

NOVEMBER / DECEMBER 2011

THE SOCIETY DIARIES

AUSTIN, SAN ANTONIO AND SOUTH TEXAS



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*Photography by Mark Oberlin
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Sittings Editor: Lance Avery Morgan*

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*By Danielle Kaplan
Photography by John Conroy*

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*By Paul Bradshaw
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*By Rob Giardinelli
Photography Courtesy of Various Luxury Vendors*



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Photos Courtesy Wire Image

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By Kevin Smothers and Laura Villagran Johnson

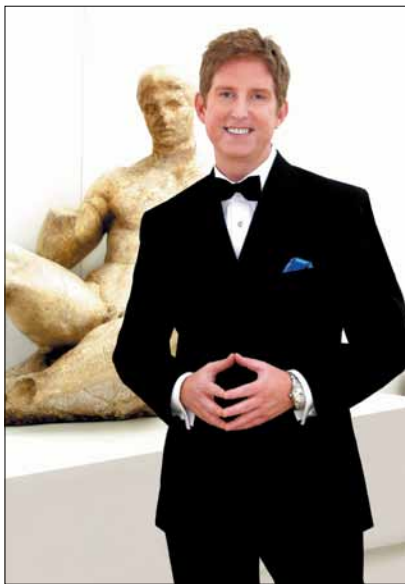


ELIE TAHARI

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WISH UPON A STAR



Yes, it's that wonderful time of the year again. It was a long, hot summer and BAM! it is now already time for the holidays. While most people self evaluate year 'round; if they have been a good little boy or girl, the answer around here is that we have all indeed been very good. And, appreciative. Mighty appreciative.

Anyone who knows me can tell you how grateful I am. Grateful for family, friends, love and happiness all rolled in together.

I am also happy with how favorably you have reacted to this new magazine because we have a tremendously talented team covering many square miles – from Austin to San Antonio into Mexico, and over to New York and Los Angeles – to bring you the best the world has to offer.

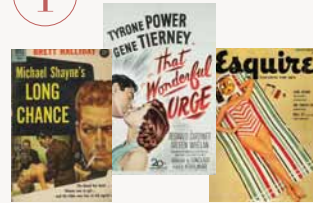
You'll see this month is an inspiring glamorama feast for the eyes. Our visionary fashion cover and editorial should blow you away like the winter's wind. As will the home feature of a maisonette in Austin, a far-flung travel to Prague and the best Holiday Wish List enticing desires this side of the Rockies. We have found the best of the best and it's all here, happening and very right now to capture the spirit of this iconic region.

Plus, this issue has soul, lots of soul with our featurettes on party hosting, romantic and self-help insight, and much more... all from the top experts in their field. As we don our black tie for the holiday gatherings we wish you a merry little Christmas that surpasses your dreams as well as the brightest, shiniest New Year for 2012.

*XOLAM Lance Avery Morgan,
Editor in Chief
lance@thesocietydiplomat.com*

THE BIG TEN

1



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4

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5



BMW 605i convertible. PRICE? \$90,000. Available at www.bmwofaustin.com



6

An Hermes pocket square. Any one will do. \$125. Available at www.hermes.com or Hermes stores in Houston and Dallas.



7

A trip to Paris. With a stay at the Hotel Crillon. Priceless.

8



Creed Green Irish Tweed cologne. It was good enough for Cary Grant. \$180. Available at NeimanMarcus and Saks Fifth Avenue stores.

9



iFrogz's Vertex Headphones. \$50. Available at ifrogz.com



10

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PAUL BRADSHAW

Paul Bradshaw is an award-winning writer/director/photographer who travels the world seeking out interesting people and new experiences. His career path has moved seamlessly between the worlds of advertising, politics and entertainment. His blog, Attack of the Stupid People is read by dozens of people, only some of whom he has to pay. His work has also appeared in HOW, Brilliant magazine and a television screen near you.



JOHN CONROY

John Conroy, who has over 25 years in the model and talent industry as both a model and a photographer, has work that is recognized on an international level. Whether he is shooting Carrie Underwood for American Idol or doing an editorial shoot for The Society Diaries or Architectural Digest, Conroy believes in the collaborative process.



DANIELLE KAPLAN

This month's home feature and Hot Wheels writer Danielle Kaplan discovered her love for fashion as a child, where she dressed herself, mix-and-matched clothes and took a stand against pants at the ripe young age of three. Kaplan's desire to stay in the know about luxury, entertainment and style has shaped this native San Antonian into a contributor to The Society Diaries as an Associate Editor.



ELLIE LEEPER

Ellie Leeper is a recent college graduate from Trinity University in San Antonio. As both a native San Antonian and social enthusiast, she is a natural networker who utilizes her affinity for connecting others as an Associate Editor for The Society Diaries. In addition to her contributions to the magazine, Leeper works for the Downtown Alliance San Antonio.



JULIA McCURLEY

Relationship expert Julia McCurley is the founder of Something More (www.trysomethingmore.com), a professional matchmaking service. As a dating veteran herself, McCurley understands firsthand how difficult it can be to balance one's career and personal life; combining these two factors that uses a best practices approach from the executive recruiting world and applies it to finding ideal partners in love. She lives in Austin, is happily married and a mother of three. Helping people find true love is her passion.



MARK OBERLIN

Our fashion photographer for this holiday issue is Los Angeles-based Mark Oberlin. Mark has also shot the collections of many of the West Coast's top fashion designers. He is an acclaimed painter as well and has exhibited his paintings in Los Angeles, New York City and San Francisco galleries. More of Mark's spectacular work can be found at his website at www.markoberlin.com.



MARY SCHNEIDER

Mary Schneider has been studying alternative healthcare modalities for over 20 years and is certified in Holographic Repatterning and Touch for Health. She has studied homeopathy, the Chinese 5 Element Acupuncture System, The Work of Byron Katie and numerous other modalities. Her practice is the Holographic (Resonance) Repatterning Institute (www.repatternit.com) and she happily resides and practices in Austin.



LARA SHRIFTMAN

Our West Coast Lifestyle Editor Lara Shriftman co-founded Harrison & Shriftman in 1995, an agency that specializes in public relations, marketing and events for high-profile luxury brands (www.hs-pr.com). Lara has served as a contributor and editor to Tribune Media's Distinction magazine, The Miami Herald's Home & Design, Brilliant, Q, Departures, LA Confidential, Quest and Hamptons, and has been a featured guest on The TODAY Show, E!, Extra, The Megan Mullally Show, and FOX's Friends and Family.

Zolton

Nothing can fill your need for speed in this society better than what we have chosen as our ten hottest luxury cars for Fall. Join us as we zoom, zoom, zoom with some of the most luxurious – and fun – wheels on the road today.

By Danielle Kaplan

HOT wheels



1. BMW 760Li -- \$136,600 – BMW of Austin / 7011 McNeil Drive / bmwofaustin.com / 512.343.3500

The current BMW series is a line of full-size luxury vehicles that introduced the ZF 8-speed automatic transmission. With state-of-the-art technology, efficient performance and extreme comfort, the BMW is offered in ActiveHybrid and bulletproof options. Enjoy its agile handling and plush interior to balance comfort with an attractive driving experience.

2. Bentley Continental GTC -- \$212,800 – John Eagle European / 12989 Research Boulevard / johnagleeuropean.com / 512.401.BOND

The new four-seater luxury convertible features a spacious cabin, leather hides, wood veneers, and cool-touch metals combined with one of the most advanced in-care infotainment systems available, Sumptuous

hand-crafted materials and the highest levels of attention to detail combine effortlessly to make the new Bentley Continental GTC a contemporary and sculpted supercar with the prestige feel and authentic quality of a true coachbuilt convertible.

3. Rolls-Royce Ghost -- \$246,500 – John Eagle European / 12989 Research Boulevard / johnagleeuropean.com / 512.401.BOND

Engineered to ride and drive in peerless fashion, Ghost's chassis' poise delivers a dynamically engaging experience for the driver, yet a serene, comfortable ride for passengers surrounded by an elegant, contemporary interior with large expanses of soft, full-grain leather, natural-wood veneers and Blenheim wool carpets. Hand-built to order, Ghost embodies 21st-century Rolls-Royce: more than 100 years of excellence expressed in modern and uncompromising style.

4. Cadillac CTS Coupe -- \$38,990 – Ken Batchelor Cadillac / 11001 IH-10 / 888.805.5566 / Cavendar Cadillac / 801 Broadway Street / 210.226.7221 mysanantoniocadillacdealers.com

This new luxury sports coupe is Cadillac's most dramatic expression of Art & Science. The interior of the CTS emphasizes technical precision with elegant, hand-crafted details complete with an integrated center stack design and the hand-assembled center console. The powertrain's performance is channeled through a chassis that delivers sports car performance without punishment.

5. Lexus LFA -- \$375,000 – Lexus of Austin / 9910 Stonelake Boulevard / lexusofaustin.com / 512.343.3400

Nothing proclaims luxury more than the ability to be one of 500 people to own the limited produced, first Lexus supercar. With a 552-hp V-10 engine, a digital instrument panel and the lightweight design, the sky's the limit with this exotic model, especially after NASCAR driver Kyle Busch was ticketed driving at more than 100 mph around North Carolina.

6. Audi A7 -- \$59,300 – Cavender Audi / 15447 IH-10 West / cavenderaudi.com / 210.681.3399

Take a drive in the proclaimed sexiest car of the year. Described as sleek, satisfying, stylish and obviously sexy, this car takes technology (and driving) to a whole different level with its versatility and practicality as the most attractive hatchback on the market. With length, width and low height in perfect proportion with smooth and clean lines, this car oozes opulence and chic.

7. Porsche Panamera Turbo S -- \$174,175 – Porsche of San Antonio / 4623 Fredericksburg Road porschesanantonio.com / 210.738.3499

Excitement and high performance are the key selling points to this full-size five-door, four-seat luxury sedan with a crucial "go-fast" formula. By delivering the best features of a sports car and a sedan with comfy rear-seat room, hatchback design and the ability to create cargo capacity like an SUV, the Panamera was named the second Super Luxury Cars specifically for its first-class interior and superior athletic performance.

2



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8. Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG -- \$189,600 – Mercedes-Benz of Boerne / 31445 IH 10 West / mbboerne.com / 830.981.6000

You may have seen this bad-boy speeding around Gran Turismo 5 or as the safety car for the current Formula One Sessions; after all, it is a luxury grand tourer automobile that succeeded the SLR McLaren. With four different versions of the car, the car will be seen on the racetrack or as an all-electric powertrain complete with a glimpse of the past of the Gullwing coupe of the 1960's.

9. Fisker Karma -- \$100,000 – Roger Beasley Porsche Fisker / 200 E. Huntland Drive / porscheaustin.com / 512.371.1155

Sexy meet sustainability, sustainability meet Karma. The stunning car is a plug-in-hybrid concept with an interior that is eco-friendly and chic. With aluminum skin, a solar-cell roof, a composite decklid and plastic bumpers, green has never looked better. Ease yourself on the guilt and get a striking, luxurious machine. With excellent driving dynamics and performance, electric cars have never looked so lush.

10. Ferrari 458 Italia -- \$260,000 – Barrett Motor Cars 15423 W. I-10 / barrettmotorcars.com / 210.341.2800, Ferrari of Austin / 4108 North Lamar Boulevard / 512.380.0231

With the ability to go 0 to 60 in under 3.4 seconds, the Italia was named Motor Trend's Best Driver's Car of 2011. While the car boasts an impress power-to-weight ratio, the killer engine is what makes the car superior. Don't let the beautiful, red Ferrari pass you by as you speed into next year's exciting adventures.

PREP-ARAZZI

The True Prep World of Lisa Birnbach

By Lance Avery Morgan

Photography: Elena Seibert, Vintage Archival Photography

Preppie is a state of mind way beyond the requisite pink, green and everything classic. Author Lisa Birnbach has reinvigorated the Prep Movement and here she dishes on the Kennedy's style, preppie charities and why she considers Texas to be Prep Heaven

LET'S FACE IT: LISA BIRNBACH IS A POP culture icon. She is charmed when I tell her I felt it was like the shot heard 'round the world when *The Official Preppy Handbook* appeared in 1980. It's so true. The book's debut was like the New New Testament to those hungry for great style after the leftover hippy-dippy 1970s. And, it was long overdue. She made TOPH grow up and didn't allow it to be stuck in a time warp. *The Official Preppy Handbook* had revelations recalibrated from the 1950s and early 60s Mid-Century cool, much like the TV series *Mad Men* has done over the recent years... and helped to capture a forgotten style that ended before its prime. Heck, it was a guidebook for a country that needed guidance after the fuel shortage, Vietnam ending and lame Presidents. It became a beacon of things stylish after the decade of yellow shag carpeting, too much tie-dying and bad polyester endeavors.

Recently, Birnbach, along with fellow Preppster designer and co-author Chip Kidd, has given new life to old ways and updated the venerably classic book, *True Prep*, and has made it new and fresh again. It's almost like finding that cashmere sweater, all laundered and smelling wonderfully clean, after you thought you left it on a plane, never to be seen again.

Actually *True Prep* is a right-now take look at the old school of substance; things like all natural-fiber clothing, hardy cocktails like a Manhattan or Gin & Tonic, and the like. What's not to love about that? The book is filled with Birnbach-isms.... including the Prep attitude towards money (ambivalent), schools (good investment), wardrobe (now your clothes fit), work (some careers will never be prep), decorating (ask mummy), scandal (including rehab and prison), and food and drink (with some classic recipes for both). She also looks at weekends (and what to do to get asked back), entertaining, sports



(including sailing and shopping), weddings, etiquette, the Internet and electronic gadgetry, political correctness, reality TV, and . . . polar fleece. And, last but not least: a do-it-yourself eulogy."

Now that's some good quality information in this book. When we made contact, I couldn't help but ask what Birnbach's favorite things were, included in the book or not. Cocktails seem to be the Preppie's greatest accessory. "In the 30 years since I published the first book, I have found a new favorite drink – a vodka gimlet with fresh lime juice," says Birnbach. "However, I have become a fan of tequila. In Texas, they make that Mexican Martini that's quite good."

When asked about what place can be defined the best Preppie destination, Birnbach is quick to answer. "That has to be Charleston, South Carolina. To me Charleston is a kind of gem – like Venice – it's cute and adorable – yet is scaled so manageable. Then there's Bermuda, Nantucket, and Capri before it gets crowded in summer." We discussed why traveling for weddings is so popular these days, and I wanted to know what the best Preppie destination wedding venue? "For me, it's reading wedding pages of *The New York Times*. I've been addicted to that for years," she admits.

Dressing for a wedding is crucial as it is with other occasions. Let's be frank, clothes are a part of the Preppie persona. The best women's Preppie outfit for day according to the author, "For years when I was in my 30s it was long sleeve T-shirts by Anges B. I had children throwing up on me (my own), so it was my uniform. I think women look great in man-tailored shirts, unbuttoned a tiny bit... sort of boyish. I love stripes, bright colors and oversized gingham, too." She goes on to say, "The best basic look for day is a button down shirt, straight jeans, and perhaps a cardigan when it is cool. It's forgiving on any

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size. I am going to dress this way the rest of my life. It may not be the sexiest, but it's the chicest."

Speaking of arms, I ask her, what sport best encapsulates Preppiedom? "Croquet. It's not my sport, but is so Preppie-specific because of its presentation, wardrobe and community. I mean, really, you can't just walk over and pick up a croquet game. Men who are crazy for croquet are confident in their manhood. They love it." She also observes, "Preppies love tennis, too. Sailing is a great sport – it encompasses the fact that Preppies love water and boat shoes, yet there's the chance of windburn and expensive equipment that breaks down."

Moving onto more cultural pursuits, I tell her I feel that Preppies love to give back and ask her what is the favorite way Preppies love to give to charity? "Preppies love their art museums as well as conservation societies, which are both about preserving that which is old. It's also a way to give without being reminded there are people suffering. Giving to the mentally disabled is a big one – look at the Kennedy's with creating the Special Olympics, as an example."

One can't mention the Kennedy's without wondering who was the most Preppie president. "It was JFK for sure," Birnbaum states emphatically. "Actually, I think that most presidents are preppies because of their family and schooling. Also, because they are the President, they usually have a big bank account and a big personality. And, really, it's easier when you are a legacy – just look at FDR, John Quincy Adams, and the Bush's." She muses, "In modern times, the White House Kennedy's were the most vibrant, attractive and vivacious couple. And, elegant. The Kennedys were attractive, confident, and sporty, too. They didn't invent touch football on Thanksgiving, but they own it. And, yes, we now know things that show their imperfections." And they had tremendous style, too, I note to her. "What Jackie wore is as relevant today as when she was alive and First Lady. The Jack Rogers sandals, Capri length pants, oversized sunglasses. I've seen very early pictures of her and it didn't seem like she was striving as a young woman. In fact, she looked like she was quite comfortable in her own skin."

When I speak with Birnbaum about *True Prep* and how it came to fruition and has been received over the years, she's very candid. "I was relieved it was well received, but I didn't want to do the sequel. When the book was coming



Author Lisa Birnbaum

out, the critics hated it, but it was some of the readers who anonymously posted things here and there; like how dare I talk about Barak Obama as a Preppie? How dare I open it up to people of various ethnic and racial groups - they were so ugly. The Internet is un-Preppie because it is a license to be anonymously mean. I find that disappointing." She shares, "Look, I'm Jewish – I've never hidden that. I'm not ashamed of it now because I was Jewish in 1980 also. It's important to be who you are. Plus, somebody who is an 18th generation WASP would never be able to appreciate it from the outside like I have. I mean Jewish people are like Preppie people in New Canaan, CT. There is no adjustment – no self hating. It is what it is.

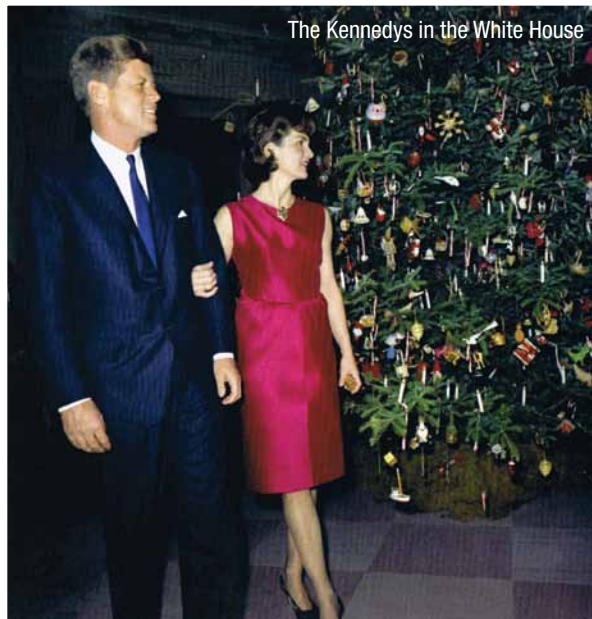
I asked her if that was the reason that the first book happened. "I've always had a sense of humor because I had a really funny father. A sense of humor was highly valued in my family of origin. To me funny is one of the most flattering things to be called - besides being thin. Plus, I knew the Preppie world from the inside and the outside. It has helped insiders feel more inside and has allowed people to understand more. I am a social observer and majored in Semiotics [every cultural phenomenon can be studied as communication], which is about what things represent. I didn't try to change anyone's life, or make it over with *The Official Preppie Handbook*. I didn't want to be famous.

Lisa Birnbaum has her ties to Texas and loves it. "I love Austin. I've vacationed there – unwittingly I'm a New Yorker, so when it comes to The BBQ Question of who has the best, I can't answer it. But, I am an American, so I love BBQ." I asked her if she experienced Austin with *The Original Preppie Handbook* and she replies, "I knew about it in the 80s – the music, food, culture. I spent time in Austin this Fall with Chip Kidd, the art director of the book. We were there for the Texas Book Festival. It was so amazing; walking home late on a Saturday night on Sixth Street. It was like time had stopped. People were meandering, almost like it was a mellow music festival with the locals enjoying the city."

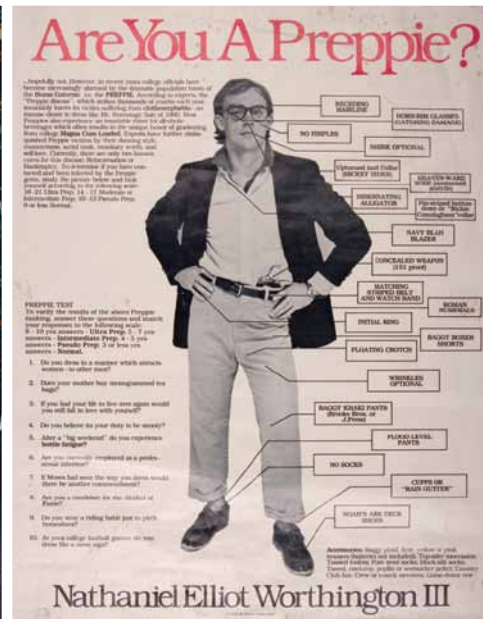
In a reflective mood, Birnbaum gets sentimental about the 80's and her book that created a resurgence in the Preppie point of view. "Thinking back, for our moment in time, it was big. What I didn't know in the intervening 30 years was that it was still big. People are so proprietary about what Preppie means to them. Plus, I want to be happy and make the world a happier place." We feel that she has with her vast talents in telling the Preppie story. 📖



Preppie is as Preppie does



The Kennedys in the White House



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HOLIDAY Hosting HOW-TO'S

The Holidays are a time to celebrate family and friends so make sure everyone receives best host, and or guest, you can be, follow these Holiday Do's and Don'ts as you celebrate your most fabulous holiday season yet

HOLIDAY DO'S

Holiday Cards

It may seem silly, but getting a jump-start on your holiday card and gift list is a must. To be thorough, look at your lists from the previous years. Make sure to separate people into categories (family, friends, co-workers, teachers, doctors, trainers, etc.) so you don't miss anyone. Take the time to confirm all of the addresses, spelling, and proper suffixes. It will save you time in the end and make the entire process effortless. Don't wait until the last minute. Design and order or make cards early. If you are using a photo for your card make sure to schedule the photo-shoot in advance (2 to 3 months)

When sending out your holiday cards, timing is key. The ideal time to send your cards out is in early December. After that, everyone will be bombarded with other holiday cards. Or, if you want to make a statement don't send out a Christmas card. Send out a card in January wishing everyone a Happy New Year.

For great holiday card ideas or help, check out www.cocodot.com for great online cards or alpinecreativegroup.com!

Holiday Shopping

Shop as you see fit. There is nothing wrong with buying someone a holiday gift in August. If you see something that speaks to the person don't miss out on the opportunity. Try and be creative with your gifts. Look out for gifts that the person is going to like, or for something they really want or need. If you get stumped on gift ideas, you can never go wrong with a gift certificate. Who can't use an iTunes gift card? Or a certificate to your favorite store, spa, gym or salon? Remember, gifts do not have to be expensive to be thoughtful! Sometimes hand-made gifts are the most special gift you can give someone!

As some simple reminders, Always, always, always remove the price tag. Include a gift receipt. Wrap your gifts nicely. If you don't trust your own skills ask the store clerk to wrap it for you or take it to a wrapping station at your local mall. Box, tissue, ribbon, and wrapping paper. Never forget to include a personal note, handwritten, of course. Make sure to keep a list of what others gave you and write your thank you notes in a timely manner.

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HOLIDAY DO'S

The Perfect Hostess Gift

Knowing when to bring a gift is key; there are times when it's ultra-important and times when it's unnecessary. Follow my protocol below and you'll never wonder again

In general, guests should always bring a gift to the host or person of honor. It's especially thoughtful to do so when attending a party in someone's home. If it's flowers, then perhaps send ahead so the host doesn't have to take time to deal with them at the party. If you bring wine or champagne, tell them you don't expect them to serve it or send it ahead of time. Always remember to send a handwritten note post-party.

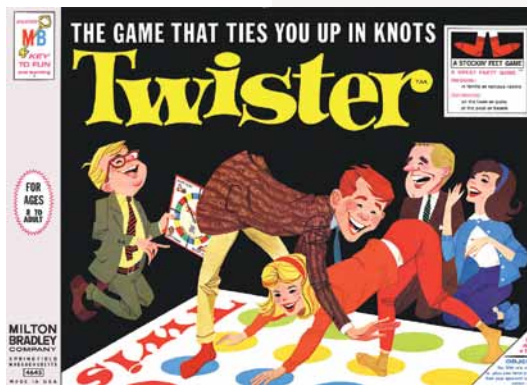
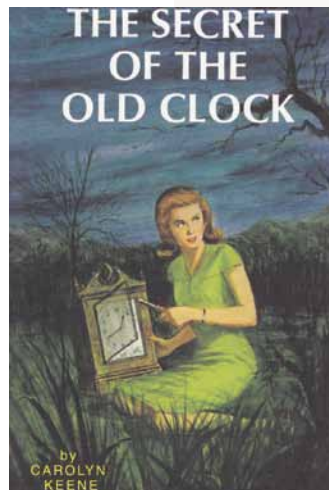
Large galas, office get-togethers, and parties en masse usually do not require anything cinched with a bow. However, be sure to check the invite carefully, as it may ask for a charitable donation such as toys, clothing, or art supplies. Here's the tricky one: if you don't attend, do you need to send a gift? Many people say no, but I firmly believe that you should send a gift either beforehand or as soon as possible after the date, for events such as birthday parties, showers, and so on. Make sure not to over extend yourself over the holiday season. Do not RSVP to an event if you are not going to show up or if you are going to leave after a short time. When attending or hosting an event know guests of guests cannot bring guests.

HOLIDAY DON'TS

Make sure not to over extend yourself over the holiday season. Do not RSVP to an event if you are not going to show up or if you are going to leave after a short time. When attending or hosting an event know guests of guests cannot bring guests.

If you are on a diet or a vegan, eat before a big party or tell the host ahead of time. Do not be a high maintenance guest. Make sure to coordinate with your close friends; do not host a party the same night as one of your friend's parties.

The holiday season is full of fun. Make sure to drink appropriately, be responsible, and do not go overboard. Dress appropriately. 🍷



Laura Shriftman's TOP HOSTESS GIFTS

First Edition Books or Restaurant Cookbooks

One of my all-time favorite gifts is my set of first-edition Nancy Drew books, given to me by Jay Penske, who owns the first edition bookstore Dragon Books.

A set of great cookbooks like Ina Garten's Barefoot Contessa cookbooks, The Balthazar Cookbook by Keith McNally, and others like Nobu by Nobu Matsuhisa, The Craft of Cooking by Tom Colicchio, Mario Batali's Simple Italian good, and Giada De Laurentiis' Everyday Italian, and no kitchen should be without Joy of Cooking.

Old School Games

Think Monopoly, Twister, and more. This is a fun gift to bring to a small gathering of friends because you can put it to use right away!

Home Bottle Service Kit

A bottle of GREY GOOSE Vodka
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Set of glasses
Favorite cocktail book

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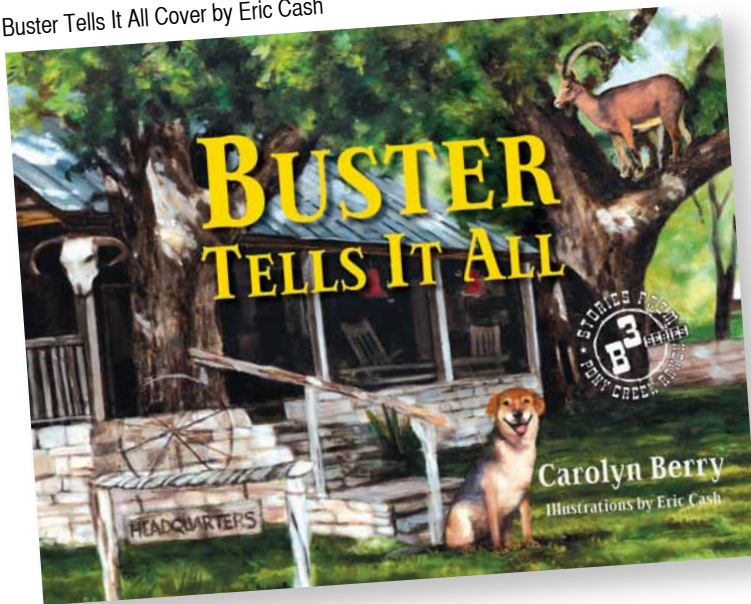


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Buster Tells It All Cover by Eric Cash



A Texas girl and her ranch dog telling tales of what they see in the land in which they live. It seems so simple, doesn't it? In the new children's book, *Buster Tells It All* by Carolyn Berry, imagine a land where exotic game from all over the world cohabitate in peace, without fences or fear of the challenges of a life in the wild. This land is tucked away in a near a town called Glen Rose, Texas and



Pony Creek Ranch Illustration by Eric Cash

it is fondly known to so many as the Pony Creek Ranch. Encompassing a thousand acres, the ranch is home to both endangered and protected wildlife rescued and raised by native Texan ranchers Carolyn and Jim Berry, who have a son who lives in San Antonio.

The Berry's have cultivated their ranch property to be a safe-haven for both the exotic and the not-so-exotic and they share their passion for wildlife and open the gates of their ranch each year to visitors from all over the world, in the hopes that others will gain the valuable life lessons they have learned from caring for their animals over the years.

Carolyn, as a life-long animal lover, believes that caring for animals can teach both children and adults four important characteristics: compassion, loyalty, trustworthiness, and honesty. In order to convey the importance of these characteristics to children who live within and outside of Texas' borders, Carolyn has written the book set on the Pony Creek Ranch.

Ranch Dog Rules

By Ellie Leeper

Illustrations By: Eric Cash

In *Buster Tells It All* the Pony Creek Ranch dog "Buster" acts as the animal guardian of the property, narrating the story, seen through his eyes of the love, friendship, and support that can exist between animals and people. He faces some challenges along the way because he must act as the stand-in caregiver for a young Nubian Ibex named April whose mother abandoned her at birth. Buster eventually overcomes these challenges by teaching April how to bottle-feed so that she receives the appropriate nutrition that she needs to survive.

The story has a purpose, too. Carolyn wrote the book in response to the tragic loss of her young niece Becca in an automobile accident just a few years ago. Like Carolyn, Becca was passionate about fostering a bond with wildlife. In addition to aiding in caring for the animals at Pony Creek Ranch, throughout her youth, Becca dedicated much of her time volunteering for Operation Kindness, one of the oldest and largest non-profit no-kill animal welfare organizations that cares for homeless cats and dogs.

Becca always displayed compassion, loyalty, trustworthiness, and honesty in her daily life because she spent so much time caring for the animals that surrounded her. "The honesty given by an animal shows us who they are. Their trust, when earned, stirs our compassion and reminds us of our own humanity," says Berry. To honor Becca's humanity and the compassion she shared with others, Carolyn wrote this children's book that she hopes is the first of many in a series about Pony Creek Ranch experiences.

Buster Tells It All is available for purchase on Amazon.com and in select bookstores. More information on Carolyn Berry's book and her life as a rancher can be found on the Pony Creek Ranch website at www.ponycreekranch.com. A portion of the proceeds from *Buster Tells It All* will be donated to Teach For America and to The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals of Texas (SPCA). 5





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Holiday Cheer

Have yourself a merry little Christmas. That's what we'll be humming but how can you help make your relationships shine brightly beyond the holiday season? Professional matchmaker Julia McCurley shares some relationship advice on how you can create the love you want.



Come on, we all know the holidays can be a daunting time for both singles and couples. For Singletons, there is an expectation that you will be bringing the love of your life to the company/family/best friend holiday party instead of your Aunt Louise's next-door neighbor's nephew. For Coupled-Ups, it's difficult trying to create a Norman Rockwell scene since families are all trying to put the "fun" back into dysfunctional, so to speak. In other words, holidays can be an extremely stressful time for everyone, no matter what your relationship status, so embrace the possibilities.

Attention married couples: I am glad the stockings were hung on the chimney with care, but this is a great time to acknowledge your single friend's predicament as well receiving the best-decorated house of the month award from your HOA. For your annual holiday open house, why not go through your mental Rolodex and invite some eligible bachelors/bachelorettes? Remember how Charlotte from the show *Sex and the City* made all her married friends go through their address

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books and she got several dates out of it? Go Charlotte! I think many married couples don't remember what it was like to be single and how you were so appreciative of introductions through friends rather than resorting to online dating. Here's a tip: Be sure to have the same number of single men and women in a similar age group to avoid awkward situations.

Whether you are married or single, most of us completely understand the holiday expectation of wanting to have someone to snuggle with by the fireplace, kiss under the mistletoe, and with whom to make a champagne toast on New Year's Eve.

For all you fabulous Singles, holidays are a great time to step out of the box and embrace yes as your favorite word. No matter who is hosting the soiree', whether it's a party thrown by some married friends, the Junior League, the tennis club, or any other organization to which you might be attached, you never know who will you meet. Married friends who happen to love matchmaking might have a Mr. or Ms. Right waiting to meet you. Also, if there is an eligible single at the event, even if there is no chemistry, they could be the perfect partner in crime to accompany you to future mandatory events, or at least become a new friend. Flying solo can be daunting, but not impossible, so give it a try because it can really build your confidence. Remember, you have to love yourself before anyone else will.

For all of us the holidays are a great time to focus on giving back to your community. This can include adopting a family in need, working at the local food bank, going to the children's hospital, women's shelters, homeless shelters; the list is endless. No one can ever criticize you for your lack of holiday lights if you are busy at the soup kitchen.

One of the common pitfalls for single women during the holiday season is what we call the "winter boyfriend." These are men you have dated in the past who come crawling out of the woodwork all of a sudden who want to re-kindle and old flame. Ladies, tread lightly in this situation. These players just want a date for their company party, someone to keep them warm, and to have as a fill-in girlfriend until January 2nd. Take it from someone who has been down that road and experienced this more times than I want to remember. Just say no to these Johnny-come-lately Casanovas. You'll thank yourself for it.

A typical challenge for one of the spouses is being expected to go to parties where you may not know a soul, such as office parties. This is a situation where you need to "take one for the team," otherwise known as a social obligation. It is a fact of life that you will continue to get invited to baptisms, graduations, Bat Mitzvah's, and retirement parties for acquaintances. One can always come up with an excuse to bow out gracefully, but what comes around, goes around. Etiquette and protocol should always prevail over some episode of Mad Men you might to miss. Can you say DVR it?

The bottom line is that this year's holiday season will come and go as it always does. Why not plan to make this the best one ever simply by focusing on giving to others and stepping out of your comfort zone? Get online, check out the top charity events of the season, look on Meetup.com for singles holiday parties in your area, and even Facebook can be a great resource of holiday event happenings. Now matter how you do it, get out there and be spectacular. 🍷

For more information on Julia McCurley, professional matchmaker based in Austin, and her services, visit www.trysomething.com.



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Peace, Love & Happiness

We all want to live more fulfilled lives, but just how do we find it? Here Austin-based enlightenment expert Mary Schneider shows how to end your year on a high note, with a little added insight from Eckardt Tolle, Byron Katie and Oprah Winfrey...

What do you do when you get into a heated discussion with a family member or a friend? How do you respond in a way that communicates how you feel and doesn't annihilate the other person? In the last issue we talked about expressing our feelings and stating our needs. There are also ways, however, that enable us to moderate our strong, negative feelings so that we can create the space for the state that we are all trying to attain – the state of inner peace.

External peace is also a highly-valued state of being and is directly proportional to our internal level of feeling it. I think that the way to peace in the world is first finding peace in our hearts. There are really two very significant ways to peace. The first one is to accept reality for exactly what it is. And, love that reality. Byron Katie, the great enlightened teacher, says that when you fight and argue with reality, or what is, "You lose. Only 100% of the time."

Accepting reality as it is... is a spiritual practice. It takes vigilance and clear intention to recognize that the way God, or whatever Source is for you, runs the world is far superior to how we think He should. It means that even though things may look as if God is nowhere to be found, we trust there is a higher reason we are not privy to for why things are happening the way they are. And, that this is perfect. Piece of cake, right?

In a serious and stressful situation when the mind overtakes our ability to sustain a state of peace, accepting reality as it appears is extremely challenging. We attach deep meaning to the thoughts surging through our brains and we become completely convinced that they are, in fact, true. When these thoughts are stressful and agitating, the attendant emotions engendered are difficult, at best, to handle. At times, we engage in all manner of outside activities to try to avoid the negative and uncomfortable feelings that arise because of these thoughts.

Author and enlightened expert Eckhardt Tolle says that these thoughts are our ego and we need to tell our egos to step aside and instead allow the feelings we are avoiding to surface. We will always be able to process them because God never gives us anything we cannot handle. In addition, he says that our divinity within is wholly capable and equipped to deal with these feelings. He says to just allow yourself to feel them. In my own experience, when I remember to engage in this practice, those agitating, uncomfortable feelings are replaced by a state of peace in a relatively short period of time just by allowing them to be.

I think that what really happens when we engage in this practice is that we bring ourselves back into the present moment. And, being present is all about empowerment. Being present and feeling empowered often creates a state of peace.



The second significant path to peace is just as challenging. It can also be as rewarding. In this practice we learn to recognize that we do indeed create our own reality: it is that the world is actually just a reflection of our own internal state. If our internal state is that of peace, peace is what we will experience out in the external world and vice versa. What we see "out there" is what we experience inside, too.

For example, if our partner is constantly irritating and annoying us because of their critical, judgmental behavior, we need look no further than our own critical, judgmental tendencies. We ask ourselves, "Where am I being critical and judgmental myself? Is it my partner (this is the first place I go); my children; my boss?" If these don't become the obvious targets of our criticism and judgment then it might be helpful to see where we are being critical and judgmental of ourselves. As Oprah Winfrey aptly declares, "You spot it; you got it!"

When we engage in the practice of this recognition with the intention and full awareness that we are being shown something valuable and important about ourselves, a lesson if you will, it will become very obvious what is being mirrored back to us. This practice is a humble form of pure surrender and is no walk in the park. I was working with a client applying this type of technology to one of their family issues and they just looked at me and said, "Oh no! We don't have to go there, do we?" We did and they found a place of peace. Making everything be about the other is usually really not what's happening and it's disempowering to both of you.

Simply put, recognizing that the world is a mirror enables us to see the source of these negative, agitating feelings within and to heal them and let them go. If we are in the midst of an argument or heated discussion with another person, remember to try not to point the finger at them. When we point the finger, it just turns around and points back at ourselves. Try to stay away from "you" statements. Generally, when using "you" in a conflict situation there is blame involved. It's best to just talk about ourselves and what we are feeling and experiencing. This helps us to see our own responsibility in the situation.

In every practice where peace is the ultimate goal, it's always about letting go. And, healing. Ultimately it's about contributing to peace in our hearts and peace in the world to end the year on a high note and approach next year with the best frame of mind possible. 🍁

More information on Mary Schneider and the Holographic Reppattern Institute at Austin by visiting www.reppatternit.com.

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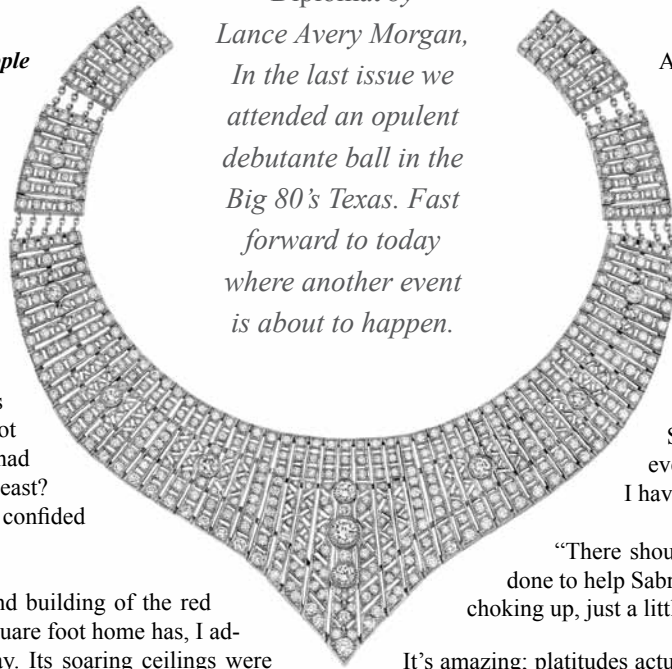


IT'S SHOWTIME!

Places, Please

Book cover illustration by Jill Prentice | Photography: Various archival

*Below is an excerpt
from The Society
Diplomat by
Lance Avery Morgan,
In the last issue we
attended an opulent
debutante ball in the
Big 80's Texas. Fast
forward to today
where another event
is about to happen.*



There are people who have money and people who are rich. Coco Chanel

The sound of tires over the smooth Argentinean pebbled driveway created a low hum as the world's priciest cars entered the superbly landscaped grounds of the baronial estate known as D'Medford. Showboating Nineties is more like it to describe The House That Zeke Medford Built.

"Honey, Zeke is incredibly proud of his baby, and I don't mean me. This casa is not my thing, but my guy had this before he had me and well, what could I do but love the beast? The house, that is," Alexandra had once confided to me.

Over a decade went into the designing and building of the red brick modern "masterpiece." The 9,452 square foot home has, I admit, stood the taste test of time in its way. Its soaring ceilings were imported from a Portuguese estate that says I'm New Money are as impossible to miss as the Alexander Calder mobiles that dot the entry leading to the installation of six, count 'em, six, original Roy Lichtenstein oils of

Alexandra portrayed in all of their animated popness.

Of course they're hung on Ralph Lauren Vicuna walls.

Zeke's buttons were bursting over the museum with bedrooms. "I bought all the Lichtensteins in one batch at Sotheby's," said Zeke over dinner one night. "Can I help it if I want to spoil my girl?"

"Zeke, all Ali ever wanted was you. I think she's felt lucky ever since you and Sabrina broke up in college," I say, meaning every word of it having known them as long as I have since college.

"There should have been something we could have all done to help Sabrina. I just can't believe she's gone," he said, choking up, just a little.

It's amazing; platitudes actually work in situations of bereavement, and this was no exception. "You and I both know that Sabrina would have wanted tonight to go on. She would have been the perfect guest and never alluded to the fact that you were the one that got away... to Ali." Zeke nodded,



The impossibly lustrous white leather seating nooks that dot the home anchor the trim side tables, laden with deep purple Murano glass accessories, bought at auction, most recently from the YSL estate sale in Paris. The tables play host to the spirits: the martinis, French 75 champagne cocktails, and the quirkier Pimm's & Lemonade, which accompany the Almas; that salty Iranian beluga caviar so coveted in fancy pants circles these days, it is spooned up in gobs here. No sour cream, no capers needed, please.

The soft amber-colored nuggets are supposedly harvested from sturgeons up to one hundred years old... how they know that is anybody's guess. One thing's for certain. If those little fish eggs are red or black, that's the cheap stuff. Four pounds of Almas runs at least fifty grand, and no, at that price it does not come with coke or a hooker, the other unspoken accoutrements of the Jet Set. They're separate, and will be in full attendance at the party, too. My irreverent self was thinking that many of the guests are in sturgeon-age territory and would look the part if not for repeated trips to Dr. Bloom, the go-to society plastic surgeon in town when guests started arriving.

Sabrina Goodfriend was supposed to be a guest and after much contemplation, it was decided this morning that the party must go on after her demise. The fact of the matter was not lost on the crowd that Sabrina's demise may have smoothed the road for Alexandra's ascent up the social heap again, to remain there for good.

"I'm a tad nervous," I say to Alexandra. "I want everyone to have a good time tonight."

"Baby, if they don't have a good time honoring you, then I'm just not a good hostess after all. Not to worry. I think guests want to applaud you, and it's an excuse to gossip about Sabrina. Just you wait. Something spectacular will happen. It always does. This will be a memorable evening."

Alexandra and Zeke had called me Christmas morning last year to see if I would be interested in having them host "a small dinner" for me. Now it's June, and the show must go on. I had hosted a party for Alexandra when she was on the cover of Dazzle, plus I'd introduced her to so many people around the state who could be vital in her charity fundraising, so she was more than happy to have the opportunity to say thank you in this way.

"This next year is going to be your year, Jake," said Zeke when he broached the subject of the party during the holiday call.

"Yes, that's right. And, we want to be a part of it," Alexandra gushed on the speakerphone.

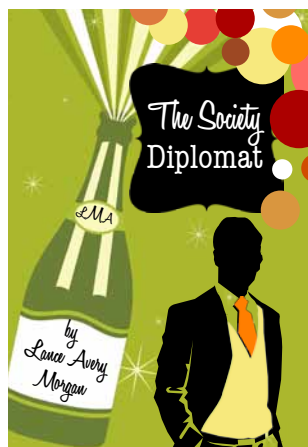
"Geez, I don't know what to say, except yes and thank you. It sounds amazing. What can I do on my end?" I offered.



"Send me your guest list, keep doing what you do and we'll do the rest," they both agreed.

Like planning a small wedding, the dinner party for 50 necessitated Save The Date cards six months in advance, arriving in early January after our initial phone call. It really was a courtesy to the guests and their schedules, booked so far in advance with calendars filled with jaunts to Aspen, Art Basel in Switzerland (why bother with its Miami show in December since those are just leftovers no one wanted in the first place?), and of course, the sailing races in Newport. These getaways are a testament that this rich crowd consistently craves new experiences to behold. Money creates more friends in more cities. Money also creates fresh memories, of which there can never be enough. Privilege has no expiration date and although money cannot buy happiness, as the old saw goes, it sure as hell does buy opportunity. And, The Society Diplomat is always there as a strategic conduit for opportunities.

The guests, arriving from myriad glittering metropolises, sparkle like the champagne that still flows like tap water, no matter what happens on the Wall Street rollercoaster. Out-of-towners are staying in suites at the Four Seasons and St. Regis, and with friends at private residences within a small radius of D'Medford. These men and women are the social beacons of today...



high performers, celebrities, diplomats, and even, aristocrats, whose fortunes, if tallied would weigh oh, \$35 billion, give or take a few B's. So, yes, security guards are crawling around like hunky roaches dotting the dark, cavernous corners, ready to pounce as if the President's been shot, if needed. Sometimes it's quietly escorting a drunken tycoon to their ride; other times, well who knows. It is pretty much all about gemology. In the Medford milieu, security is always warranted and no female would dare arrive unadorned.

Yes, those stones need guarding, and their sentries are part of the décor, too. Precious jewels hang like hard fruit from every limb of every woman. These stones have been romanced and earned, by golly. When you marry for money, you earn every cent of it, as my grandfather used to say. Let's face it, the amount of Graff, Cartier and Harry Winston's here would rival anything on an Oscar red carpet, except that these are not borrowed for the evening. They're the centerpieces of the wifely treasure chest, witnesses to social history as seen from alabaster clavicles, delicate ear lobes, dainty wrists lifted in happiness and disdain, and on fingers that point toward the future or back at transgressions, or held up in case one has erred in social judgment.

Some have been bestowed upon the bride with love; most are bribes to cover a back-story of marital treachery. It's amazing how the delicate refraction from an 8-carat diamond can make even the most sensitive women blind to their tycoon's indiscretions.

Regardless of value or intent, tonight no stone goes untracked by hired eyes. 5

To order the book, visit TheSocietyDiplomat.com and Amazon.com for printed and electronic copies. Copyright 2001 The Society Diplomat, LLC.

DEBUT Party

LAUNCH EVENT AT NEIMAN MARCUS SETS TRENDS BOTH ON AND OFF THE RUNWAY

By Ellie Leeper

Photography by Mendy Escamilla, Dustin Finklestein (www.dustinfinklesteinphoto.com) and Greg Harrison



Lee Walker, Carrie Frugé, Alan Weinberger, AUS



Venus Strawn, Karen Hawkins, Victoria Reed Fenimore and Janna Jacobson, AUS



Christine Cox, Jill Skinner, Sarah Russ, AUT



Neiman Marcus Runway Model, SA

With the launch of the debut issue of *The Society Diaries* in September what better way to celebrate the magazine and to help prepare for the transition into the stylish Fall season than our teaming with *Vogue* magazine and the Neiman Marcus stores in Austin and San Antonio for Fashion's Night Out?

It was a sartorial smash—with models wearing the hip color Bordeaux from head to toe. The stores were alive with both a chic and classic atmosphere of the evening of the in-store event. There were many contributors to the night out in both the San Antonio and Austin stores that made for the trendy twilight event's success. Guests at the San Antonio store were greeted upon arrival with complimentary valet service provided by Mercedes-Benz of Boerne. Once guests were inside of the store,





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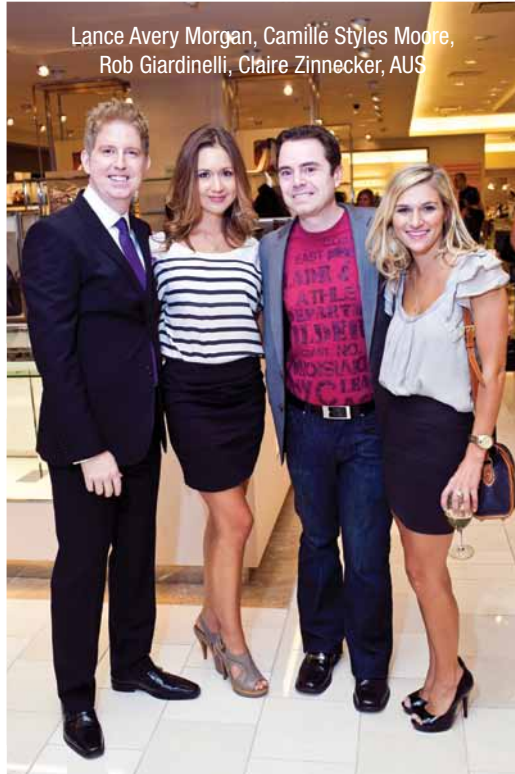
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Cabo Seafood + Grill food table, SA



Keller Henderson's vision for Richard Ginori China, SA



Ramiro Salazar, Rocío Heller, Angelica Wells, Melissa
Christianson, Elizabeth Falk, Dr. Clint Falk, SA



Rachel Shultz and Kat Reagan, AUS

San Antonio food and beverage vendors Cinco Vodka, Texas de Brazil, Costa Pacifica, Marioli Catering, Cabo Seafood + Grill, and Greenfields Market fueled fashionistas with creative beverages such as "Fashiontinis," and succulent appetizers such as seafood ceviche. Guests enjoyed the exquisite Bordeaux colored French Macaroons created by Chef Damien Wael of the Bistro Bakery in Olmos Park. In Austin, nibble highlights included cupcakes and ice cream from Lick It Bite It



Margaret Rzesotorski, Donna Martel, SA



Merèdith Fong, Maricela Rios, Ellie Leeper, SA





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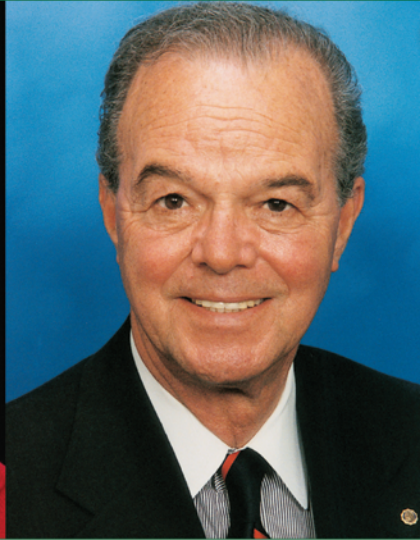
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Crownridge 4/4/2 Remarkable Hill Country home on a quiet cul-de-sac. Open floor plan features marble, hardwood and mesquite floors, stone columns. Walls of windows offer exceptional views of Canyon Ridge Park.

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- Private 2 acre lot



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Alamo Heights 3/3/2

An architectural and engineering masterpiece, this amazing home is nestled on the edge of a bluff overlooking the Olmos Dam, with views across the Olmos Basin to downtown.

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- Walls of arched windows
- Multi-level patios and terraces are perfect for entertaining



Terrell Hills 5/5/3 Stunning property encompassing a single story main residence and 2-story guest house offering over 9,000 sq.ft. of combined living space featuring remote access technology.

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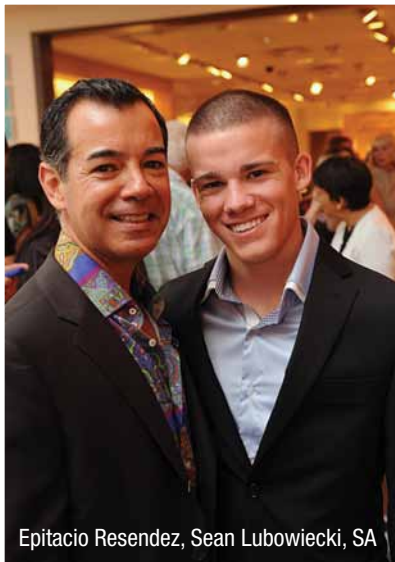
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Alamo Heights 4/3

Attractive terra cotta stucco home with lots of curb appeal and many upgrades, including a recently updated kitchen.





Epitacio Resendez, Sean Lubowiecki, SA



Kim Gillum, Claudia Coleman, Peggy Hughes, Karin Beckendorf, SA



Costa Pacifica shrimp cocktail, SA



Carla McDonald and Eric Copper, AUS

Or Both and cocktails by Deep Eddy Vodka as the stylish crowd swelled to over 2000 guests between the two simultaneously-scheduled events. Keller Henderson Interiors provided the Decorator's Corner display in the San Antonio store, creating a vignette for Ginori's new Prova Prima collection for Neiman Marcus, highlighting Ginori's creative design concepts centered around paint swatches, brushes, and cans. To add to the event's artsy ambiance, acclaimed artist Carlos Betancourt presented his limited-edition scarf collection sponsored by the Ruiz Healy Art Gallery, complemented also by an in-store trunk show for Van Cleef & Arpels' jewelry and displays of exotic modern patio



Calvin and Jackie Smith, AUS



Al Fresco Patio Lounger, SA



Margaret Barnes, Haley Rodriguez, Corie Boldt, Linda Leyendecker Gutierrez, Niti Volpe, SA



Lisa Halff, Xitlalt Herrera-Salazar, SA



Melissa Cancino, SA



Paulina & Alejandro Zamudio, SA



Rachel Roberts, Tom Wensinger, Ginger Doherty, SA



The Society Diaries Lounge, by Richard Gallaway Special Events & Designs, SA



Cupcakes by Lick it Bite it



Kim Azar, Stacey Rubin, Elizabeth Roberts, Christine Tyng, Lisa Nichols, SA

furniture by Al Fresco Patio (available in San Antonio and Laredo). In the Austin store, guests posed for black and white snaps in the social media photo booths that uploaded pictures directly to Facebook and Twitter, while listening to the sounds of DJ Johnny Bravvo and the Bruce James Soutlet while mingling with their fellow Swells.

The biggest hit? It had to be swank Society Diaries lounge that was constructed on the first floor of the San Antonio store by Richard Galaway Special Events & Designs, creating a comfy landing pad for guests to relax and flip through the first issue of our magazine. Models from the Avant Agency were posed throughout the lounge in tableaus mimicking the designs of Bob Mackie that were featured on the cover of the premier issue. Pizzini Designs provided the Bordeaux-inspired floral arrangements that brought life to the lounge furniture, which was provided by Chic Accents. The Austin store's pop up lounges in different departments kept



Jennifer Carnes and Nancy Nichols, AUS



Heather Cooke and Summer Burns, AUS



Michael Kellerman and Christi Cueller, AUS



Moris Saide, SA

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Brooklyn Garner, Danielle Kaplan, and Maura Ryan, AUS



Sarah Keffer and Jason Muesse, AUS



James Armstrong, Julia McCurley, Larry Connolly, AUS



Eric Groton and Bill Strawn, AUS



Adeline Rem, Mary Schneider, Ashley Sawyer, AUS



Stephanie and Todd O'Neal, AUS



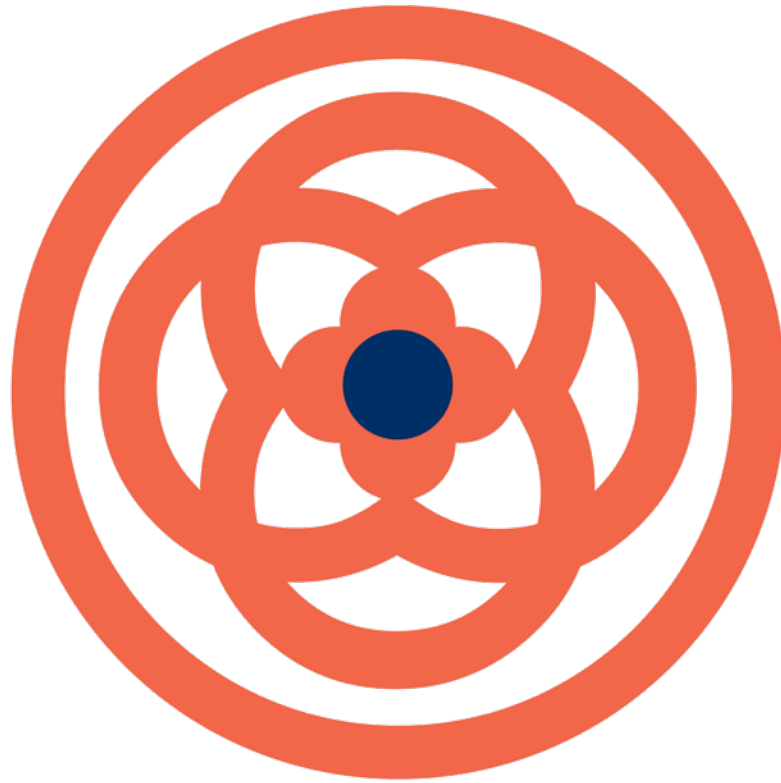
Dj Johnny Bravo, AUS



Daniel Becker and Samantha Adams, AUS



Maria Golden, Linda Ball and Forrest Preece, AUS



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Dee Schultz, Eric Copper & Ava Late

ON YOUR

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H

LADIES & GENTLEMEN

By Ellie Leeper

Photography By: Tony Spielberg

The Ballet Fete' was in full swing and this year's chair, Ava Late, and her steering committee created a triumphant gala evening. It was definitely the place to be in town that night when Ballet Austin's annual gala graced the ballroom, foyer and rooftop of the W Hotel for a fundraising event benefitting the company's community education programs that reach over 57,000 central Texans each year.





Ballroom



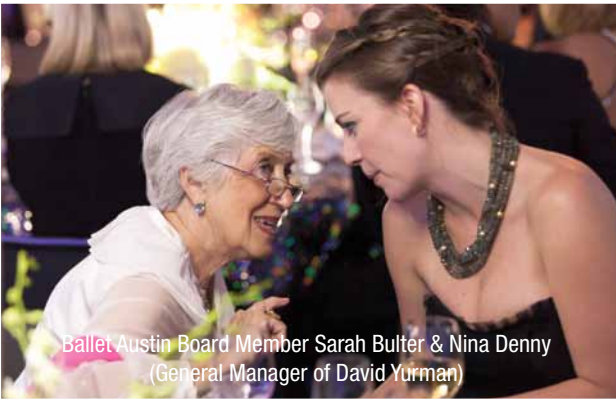
Janet Harman, Kent Mayes, Jon Ivester, Dwight Thompson



Grammy-winning Jazz Artist Kurt Elling performs



Ballet Austin Executive Director Cookie Ruiz and Marla Bommarito-Crouch



Ballet Austin Board Member Sarah Bulter & Nina Denny (General Manager of David Yurman)

The evening featured artful eats and drinks provided by the W Austin, Julian Gold, and Whole Foods Market. Guests enjoyed live entertainment from romantic Austin vocalist Ava Aranella, Grammy Winning jazz artist Kurt Elling, and danced under the stars to beats from DJ Manny and DJ Orion.



Ben Crenshaw, Steve Late in the foreground



Dueling DJ dance party with DJ Manny and DJ Orion



Ballet Austin Company Dancers Jaime Lynn Watts & Frank Shott

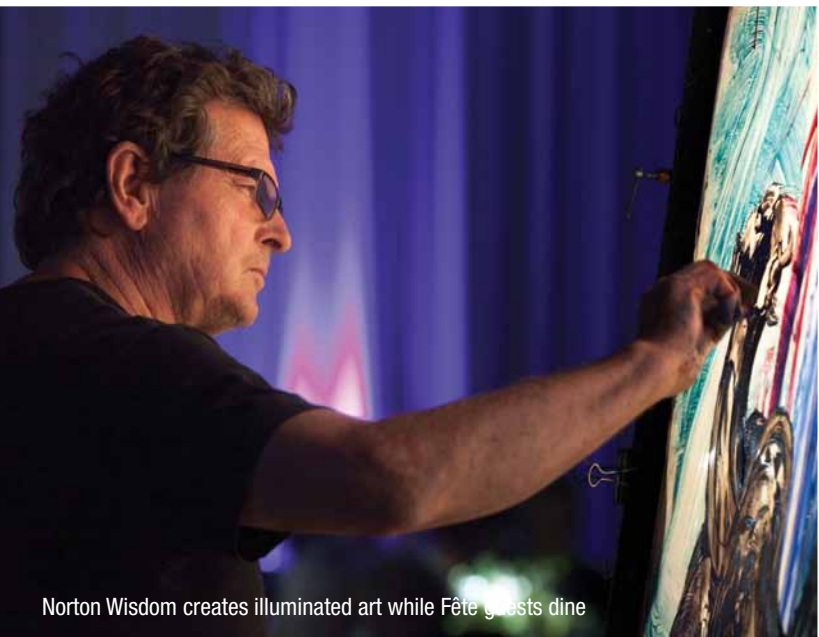


Jenna Stotts, Ava Late, and Julie Crenshaw



A grand repast was served in the Great Room of the W while guests were inspired by Norton Wisdom's words on Artistic Strokes of Genius. Following the repast was a live auction and dessert, where guests of Fete' and the after party, Fetish were invited to explore the four Ballet Barre studios while savoring treats such as grown-up ice cream shakes, grilled-to-order paninis and pad thai in the various lounges on the moonlit terrace. The event partnered Ballet Austin in a leap towards success, raising a total of \$308,000 for the organization. Now that's good work in action for a fine cause. 🍷

Norton Wisdom creates illuminated art while Fête guests dine



Brent Hasty & Ballet Austin Artistic Director Stephen Mills



GALA

IN
THE

Garden

Southwest School of Art Goes Spanish

By Ellie Leeper
Photography by Greg Harrison



Alhambra, Spain came to San Antonio this Fall and sprouted in the Ursuline gardens at the Southwest School of Art. “The Gardens of Alhambra” gala was a Spanish success. Guests were photographed upon arrival and moved onward to mingle as they were serenaded by Spanish classical guitar music. Patrons admired the art pieces, and later attended a seated dinner throughout the green garden that was illuminated with uniquely organic light fixtures suspended from the boughs of the oak trees. Guests donned appropriately themed ensembles—the most distinctive gowns were those that were imitations of ones resembling the flowing flamenco dancers.



Curtis Johnson, Leland Stone



Cheri Longoria



Susan Budge and Jesus Moroles



Flamenco dancers in the garden



Southwest School of Art



Nicole Wilson and Kim Hurtado



Beth Smith and Judy Barnes



Don and Lucelia Frost



John and Courtney Beauchamp, Lisa and Clint Ray



Omar Rodriguez, Veronica Prida, Maria Elena and Richard Mogas



Nena Gilliland and Roxana McAllister

The Gala in the Garden and Art Sale has served for three decades as the kick-off for the fall party season of the Southwest School of Art, in the effort to fundraise for the organization. The Art Sale during the gala presented exceptional works donated by 71 artists who were either locally or nationally known. Serving as Co-Chairs for the event were Mr. and Mrs. Josephine and Marshall Davidson Jr., Mr. and Mrs. Carolyn and Peter French, and Mr. and Mrs. Laura and Christopher Gill. Mr. James Lifshutz serves as Chair of the board for the Southwest School of Art, and Ms. Paula Owen serves as President. The evening was certainly one to remember, leaving guests with “recuerdos del Alhambra.”



Henry Munoz and Matt Johns



Peter & Carolyn French, Laura Gill, Paula & Ben Owen, Josephine & Marshall Davidson

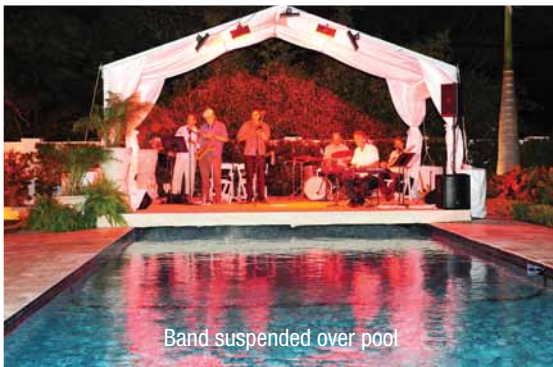
TENNIS

anyone

State-of-the-Art Tennis Facility Opens at TAMU in Corpus Christi



*By Ellie Leeper
Photography by Greg Harrison*



Band suspended over pool



Exterior of the Henry's home

Just in time for the start of 2011-2012 academic year, Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi celebrated the opening of their new Thomas J. Henry Tennis Center – a state-of-the-art facility that was donated to better accommodate the exponential growth and success of the school's collegiate tennis program.

Thomas J. Henry, Dr. Flavius Killebrew, Steve Moore



Floral arrangements at Henry's home

Thomas J. Henry, Azteca Henry



The festivities for the grand opening of the center were coordinated by Richard Gallaway Special Events & Design. Celebration began with over 200 guests and numerous news cameras eagerly awaiting the dedication ceremony in honoring Henry. Special guests in attendance were Henry, President of TAMU-Corpus Christi Dr. Flavius Killebrew, and Corpus Christi Mayor Joe Adame and his wife, Kathy. Making the first serve on the new court was Mr. Thomas J. Henry, who was then followed by members of the TAMU-Corpus Christi men's and women's Islander tennis team.

Following the sunny dedication ceremony was an exclusive oceanfront cocktail party held the same evening at the private residence of the Henry's.



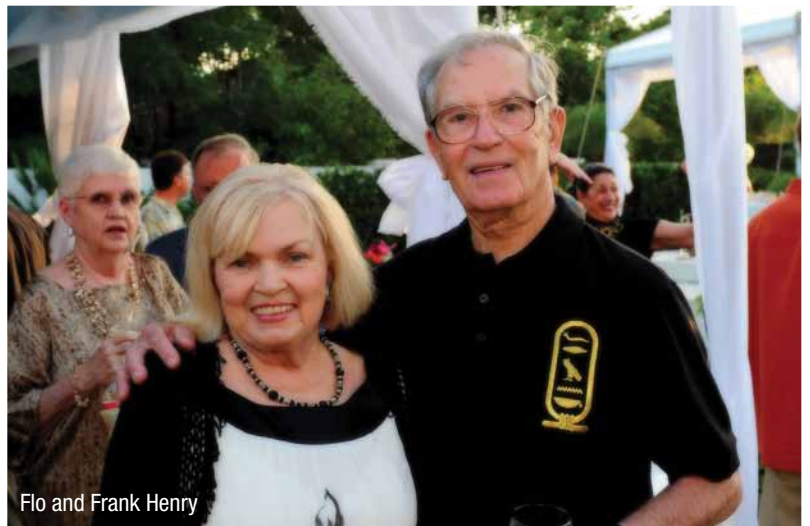
Tennis Courts at Texas A&M Corpus Christi



Interior of the Henry's home



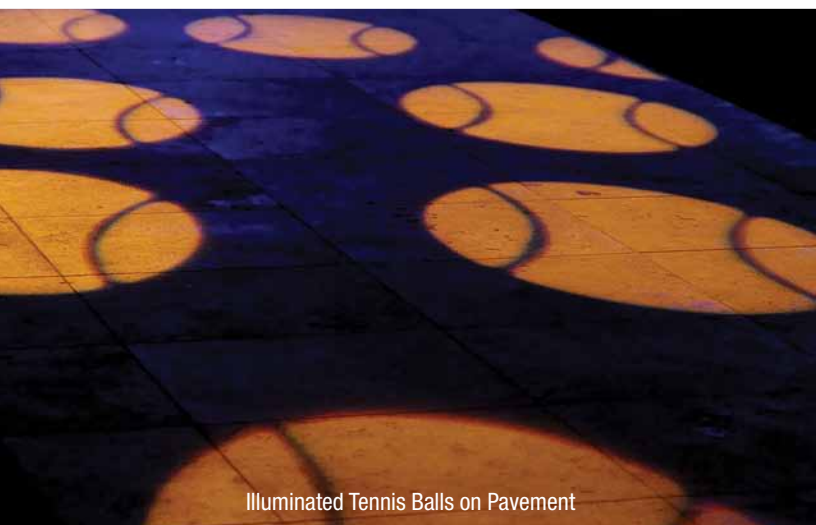
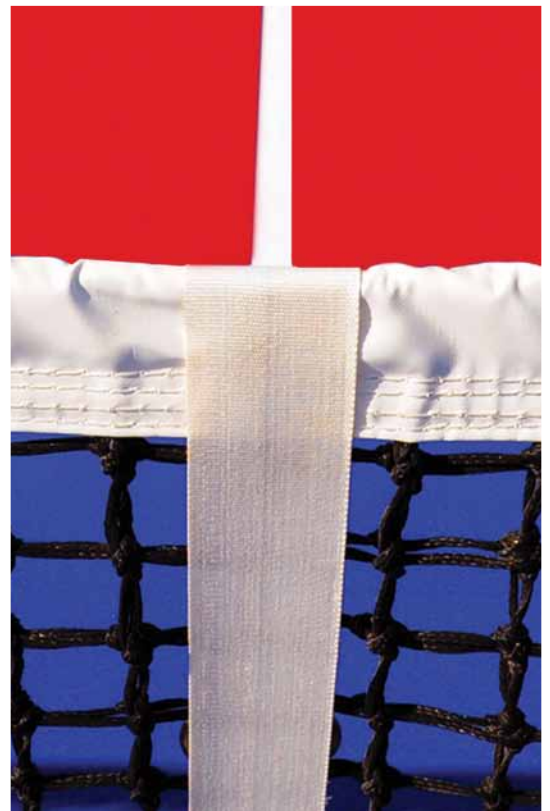
Tennis Center Sign



Flo and Frank Henry

Guests were greeted with tropical lime vodka cocktails and artful hors d'oeuvres, socializing as the ocean breeze kept them cool. The ambiance of the event was complimented by hues of amber and violet lighting that delicately washed the estate throughout the evening's party.

Guests enjoyed musical accompaniment provided by Beto and The Fairlanes from Austin, who played on a tented platform that was suspended over the pool. Tables were draped in custom blue, gathered silk that added to the cool ocean feel of the event. Guests exited the Mediterranean estate through a walkway that shone the blue and green colors of the US Open. As parting gifts, guests received custom designed and packaged cans of US Open tennis balls marked with the Center's logo. This festive evening was one that Corpus Christi-ans will not soon forget. 5



Illuminated Tennis Balls on Pavement



Floral arrangements at Henry's home

Moonlight Magnolias

The Women's Symphony League of Austin Debutante Ball

*By Madeline Cummings Noal
Photography By Rose Betty Williams*



Mary Francis "Maisie" Barksdale, Sara "Alexandra" Waugh, Andrea "Andie" Naomi Ingram, "Kallie" McLaurin Harrington, Sara Hyten, Anna Celeste Widner and The Diamond, "Catherine" Elizabeth Boyd Chlebowski



Set design from the WSL Fashion Show Luncheon



Diane and Howard Falkenberg



WSL President Carrie Brown with husband Lamar Brown and daughter Sarah Brown.



WSL Debutantes and their Escorts

The term Moonlight and Magnolias evokes a sense of old Southern charm, classical tradition, and impeccable heritage. The Women's Symphony League annual Jewel Ball was nothing short of all these ideals. The organization has served the community with a commitment to the Austin Symphony Orchestra for 59 years, and with its 57th Jewel Ball, the legacy of service was continued with the Jewel Ball Royal Court of debutantes and escorts.



Ivy Welker and Kris Zepede



William Levi Gibson with Andrea
"Andie" Naomi Ingram



Michael and Molly Christie

The Palmer Event Center was surfeit with giant magnolia trees lining the tables, the ceiling decorated with magnolia blossoms and branches. As guests entered they were greeted with décor nothing less than that of an old southern plantation. Each ticket holder was given a poker chip for the many casino-style tables, and the silent auction boasted items like immaculately detailed violins, each instrument displaying a different theme on its body. Each table had an immaculate selection of hors d'oeuvres for guests to enjoy as the presentation commenced. While guests made their way to the tables, the back of the Palmer Event Center was a buzz



Sharon Wilson, the WSL Diamond in 1983, and her daughter, Catherine Elizabeth Boyd Chlebowski, the Diamond in 2011.



Madison Taylor, WSL Visiting Jewel, The Peridot from Waco and Sydney Taylor



047 Dinah and WSL debutante Maisie Barksdale

with the Jewel debs, their escorts, and their families alike. Champagne, wine, and appetizers were served as proud parents watched their children take photographs and family portraits. The jewels and escorts, who are selected in honor of their families' continued support for the WSL and the Austin Symphony Orchestra, were all beaming as they began their special night. The Duchesses from out of town added a spark to the gorgeous white gowns worn by the Jewels with dresses in every shade of the gem, and when the group came together for a group portrait, it was breathtaking.



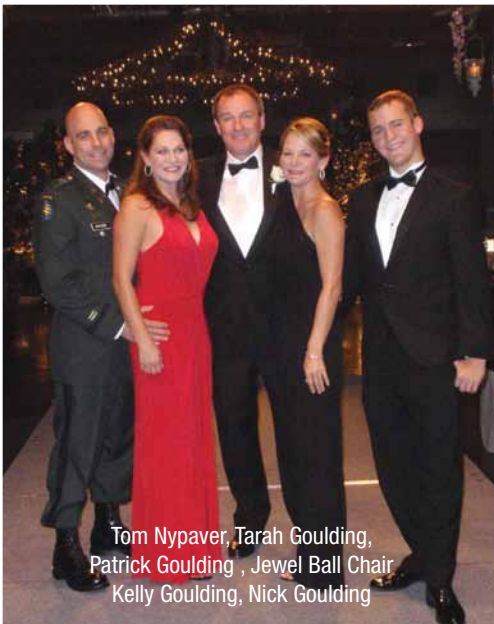
Hayden Waugh, Mark Waugh, WSL debutante
Alexandra Waugh and Kim Conner.



Margaret and Doug Danforth



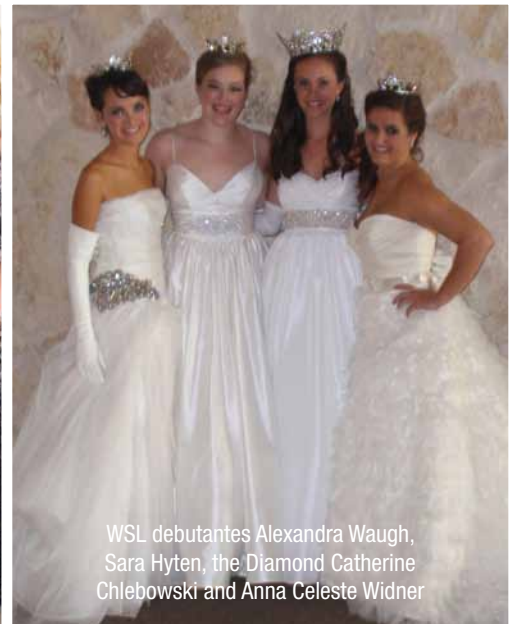
Sandy Alcala, August Alcala III and Crystal Vasquez



Tom Nypaver, Tarah Goulding,
Patrick Goulding, Jewel Ball Chair
Kelly Goulding, Nick Goulding



Margaret and Doug Danforth



WSL debutantes Alexandra Waugh,
Sara Hyten, the Diamond Catherine
Chlebowski and Anna Celeste Widner

As symphony music began to fill the room, the black tie guests took to their tables as the debutantes and escorts lined the back of the room. First presented were the Maidens and Squires, 8th grades who share a common love for music and philanthropy. After their individual presentation, the debutante presentation began. As everyone turned in their seats to watch the beautiful debutantes approach the runway with their fathers, the onlookers took in the beautiful gowns and anxiously awaited the debutante's bow. As debutante Mary Frances Barksdale, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Barry Barksdale took the stage on the arm of escort and brother Barry Ross Barksdale, Jr., the song Moon River began to play, transfixing the audience. Turning to the audience, she raised her arms, bent her legs, and bowed gracefully for the entire audience's delight, and then smiled with the confidence of a new debutante.

Following the presentation, a delicious meal including a fresh mozzarella and arugula salad, steak and Brie, and a miniature crème brûlée was served to the guests. The band began to play as the debs flocked to the dance floor with their fathers and the poker tables and auction area began to swarm. The belle of the ball was Diamond Catherine Chlebowski, who comes from a legacy of Symphony League women. Her mother, Sharon Wilson, is the current Women's Symphony League president, and her grandmother, Sonia Wilson, served as the president of the charity in 1976. The beautiful event would not have been the same without two women, Jewel Ball Chair Kelly Goulding and Jewel Chair Diane Falkenberg, who together organized the debutantes, the décor, the diversions, and an all-around memorable evening. 🍷

TELLING TIME

WORLD-CLASS WATCH EXHIBIT WOWS GUESTS

By Ellie Leeper


Photography By Greg Harrison of Scarlet Photo Studios

Adding a dashing touch to Labor Day weekend in San Antonio, Kuper Sotheby's International Realty hosted an exclusive event at a private home in the Dominion that showcased an exquisite line of classic and modern timepieces up for auction in December at Sotheby's auction house in New York City. Four generations of the Kuper family greeted guests, creating a friendly and inviting environment for all.

Binkan Cinaroglu, JP Martin, Jim Hauglid, Susan Hallmark and Theodora Kaufman were few among many Kuper Sotheby's International Realty agents who were enthusiastic to entertain while guests examined unique watches from Sotheby's. When asked about the event, Rick Kuper stated, "Our clients are the best of San Antonio and beyond, and we are pleased to acknowledge them with this spectacular event." Kuper also said that, "Sotheby's is a name that stands for luxury and sophistication and this exhibit was just that."

Sotheby's watch expert Katharine Thomas presented the exhibit of 22 classic and modern pieces, in-

cluding a 1950 Patek Philippe 18K Pink Gold Chronograph Wristwatch with an estimate worth of up to \$60,000.00. The Sotheby's watch department offers some of the most significant timepieces in the world from the 16th to the 21st centuries, including pocket watches, wrist watches, tourbillons and perpetual calendars. It holds the auction record for any timepiece with a Patek Philippe, which sold for more than \$11 million. The following day, Ms. Thomas took appointments for personal watch evaluations at the Kuper Sotheby's International Realty Dominion Office.

Approaching its 40th year in business, the Kuper Sotheby's International Realty team has provided real estate expertise for properties from San Antonio and the Hill Country to the Texas Gulf Coast. As part of the Sotheby's International Realty network, Kuper Sotheby's International Realty offers luxury real estate and extensive worldwide marketing. 

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Polly & Jerry Hagee



Rick and Caroline Kuper



Rajeev Puri, Sharu Puri, Katharine Thomas



Al Aguilar & Gisela Girard



Jim Hauglid, J Kuper

QUIET NIGHTS,
QUIET STARS.

Purple satin top from Yves Saint Laurent at Saks Fifth Avenue. Tweed pants from Etro at Julian Gold. Zebra Belt from Etro at Julian Gold. Black patent belt below from Kevan Hall at Kevan Hall Atelier. Black pony bag from Homanz at Homanz.com. Ring from Baccarat at Neiman Marcus. Platforms from Giuseppe Zanotti at Neiman Marcus.



THE OTHER SIDE

of
Midnight

Enter: Stage Left. Our fictitious ingénue actress, Francesca Wellborne, from a ranch in Attenboro, Texas has just landed the romantic period film role of a lifetime in Europe. She hops a plush little plane, kisses her leading man, studies with her director and then prepares to take the continent by storm every evening while dining and dancing the nights away. Here she chooses some of the most glorious clothes of the season to dazzle her temporary countrymen who will inspire any young lass to take a chance on love...

Photography: Mark Oberlin www.markoberlin.com

Styling: Kelvin Seah at Aim Artist and www.KelvinTheStylist.com *Model:* Alex Palmer at NEXT *Make Up:* Barbara Yniguez
Hair: Kristin Cicala using Prive' Products *Studio:* Armory *Sittings Editor:* Lance Avery Morgan *Product Editor:* Danielle Kaplan

LADY BE GOOD.
Black sequin dress from
Kevan Hall at Kevan Hall Atelier.
Opera gloves from Kevan Hall
at Kevan Hall Atelier.



IT HAD TO BE YOU.
Red raffeta dress from Kevan
Hall at Kevan Hall Atelier.
Textured blazer from Christian
Cota at ChristianCota.com.
Sequin leather clutch with
leather tassel from Homanz at
Homanz.com. Rings from MCL
at Neiman Marcus.



YOU'RE GONNA
HEAR FROM ME.

Black sequin dress from
Kevan Hall at Kevan Hall
Atelier. Opera gloves from
Kevan Hall at Kevan Hall
Atelier. Gold lace ankle
boots from Guiseppe Zanotti
at Neiman Marcus. Rings
both from KumKum at
ShopKumKumJewelry.com.
Bangles all from Misaki at
Misaki.com. Patent clutch
from Arianne Tunney at
ArianneTunneyBags.com.





PROMISES, PROMISES.
Embellished black sweater from Reed Krakoff at Saks Fifth Avenue. Houndstooth skirt from Carolina Herrera at Saks Fifth Avenue. Peep toe platforms from Giuseppe Zanotti at Neiman Marcus. Rings and clutch all from MCL at Neiman Marcus.

(opposite)
TEACH ME TONIGHT.
White dress from Ghadah, Paris at GhadahParis.com. Mesh black blazer from Christian Cota at ChristianCota.com. Brocade purse and bangles all from MCL at Neiman Marcus. Boots from Christian Cota for ALDO at ALDO stores.





STREET OF DREAMS.

Tweed coat from Christian Dior at Saks Fifth Avenue. Lurex leggings from Christian Cota at ChristianCota.com. Bracelets from MCL at Neiman Marcus. Pony hair tote from Homanz at Homanz.com. Heels from Christian Cota for ALDO at ALDO stores.

(opposite)

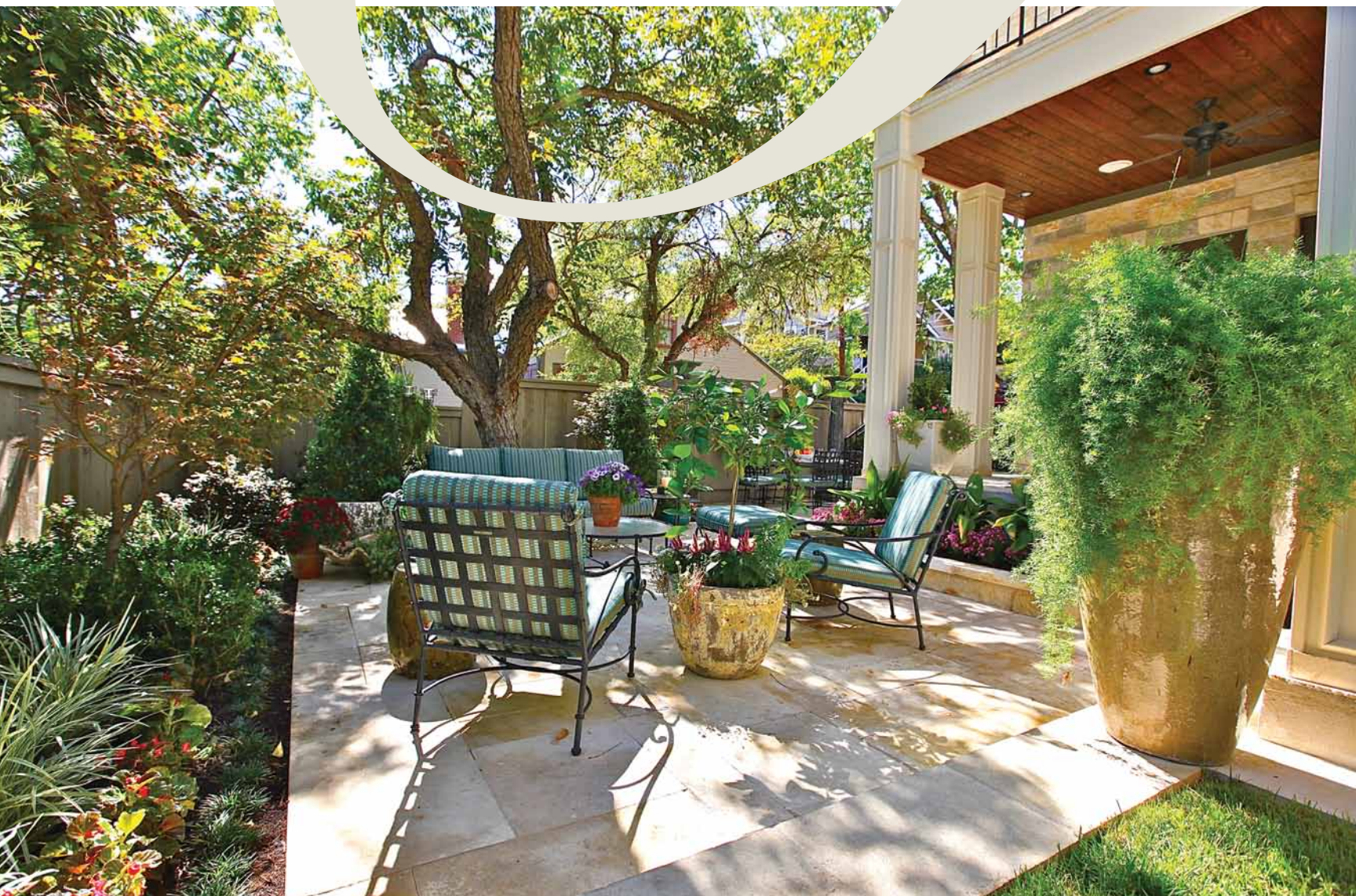
MORE THAN YOU KNOW.

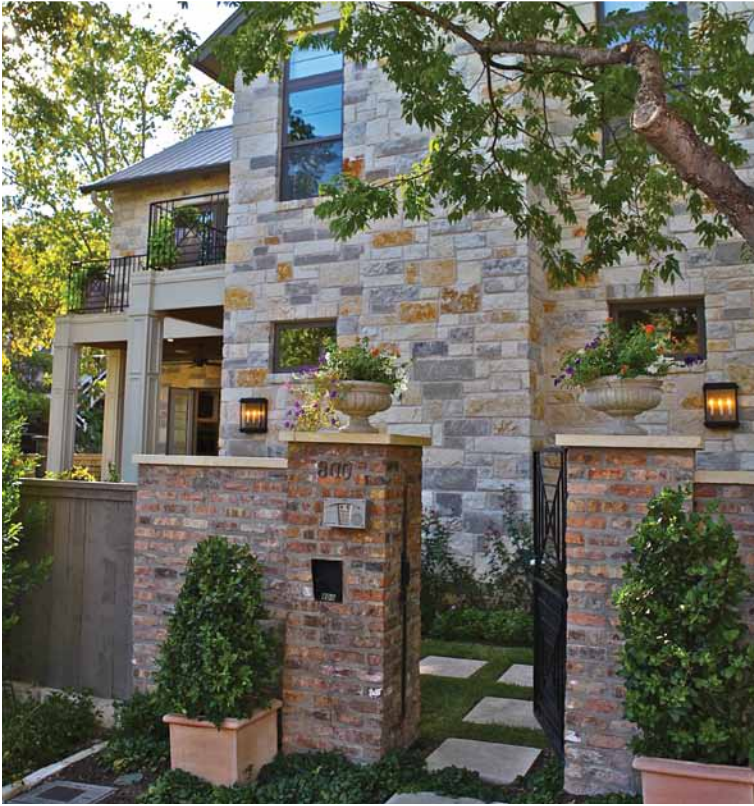
Lurex coat from Maria Francesca Pepe at MFPepe.com. Leather trimmed leggings from Christian Cota at ChristianCota.com. Patent belt from Kevan Hall at Kevan Hall Atelier. Patent clutch from Homanz at Homanz.com. Crystal studded satin pumps from Giuseppe Zanotti at Neiman Marcus. Cocktail ring from MCL at Neiman Marcus.

URBANE OASIS

BY DANIELLE KAPLAN
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JOHN CONROY

An Austin home near downtown is as close to being a restful retreat as it gets in the city. Join us as we venture into a respite filled with art, collectibles and many memorable times with guests.



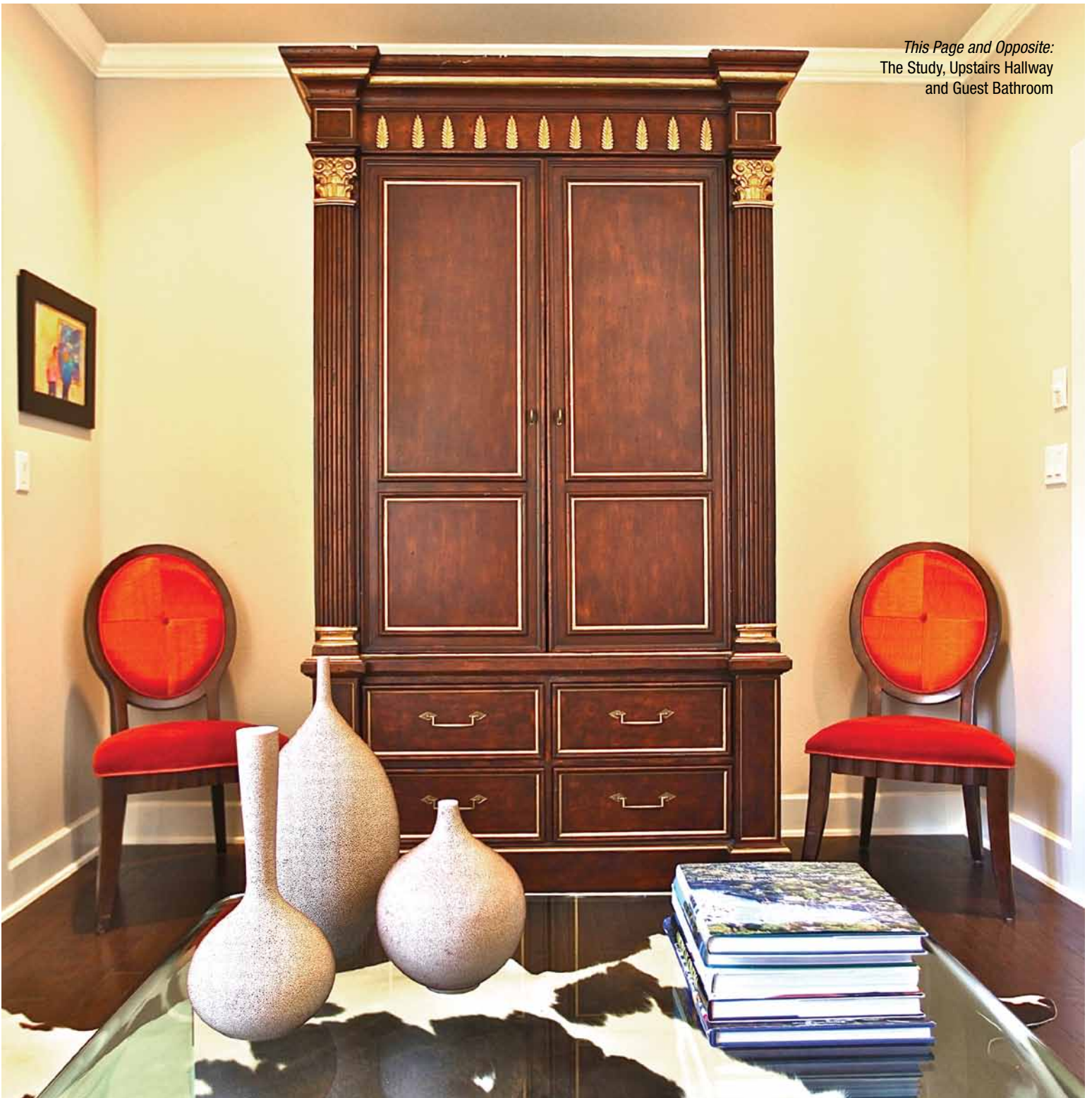


This Page and Opposite:
Exterior of Home with patio

To an outsider, it may seem easy to exude style when you are immersed in it on a day-to-day basis like Jose Buitron and Bill Pitts, owners of Jose Luis Salon in Austin. But in reality, it's tough work when you are styling hair at the go-to salon in town, celebrity stylist Oribe calls you to travel to Paris and Milan to style the couture fashion shows for Giorgio Armani, and then running a successful business. It would seem like an overly full-time job to most, yet this fashionable couple still has time to enjoy their chic lifestyle and use their house as a vessel to display their travels, art and many years together. Built

in the heart of urban Old West Austin, the house radiates a sense of calmness, coolness, and serenity despite the hustle and bustle of the downtown life. With the creative license to build their home, the couple focused on a transitional style with contemporary pieces mixed with established elements of the house. "We wanted something that fit the neighborhood; something a little more transitional, and a more timeless look," the couple explained. With a cohesive style and the ease of never wanting to go separate routes, they were able to create a Manhattan vibe in the Capitol City. Walking into the home, guests are

*This Page and Opposite:
The Study, Upstairs Hallway
and Guest Bathroom*



greeted by not only a gorgeous outdoor oasis, but by the exciting energy of Jose and Bill's two miniature dogs, Pepper and Pickles. Designed by Pearson landscape, the garden entails not only a seating area, but also an al fresco table used for much of their entertaining needs. The Chinese stools and the stone etching of Bacchus, the god of wine, show off the mixture of styles the couple incorporates into their home life. With an impeccable garden they tend to themselves, the courtyard offers a breath of fresh air before entering the home. The first impression of the home's interior is a delight to all the senses. The ground floor is an open floor plan with three different living different

living areas, with synergistic styles. The main feature of each room is a piece of artwork that the couple's dear friend, Deborah Schneider, of Deborah Page Projects, chose for them. Page spent time waiting for the right piece to connect to the couple, while incorporating personalities of both. "Nothing ever was returned to her, she was one of our influences on opening our eyes to the art world," the couple explained. The first section of the home is the living room, where objects from past vacations, chic store finds, rare collectables plus an Al Souza piece "pop" in the room. The next section contains a painting by McKay Otto, a protégée of Agnes Martin, resides in Wimberley, Texas. His paintings







This Page and Opposite:
The Public Spaces including
a Painting by McKay Otto



Homeowners Bill Pitts and José Buitron



are all about energy and the reflection of light, which is why his piece works so well in this specific home and is one of the couple's favorites. "McKay is not only the most brilliant artist in Texas since Mark Bradford, but I'm in love with him and his work – they transcend the test of time," Page raved. The specific piece started with nylon pantyhose in an effort to cover the canvas to make the material world go away. The lines are as close to life as living and are created to breath. The last section of the room contains a Gary Lange painting that has heavy green lines dancing along the canvas and serves as the couple's visual backdrop for intimate dinner parties where guests are served on Versace tableware.

The segments of the home are each separated by three distinct paintings that seem to speak to each other, not the same language, but they speak well – especially with the zebra print rug's lines that create a key fourth dimension to the room. The leather sofa, white duct chairs and objects d' art fill the space perfectly.

The radiant zebra rug leads guests up the stairs where they are greeted by an amazing aqua, hand-painted dresser that adorns the upstairs landing, adorned by a series of mirrors. The walkway seems to entice guests to venture around the corner to see more. The master suite is immaculate, clad with textured aqua grasscloth wallpaper that adds the perfect accent color. The Carrara marble counters in the master bath are enough to leave to us drooling and dreaming of a long, warm bubble bath laden with white rose petals. Venturing

back down the stairs, the four huge French doors leading to the outside are slightly open, creating an entirely different space leading out from the kitchen where the inside goes out and the outside goes in. The room was designed to enhance their love of the outdoors and entertaining. It was a main concern when thinking about their home and incorporating their love of hosting. "We do it all. We love to have intimate dinners of eight or less at the house, but it can be anything from happy hours, big events, business meetings or parties for friends. The space has been a great fit for us," the couple explains. With a passion for cooking, eating and wine, the space is flawless for any occasion that arises, which is just the way they want it.

The most impressive part of the home isn't the way it's decorated, but more of how it has become a way of life for Bill and Jose. "We realized that we wanted to live the way we do when we are on vacation. We live three blocks from the salon, 10 to 15 minutes from Whole Foods, and downtown – we want to walk like we do in New York and elsewhere on vacation." The owners not only radiate personal style, dressed clad in black shirts and perfectly styled hair, but they are very engaged in the community. Whether entertaining or spending a day together with their dogs, they have a perfect place to go home to after the roar of the crowds that often surround them. "We realized that we wanted to build a house that maintained our lifestyle. We love to entertain and be downtown – we designed the house exactly how we wanted to live it. It's built strictly for us." 📍



*The most impressive part of the home
isn't the way it's decorated, but more of
how it has become a way of life*

PRRA

An aerial photograph of a historic Czech town, likely Brno, featuring a prominent church with a green spire and numerous buildings with red-tiled roofs. The town is set against a backdrop of green hills under a blue sky with light clouds. The word 'PRRA' is overlaid in large, white, outlined letters across the top of the image.

BY PAUL BRADSHAW Photos Courtesy of Czech Tourism

Czeching it out is a must-do when visiting Europe. The Old World European country has a fabled past and an exciting future. Here, we take you to the heart of the metropolis and show you where to go and how to do it. And, even attend a formal masked ball.



PLEASURES OF

G U E



Chapel at Hotel Augustine

PRAGUE IS A CITY WITH SOMETHING TO PROVE,

even though it is the capital of the Czech Republic and boasts over a million residents. Long the darling of the creative set, Prague is now firmly established as a luxury destination, with all the food, shopping and high-end accommodations that come with it. Once dour locals are bursting with enthusiasm to shake the memory of Communist rule and show the world their rich, vivid history—and preview their vibrant, creative future as a world culture capital.

The old palace hotels have been joined by new aspirants. Design hotels are popping up all over town. Moods, Hotel Elephant and The Icon are some of the cool new additions. The Augustine, Sir Rocco Forte's five-star luxury retreat, is carved out of a 13th Century monastery. All clean lines and chic simplicity, The Augustine is pure luxury, but with a playful nod to the asceticism of its previous occupants.

Set in the Mala Strana district, just across the river from the Old Town, The Augustine, along with the Mandarin Oriental and Four Seasons, define Prague's super-luxury category. One thing the Augustine has over its competitors however, is the actual St. Thomas Monastery, which is part of the hotel complex. Through a discreet door just off the lobby you'll find the cloisters of the working monastery where, by appointment of course, one of the friendly monks will be happy to listen to your troubles. Of course, if you want a more traditional approach to de-stressing, there is The Augustine's sublime spa, with a full repertoire of treatments. Try the Ila Experience, a bespoke two-hour combo of heavenly experiences (voted best treatment concept by the GALA Spa Awards) that will leave you in a blissful haze of serenity and calm.





Krumlov trompe l'oeil

Parizska street



Baroque Theater, Cesky



If your idea of stress relief involves a little retail therapy as well, rest assured—all the usual suspects abound. Cartier, Dior, Vuitton, Gucci, Hermes and Prada have outposts on or near Parizska, the main shopping drag. But it is the quirky mix of ever-evolving local boutiques that will really turn your head. Pop in to At Work and its sister store, The Address. Then stroll down and across the street to Simple Conceptstore with its champagne bar and perfectly curated collection of books, music and objets d’ can’t live without.

HIPSTER, MEET OLD WORLD

Looking for something a little more contemporary? That’s easy. Venture to the emerging Smichov neighborhood to see what’s next. The Meet Factory is a vast industrial building that has been converted into a center for contemporary art, with gallery and performance spaces, as well as an art café and nightclub. Then, check out the FUTURA Center for Contemporary Art, a three-floor exhibition space showcasing both international and Czech artists. Don’t miss the new Artel Design Shop in the Mala Strana district, for the latest in contemporary Czech design, too.



Cesky Krumlov at Night

As terrific as these spaces are, it's not necessary to stay indoors to see amazing works of art. The quantity and caliber of serious public art in Prague already rivals its western counterparts. Provocatively engaging installations are sprinkled liberally throughout the town, each positioned for maximum impact or surprise effect, from the ever-evolving, block-long graffiti art ode to John Lennon, to the giant bronze baby sculptures of David Cerny that crawl along the banks of the Vltava.

So much is happening in Prague right now, that one starts to wonder what is beyond the city limits. With the city becoming such a popular destination, it was inevitable that people would start to venture outside the city, into what the old-timers call Czechlands, a beautiful, bucolic setting of rolling hills and charming villages.

Three hours south of Prague, in the southern Bohemia region, is Cesky Krumlov. A UNESCO World Heritage site, Cesky Krumlov is a fairytale village built along the banks of a winding stretch of the Vltava, its narrow, winding streets echoing the river's twists

and turns. Dominating the bluff above town, Krumlov Castle stands watch over the sea of red tile roofs below.

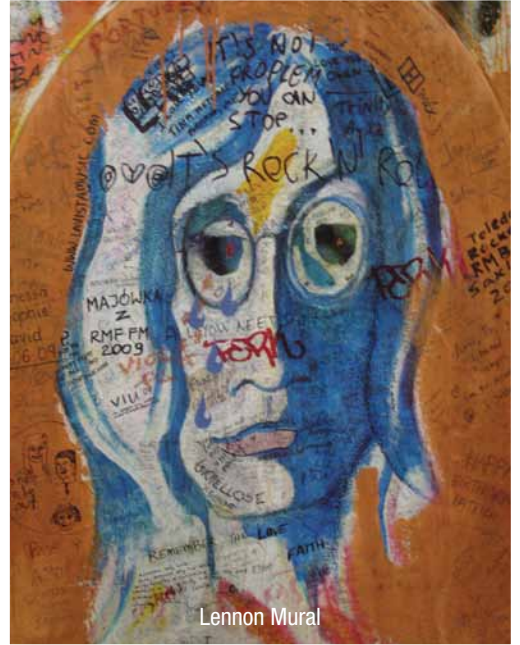
As you walk through the village, you could be forgiven for thinking you were on the back lot of a major movie studio. The buildings are covered in a signature style of trompe l'oeil, which, from a distance, does trick the eye. Upon closer inspection, you realize that these daunting stone façades are actually beautifully crafted, detailed works of art.

MASKED BALL

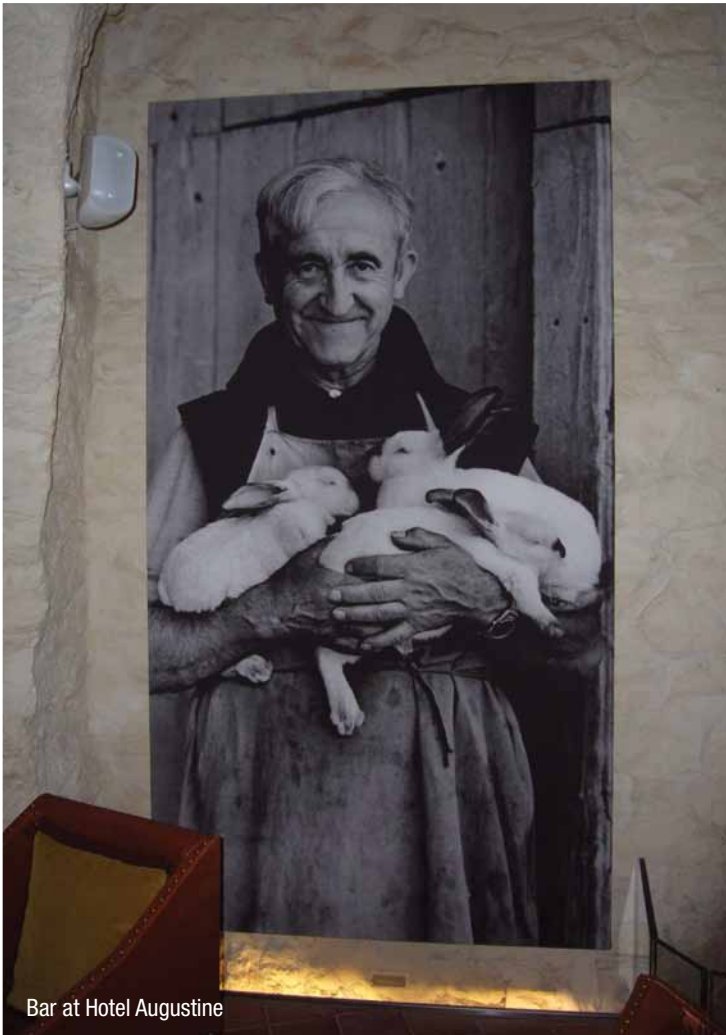
The perfect time to visit is late June for the annual Chamber Music Festival, held at the Krumlov Castle. If you've ever wondered what it would be like to be royal, the Festival's Baroque Night is your chance. Imagine stepping back in time and attending a party at court. Masked partygoers in period costumes fill the castle's ballrooms. Baroque chamber music guides the uninitiated through a court dance



International Music Festival



Lennon Mural



Bar at Hotel Augustine



Prague Sculpture

lesson, as servers in full livery pass flutes of champagne and delicious canapés. The worries of the 21st Century seem miles and miles away.

But that is just Act One of this fantastic party. Soon, the “royals” have decreed that the dancing is done. After giving you a moment to catch your breath, you are ushered through the castle into a most spectacular small, court theater for a performance. The theater is an exquisite example of baroque architecture, perfectly preserved, complete with the original mechanics and scenery. This yearly performance draws the best operatic voices in the Czech Republic. You would expect nothing less from a command performance.

After the final curtain call, you take the secret passageways of the castle to the private royal gardens, where there is more music and merriment, with an enormous selection of desserts to satisfy your sweet tooth. The night is brought to a dazzling conclusion with an enthusiastic display of fireworks.

As the last, dazzling report starts to fizzle, you gaze down at the village below you, the ribbon of river glowing in the moonlight, and you can, for a moment,

feel what’s it’s like to be royal.

How do you follow that act, you ask? Why, return to your royal fantasy the next night for a performance at The Revolving Auditorium. Located at the opposite end of the royal gardens from the castle, this is a theater where the scenery doesn’t move. The audience does. Set on an oval riser, the seating area actual twirls around slowly, revealing different scenes being acted out in different parts of the park-like gardens. The operatic performance truly comes to life in the three-dimensional setting while the beautiful grounds give the staging a much more vivid, real, feel than just sitting in an enclosed space, watching through the fourth wall.

Afterwards, stroll through the moonlit gardens down the hill to the village proper, cast aside your Royal Persona, and drop into Cikanska Jizba, a local pub. Known in these parts as a Romany bar (it’s not polite to call them Gypsies) this tiny, out of the way watering hole offers lively music in the Romany tradition well into the night to remember. You may find that being a commoner has a lot to offer, too. 🍷



Five Petalled-Rose Celebration



Baroque Musicians



Garden Hotel Augustine



Baroque Festival



Revolving Theater

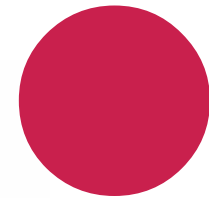
© Czech Tourism



A woman never says a diamond is too big, does she? This stunner is from Calvin's Collection Platinum 6.87ct Radiant Diamond Pavé Engagement Ring with 1.82ctw, \$198,000. Available at Calvin's Fine Jewelry, Austin.



Table tennis, anyone? Try your hand with the Aruliden for Puma Blackout Table Tennis, \$1,800. Available at conranusa.com.



By Rob Giardinelli



Stackable rings add a regal touch to any outfit. 18K Gold Bangles By Katy Briscoe, \$12,000-\$25,000. Available at Saks Fifth Avenue, Austin and San Antonio.

What to give, what to give? For her, important jewelry is always nice. For him, cars are always a good bet. But there's so much more, too. Here you'll find many more inspiring gift ideas to encourage your Inner Santa to help make your loved one's 2012 the merriest and brightest year of all.



Feel taller and prouder as a Texan in these Black Teju Lizard Vamps w/ French Calf Shafts – Vintage Tulip inlay in Turquoise. \$950. Available at austincustomboots.com



The couture master now in a bottle near you with the Balenciaga Paris L'Essence, \$130.00. Available at Neiman Marcus, San Antonio and Austin.

IT SO



Create your own Tour D' Texas while pedaling this Canondale Caad8 6 Tiagra Bicycle, \$1,220. Available at REI Austin.



The sweet taste of your success can be found in this Limited Edition Casa Dragones Tequila, \$275. Available at Twin Liquors, Austin.



This suit is a head-turner from any angle as you climb the evening's ladder of success in this Giorgio Armani black velvet jacket with grosgrain lapel, \$3295 Coordinating trousers with grosgrain waist and tuxedo stripe, \$1495 Grey and white broken-stripe cotton shirt, \$1095. Available at Neiman Marcus stores in Austin and San Antonio.



Every woman is a dazzling femme fatale in this Aidan Mattox black gown with velvet bustier, beaded waist, and skirt made of mesh and tulle overlays, \$440. Available at Neiman Marcus stores in Austin and San Antonio.



007's James Bond wishes he had this Monogrammed Tuxedo Shirt By Hamilton Shirts, \$425. Available at Hamilton Shirts, Houston.



A waterfall of jewels from your ears with these Ron Hami 18K Yellow Gold, Green Diamond and Round Brilliant Cut Diamond Octagon Rain Drop Dangle Earrings, \$6,985. Available at Calvin's Fine Jewelry, Austin.



Q Custom Clothiers is the go-to place for Texans wanting a custom suit. Available at QCustomclothing.com, Houston, TX.



Get your grill on year 'round with this Tejas Originals Iron Outdoor Kitchen, \$16,725. Available at Tejas Originals, Austin



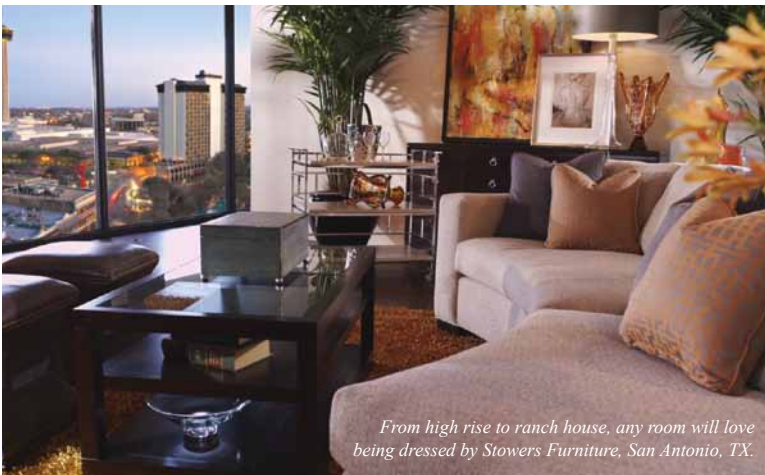
Techie, Meet Ms. Chic with this Monogrammed iPad Case By Alexandra Knight, \$1,995. Available at alexandraknight.com.



Shake, stir, but get ready to pour with the Diane vonFurstenberg Chain Link Bar Set. \$25-\$80. Ask PR where Available at Bloomingdales and dvf.com



A modern, yet timeless statement piece is seen in this Knight Dreams Gypsy Bracelet, \$5,900. Available at Zolton David Jewelry Gallery, Austin.



From high rise to ranch house, any room will love being dressed by Stowers Furniture, San Antonio, TX.

Every guest will feel welcome with the fragrant Waterworks Lemon Verbana Set. \$150. Available at store.waterworks.com





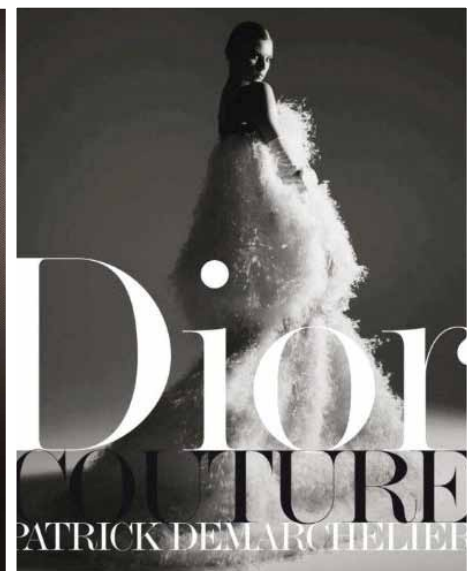
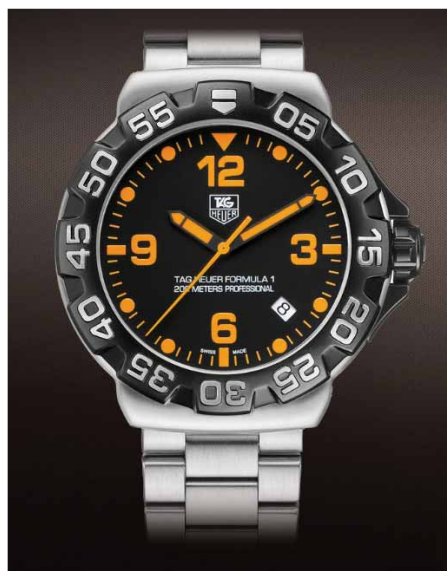
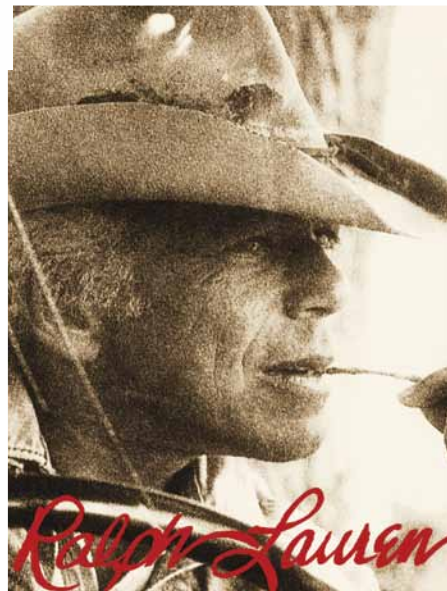
La Liz knew how to garner the jewels. Bid on her Elizabeth Taylor Diamond, of 33.19 carats D color, VSI clarity, potentially internally flawless that was a gift from Richard Burton Purchased from Parke-Bernet Galleries, New York in May 16, 1968 Estimate: \$2,500,000 – 3,500,000. Available at Auction, Christie's New York, Dec 3-16

Keep all your loved ones close by in this timeless frames by Serena and Lily Jali Collection Decorative Frames , \$58 for a set of 3. Available at serenaandlily.com



Be your own luxury lifestyle expert with a little guidance from the style master himself with this retrospective in the new book, Ralph Lauren, \$50. Available from Rizzoli Books.

That New Year Resolution of getting organized starts here and now with the Neatdesk Desktop Scanner and Digital Filing System, \$399.95. Available at neat.com.



Take the wheel of life and steer it deftly while wearing this Tag Heuer Formula 1 Watch, \$1,800. Available at Russell Korman Jewelry, Austin

The New Look can be yours again, as well as hundreds of other divine images, in the new Dior Couture by Patrick Demarchelier. \$115, Available from Rizzoli Books.



Nothing feels like real gold, does it?
Appassionata Collection from Roberto Coin, 18K gold necklace with diamond clasp, \$18,200.
 Available at Lee Michaels Fine Jewelry, San Antonio



40-Love on your own backyard tennis court so you never have to wait on others at the club. Priceless.



Nurture your inner Hugh Hefner with this Charcoal Pinstripe Robe by Claridge & King, \$125.



It's like having HGTV come to your own home with this Roche Bobois dream living room. Available at Roche Bobois in Houston

You'll be flyin' the Hill Country with a helicopter ride by Alamo Helicopters, \$700 per hour. Alamohelicopters.com



Want to drive more strategically? A great start is with the Audi Sportscar Experience at Infineon Raceway in Northern California Just \$3,495 for the luxe two-day Audi R8 program.

RANCH FIESTA

A BENEFIT FOR THE SAN ANTONIO LIBRARY FOUNDATION

By John G. Bloodsworth

Photography By Mendy Escamilla of Scarlet Photo Studios



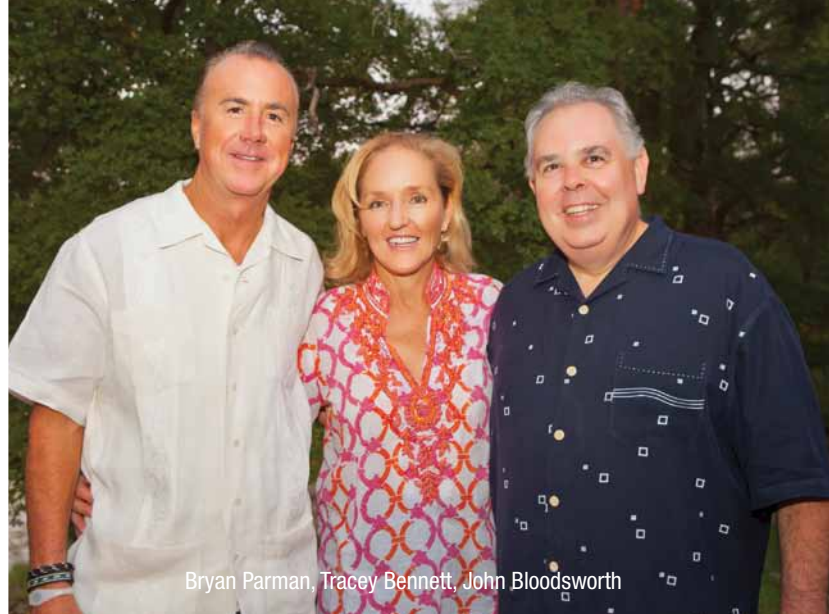
Texas' ranching families have long held festive fandangos for family and friends on ranch lands in every part of the great state, but there is an undeniable allure that beckons guests to the Hill Country where rustic sophistication is generously seasoned with true Texas hospitality.

Guests arrived at the Parman family cabin just north of San Antonio for a benefit dinner that raised funds for the new



Matt Skinner





Bryan Parman, Tracey Bennett, John Bloodsworth

Parman Library in Stone Oak. They were immersed in Hill Country style; rustic and comfortable simplicity that exuded comfort and warmth in true ranch chic. Tables of six were skirted with indigo denim floor-length cloths overlaid with paprika cotton cloths flanked by natural wooden and galvanized metal chairs. Corn yellow cotton napkins held place settings of hand-wrought iron flatware. Galvanized metal chargers held moss green pottery plates. Each table was centered with an arrangement of summer succulents and native grasses in rustic galvanized metal containers.

A small building on the property with a covered porch served as the stage for country singer Matt Skinner who entertained party patrons as they sipped on sangria, margaritas and ice-cold beer during the cocktail hour. Chef Mariana Oliver of Marioli's in Stone Oak pre-

pared delicious Cochinita Pibil mini tacos and miniature tortilla cups of fresh ceviche for starters at the memorable meal.

The buffet table was covered in the same floor-length indigo denim cloths centered with a massive galvanized metal-tiered container of succulents, Texas native flowers and grasses to compliment the table settings. A young Trucador carved Carne Al Pastor from the spit as guests were served tasty pork tacos along with Chile Rellenos ranchero beans, tri-colored rice and individual Tres Leches cupcakes for dessert.

As the Texas sunset gave way to a starry summer night, multicolored lights in the ancient oaks and cypress trees illuminated the languid outdoor affair that will be long remembered. 9

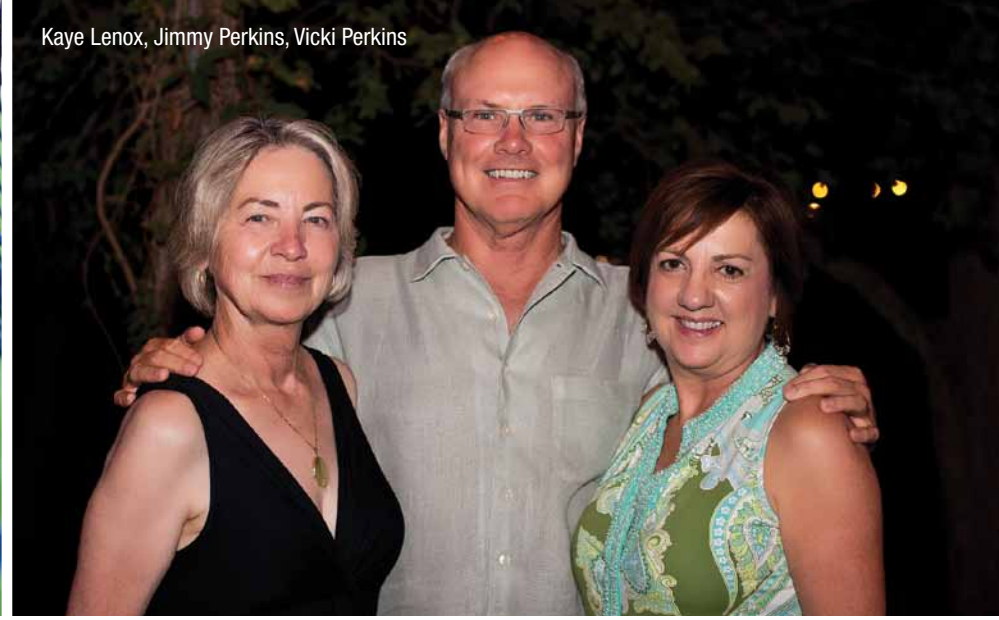


Judy Salomon, Soonalyn Jacob, Lisa Byington





Kaye Lenox, Jimmy Perkins, Vicki Perkins



Liese Hollis, Nick Hollis



Mariana Oliver, Dan Parman



Octo tea 16

PARTY WITH A PURPOSE

By: Rob Giardinelli
Photography By: Seabrook Jones

RAISES AWARENESS FOR COMMUNITY ISSUE



It was event that's as unique as Austin. Octotea 16, held at the modernistic Mexican American Cultural Center, was the scene of top-flight entertainment, cocktails, food, auction bidding and dancing - all benefitting a great cause. AIDS Services of Austin's Paul Kirby Emergency Assistance Fund provides monetary assistance for basic needs including life-saving medications, transportation assistance and rent/utility subsidies to those living with HIV and AIDS. Historically thought of as an LGBT disease, this event selected its venue to help highlight the fact that one of the fastest growing demographics of new HIV/AIDS cases in Central Texas is Hispanic women.





Tyler Sieswerda



Omar Barnhart Juanita Juarez



Melanie McLeroy, Stephen Moser

Mark Fiset and Mary Morrison chaired the evening and KVUE News Anchor Tyler Sieswerda was on hand to M.C. the event that included a series of local performers such as Nakia, Courtney Sanchez, West African Dance Moves and MoTel Aviv. Over a thousand guests danced the night away as cocktails were poured, food was served and silent auction items were bid upon - all for a worthy cause. 🍷



Nakia Performing



Jenelle Shriner



Lew Aldridge Mary Morrison Mark Fiset



David Rojas Mark Halsell



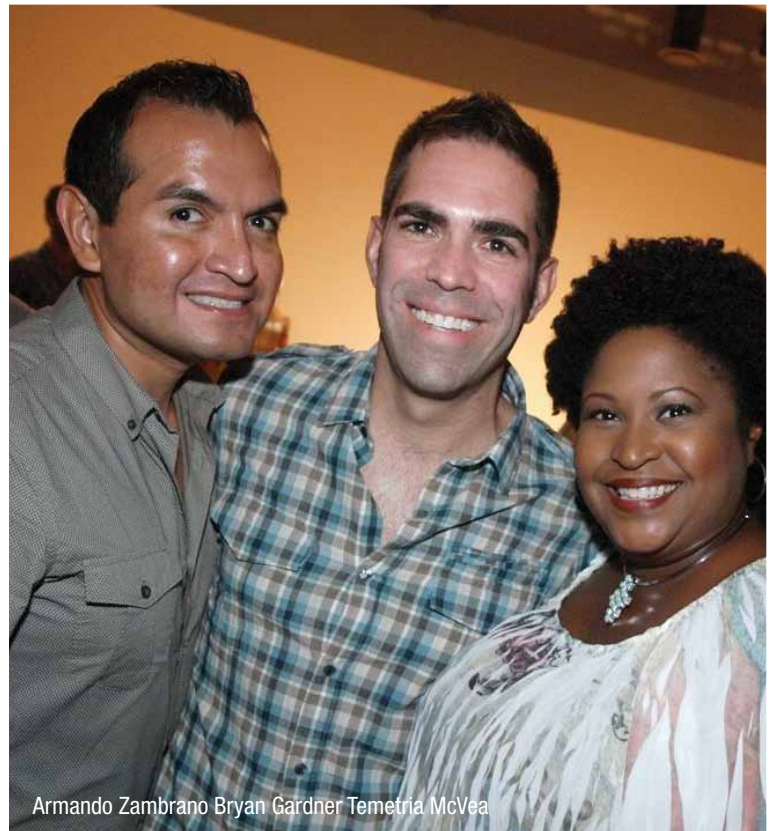
Isaac Levy Kris Swift



Todd Harper Kimmi Selinger



Ann Hargrove Mark Guerrero



Armando Zambrano Bryan Gardner Temetria McVea

THE ARTIST'S WAY

RUIZ-HEALY ART
CELEBRATES
LIFE OF ARTIST
CHUCK RAMIREZ

By Ellie Leeper

Photography By Greg Harrison, Chuck Ramirez



Gallery Vinette

The life of highly acclaimed artist Chuck Ramirez was celebrated in San Antonio with “Minimally Baroque,” an exhibition of some of his finest photographic works. Displayed first at the Blue Star Arts Complex and then at the Ruiz-Healy studio, Ramirez’s dynamic works were curated by Latin American art specialist Victor Zamudio-Taylor.

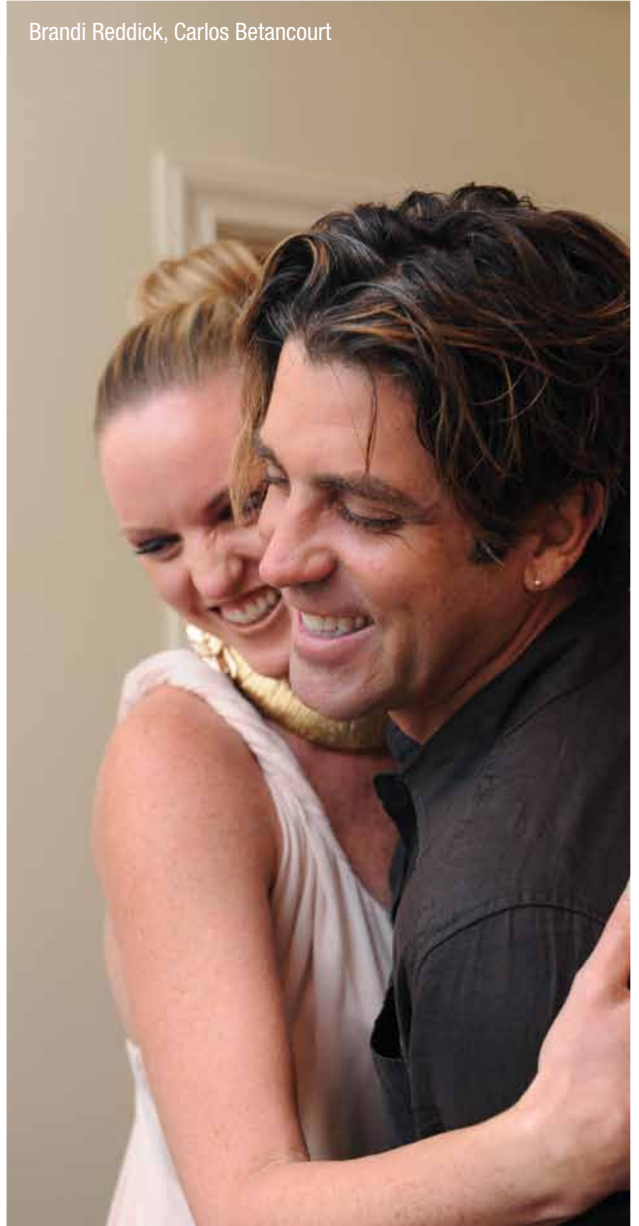
Libbey Tilley, Dr. Alexis Wiesenthal



Deborah Kline, Dr. Phil Kline



Brandi Reddick, Carlos Betancourt



Chris Hill, Keller Henderson



DeeAnn Jennings, Carol Lavender, Sandy East



Josephine Ruiz-Healy, Katy Alexander, Megan Petri

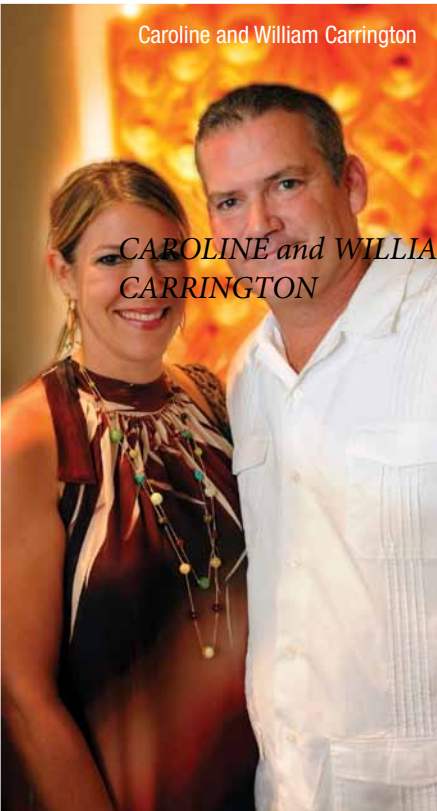


Chris Cheever, Juan Ruiz-Healy, Rick Frederick



Rudy Choperena, Cindy Dawson

Caroline and William Carrington



*CAROLINE and WILLIAM
CARRINGTON*

Zamudio-Taylor began working with Ramirez in 1997. Patricia Ruiz-Healy explained, "For many years, Victor has recognized how Ramirez explored the various aspects of cultural identity, mortality and consumerism through his photography. Ramirez's work was, in many ways, a social commentary on the way our culture has been consumed by consumerism itself, while also providing enlightenment about the fragility of life," states Ruiz-Healy. The wildly popular work ranged from the contents of trash bags to purses and beyond so that Ramirez could fully illustrate his voyeuristic point of view of his subjects.

Among the guests were Chuck Ramirez's family and supporters of his unique artistic legacy. 📍



Elizabeth & Tom Netting



Trish Ramirez-Marcus, Mr. & Mrs. Charles Ramirez



Patricia Ruiz-Healy, Drs. Ricardo & Harriett Romo

OLD HOLLYWOOD

By Mojo Events Launches In Grand Style

By: Jake Gaines

Photography By Russell Thomas Clayton, Chad Harlan and Andrew Sterling



Monica Burcham, Jonathan Ticken

If Lana Turner had walked in dragging a fur with Cary Grant not far behind her, no one would have been surprised. It was that kind of festive evening when partners Monica Burcham and Jonathan Ticken launched their new events production firm, By Mojo, in a downtown-adjacent, hundred-year-old loft that easily doubled for a Hollywood Hills maison.

“We wanted to rethink, re-imagine and dream of the possibilities of what an event experience can be. By MoJo was created to develop a new era of entertaining in Austin, turning events into experiences and memorable nights,” says By MoJo founder and event co-host Monica Burcham. “We are a blend of relaxed simplicity and over-the-top refined style. Sometimes it needs to be coaxed out, but when it is, the room is filled with unseen energy that is felt by everyone.” Now that’s mojo.

After the elaborate invitations were delivered, guests were asked to take a step into the unknown. The three story location, Palazzo Lavaca, while well-marked with the antiquated neon Capitol Saddlery Boot sign still hanging out front, was as nondescript and as understated as it gets. Large gates opened up to welcome guests who are adventurous enough to follow their ears and the music coming from within. Then they were met with one of the most amazing spaces in Austin full of eclectic artwork, vintage chandeliers and a true intellectual salon environment.

The Old Hollywood-inspired guests grooved to the Copa Kings who belted out swing tunes as burlesque costumed girls roamed the crowd. Guests mingled and danced in one of the first firehouses in Austin partaking in cigars, hand-rolled for any guest willing to stop for a brief conversation, as well as nibbles and Tito’s vodka concoctions. The hosts goal of vintage Hollywood flair mixing perfectly with approachable Austin charm was achieved and we look forward to more unique events from this dynamic duo. 🍷



Jon Ryan Parker, Hunter Lohse, Janessa Rodriguez, Chad Harlan, Ricky Hodge



Ruby Joffe, Chris Lindenmayer, Coco Lectric



SugaPlump Pastries

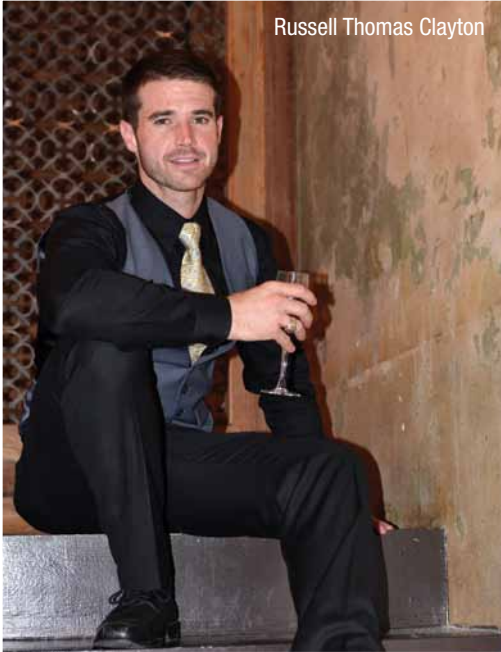


Bobalu Cigars, Katie Phelan



Jonathan Chang

Russell Thomas Clayton



Floral Design by The Flower Studio

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Monica Burgham, Jonathan Tiekem



Christian Ramirez, Olive Plhak

THE

Bewitching

BALLET

SAN ANTONIO BALLET FUNDRAISERS
OFFER SEASON SNEAK PEEK

By Ellie Leeper
Photography By Mendy Escamilla

San Antonio was bewitched by ballet this September with events that sponsored both Ballet San Antonio and the Ballet Conservatory of South Texas. The first event was held in-store at Julian Gold to fundraise for the Ballet Conservatory of South Texas. Ballerinas both young and old posed throughout the store in Swan Lake-esque costumes while bartenders served “Pink Slipper” cocktails to guests as they enjoyed appetizers. Window displays were teeming with tulle as the mannequins donned tutus from various Conservatory productions.



Ian Morris and Saki Yobumoto, Ballet San Antonio, S.A



Carlos Hopuy and Sarah Aujon, Ballet San Antonio, S.A.



Cynthia Juen Ryan, Nancy Billups, Ann Newman, S.A.



BCSTX Academy Students and Senior Members of the Conservatory Company, S.A.



Courtney Percy and Melissa Zuniga



Ian Morris and Saki Yabumoto, Ballet San Antonio, S.A.



Costume from Raymonda, S.A.



Stefanie Alvheim and Susan Petty Arnim, S.A



Alexandra Bobrow and company members, Ballet San Antonio, S.A



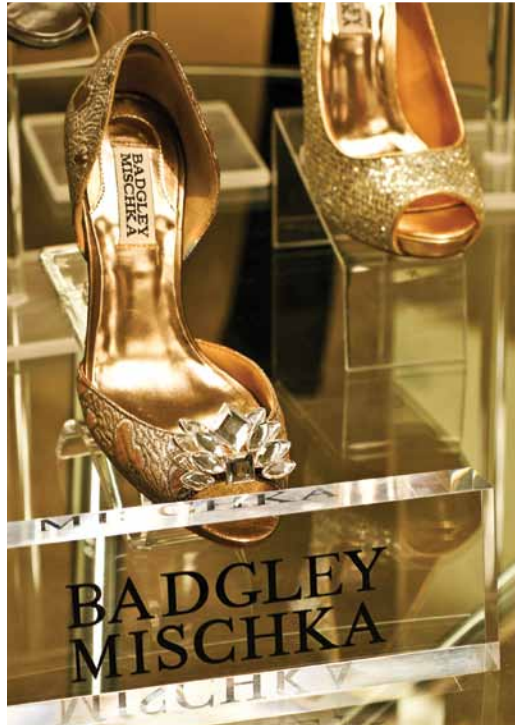
Costume form Sleeping Beauty, S.A

Then, Ballet San Antonio prepared patrons for a more sinister spectacle this season when they presented previews for their October production of "Dracula." Patrons who gathered at Ballet San Antonio's studios were moved and spooked by the professional performances of principal dancers. Although the preview was performed without costumes, guests were painted a truly Transylvanian picture as they viewed variations

from the production. Gabriel Zertuche, Texas native and resident choreographer for Ballet San Antonio, has originated the choreography for this century-old musical score. "This is classical ballet with the emotional intensity of the novel," said Zertuche. He claims that, "Fear, seduction and passion are at the heart of this story, and with the storyline details we have built into our costume and set design, audiences will have a mesmerizing experience." ❸



Costume form Sleeping Beauty, S.A



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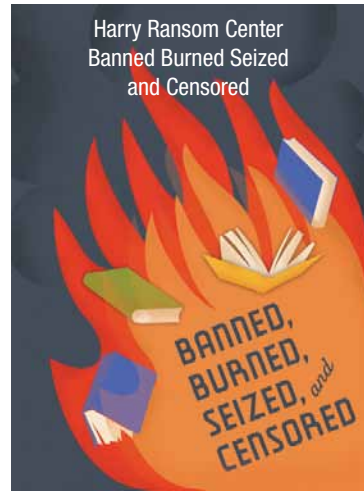
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November 5

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November 6

3rd Annual American Girl Fashion Show
Dell Children's Medical Center
childrensaustin.org

November 6

Choice for Generations Dinner
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plannedparenthood.org

November 8

Artists on Recovery featuring Rob Lowe
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austinrecovery.org

November 10

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November 17

9th Annual Big Reds & Bubbles
The Food and Wine Foundation of
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winefoodfoundation.org

December 3-23

Ballet Austin: The Nutcracker
balletaustin.org

December 3

Holiday Swing
Project Transitions
projecttransitions.org

December 4

Zilker Tree Lighting Ceremony
ci.austin.tx.us

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Dancing with the Stars Austin
The Center for Child Protection
centerforchildprotection.org

December 5

Conspirare Holiday Gala
Conspirare
conspirare.org

December 10

Holiday Party
Austin Lyric Opera Guild
aloguild.org

December 13

Austin Symphony Christmas
Sing-Along
Austin Symphony Orchestra
austinsymphony.org

san antonio social planner

November 3

15th Annual Casino Night
Boys & Girls Clubs of San Antonio
begreatsa.org

November 3

5th Annual Muertitos Fest
Opening Gala
Say Sí
saysi.org

November 5

Stars of Texas Charity Dinner and
Silent Auction
A World for Children
flatcreekestate.com

November 8

6th Annual President's Gala
San Antonio NACE
sanantonionace.com

November 10

Fifth Annual Gayla's Gala
Transplants for Children
transplantsforchildren.org

November 14

20th Annual San Antonio Express-
News Book and Author Luncheon
University of Texas Health Science
Center at San Antonio
makelivesbetter.uthscsa.edu

November 18

Noche de los Reyes Gala
Rey Feo Consejo Educational
Foundation
reyfeconsejo.org

November 19

Light the Way
University of the Incarnate Way
uiw.edu/lighttheway

November 25

Ford Holiday River Parade
& Lighting Ceremony
thesanantonioriverwalk.com

November 26-27 & December 2-4

Ballet San Antonio: The Nutcracker
balletsanantonio.org

December 2

65 Roses Gala
Cystic Fibrosis Foundation
cff.org

December 6

The 32nd Annual Grand
Western Shindig
Mission Road Ministries
shindig.missionroadministries.org

December 8

Annual Gala & Silent Auction
Greater San Antonio Chamber
of Commerce
sachamber.org/

December 27-28

Moscow Ballet's Great Russian
Nutcracker 2011
nutcracker.com

**For more information, visit:
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