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Architecture by Harry Daple and Stephen Samuelson
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ARCHITECTURAL DIGEST VISITS
CAROL BURNETT
THE TELEVISION LEGEND'S
SANTA FE RETREAT



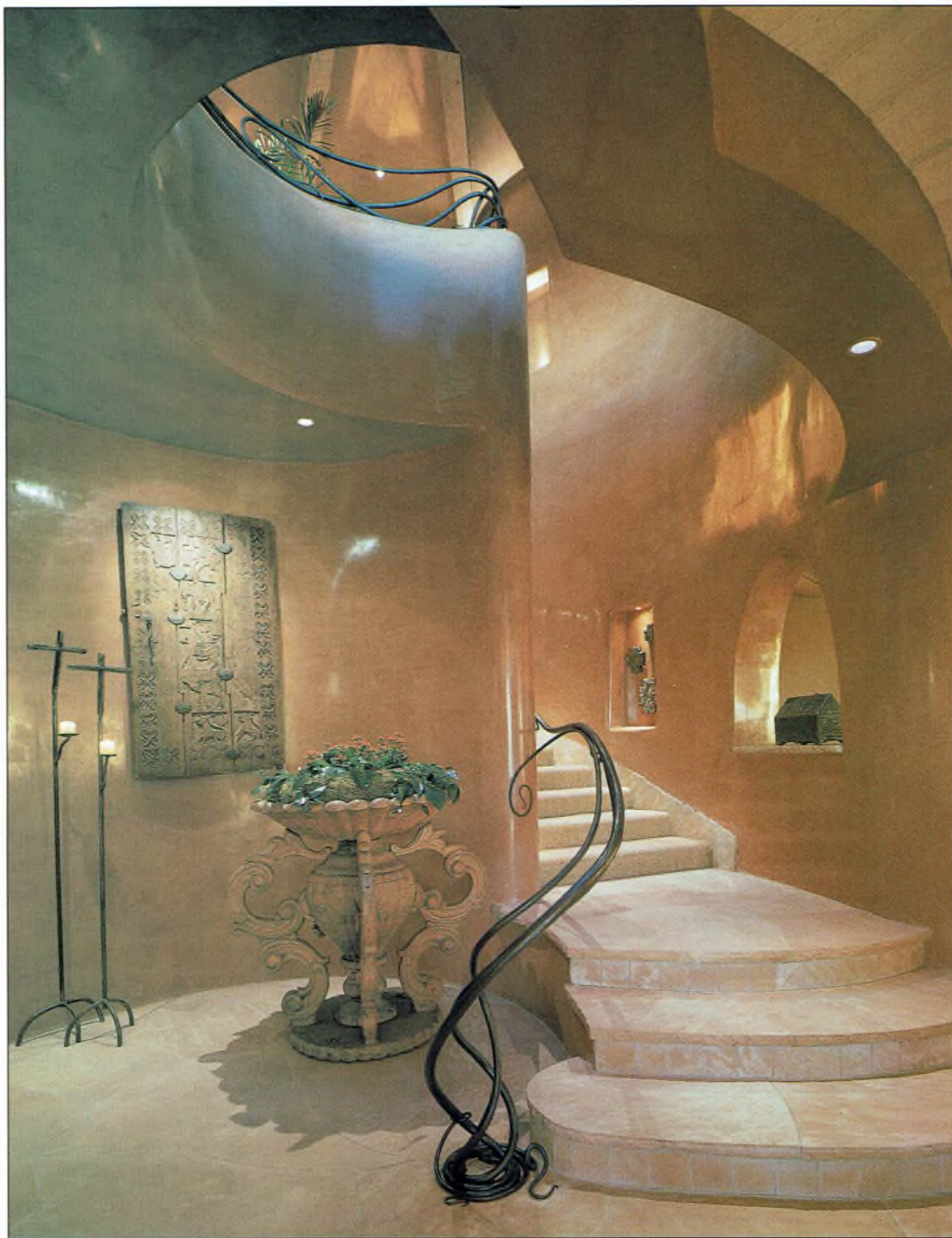
Carol Burnett worked with interior designer Anita Ludovici De Domenico and architects Harry Daple and Stephen Samuelson of Studio Arquitectura to create a contemporary Santa Fe residence. OPPOSITE: A curving wall encircles the house, which sits on five acres.

"I wanted it to be open and airy but comforting," says Burnett. "I didn't want any square corners." ABOVE: The actress and comedienne relaxes in the upstairs media room on a corrugated cardboard chair and ottoman that were designed by Frank Gehry, a gift from the architect.

Carol Burnett is an American institution. From the late 1960s to the late 1970s, when we weren't watching the football game or *The Love Boat*, we were watching *The Carol Burnett Show*. We watched her "bump up the lights" and field questions about her first kiss and what kind of floor polish she used. We watched her fall out of windows and walk into doors. We watched her snap her gum and file her nails as the lackadaisical secretary Mrs. Wiggins. We watched her guzzle beer and shriek at her family as the shrewish housewife Eunice. And (before we knew it) we watched her reappear in a sparkling Bob Mackie gown, tug her earlobe and say good night. Burnett has moved on, of course, to projects ranging from Robert Altman films to *Moon over Buffalo*, the Broadway farce for which she recently garnered a Tony nomination. But *The Carol Burnett Show*, which has been reincarnated as *Carol Burnett and Friends* on the Family Channel, is as timeless as bell-bottoms and cigars.

You half expect the entertainer to come to the door in a floral-print dress or her charwoman rags. Instead it's a chic black ribbed turtle-neck, black jeans and black slippers. But the manner is vintage Carol Burnett. She greets first-time visitors in the driveway, waving her

“IN SANTA FE,” QUIPS
BURNETT, “FIRST YOU
BUY THE DOOR, THEN YOU
BUILD THE HOUSE.”



ABOVE: As elsewhere, the plaster walls leading to the media room were covered with beeswax and buffed to a glossy finish. A tribal door panel hangs beside candle holders given to Burnett by her daughter Jody Hamilton. De Domenico designed the iron railing.

OPPOSITE: Antique Spanish pottery and a candle holder that Burnett found at the Santa Fe flea market rest on the shepherd's mantel in the living room. "Carol has a casual elegance," says De Domenico. "She needs to be surrounded by things that are important to her."

arms like a human semaphore lest they make a wrong turn. The duality persists: Indoors, the oversize amber sunglasses stay on, but her conversation couldn't be more direct. Although business and family take her to Los Angeles every month or so, about a year ago Burnett resettled in Santa Fe—a part of the world, appropriately enough, as stylish as it is earthy.

Her first trip to the area won her over. "I guess I missed it the day they taught Santa Fe in school," the actress says, letting loose one of her trademark belly laughs. "I was expecting flat desert. I got to Albuquerque and I was driving and going up, up, up and seeing snow on the mountaintops, and I thought, Well, *this* is interesting."

She was visiting her friend Anita Ludovici De Domenico, a designer and a onetime neighbor of Burnett's in Hawaii. "Another thing that attracted me to Santa Fe was I was sitting out on Anita's portal—I've learned to say that now: In Hawaii it's a lanai; in Texas it was a porch; down south it's a veranda—so I was sitting out on the portal and I did a double take. For a moment I couldn't tell if the sun's rays were hitting somebody's house or a boulder. Everything's blended into the landscape, like some towns in Europe. There are no eyesores."

Mountains and organic architecture—it makes sufficient sense that what Burnett would come to desire in Santa Fe was "a womb with a view." She and De Domenico found the view on a five-acre piñon-covered knoll overlooking the city and the San-



gre de Cristo, Sandia and Jemez ranges. The womb—"I wanted softness and curves and a comforting wrap-around feeling"—materialized more gradually. De Domenico, who designed the interiors, defines its psychological dimensions this way: "Because she's so outgoing and gives so much of herself when she's out in public, Carol had to have this safe, rewarding nest to come back to. She needed that sense of security."

Among the nest builders they approached were Harry Daple and Stephen Samuelson of the Santa Fe firm of Studio Arquitectura, who took Burnett's anthropomorphism a step further. "The way we hooked Carol," says Daple, "was to give her a set of plans with a cover sheet that said, 'A Home with Heart for Carol Burnett.'"

It was more than a sentimental pitch. The proposed nucleus of the house was a heart-shaped media room with three-hundred-and-sixty-degree views. Other rooms were sited to follow the movement of the sun and to maximize the coveted vistas: Burnett can now watch day-break over the Sangre de Cristos from her bedroom, sunsets from her dining room and the city lights from her portal.

The sight lines were carefully plotted within the house, too, so that the interior spaces would be both as fluid and as cozy as the actress had envisioned. A traditional Santa Fe adobe might be squarer and darker—but Burnett's house is not lacking in authenticity. There are

RIGHT: The actress's Emmys and People's Choice and American Comedy awards highlight the library, whose ceiling is lined with aspen *latillas*. The photos include a portrait of John F. Kennedy. Roman shade and striped slipcover fabrics from Stroheim & Romann.



LEFT: A portrait of Burnett by singer Tony Bennett adorns a wall in the library. "He used a palette knife and a makeup brush and did it in about fourteen minutes," she says. "He paints as well as he sings."

"The house has a modernness to it, but it's also got an old-fashioned warmth," says Burnett. **OPPOSITE:** The family room combines dining and sitting areas. Baker Furniture dining table and chairs. Armchair, love seat and plaid fabric, Pearson. Schumacher drapery fabric.







LEFT: Costume designs by Bob Mackie join pictures of the actress and friends in the media room. The photo of Burnett and Dolly Parton is, she says, "tipped in Dolly's favor." OPPOSITE: De Domenico designed the master bedroom fireplace, which has an Italian leather inset.

"The adobe is a very plastic form," notes Daple. "It was exciting to play with the traditional shapes, to give it a real handmade look." BELOW: Lace from a quilt made in the 1700s by Burnett's great-great-grandmother hangs in the master bedroom; the niche at left holds Doug Hyde's *Lukachukai Woman*.

parapets and vigas and even a shepherd's fireplace modeled after those whose broad mantels kept herdsmen warm at night. The plaster walls are as shiny as Formica, beeswaxed in the Spanish fashion to preserve their rosy colors. The town's finest artisans forged an iron railing to snake up the staircase and hand-blew glass for lighting fixtures. Some of the wood doors look as though they date back to the Inquisition. "In Santa Fe," quips Burnett, "first you buy the door, then you build the house."

This is not, on the other hand, what De Domenico refers to as the sort of house that wears the owner. A self-

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