

# California Dreaming



## The Environment for Singer Chynna Phillips

She balanced her "strong personality" with a feminine design in her apartment. Most of the furnishings—including the hand-hooked Pennsylvania cabinet and the painted low table in the living room—were purchased from Mulligan Antiques. Fabric on hearth chairs, Ralph Lauren.



INTERIOR DESIGN BY ALLAN WARRICK  
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"This is my first place, and I thought it had to be very adult and very sophisticated with nothing childlike. But I love this. It's like a fairy tale," says singer Chynna Phillips (above).

CHYNNA PHILLIPS wistfully recalls that throughout her childhood she was always traveling. "Mom was a chameleon and I never had a place I could call home. This is my first real home."

Phillips is the daughter of Michelle and John Phillips, cofounders of the group The Mamas and the Papas, who divorced in 1969. Last year Chynna became a pop star in her own right with the group Wilson Phillips, whose debut album went platinum. Her partners in song, Wendy and Carnie Wilson, are the daughters of Brian Wilson, the genius behind the Beach Boys. The three girls grew up together in Los Angeles, scions of a privileged yet turbulent rock-and-roll lifestyle. The success of their first record, however, did allow the pur-



Warnick found a late-19th-century carved wood angel in Maine that “softens the contemporary look of the fireplace,” he says. “It was one of the first things we wanted but one of the last things to arrive.” On either side of the living room niche are circa 1880 flower-and-ivy sconces. By the French windows are a 1920s iron floor lamp, an 1820s whirligig and a chaise upholstered in Manuel Canovas fabric.

chase of some stability—they all bought new homes.

Phillips, twenty-four, chose a 1,500-square-foot apartment in Santa Monica with an unobstructed view of the ocean. Among the many elaborate thanks given to musicians, producers and engineers on the album, there is also thanks to Allan Warnick, her interior designer.

Warnick was an old family friend, having first met Michelle Phillips when she was pregnant with Chynna. As the younger Phillips’s singing career began to take off, he suggested

that she come up with a more striking personal image by adopting the smart blond bob that has become her stylistic trademark. She welcomed the advice, and when he offered to design her new apartment, Phillips replied, “Definitely.”

Warnick looked beyond the somewhat sterile contemporary architecture of the apartment and created a welcoming, cozy and frankly feminine series of rooms. He started by asking what colors she liked. “I was confused at first,” she says. “I thought color was uncool and that everything

had to be black. I didn’t know how different colors could work together.” After getting Phillips to admit that she was fond of mauve, rose, lilac, sea green and sky blue, Warnick presented his client with a variety of patterned fabrics and said, “Trust me.”

They also went shopping—and bought nearly all the furniture—at Richard Mulligan Sunset Cottage Antiques & Design in Los Angeles. “Everything there was so unique and beautiful,” Phillips remembers. A one-hundred-and-fifty-year-old hand-hooked rug in tones of mauve, ivory

and pink sparked her interest in collecting early Americana. It now rests on the living room floor, surrounded by a sofa covered in a floral linen, a pair of pink dining chairs with rush seats and backs and floral cushions, and another pair of hearth chairs that appear deceptively small, as though waiting for visiting elves.

The room is centered around a wood table painted pale rose and cov-

ered with knickknacks that Phillips either bought with Warnick, collected on tour or culled from her childhood. Roseville ceramic vases from a shop in her neighborhood, a nineteenth-century Lalique glass vase from London and an old abacus and spelling book are arrayed on the table with rag yarn and turn-of-the-century children's slippers. Rising above a cloud of dried flowers in the alcove

over the fireplace and casting a benevolent gaze over the scene is a late-nineteenth-century carved wood angel from Maine. A "chain" cutout wood-framed mirror on the opposite wall expands and reflects the long, narrow dimensions of the room.

"There is a childlike theme to this house," says Phillips. "The small chairs, the dolls, the stuffed animals. I love it." Opening the glass-paned door of a circa 1860 Pennsylvania wall cupboard lined in wallpaper—the first piece to be brought home from Richard Mulligan—she lifts down a china doll with glass eyes and real hair. "My mother gave this to me in London when I was eight. I call her Sweetheart." The playful medley of furniture and toys continues in the bedroom. A stuffed doll and bear recline on the bed. Story lamps on end tables are made from a chalkware sailor and an English ceramic biscuit box. Unsightly reminders of contemporary hustle, such as the television, VCR and stereo, are tucked away in painted wood consoles specially designed by Warnick and Mulligan. Draped across the end of the bed is an early American quilt in shades of ivory, sage, mauve and blue.

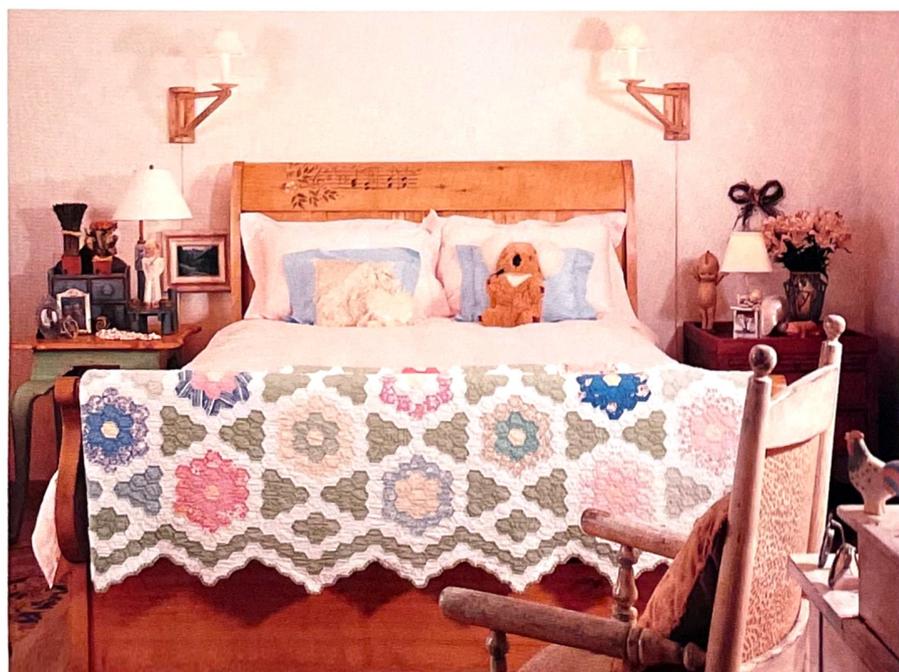
"Chynna is so strong, I wanted the house to enable her to indulge her more passive, gentle side. It lets peo-

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ABOVE: Photographs of Carnie and Wendy Wilson, the other members of the group Wilson Phillips, are framed in her office along with gold and platinum records from their debut album.

BELOW LEFT: Notes from her first hit song, "Hold On," decorate the head of the sleigh bed. BELOW RIGHT: The mirror is draped with 1860s lace. On the vanity are silver-framed family photos.



ple see that gentleness as opposed to her assertiveness and her strength," says Warnick. Adds Phillips, "The rooms are extremely feminine. Guys walk in and just laugh."

The layout of the living room allows for a dining table, but Warnick has put an armchair in that area near the windows so Phillips can watch the sunset over the Pacific. "I like to think of things the client is actually going to use," he says.

The adjacent kitchen, with its granite counters and gleaming fixtures, looks untouched. "I'm not a dinner party person yet," says Phillips, somewhat apologetically. "I plan on being that kind of person in a few years." At the entrance to the living room, a round wood dining table with red legs and pink ladderback chairs are for informal meals.

The office, which seems well used, is equipped with a broad table doubling as a desk and a 1930s Windsor chair. The walls are hung with evidence of Phillips's success—gold and platinum records and framed photographs of the group. Another wall bears three photographs of Phillips, aged six, wearing studio headphones and singing into a microphone, a real rock-and-roll baby.

"Ever since we were children, Wendy, Carnie and I sang and put on shows for our parents. About five years ago we decided to get serious about it," she explains. "And I love this life. But when I'm touring day in and day out, those sterile hotel atmospheres make me feel cold and distant. I bring my framed pictures and my quilt to try to warm it up, to make it as much like home as possible.

"I was recently in a hotel in Hawaii, but I missed my house," Phillips adds. "The color, the personalness of it. I feel so comfortable here where I can light my candles, run my own bath and relax. This is the first thing I've put my heart and soul into," she concludes. "Even if I move in the future, I think I'll always keep this apartment, with all of its furniture in place, as a sort of retreat. It's special." □