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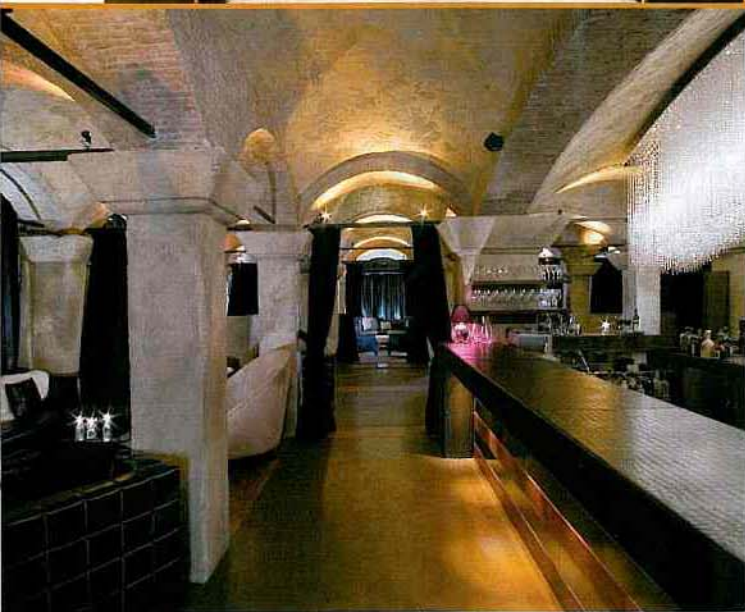


a star is reborn

text: edie cohen photography: art gray

And the Oscar goes to... Dodd Mitchell, for his revamped Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel





"Go West, young man," Horace Greeley advised. And Jason Pomeranc heeded the call. With Thompson Hotels properties already in New York and Washington, D.C., Pomeranc was looking to Los Angeles for expansion. What he found was the Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel, a National Register of Historic Places listee with a star-studded past. The find came courtesy of Dodd Mitchell, who was already renovating the 1927 landmark for new owners Goodwin Gaw and David Chang—and knew that they happened to be in need of a management operator. Since Mitchell

was also, simultaneously, in the middle of a Thompson Hotels project in New York, he put out the casting call to Pomeranc. Last December, they inked the deal.

At the time, the Roosevelt renovation was almost complete, after 18 months of work. Before Mitchell arrived, the interior had been positively "decrepit," he says. Quite a comedown from the hotel's heyday. The first Academy Awards took place there in 1929, and the duplex penthouse was a rendezvous destination for Clark Gable and Carole Lombard.

Every inch bears the Dodd Mitchell Design stamp, 300,000 square feet of interior and exterior space, total. For starters, that means 300 rooms—240 in the original 12-story tower, 60 in a 1950's cabana-style building—the triple-height lobby, and the Tropicana bar near the famous swimming pool painted by David Hockney. Combine that with three new attractions, Dakota and 25 Degrees restaurants and Teddy's nightclub, and the result is a self-contained campus destined for enrollment by Hollywood's current tribe of starlets. (A magnet for boldface names, Teddy's was instantly splashed all over the gossip columns when promoter Amanda Demme clashed with light-sleeping hotel guests and L.A.'s liquor →

Previous page, top: Renovated by Dodd Mitchell Design, the Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel retains its original neon sign. **Previous page, bottom:** The brick columns of the pool area's Tropicana bar are original, but the sidewall is clad in new ipé. Except for the vintage cork floor lamp, all the furnishings are custom, made of teak.

Left, from top: At Teddy's nightclub, a new brick ceiling vault frames vintage armchairs covered in mohair, a sheepskin rug, and a flea-market painting. A custom crystal chandelier sparkles above the club's bar counter, wrapped in embossed faux crocodile. **Right:** The lobby's original 35-foot ceiling, now restored, had been hidden behind drywall.

Opposite: The 1950's cabana building remains largely unchanged, but Dodd Mitchell stripped the balcony's redwood balustrade. David Hockney painted the pool's underwater mural.





authorities. It's now closed temporarily.) Mitchell somehow got the whole thing done on a \$12 million budget. "The fact that we pulled it off is *ridiculous*. But I started out my career at the end of a broom at a set-design shop. That makes anything possible," says the self-taught designer, a confessed high-school dropout.

Renovation always brings surprises. The biggest at the Roosevelt was the lobby's ceiling. Hidden behind drywall, the Moorish-style polychrome-painted surface was restored in a Michelangelo-esque process over the course of

three months. To counterbalance that colorful composition, Mitchell designed large-scale, chocolate-brown leather-covered sectionals for the room below.

From the lobby, a vaulted brick colonnade leads to Teddy's, once just a "concrete box," Mitchell recalls. Today, it's a procession of arches, columns, and niches inspired by an underground church in Istanbul. Black curtains further define seating groups, some composed of massive squared-off club chairs in jet-black leather, others of vintage discoveries. The 19-foot-long crystal chandelier above the U-shape bar—topped in embossed faux crocodile colored a deep plum—is a testament to Mitchell's resourcefulness and ability to get things done. When an estimate for the fixture came in at \$150,000, he bought the crystal drops in Spain, made the frame of polished steel in L.A., and outsourced assembly to New York. Total: \$30,000.

A onetime club kid, Mitchell knows what it takes to get people to where the drinks are. Fire. At the the poolside Tropicana bar, nestled in a corner of the cabana building, an 8-foot-long fireplace is backed by smoked mirror. So far, Prince, Alec Baldwin, Jake Gyllenhaal, and Kirsten Dunst have →

Left, from top: The duplex penthouse's upstairs bedroom features a Venetian plaster wall finish, stained-oak flooring, and a custom king-size bed, covered in leather. In the penthouse's living area, seating in polished steel and leather surrounds a table in mirror and glass, set on a rabbit-fur rug; the only significant non-custom piece is the Mariano Fortuny photographer's lamp. **Right:** A spa tub in stainless steel dominates the penthouse's master bathroom, its walls clad in smoked mirror.

Opposite: The penthouse dining area's custom smoked-glass chandelier hangs above Ludwig Mies van der Rohe's Brno chairs and a custom table, topped in python-painted leather protected by glass. Aluminum-mesh curtains draw back to reveal the master bedroom.





Left, from top: On the penthouse's redwood deck, now twice as large, Orbit lounge seating combines a woven-resin base and an acrylic canopy. In the Marilyn Monroe suite's living area, Christoph Burtcher and Patrizia Bertolini's co-track and the vintage floor lamp, tables, and chairs enliven the walnut flooring and painted concrete ceiling. **Right:** A backlit 1962 photo of Monroe and photographer Bert Stern hangs on the bedroom's padded-vinyl wall.



been sighted lounging on the teak seating nearby.

On the cabana building's second floor is the Marilyn Monroe suite. Yes, she did live here, but she wouldn't recognize the 850-square-foot space's current incarnation, with its walnut floor and original board-formed concrete ceiling painted glossy black. The public area is filled with 1970's furnishings, while the bedroom hints at old Hollywood with a backlit black-and-white photograph of Monroe and photographer Bert Stern hung on the white padded-vinyl wall behind the bed.

Mitchell goes for all-out glamour in the tower's 3,500-square-foot penthouse, where custom pieces play a leading role. In the public areas, witness the platinum-shimmering Venetian plaster, the aluminum-mesh curtains, and the silvery python-painted leather underneath the glass top of the long dining table. Ludwig Mies van der Rohe's Brno chairs and Mariano Fortuny's photographer's lamp add pedigree. Mitchell throws disco, deco, and decadence into the mix with the living area's rabbit-fur rug and cowhide-covered bench and the master bathroom's smoked-mirror walls and gleaming stainless-steel spa tub. And that's just the first floor.

Upstairs, below the restored painted-wood cathedral ceiling, is another bedroom. We'll leave the goings-on of the leather-covered bed to the imagination, but trysts can extend out to the 1,000-square-foot redwood roof deck, which Mitchell doubled in size. From the cocoon of canopied lounge seating, guests can enjoy their own private Hollywood. ■

PROJECT DIRECTORS: GULLA JONSDOTTIR; CHRISTIAN SCHULZ. **PROJECT TEAM:** LESLIE KALE; MELISSA MUTKOSKI; PAOLA TASSARA.

CUSHION FABRIC (POOL BAR): TORAY GROUP. **CUSTOM FURNITURE (POOL BAR, CUSTOM CLUB CHAIR (NIGHTCLUB):** DESIGNER IMPORTS. **FLOOR LAMP (POOL BAR), ARMCHAIRS (NIGHTCLUB), TABLE, CHAIRS (SUITE DINING):** THROUGH ORANGE. **SEATING (POOL AREA):** CALIFORNIA LIVING. **CUSHION, CURTAIN FABRIC:** GLEN RAVEN. **CUSTOM CUBE TABLE (POOL AREA), CUSTOM SOFA (SUITE LIVING):** ARGENT CUSTOM FURNITURE. **CUSTOM SEATING, TABLES (PENTHOUSE BEDROOMS, LIVING), CUSTOM TABLE (PENTHOUSE DINING):** DÉCOR FABRICS. **PILLOWS (PENTHOUSE BEDROOM, ROOF), VASE (PENTHOUSE DINING):** THROUGH MOGUL. **CUSTOM MIRROR PANELS (PENTHOUSE BEDROOM, BATHROOM, SUITE LIVING):** KIM'S GLASS. **CURTAIN FABRIC (PENTHOUSE LIVING, DINING):** DONGHIA. **TUB (BATHROOM):** THROUGH EUROCONCEPTS. **TUB FITTINGS:** DORNBRACHT. **CUSTOM CHANDELIERS (BATHROOM, PENTHOUSE DINING):** FANTASY LIGHTING. **CHAIRS (PENTHOUSE DINING):** KNOLL. **CURTAIN MESH:** WHITING & DAVIS. **WALL UPHOLSTERY (BEDROOMS):** VALLEY FORGE FABRICS. **SEATING (ROOF DECK):** JANUS ET CIE. **COATRACK (SUITE LIVING):** DESIGN WITHIN REACH. **LANDSCAPE CONSULTANT:** MIA LEHRER + ASSOCIATES. **ENGINEERS:** RBE ENGINEERS (STRUCTURAL), FR & ASSOCIATES (MEP), JOHN M. CRUIKSHANK CONSULTANTS (CIVIL). **ARCHITECT OF RECORD:** JAMES HEIMLER, ARCHITECT. **GENERAL CONTRACTOR:** CITY CONSTRUCTORS.