



Hollywood's Original Rat Pack: The Bards of Bundy Drive

Stephen C. Jordan

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In the 1930s and '40s an untamed group of Hollywood notables, men most well-known for their talents on the silver screen, frequently met and behaved in a manner that no doubt made them infamous within their community. For a brief period, their insatiable appetites for women and strong drink made them the lives of the party. The group included the likes of actors John Barrymore, Errol Flynn, W. C. Fields, and Anthony Quinn; writers Gene Fowler, Will Fowler, and Ben Hecht; art critic Sadakichi Hartmann; and the man who stood at the center of this gang of mischief-makers, eccentric artist John Decker. Additional characters who were regulars on the scene included Pulitzer Prize-winning poet Robert Hillyer, artist and goldsmith Philip Paval, and actors Thomas Mitchell, Vincent Price, John Carradine, Burgess Meredith, Roland Young, and Lionel Barrymore. In time the group would be known as the Bundy Drive Boys-named for the location of their favorite hangout, Decker's home and art studio-and their adventures would become legendary, if not downright scandalous. In *Hollywood's Original Rat Pack: The Bards of Bundy Drive*, Stephen C. Jordan revisits the lives and times of this free-spirited gang and rekindles the spirit of their excesses. In this lighthearted history, Jordan introduces the members of the Bundy Drive Boys and then focuses on the unique personality traits each offered. Stardom or wealth had nothing to do with membership. Rather, entry into their informal circle of actors, artists, writers, and poets required uniqueness of character. The group was often cynical, but always poetically so, and never sentimental. They enjoyed each other's company as friends, philosophers, poets, humorists, critics, and especially heavy drinking companions. *Hollywood's Original Rat Pack* brings their lusty stories of carousing and debauchery to life in a manner that pays tribute to their carefree, if admittedly reckless, antics. A tribu

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