morecambe and Stirling argue that Grant 's abstinence from film after 1966 was " not the actions of a man who had irrevocably turned his back on the film industry , but one who was caught between a decision made and the temptation to eat a bit of humble pie and re @-@ announce himself to the cinema @-@ going public " . In the 1970s , MGM were keen on remaking Grand Hotel (1932) , and hoped to lure Grant into coming out of retirement to star . Hitchcock had long wanted to make a film based on the idea of Hamlet , with Grant in the lead role . Grant stated that Warren Beatty had made a big effort to try to get him to play the role of Mr. Jordan in Heaven Can Wait (1978) , which eventually went to James Mason . Morecambe and Stirling claim that Grant had also expressed an interest in appearing in A Touch of Class (1973) , The Verdict (1982) and a film adaptation of William Goldman 's 1983 novel Adventures in the Screen Trade .

In the late 1970s and early 1980s Grant became troubled by the deaths of so many of his close friends , including Howard Hughes in 1976 , Howard Hawks in 1977 , Lord Mountbatten and Barbara Hutton in 1979 , Alfred Hitchcock in 1980 , Grace Kelly and Ingrid Bergman in 1982 and David Niven

in 1983 . At the funeral of Mountbatten he was quoted as remarking to a friend : " I 'm absolutely pooped , and I 'm so goddamned old ... I 'm going to quit all next year . I 'm going to lie in bed ... I shall just close all doors , turn off the telephone , and enjoy my life " . Kelly 's death was the hardest hitting on Grant , as the death was unexpected , and the two remained close friends after filming To Catch a Thief . Grant visited Monaco three or four times each year during his retirement , and showed his support for Kelly by joining the board of the Princess Grace Foundation .

In 1980 , the Los Angeles County Museum of Art put on a two @-@ month retrospective of over 40 of Grant 's films . In 1982 he was honored with the " Man of the Year " award by the New York Friars Club at the Waldorf @-@ Astoria Hotel . He turned 80 in 1984 ; Peter Bogdanovich noticed that a " serenity " had come over the actor . Grant was in good health until suffering a mild stroke in October that year . In the last few years of his life , he undertook tours of the United States in a one @-@ man show , A Conversation with Cary Grant , in which he would show clips from his films and answer audience questions . He made some 36 public appearances in his last four years , from New Jersey to Texas , and found his audiences changed from elderly film buffs to enthusiastic college students discovering his films for the first time . Grant admitted that he thought the appearances were " ego @-@ fodder " , remarking that " I know who I am inside and outside , but it 's nice to have the outside , at least , substantiated " .

= = Business interests = =

Stirling refers to Grant as " one of the shrewdest businessmen ever to operate in Hollywood " . His long @-@ term friendship with Howard Hughes from the 1930s onward saw him invited into the most glamorous circles in Hollywood and their lavish parties . Biographers Morecambe and Stirling state that Hughes played a major role in the development of Grant 's business interests , so that by 1939 , he was " already an astute operator with various commercial interests " . Scott also played a role , encouraging Grant to invest his money in shares , making him a wealthy man by the end of the 1930s . In the 1940s , Grant and Barbara Hutton invested heavily in real estate development in Acapulco at a time when it was little more than a fishing village , and teamed with Richard Widmark , Roy Rogers , and Red Skelton to buy a hotel there . Behind his business interests was a particularly intelligent mind , to the point that his friend David Niven once said : " Before computers went into general release , Cary had one in his brain " . Film critic David Thomson believes that Grant 's intelligence came across on screen , and stated that " no one else looked so good and so intelligent at the same time " .

After Grant retired from the screen , he became more active in business . He accepted a position on the board of directors at Fabergé . This position was not honorary , as some had assumed ; Grant regularly attended meetings and travelled internationally to support them . His pay was modest in comparison to the millions of his film career , a salary of a reported \$ 15 @,@ 000 a year . Such was Grant 's influence on the company that George Barrie once claimed that Grant had played a role in the growth of the firm to annual revenues of about \$ 50 million in 1968 , a growth of nearly 80 % since the inaugural year in 1964 . The position also permitted use of a private plane , which Grant could use to fly to see his daughter wherever her mother , Dyan Cannon , was working .

In 1975 , Grant was an appointed director of MGM . In 1980 , he sat on the board of MGM Films and MGM Grand Hotels following the division of the parent company . He played an active role in the promotion of MGM Grand Hotel in Las Vegas when opened in 1973 and he continued to promote the city throughout the 1970s . When Allen Warren met Grant for a photo shoot that year he noticed how tired Grant looked , and his " slightly melancholic air " . Grant later joined the boards of Hollywood Park , the Academy of Magical Arts (The Magic Castle , Hollywood , California) , and Western Airlines (acquired by Delta Air Lines in 1987) .

= = Personal life = =

One of the wealthiest stars in Hollywood , Grant owned houses in Beverly Hills , Malibu , and Palm Springs . Immaculate in his personal grooming , Edith Head , the renowned Hollywood costume

designer , appreciated his " meticulous " attention to detail and considered him to have had the greatest fashion sense of any actor she had worked with . McCann attests his " almost obsessive maintenance " with tanning , which deepened the older he got , to Douglas Fairbanks , who also had a major influence on his refined sense of dress . McCann notes that because Grant came from a working @-@ class background and was not well educated , he made a particular effort over the course of his career to mix with high society and absorb their knowledge , manners and etiquette to compensate and cover it up . His image was meticulously crafted from the early days in Hollywood , where he would frequently sunbathe and avoid being photographed smoking , despite smoking two packs a day at the time . Grant quit smoking in the early 1950s through hypnotherapy . He remained health conscious , staying very trim and athletic even into his late career , though Grant admitted he " never crook [ed] a finger to keep fit " . He confessed that he did " everything in moderation . Except making love " .

Grant 's daughter Jennifer stated that her father made hundreds of friends from all walks of life , and that their house was frequently visited by the likes of Frank and Barbara Sinatra , Quincy Jones , Gregory Peck and his wife Veronique , Johnny Carson and his wife , Kirk Kerkorian and Merv Griffin . She said that Grant and Sinatra were the closest of friends and that both men were remarkably similar in that they both shared a similar radiance and " indefinable incandescence of charm " , and were eternally " high on life " . While raising Jennifer , Grant archived artefacts of her childhood and adolescence in a bank @-@ quality , room @-@ sized vault he had installed in the house . Jennifer attributed this meticulous collection to the fact that artefacts of his own childhood had been destroyed during the Luftwaffe 's bombing of Bristol in the Second World War (an event that also claimed the lives of his uncle , aunt , cousin , and the cousin 's husband and grandson) , and he may have wanted to prevent her from experiencing a similar loss .

Grant lived with actor Randolph Scott off and on for 12 years , which several authors have claimed was a gay or bisexual relationship . The two had first met early on in Grant 's career in 1932 at the Paramount studio when Scott was filming Sky Bride at the same time as Grant was shooting Sinners in the Sun , and moved in together soon afterwards . Scott 's biographer Robert Nott states that there is no evidence that Grant and Scott were homosexual , and blames rumors on material written about them in other books , which was assumed true by historians . Grant 's daughter , Jennifer , denied the claims . When Chevy Chase joked on television in 1980 that Grant was a " homo . What a gal ! " , Grant sued him for slander , and Chase was forced to retract his words . Grant became a fan of Morecambe and Wise in the 1960s , and remained friends with Eric Morecambe until his death in 1984 .

Grant began experimenting with the drug LSD in the late 1950s , before it become commercially popular . His wife , Betsy Drake , displayed a keen interest in psychotherapy , and through her Grant developed a considerable knowledge of the field of psychoanalysis . Radiologist Mortimer Hartman began treating him with LSD in the late 1950s , with Grant optimistic that the treatment could make him feel better about himself and rid of all of his inner turmoil stemming from his childhood and his failed relationships . He had an estimated 100 sessions over several years . For a long time , Grant viewed the drug positively , and stated that it was the solution after many years of " searching for his peace of mind " , and that for first time in his life he was " truly , deeply and honestly happy " . Cannon claimed during a court hearing , in which she claimed he was an " apostle of LSD " , that he was still taking the drug in 1967 as part of a remedy to save their relationship . Grant later admitted that " taking LSD was an utterly foolish thing to do but I was a self @-@ opinionated boor , hiding all kinds of layers and defences , hypocrisy and vanity . I had to get rid of them and wipe the slate clean " .

= = = Relationships = = =

Grant was married five times . He wed Virginia Cherrill on February 9 , 1934 at Caxton Hall registry office in London . She divorced him on March 26 , 1935 , following charges that Grant had hit her . The two were involved in a bitter divorce case which was widely reported in the press , with Cherrill demanding \$ 1000 a week from her husband in benefits from his Paramount earnings . After the

demise of the marriage , he dated actress Phyllis Brooks from 1937 . They had considered marriage , and vacationed together in Europe in the summer of 1939 , visiting the Roman villa of Dorothy di Frasso in Italy , before the relationship ended later that year .

Grant became a naturalized United States citizen on June 26 , 1942 , at which time he also legally changed his name from " Archibald Alexander Leach " to " Cary Grant " . That year he married Barbara Hutton , one of the wealthiest women in the world following a \$ 50 million inheritance from her grandfather , Frank Winfield Woolworth . The couple was derisively nicknamed " Cash and Cary " , although in an extensive prenuptial agreement Grant refused any financial settlement in the event of a divorce , to avoid the accusation that he married for money . Towards the end of their marriage they lived in a white mansion at 10615 Bellagio Road in Bel Air . After divorcing in 1945 , they remained the " fondest of friends " . After dating Betty Hensel for a period , on December 25 , 1949 , Grant married Betsy Drake , the co -@-@ star of two of his films . This would prove to be his longest marriage , ending on August 14 , 1962 .

Grant married Dyan Cannon on July 22 , 1965 , at friend Howard Hughes 's Desert Inn in Las Vegas . Their daughter , Jennifer , was born on February 26 , 1966 . Jennifer is Grant 's only child . He frequently called Jennifer his " best production " . He said of fatherhood : " My life changed the day Jennifer was born . I 've come to think that the reason we 're put on this earth is to procreate . To leave something behind . Not films , because you know that I don 't think my films will last very long once I 'm gone . But another human being . That 's what 's important . " Grant and Cannon divorced in March 1968 . On March 12 that month he was involved in a car accident on Long Island when a truck struck the side of his limousine . Grant was hospitalized for 17 days with three broken ribs and bruising .

Grant had a brief affair with self @-@ proclaimed actress Cynthia Bouron in the late 1960s , Grant , who had been at odds with the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences since 1958 , was named as the recipient of an Academy Honorary Award in 1970 . Grant announced that he would attend the awards ceremony to accept his award , thus ending his twelve @-@ year boycott of the ceremony . Two days after this announcement , Ms. Bouron filed a paternity suit against Grant and publicly stated he was the father of her seven @-@ week @-@ old daughter . Bouron named Grant as the father on the child 's birth certificate . Grant challenged her to a blood test and Bouron failed to provide one , and the court ordered her to remove his name from the certificate . Between 1973 and 1977 he dated British photojournalist Maureen Donaldson , followed by the much younger Victoria Morgan .

On April 11 , 1981 , Grant married Barbara Harris , a British hotel public relations agent who was 47 years his junior . The two had met at the Royal Lancaster Hotel in London five years earlier where Harris was working at the time and Grant attending a Fabergé conference . The two became friends , but it wasn 't until 1979 that she moved to live with him in California . Friends of Grant considered her to have had an extremely positive impact on Grant , and Prince Rainier of Monaco remarked that he had " never been happier " than he was in his last years with her .

= = = Death = = =

Grant was at the Adler Theatre in Davenport , Iowa , on the afternoon of November 29 , 1986 , preparing for his performance for the Conversation with Cary Grant when he was taken ill . Though his close friend Roderick Mann recalled that he had met up with Grant at the Hollywood Park Racetrack earlier that month and he had been in a jovial state and in good health , Grant had been feeling unwell as he arrived at the theatre . Basil Williams , who photographed him there , thought that though Grant still looked his usual suave self , he noticed that he seemed very tired and that he stumbled once in the auditorium . Williams recalls that Grant rehearsed for half an hour before " something seemed wrong " all of a sudden , and he disappeared backstage . Grant was taken back to the Blackhawk Hotel where he and his wife Barbara had checked in , and a doctor was called and discovered that Grant was having a massive stroke , with a blood pressure reading of 210 over 130 . Grant refused to be taken to hospital . The doctor recalled that " The stroke was getting worse . In only fifteen minutes he deteriorated rapidly . It was terrible watching him die and not being able to

help . But he wouldn 't let us " . By 8 : 45 p.m. Grant had slipped into a coma and was taken to St. Luke 's Hospital . He spent 45 minutes in emergency before being transferred to intensive care , where he was pronounced dead at 11 : 22 p.m. He was 82 .

The New York Times reported : " Cary Grant was not supposed to die . Cary Grant was supposed to stick around . Our perpetual touchstone of charm and elegance and youth " . Grant 's body was taken back to California , where it was cremated and his ashes scattered in the Pacific Ocean . He refused a funeral , which Roderick Mann remarked was appropriate for " the private man who didn 't want the nonsense of a funeral " . The bulk of his estate , worth in the region of 60 to 80 million dollars , went to his wife Barbara Harris and his daughter Jennifer Grant . He also gave goods valued at \$ 150 @, @ 000 to beloved employees , \$ 50 @, @ 000 to the Motion Picture Relief Fund , \$ 25 @, @ 000 to Variety Clubs International , \$ 20 @, @ 000 to the John Tracy Clinic for deafness , \$ 10 @, @ 000 to LSD doctor Mortimer Hartman , and his clothes and personal belongings to Frank Sinatra , Roderick Mann , Stanley Donen , Kirk Kerkorian and others .

= = Screen persona = =

McCann notes that one of reasons that Grant was so successful with his film career is that he was not conscious of how handsome he was on screen , acting in a fashion which was most unexpected and unusual from a Hollywood star of that period . George Cukor once stated : " You see , he didn 't depend on his looks . He wasn 't a narcissist , he acted as though he were just an ordinary young man . And that made it all the more appealing , that a handsome young man was funny ; that was especially unexpected and good because we think , ' Well , if he 's a Beau Brummel , he can 't be either funny or intelligent ' , but he proved otherwise " . Jennifer Grant acknowledged that her father neither relied on his looks nor was a character actor , and said that he was just the opposite of that , playing the " basic man " .

Grant 's appeal was unusually broad , among both men and women ; Kael remarked that men wanted to be him and women dreamed of dating him . She noticed that Grant treated his female co @-@ stars differently to most of the leading players at the time , regarding them as subjects with multiple qualities rather than " treating them as sex objects " . For writer David Shipman , he seemed to meet the requirement for every figure to aspire to be , whether it was an uncle , best friend or lover , and " more than most stars he belonged to the public " . A number of critics have argued that Grant had the rare star ability to turn a mediocre picture into a good one . Philip T. Hartung of The Commonweal in his review for Mr. Lucky (1943) stated that if it " weren 't for Cary Grant 's persuasive personality the whole thing would melt away to nothing at all " . For McCann Hollywood had " found its ideal gentleman , a gentleman for a democratic culture . He was an amalgam of tradition and modernity , wealth and virtue , elite and mass , high and low , great and good " . He states that Grant 's delivery should " not have worked , but somehow it did " , commenting : " As he sits and faces the camera during that early scene in The Awful Truth , he looks at us with an expression that suggests he knows as well as we do that the audacious trick has , against all the odds , actually come off . He smiles at us , sharing with us his extraordinary good fortune . He smiles a smile like Gatsby 's smile . " Political theorist C. L. R. James saw Grant as a " new and very important symbol " , a new type of Englishman who differed from the Leslie Howard and Ronald Coleman gentleman types , who represented the " freedom , natural grace , simplicity and directness which characterise such different American types as Jimmy Stewart and Ronald Reagan " , which ultimately symbolized the growing relationship between Britain and America .

McCann notes that Grant typically played " wealthy privileged characters who never seemed to have any need to work in order to maintain their glamorous and hedonistic lifestyle . He became a star whose characters were good looking , quick witted , funny and athletic , a star whose characters seemed to win the hearts of women without even trying " . Martin Stirling , commenting in the biography Cary Grant : In Name Only , thought that Grant had an acting range which was " greater than any of his contemporaries , but understood why a number of critics underrated him as an actor . He believes that Grant was always at his " physical and verbal best in situations that bordered on farce " . Charles Champlin , commenting in Donald Deschner 's The Complete Films of Cary Grant (

1973) similarly identifies a paradox in Grant 's screen persona , in his unusual ability to " mix polish and pratfalls in successive scenes " . He remarks that Grant was " refreshingly able to play the near @-@ fool , the fey idiot , without compromising his masculinity or surrendering to camp for its own sake . His ability to play off against his own image as the strong and handsome romantic hero @-@ figure is , as a matter of fact , probably unique among superstars . Nobody else comes even close to mind who could similarly toy with his own dignity without losing it " . Wansell further notes that Grant could , " with the arch of an eyebrow or the merest hint of a smile , question his own image " , managing to " blend irony and romance in a way that few other stars have ever done , by slyly never appearing to take himself too seriously , and mixing his own unique mixture of naïveté and worldliness " . Stanley Donen , a director who had worked with Grant , stated that his real " magic " came from his attention to minute details and always seeming real , which came from " enormous amounts of work " rather than being God @-@ given . Grant remarked of his career : " I guess to a certain extent I did eventually become the characters I was playing . I played at being someone I wanted to be until I became that person , Or he became me " . He would later profess that the real Cary Grant was more like his scruffy , unshaven fisherman in *Father Goose* than the " well @-@ tailored charmer " of *Charade* .

Grant often poked fun at himself with statements such as , " Everyone wants to be Cary Grant ? even I want to be Cary Grant " , and in ad @-@ lib lines ? such as in the film *His Girl Friday* (1940) , saying , " Listen , the last man who said that to me was Archie Leach , just a week before he cut his throat . " In *Arsenic and Old Lace* (1944) , a gravestone is seen bearing the name Archie Leach . According to a famous story now believed to be fictional , after seeing a telegram from a magazine editor to his agent asking , " How old Cary Grant ? " , Grant reportedly responded , " Old Cary Grant fine . How you ? " Despite his strong comedic qualities , Alfred Hitchcock thought that Grant was also very effective in playing darker roles , with a mysterious , dangerous quality , remarking that " there is a frightening side to Cary that no one can quite put their finger on " . Wansell notes that this darker , mysterious side extended to his personal life , which he took great lengths to cover up to retain his debonair image .

= = Legacy = =

Biographers Morecambe and Stirling believe that Cary Grant was the " greatest leading man Hollywood had ever known " . Schickel stated that there are " very few stars who achieve the magnitude of Cary Grant , art of a very high and subtle order " , and thought that he was the " best star actor there ever was in the movies " . David Thomson and directors Stanley Donen and Howard Hawks concurred that Grant was the greatest and most important actor in the history of the cinema . He was a favorite of Hitchcock , who called him " the only actor I ever loved in my whole life " , and remained one of Hollywood 's top box @-@ office attractions for almost 30 years . Wansell wrote : " To millions of movie @-@ goers around the world , Cary Grant will forever epitomize the glamour , and the style , of Hollywood in its golden years . With his dark hair , and even darker eyes , mischievous smile and effortless elegance , he was , is , and always will be indelibly one of the great movie stars . Since his death in 1986 , the incandescence of his screen image has not dimmed for a single moment " . Kael stated that the world still thinks of him affectionately , because he " embodies what seems a happier time ? a time when we had a simpler relationship to a performer . "

Grant was nominated for two Academy Awards , for *Penny Serenade* (1941) and *None But the Lonely Heart* (1944) , but never won a competitive Oscar ; he received a special Academy Award for Lifetime Achievement in 1970 . The inscription on his statuette read " To Cary Grant , for his unique mastery of the art of screen acting with respect and affection of his colleagues " . On being presented with the award , his friend Frank Sinatra announced : " It was made for the sheer brilliance of acting ... No one has brought more pleasure to more people for so many years than Cary has , and nobody has done so many things so well " .

At the Straw Hat Awards in New York in May 1975 , Grant was awarded a special plaque which recognized the city 's appreciation of him as a " star and superstar in entertainment " . The following August , he was invited by Betty Ford to give a speech at the Republican National Convention in

Kansas City and to attend the Bicentenary dinner for Queen Elizabeth II at the White House that same year . He was later invited to attend a royal charity gala at the London Palladium in 1978 . In 1979 , Grant hosted the American Film Institute 's tribute to Alfred Hitchcock , and presented Laurence Olivier with his honorary Oscar .

In 1981 , Grant was accorded the Kennedy Center Honors . Three years later , a theatre on the MGM lot was renamed the " Cary Grant Theatre " . In 1995 , when over a hundred leading film directors were asked to reveal their favorite actor of all time in a Time Out poll , Grant came second only to Marlon Brando . On December 7 , 2001 , a statue of Grant was unveiled in Millennium Square , a regenerated area next to Bristol Harbour , Bristol , in the city where he was born . In November 2005 , Grant again came first in Premiere magazine 's list of " The 50 Greatest Movie Stars of All Time " . According to McCann , ten years earlier they had declared that Grant was " quite simply , the funniest actor cinema has ever produced " .

= = Filmography and stage work = =