


BEST of THE CITY

As Houston celebrates 2017 and prepares for the Super Bowl, the foremost thing on the city's agenda is putting the best boot forward. We're talking arts and culture worthy of standing ovations, style that's always on point, world-class health and beauty, design and realty for bon vivants, and food. We really can't forget the food. It's all right here.

BY RAY DENNISON AND MELLANIE PEREZ

A full-page photograph of Steven Reineke, a man with short brown hair, wearing a dark purple velvet suit jacket over a white shirt and a patterned pocket square. He is sitting on a dark wooden table, leaning forward with his hands clasped. The setting is an elegant room with a large red abstract painting on the wall, a crystal chandelier, and ornate white chairs with gold nailhead trim. The floor is made of dark wood.

THE VIRTUOSO

Steven Reineke, 46, has been conducting concerts since 1995, and he's led orchestras from New York to Taiwan. He's the musical director of The New York Pops series at Carnegie Hall, and he's a regular here in Houston. In fact, back in September, the Houston Symphony named him the principal pops conductor designate. Sparks flew when he conducted the orchestra's Fourth of July concert at Miller Outdoor Theatre this summer, and he knocked everyone's socks off yet again when he opened the orchestra's pop series with a Judy Garland tribute featuring Linda Eder. It should come as no surprise, then, that he's officially been named the principal pops conductor for the Houston Symphony's 2017-2018 season. Although he plans to keep his residence in Manhattan, he'll be on hand in H-Town a lot more. "I love how responsive and enthusiastic the Houston audience has always been," Reineke says, "and I'm counting on creating even more memorable concert experiences." houston-symphony.org

PLAY ON Steven Reineke, the Houston Symphony's new principal pops conductor, at Hotel ZaZa

PHOTO BY JAMES SCHERER



STRING ALONG
Da Camera presents the Horszowski Trio Feb. 21 at the Menil Collection.

THE GIFT OF MUSIC

Last year, jazz and chamber music presenting company **Da Camera** received a \$1.64 million bequest from the estate of long-time supporter James Schooler. The gift is the largest in the organization's history, and Da Camera plans to hold an annual concert in Schooler's name; internationally renowned violinist Christian Tetzlaff and pianist Lars Vogt will play the inaugural memorial concert Feb. 16. Also on the upcoming schedule are trumpeter and composer Arturo Sandoval—a 10-time Grammy winner—the Elias String Quartet and a performance by the Horszowski Trio. dacamera.com



BACKSTAGE PASS

White Oak Musical Hall opened its massive three-stage complex north of Downtown last year, and next up is Sugar Land's 200,000-square-foot **Smart Financial Centre**. Comedian Jerry Seinfeld headlines the grand opening Jan. 14, while performances by Don Henley; Dave Matthews and Tim Reynolds; Reba McEntire; and Kristin Chenoweth round out the rest of the venue's first month. smartfinancialcentre.net

READERS' CHOICE

ARTS & CULTURE

We asked, you replied. According to our loyal readers, these are three of Houston's top independent art galleries.



INTO THE BLUE
"New Blue" light sculpture Adela Andea, who shows at Anya Tish Gallery this month

1 Anya Tish Gallery

Located on Montrose Boulevard, this gallery shares a building with several other venerable gallerists. Adela Andea shows colorful, futuristic LED sculptures and installations this month. anyatishgallery.com

2 Archway Gallery

Long known for discovering and nurturing local artists, this gallery presents a show of watercolors and sketches by Shirl Riccetti that evoke European landscapes and faraway travels. archwaygallery.com

3 McClain Gallery

Gary Lang opened a show of large, colorful canvases that resemble bull's-eyes in November. Due to a successful opening, the works will continue to be on display through this month. mcclaingallery.com

THE VISIONARIES

Native Houstonians and performing arts powerhouse duo **Kathryn Lott** and **Allison Lott** share more than a surname. Although they're not related, they both cut their chops working at Houston's Society for the Performing Arts. Now they've launched Lott Entertainment Presents, a nonprofit organization focused on bringing to the city outside shows that push the boundaries of traditional theater. After a successful inaugural year—major hits included cabaret comedian and singer Bridget Everett, as well as *The Other Mozart*, a theatrical performance about Wolfgang Mozart's talented sister—they're now in the midst of an even more impressive second season. "We never want to become predictable, and we don't want people to be able to nail us down artistically," says Kathryn. "Our job is to present and give a voice to these artists."

In addition to bringing independent acts to town, they've also launched partnerships locally and afar. First up this season was a special new series done in collaboration with New York City's wildly popular theater concept, Joe's Pub, which finds the Big Apple's most daring new talent. Lott Entertainment Presents worked with them to bring a special series of acts to H-Town this year, and they plan to do it again next season. In fact, the relationship has been so successful that Joe's Pub is now working with other cities across the country to build similar talent-sharing programs.

Next up for spring is a performance by American blues and soul singer Martha Redbone as well as a run of the hilarious romantic comedy *Sex Tips For Straight Women From a Gay Man*. They've also recently announced a new partnership with the highly regarded Alley Theatre, where they'll grow into an even more visible space for the 2017 to 2018 season.

If things continue, the Lotts have the potential to become two of the country's leading cultural innovators. "Houston has great companies producing fantastic shows," Allison adds, "but we hope to fill a void by presenting things from outside the city and around the world that would not be seen here if we didn't exist."

lottentertainmentpresents.com

HORSZOWSKI TRIO PHOTO BY LISA MARIE MAZZUCCO. ALLISON LOTT AND KATHRYN LOTT PHOTO BY JULIE SOEFER



STAGE PRESENCE
Allison Lott and Kathryn
Lott, co-founders of Lott
Entertainment Presents

THE NEW
BLACK The
Beckaa bag
(\$229) by
Ted Baker,
a Galleria
newcomer



RETAIL THERAPY

In 2016, the Galleria said bonjour to two French designers with the opening of new boutiques by Céline and Christian Louboutin. Saks Fifth Avenue also relocated, to a 210,000-square-foot flagship space, leaving its former digs open for new development. As soon as a major reno finishes this spring, several boutiques have plans to bow in both Saks' former hall as well as elsewhere in the complex. Italian cashmere producer **Loro Piana** opens an exclusive shop, as does British design house **Ted Baker**, which started as a men's shirting company in Glasgow, Scotland. Spain's **Massimo Dutti** and women's designer **Tadashi Shoji** round out the current score of newcomers. Current retailers St. John, Cole Haan, Tumi, Coach and Kate Spade also have plans to move to new spaces, freeing up their former spots for more. The holidays may be over, but the Galleria is just getting started. *simon.com*

READERS' CHOICE STYLE

Most fashion icons are global, but Houston likes to think local. Here are three designers our readers love. One has her own boutique and the other two might become the fashion world's next big thing.



GRAY
MATTERS A
look at Korto
Momolu's
runway show
in November

1 Chloe Dao

After local designer Chloe Dao won the second season of *Project Runway*, the secret was out. Now her Rice Village boutique is one of the city's hottest spots, and she continues to make ready-to-wear collections that turn heads. *chloedao.com*

2 Korto Momolu

Liberian-born Korto Momolu may live in Arkansas, but she made a local statement at Fashion X Houston in October. Keep an eye out for more appearances in the future, and check out her jewelry online. *kortomomolu.com*

3 Nicholas Nguyen

The University of Houston alum is known for finding creative inspiration in Southeast Asia, more specifically Vietnam, where he was born. He's shown here, as well as at fashion weeks in both New York City and Austin. *mysteriousbynyn.com*



SUIT UP French
luxury swimwear
designer Eres
handselected Lauren
Gaiser to open its
first Texas boutique.

THE TREND-SETTER

It's been a prolific time for **Lauren Geiser**, who grew up in Mississippi and moved to Houston in 2002. A little more than a year ago, the entrepreneurial bombshell opened one of the city's sexiest premier lingerie and swimwear shops, **Maison Jolie**, in Highland Village (4003 Westheimer Rd., 713.850.1362). It's one of the only multibrand boutiques in Houston, and it quickly caught the attention of the style set for carrying exclusive designers like Epure and Cadolle. Now she's going even bigger and helping French luxury swimwear and lingerie brand **Eres** launch its first Texas location in River Oaks District.

The Eres brand first approached Geiser, 36, while she was on a buying trip in Paris. Impressed by her track record, they couldn't picture a better candidate. "It's right up my alley, partly because I already have a high-end lingerie boutique, but also because I'm a longtime fan of its work." The chic stark white boutique is the Chanel-owned house's first location that's not on the East or West Coast, and Geiser couldn't be prouder to run it. "I've always liked finding the gem and then bringing it home to the women of Houston."

She'll have to run up and down Westheimer to continue managing both shops, but there's little doubt she'll do it with a breeze. "I love all things fashion, but I especially love lingerie and swimwear. They're art. Even if you don't wear them, they're special to have as collectors' items." *maisonjolie.co; eresparis.com*



WELL-POLISHED

New nail salon **Paloma** (1700 Post Oak Blvd., Ste. 2-150, 832.516.9628) has bowed in BLVD Place. Hydrating hand massages (from \$15), manis and pedis (\$30 to \$60), and nail art masterpieces (from \$10) are just a few of the options available at the 1,450-square-foot spot. Founder Maryam Naderi is focused on providing services that use only the highest-quality nontoxic polishes by the likes of Chanel, Deborah Lippmann and Lauren B. Beauty, a California line exclusively in Houston at Paloma. With 10 mani-pedi combo stations and four manicure-only stations, there's room for the whole crew. paloma-beauty.com



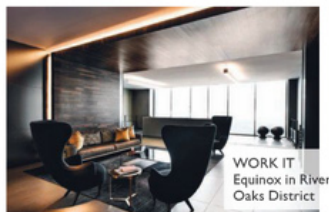
TAKE A SPA DAY

In 2016, D.C.-based **Blue Mercury** finally made its foray into H-Town, opening locations in Rice Village, Piney Point and Memorial City Mall. Each shop offers more than 90 skincare and cosmetics brands—including names like Laura Mercier and NARS—as well as an extensive menu of spa services. The brand plans to continue expanding in the Houston area, as well as in other Texas cities. bluemercury.com

READERS' CHOICE

HEALTH & BEAUTY

Looking fit has always been in style, and these three exercise concepts have got our readers working up a sweat.



1 Equinox

This luxury boutique gym caters to celebs and royalty in the Big Apple, and its arrival appears to have taken our city by storm. Here, expect the same posh treatment, polished facilities and Kiehl's bath products. equinox.com

2 Orange Theory

This training concept has a spot in West U, the Heights, Memorial, CityCentre and several suburbs. The heart rate-monitored workout mixes cardio interval and resistance training to spike metabolism. orangetheoryfitness.com

3 SoulCycle

Another New York import, it took years to arrive, but now H-Town boasts two locations and counting. Grab a bike and prepare for an intense workout with motivating instructors, club lights and a thumping soundtrack. soul-cycle.com

THE HEALERS

Medical doctor **Mahyar Badrei** and his Rice Ph.D. wife, **Hannah**, discovered restrictive environmental stimulation therapy, or REST, while on vacation four years ago in Kyoto, Japan. "We've always been interested in treating the body as a whole," Hannah explains. When the couple, who have been married for 16 years, returned home, they noticed REST was pretty much absent in Houston. This was quite surprising given the city's global reputation in medicine, so the couple got to work, and in November, they opened MIZU Integrative Medicine Clinic + Float Center (5161 San Felipe St., Ste. 120, 832.767.4312), Houston's first clinic and flotation spa combination, in Tanglewood.

Although REST may not be a familiar term, some seasoned spagoers may have seen, or even used, the flotation pods at facilities elsewhere in the country. The pods hold 10 inches of high-saline solution—the same salt concentration found in the Dead Sea, to be precise—which allows users to suspend their bodies and relax their joints and muscles in a calm, still environment. Not only has the practice caught the attention of the Air Force and professional athletes like Houston Texan J.J. Watt, it's also getting traction with clinical trials and data in the medical community. It's proven to lower anxiety, and decrease heart rate and blood pressure.

The boutique clinic houses three pods in private rooms for treatments, which can be booked online for \$120 per session. Additionally, there are two consultation rooms where the team offers general medical services like wellness exams and chronic care management, herbal medicine advice and remedies, acupuncture, cognitive behavior therapy and nutrition guidance.

"Research finds that patients that are involved in an integrative medicine program not only have better outcomes, but they do better with treatments and have a better quality of life," Mahyar says. "There are not many clinics that provide this level of integration and research-proven therapy in a [boutique] setting." mizumed.com

FLOAT ON
Owners Mahyar and
Hannah Badrei at new
MIZU Integrative
Medicine Clinic +
Float Center

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HEALTH &
BEAUTY



PHOTO BY TYNN LANE

READERS' CHOICE

DESIGN & REALTY

When asked where to find the best modern furniture, our discerning readers had no trouble selecting three showrooms perfect for making a statement. Not only do they each offer some of the world's most innovative designs, but they also offer consultation services.



TAKE A SEAT
Bubble chair,
\$3,615, by
Roche Bobois

1 Cantoni
This Texas-owned company specializes in Italian modern design. They carry collections by Calligaris, Cattelan Italia and Minotti Italia. They also have a full design team on hand to help with design choices or customized projects.
cantoni.com

2 Ligne Roset
One of several high-end home decor stores in West Ave, Ligne Roset hails from France. Check out pieces like the colorful Slice chair by Pierre Charpin. Sectionals can be removed to completely change the piece at whim.
ligne-roset.com

3 Roche Bobois
Here's another Italian name globally known for cutting-edge design. The San Felipe showroom attracts major mod fans, and nothing is quite as timelessly boho-chic as their Mahjong sectional sofa, which comes in a variety of designs.
roche-bobois.com



WATER FALL
Market Square
Tower's pool is
the highest
in Texas.

ROOM WITH A VIEW

The sky's the limit for many of the luxury high-rises popping up across town, and three in the city's center are changing the main skyline. The Theater District's dramatic **Market Square Tower** (777 Preston St., marketsquaretower.com) has opened for residents. It's Downtown's tallest residential tower, coming in at 40 floors, and amenities include a movie theater, a grand ballroom and a 24-hour concierge service. Most impressive of all is the rooftop pool, which is the highest in Texas and features a glass-bottom section jutting out over the street below. Talk about a view! Also rising in the area is Hines' 32-story **Aris Market Square** (409 Travis St., hines.com) on the busy corner of Travis and Preston. It finishes this year, boasting approximately 9,000 square feet of street-level retail and restaurant space. And over by Minute Maid Park, the 28-story **Catalyst Houston** (1423 Texas Ave.), designed by Ziegler Cooper Architects, also finishes in 2017. It's slated to have 20,000 square feet of outdoor space including a resort-style pool; a rooftop terrace garden; a sundeck with fire pit; a yoga lawn; a volleyball court; and Ballpark Club, where residents can watch Astros home games.



HOUSE AND
GARDEN
A River Oak
estate by Curtis &
Windham Architects,
showcased in the
firm's new book

THE CRAFTSMEN

Houston architects **Bill Curtis** and **Russell Windham** started their practice, Curtis & Windham Architects, more than two decades ago. Since, they have developed a strong reputation among the upper crust for designing stunning, traditional homes that dot the tree-lined streets of River Oaks, Memorial and other stately hoods. They respect the aesthetic of these historic areas, but they bring fresh, new touches. And now, with the release of an oversize coffee-table book, *A Vision of Place*, it's possible to get a look at some of the duo's most glamorous estates without ever leaving home.

The two native Texans—Curtis is from Longview and Windham hails from the Panhandle—met through a mutual friend back in the early '90s after spending time working separately at major firms on the East Coast and abroad. "Once a Texan, always a Texan," Windham quips when asked why he moved back to the Lone Star State. Curtis adds about Houston, "It's warm and receptive to people who have ideas, talent and energy."

After knowing each other for a little while, they decided to branch out and start a firm. Today, they both live in River Oaks—"Russell kept showing me houses across the street, but I said, 'I'm with you all day long,'" Curtis says with a laugh—and their firm has started to pick up major civic projects that are transforming not just neighborhoods but entire towns and cities. They've done a sorority house at the University of Arkansas and helped with the expansion of a church in Abilene. And here at home, they most recently completed the St. John's School's new great hall. Next, they'll be working with the prestigious prep school on a new art building. curtisandwindham.com



DISH OUT
Salmon sashimi
at Nobu



FOOD COURT

The Galleria has always offered elevated dining options beyond that of a typical mall, but things are getting even hotter as they continue to announce world-renowned concepts. London's Michelin-starred dim sum and tea house **Yauatcha** (yauatcha.com), opens any day now next door to The Webster. Also this year, sushi temple **Nobu** (noburestaurants.com), known from Miami to Malibu, Calif., finally makes a Houston home in the former Saks Fifth Avenue spot, along with New York City's French concept **Fig & Olive** (figandolive.com).



TO THE POWER OF FIVE

Chef **Chris Shepherd** revives Mark's old home with his new concept, Five: He plans to cycle through five dining experiences over the same number of years. This month, he starts with One Fifth Steak, grilling up prime meats; then, come fall, he'll transition into One Fifth Romance Languages to try his hand at French, Spanish and Italian cuisine. Fish will follow in 2018, and the last two are yet to be announced. onefifthhouston.com

READERS' CHOICE FOOD & NIGHTLIFE

In a town known for food, Houston chefs are the nearest thing to royalty. Here are three chefs for whom our readers have the hots.



RIGHT
DIRECTION
Chef William
Wright of
Arthur Ave.
and Helen
Greek Food
and Wine

1 Hugo Ortega

Along with wife Tracy Vaught, Ortega runs some of the city's top restaurants. Hugo's introduced Houston to Mexican gourmet, and his Galleria-area seafood spot, Caracol, couldn't be a hipper catch. hugosrestaurant.net

2 William Wright

This young chef hit the scene last year with his wildly popular Helen Greek Food and Wine, which even got a James Beard Award nod. Now he's got two spots with his Italian eatery, Arthur Ave., in the Heights. arthuravehou.com

3 Justin Yu

The James Beard Best Chef Southwest Award winner has announced he'll close his restaurant Oxheart in March. Don't worry, though: He's already planning something new for the location. oxhearthouston.com

THE FAMILY RECIPE

When brother-sister pair **Nick** and **Katie Adair** opened Adair Kitchen in 2012, they set out to create a healthy neighborhood restaurant that would make favorite simple recipes accessible to Houstonians morning, day and night. The concept appealed to casual yet seasoned diners who rolled in from the Uptown and Tanglewood areas. Now, after several years of success, they're taking their operation to the next level with new concepts.

First up is a move inside the Loop near River Oaks District and Afton Oaks, where they've bowed Eloise Nichols Grill & Liquors (2400 Mid Ln., Ste. 100, 713.554.0136). The former, a polished 45,000-square-foot vintage-inspired eatery, dishes up modern spins on Southern classics and is named for their grandmother. "We felt a hole for a neighborhood staple that would be approachable every day of the week—whether you wanted to meet someone for cocktails or have a nice meal," says Katie. "It was important for us to marry the bar vibe and the food vibe, and have a place where you feel comfortable at both." Under the charge of Executive Chef Joseph Stayshich—formerly of Benji's—the weekly rotating menus feature Eloise's classic recipes and other fresh Gulf Coast delights, including raw oysters.

Farther down Westheimer, sandwiched between Greenway and River Oaks, is Bebidas (2606 Edloe St., 713.554.0003), a quick and casual spot that serves up grab-and-go selections of coffee, juices and small bites. It even features a drive-thru for the superspeedy. "We want the people [who] live around our restaurants to feel like they belong to them," says Nick. "We want to be the best neighborhood restaurant we can be." adairkitchen.com; eloisenichols.com; bebidashouston.com

FIVE PHOTO BY JULE SOEFER, WILLIAM WRIGHT PHOTO BY SHANNON O'HARA

SIBLING RIVALRY
Brother-and-sister
restaurateurs Nick
and Katie Adair at
their new Eloise
Nichols Grill and
Liquors on Mid Lane

PHOTO BY LYNN LANE

