

Stephen Soderbergh directs the film

Crews spent two days capturing scenes in the desert. Monday, they shot scenes inside private homes

Tuesday's filming demanded much more attention.

Police barricaded parking lots and streets, which had been taken over by big-rigs full of film-making equipment.

The morning hours saw Palm Springs City Hall transformed into the city hall of the 1970s -- complete with cars to match in the parking lot and boxy video cameras set up for a scripted news conference.

Across town, local residents, who auditioned in July, got their chance to perform in the movie. "Extras" filled up vans, called "Showmanship Vans," to take the ride to Our Lady Of Solitude Church on West Alejo Street -- a church Liberace attended frequently across the street from his home

So many years later, Hollywood found itself converging on a corner of Palm Springs that Liberace built.

He crafted his home out of a former motel in 1967 at the corner of Belardo and Alejo Roads. He called it "The Cloisters" and spent \$130,000 renovating it for royalty

Its five bedrooms had already been converted to guest suites when Liberace arrived, but the flamboyant pianist turned them into theme rooms

The Valentino Room featured a sleigh bed, and there was a Persian tent room off to the side of the pool.

There was also a master bedroom so large that one tour guide claimed you could fit a small house inside it.

Beyond that, the house had crystal chandeliers, antiques and a small chapel.

Today, a fence surrounds the home, which was purchased in 2011 by a couple in Pasadena. The husband and wife said they were renovating it for their retirement.

An HBO representative told PalmSpringsLife.com *Behind the Candelabra* will air sometime during the Spring of 2013.

# Palm Springs City Hall, Church Scenes For Liberace Movie

Sites Sent Back In Time For 1970s Biopic

ERIK SANDOVAL



Our Lady Of Solitude Church in Palm Springs served as the backdrop for one of the scenes in *Behind The Candelabra*, a movie based on Liberace's life

ERIK SANDOVAL

On a day that saw temperatures soar to more than 101 degrees, movie crews in Palm Springs cut through thick humidity to unload scaffolding, lights and sound equipment from a farm of trailers -- setting up the framework for a day of filming of the new Liberace biopic *Behind The Candelabra*.

Based on the story told by his secret live-in lover Scott Thorson, the movie focuses on their often tempestuous relationship as Liberace fought to keep it and his homosexuality a secret.

Matt Damon plays Thorson -- a man who sued Liberace for more than a million dollars in palimony after their break-up, walking away with only a small settlement.

Michael Douglas plays "Mr. Showmanship" Liberace, who lived out the final days of his life in 1987 at his home in the Las Palmas neighborhood of Palm Springs.

Producing the project -- part-time Palm Desert resident Jerry Weintraub.

"I've wanted to make a film about Liberace for a very long time," he said. "After the amazing experience I had with HBO on *His Way*, I knew that they were absolutely the right place for this movie."

# It's a Wrap: Liberace filming ends in Palm Springs

## Movie stars Michael Douglas and Matt Damon

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Photos courtesy of the City of Palm Springs

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**PALM SPRINGS, Calif** - A new HBO movie about the life of Palm Springs resident Liberace wrapped filming in the desert Tuesday

Film crews for "Behind the Candelabra", a film starring Academy Award winning actors Michael Douglas and Matt Damon, were stationed outside "Our Lady of Solitude" Catholic Church and Palm Springs City Hall Tuesday filming key scenes

Hundreds of valley residents were also on hand as the film production reached out to the community to fill extra roles for the film.

The filming is also good for business. Local hotels are packed, and Sherman's Deli in Palm Springs is providing the food on set for the cast and crew. "It's fantastic we've been doing catering for 2 days," says the Deli owner Sam Harris. "There are a lot of extras here and Michael Douglas also had lunch here on Monday."

6 months ago the City of Palm Springs passed an initiative to make Palm Springs a film friendly city and waived all filming permit fees. This effort was spearheaded by City Councilman Paul Lewin

Filming in the desert wraps up Tuesday and they crews return to Hollywood to finish the film.

The movie is based on the 1987 book by Scott Thorson, former love of the famed entertainer. Thorson played by Damon wrote a book titled "The Candelabra: My Life with Liberace". There has been no air date announced yet when the film will air.