



GRACE KELLY

Born: Grace Patricia Kelly, November 12, 1929 (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, U.S.); died 1982 (Monacoville, Monaco).

Star qualities: Flawless beauty, poise, and glamour; one of Hitchcock's leading actresses; dated many of her costars before her fairytale wedding to Prince Rainier.

One of the most beautiful women ever to become a major movie star, Grace Kelly was born into a wealthy family. Beginning her career as a model, she worked on Broadway and in television before landing a minor role in a Hollywood thriller, *Fourteen Hours* (1951). A year later she was cast as Gary Cooper's Quaker wife in the Western *High Noon*, which became a big hit. After costarring with Clark Gable and Ava Gardner in *Mogambo* (1953), an adventure film set in Africa, she went on to make two films for Alfred Hitchcock, *Dial M for Murder* (1954), with Ray Milland, and *Rear Window* (1954), in which her costar was James Stewart. Just the sort of cool, blonde type that Hitchcock favored, outwardly reserved but smoldering underneath, Kelly was much in demand.

Green Fire (1954), another adventure film, set this time in South America, was a waste of Kelly's talents; but for her meaty dramatic role in *The Country Girl* (1954), in which she played the loyal wife of washed-up alcoholic singer Bing Crosby, she received the Oscar for Best Actress. Set in Korea, *The Bridges at Toko-Ri* (1955) was not an especially remarkable war film, but then Hitchcock cast her again, this time opposite Cary Grant, in



RIGHT: Kelly's role as Lisa Fremont in *Rear Window* brought her Hollywood fame.

Top Takes...

High Society 1956

The Swan 1956

To Catch a Thief 1955

The Bridges at Toko-Ri 1955

Green Fire 1954

***The Country Girl* 1954 ★**

Rear Window 1954

Dial M for Murder 1954

***Mogambo* 1953 ☆**

High Noon 1952

Fourteen Hours 1951



To Catch a Thief (1955). The moment when, having been icily distant with him all evening, Kelly suddenly kisses Grant on the mouth before firmly closing her bedroom door in his face, is one of the most sophisticatedly erotic in cinema history.

It was while filming this project on the French Riviera that Kelly first met Prince Rainier of Monaco. As if life were imitating art, Kelly's subsequent film, *The Swan* (1956), was a comedy set among European royalty. And her next movie proved to be her swan song. *High Society* (1956) was a musical remake of the Hollywood comedy *The Philadelphia Story* (1940), in which Kelly, playing opposite Frank Sinatra and Bing Crosby, takes the role originally played by Katharine Hepburn. After this she married Prince Rainier, retiring from the screen after a mere half a dozen years. Princess Grace was rarely out of the limelight after that. And then, in 1982, when she was only fifty-two, came tragedy—a fatal car crash on a mountain road. **EB**

ABOVE: Grace Kelly and Cary Grant giving stylish performances in *To Catch a Thief*.

Perfect Princess

Born the sole heir to the throne of the tiny French enclave of Monaco, Prince Rainier was the richest bachelor in the world. He was eager to marry a movie star in the hope that it would boost tourism in his principality. Marilyn Monroe and Gina Lollobrigida were considered as possible choices before he settled on Grace Kelly. (She was deemed suitable because she was Catholic and could bear children.) After they married in 1956, Princess Grace reluctantly gave up her acting career. No longer keen on the publicity his new wife attracted, Prince Rainier ordered that her films should not be shown in Monaco.