

# MALIBU TIMES

MAGAZINE

A photograph of a man and a woman smiling and embracing each other. They are wearing a thick, textured red sweater. The background is a blue, rippling body of water, suggesting they are on a boat. The man has a beard and is wearing a watch and a bracelet. The woman has long, light brown hair.

LOVE & LAUGHTER  
AT HOME WITH THE STERNS

FAMILY FARE  
FASHION, FOOD  
& FUN

WEDDING  
SPLENDOR  
TRENDS A TO Z

RICHARD LANDRY'S  
DREAM  
HOMES



Wayne Gretzky's Georgian-style estate in Thousand Oaks is featured in architect Richard Landry's book "Modern to Classic: Residential Estates by Landry Design Group."

# CREATING DREAM

ARCHITECT **RICHARD LANDRY** DESIGNS HOMES THAT FIT THE

*at*



By David Wallace

rchitect Mies van der Rohe's "less is more" philosophy defined much of mid-century home and building design for more than a generation. Nevertheless, for the most part, Hollywood movers and shakers never really bought into such "modernism," opting instead for traditional designs, including ersatz Spanish villas, New England bungalows, French chateaux and the like. They still do. And architect Richard Landry, a Malibu resident, has become rich and famous by giving the rich and famous what they want, albeit updated for modern living, as well as building needs and requirements.

Of the three hundred or so ultra-high-end homes he and his company have designed since Landry opened his business on his thirtieth birthday twenty years ago, images of seventeen (a dozen are in Malibu) are contained in the newly published book, "Modern to Classic: Residential Estates



Richard Landry

# HOMES

Photos by Erhard Pfeiffer

DREAMS AND LIFESTYLES OF HIS SELECT CLIENTS



Landry's Coral Canyon home includes a barn, an aluminum-clad silo and a swimming pool resembling a huge corrugated-metal cattle waterer.

by Landry Design Group." True, a couple of modern homes are included, but the heart of the book is devoted to such architectural flights of fancy as hockey superstar Wayne Gretzky's Georgian-style estate in Thousand Oaks, ex-MGM boss Frank Mancuso's sprawling Beaux-Arts palace (think Grand Central Station) and jazz musician Kenny G's Seattle mansion, modeled after the historic Greystone Mansion in Beverly Hills.

The houses, all but five photographed by Erhard Pfeiffer, are also big, averaging thirteen thousand three hundred fifty square feet, ranging from Landry's own five-thousand-five-hundred-square-foot Coral Canyon residence to a twenty-eight-thousand-square-foot behemoth of a French-style chateau built for "a Hollywood mogul and his wife, a doctor in psychology," Landry said in an interview with *Malibu Times Magazine*.

Appropriate to the size of these creations, Landry's privately published, seventy-five dollar tome is heavy, weighing in at just less than eight pounds, several times more than the average cocktail table book. Clearly designed to be an upscale

calling card, the book not only includes listings of the Landry Group's employees (present and past), it also lists every magazine and television feature about him as well as awards (his most valued is the "AD 100," *Architectural Digest's* list of the world's one hundred best architects).

"People expect quality from my firm, and I wanted to do a book reflecting that," Landry said, explaining the book's bulk.

Catering to his clients' taste has given Landry luxuries of his own such as the Mercedes-Benz in which he commutes to his West Los Angeles office and the Ferrari convertible he toots around in on weekends. But his success comes at the expense of being famous for his own unique vision—like Frank Gehry, whose Los Angeles Music Center design has even been celebrated as a Christmas ornament.

Writer Michael Webb remarks in his introduction to the book: "Landry is willing to embrace any style to please a client ..."

For Landry, however, this isn't the slightest bit conflicting.

"In architecture school, everything is purist modern," he said in an accent echoing both his French language and

Dutch-English upbringing (he received his architecture degree from the University of Montreal where he was first in his class, and a subsequent degree from Copenhagen University, when he learned English). "But at one point you have to make a choice—a purist career or a service career."

Landry chose service.

"A lot [of what I do] is about listening to clients ... not about creating one's own identity," he said. "It's important to [know] what a client's dreams are, how they live, how they entertain and then create good architecture that fits the site, the environment and their lifestyles. You should see how happy my clients are. That pleasure is a lot bigger than ego." (In his just published book, "The Architecture of Happiness," writer Alain de Botton concurred, remarking, "Great buildings speak of visions of happiness.")

In the foreword to Landry's book, Pulitzer Prize winner (architectural criticism) Paul Goldberger, now architecture critic for *The New Yorker*, supports Landry's philosophy: "Richard Landry belongs to the great tradition of American eclecticism," he writes, comparing his style with such legends