

# **EDITOR'S NOTE**

WINTER/SPRING 2017



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Here at *Modern*Luxury Interiors Texas,
we kick off every new year with
a celebration. Our annual Best of
Design Issue—the first edition of 2017—
honors the architects, designers, showrooms
and products that charmed us most over the past
year. In this installment, we laud newcomers and
longtime favorites—and take a minitour of Texas in
the process. In the At Home section alone, you'll find a
divine high-rise dining room in Dallas, a rustic living room
in Fredericksburg, a bayside bedroom in Galveston and a chic
home office in Houston.

Our state tour continues in other sections of the magazine as well. In "Good Neighbors," designer Catherine Brooks Giuffre shares her favorite spots in West University, where she lives, works and plays. We also take you behind the doors of some beautiful Texas abodes, including a stunning Austin condo imagined by Furman + Keil Architects and Wendy Dunnam Tita of Page ("Outside the Box"), a contemporary home in The Woodlands designed by Cantoni's Gena Sylvester ("Color Scheme") and a Highland Park traditional that underwent a stylish transformation by Meredith Lamme and Brooke Wilbratte of The Décor House ("Modern Makeover").

The new year also brings a slew of new shop and showroom openings. In Houston, furniture store Oroa amps up the glam in River Oaks District. In Dallas, Christopher Peacock debuts its English-inspired kitchens. And in Austin, ANN SACKS completes its Texas trifecta with a brand-new 3,100-square-foot tile, stone and plumbing showroom (other locations are in Dallas and Houston). That's just a sampling of the new spots design lovers will want to check out. Keep reading to see what else the Texas design world has in store.

In the spirit of new beginnings, if we've yet to meet and you see me out and about this year at our various industry events, please introduce yourself! I would love to hear what's going on with you, and I would also love to hear what you think about what we're doing here at the magazine. In the meantime, enjoy the start of another new year. May we all make it our best yet.

# BEST OF

#### BEST ARCHITECTURE FIRM Lake|Flato

In the last 30 years, Lake Flato has assembled a body of work that is encyclopedic in scope and importance, a timeline of modern structures that tell the back story of Texas' agricultural past. The firm's signature is its use of local materials (usually rock, glass, wood and steel) and partnerships with the best local craftspeople—a commitment that results in beautifully constructed buildings that are also environmentally responsible. Led by eight partners, including David Lake and Ted Flato, the San Antonio- and Austin-based firm's project list includes houses, ranches, schools, university centers, libraries, museums, natureand visitor centers, hotels, restaurants, wineries, places of worship and-last but not least-modular housing. Lake Flato's romance with the landscape empowers every design produced by the 90-person firm. Big overhangs, trellises, porches and easily accessed water features are hallmarks. 1711 E. Cesar Chavez St., Ste. C, Austin, 512.373.3715; 311 Third St., San Antonio, 210.227.3335; lakeflato.com

A ROOM WITH A VIEW A sculptural light fixture illuminates the dining area of an Olmos Park residence designed by Lake | Flato.

Texas is teeming with undeniable design talent. Here, we pay homage to the Lone Star State's hottest and brightest.

BY NADIA DABBAKEH, BECCA HENSLEY, RHONDA REINHART AND HELEN THOMPSON

#### Best Restaurant Design Coevál Studio

The Rustic, Happiest Hour, Quill, Whistle Britches, El Bolero-the list of successful Dallas restaurants designed by Coevál Studio, led by creative directors John Paul Valverde and Miguel Vicéns, goes on and on. The duo offers a cohesive package to stylish restaurateurs, including architectural and space design, interior design, branding, graphic design and more—all in-house. Their latest vision is STIRR, a popular cocktail, lunch and dinner concept in Deep Ellum. "The mix of raw, natural finishes, exotic marble, and details in the bench seating and lighting all come together to define the concept and execute our vision of refined casual," Valverde says. Playing with different textures-whether combining wood and tile in different patterns on the floor or mixing different lighting styles—is an au courant Coevál move. The team's biggest do and don't? Do incorporate focal areas with communal tables that grab attention and create comfortable gathering areas for guests, but definitely don't think only about the guest. "Operations must be part of the design development," Vicéns explains. "Function, form and operation must all work together. This helps with overall efficiency, which in turn adds to the guest experience." 154 Leslie St., 214.931.4097, coevalstudio.com



# HOME MAKEOVER Bodron+Fruit meticulously restored this 1964 Dallas house designed by architect Philip Johnson. NTERIORS WINTER/SPRING 2017

#### BEST INTERIOR DESIGN FIRM, CONTEMPORARY

Bodron+Fruit

"It's not about the furniture," says Mil Bodron, co-principal in the interior design and architecture firm Bodron+Fruit. The designer is committed to creating interiors that are first and foremost about scale, proportion and composition-which is why his and architect Svend Fruit's projects are virtuosic tutorials in how to make a house and its interiors seamlessly stunning. The pair is responsible for the renovation of an honor roll of midcentury houses designed by some of the country's greatest architects, including Frank Lloyd Wright, Edward Larrabee Barnes and Philip Johnson. Bodron+Fruit's new construction projects reflect the same meticulous attention to detail, nuance and restraint that it elicits from its renovations. The firm also has a no-nonsense approach to displaying art: "It's about the architecture and the art," says Bodron. "The interiors should be beautiful and respectful to both." 4040 N. Central Expressway, Ste. 150, 214.826.5200, bodronfruit.com

# BATH TIME A master both design by Combridge Row feeturing a marble shower and steel trim

#### READERS' CHOICE

### Best Interior Design Firm, New

Cambridge Row

Laurin White's new full-service interior design and renovation consulting company is a one-stop shop for builders and remodelers looking for everything from space planning and drafting to furniture and finishes. But this firm of the future, based in The Woodlands, also offers something straight out of your wildest design dreams: your very own virtual reality tour. When renderings and fabric swatches fall short, White's team will create a 3-D space for clients to physically explore, giving them an almost real-life sense of walking around the project they've developed together. "It's an unparalleled tool for helping people assess projects before work has even begun," says White. "Not only can it alleviate stress, but it can also help save money, as there are fewer needs for adjustments or revisions." 832.930.7015, cambridgerow.com

#### BEST HOTEL DESIGN

#### **ForrestPerkins**

With a fondness for bringing the interiors of both luxury hotels and private residences to life, ForrestPerkins-with offices in four U.S. cities, including Dallas-has a penchant for capturing the distinct personality of a space. Recent projects in Texas include The Westin Dallas Downtown and the renovation of San Antonio's historic St. Anthony Hotel-an undertaking that garnered the team myriad accolades. "The design is modern and sexy, yet thoughtful and respectful of the hotel's magnificent history," says Colletta Conner, principal in charge and lead designer of the St. Anthony project (shown here). "Individual spaces feel like special little jewel boxes," she adds, touting the way the architecture, antiques and period artwork contrast with 21st century furnishings. 3131 Turtle Creek Blvd., Ste. 700, Dallas, 214.953.2210, forrestperkins.com





## BEST INTERIOR DESIGN FIRM, CLASSIC Michelle Nussbaumer

"I want the interiors I create to feel timeless," Michelle Nussbaumer writes in Wanderlust: Interiors That Bring the World Home. "These are not staged or museum settings but designs for living, growing and changing!" Nussbaumer's well-received first book, published last fall by Rizzoli (\$50), takes readers through a medley of color-infused, pattern-happy homes designed by the illustrious Dallas-based decorator whose touch can be seen in residences across the globe. The collection of rooms—and Nussbaumer's stories behind them—showcase her fondness for mixing important antiques and modern art with prized finds from the markets of Istanbul, Paris, Beijing and copious points in between. In her aim for timelessness, Nussbaumer blends styles and eras with ease, creating lush, layered spaces where every item is a conversation piece. 1319 Dragon St., Dallas, 214.742.7632, ceylonetcie.com







#### READERS' CHOICE

## BEST HARDWARE AND FIXTURES SHOWROOM Alexander Marchant

Susan Alexander and Laurie Marchant have always been fascinated by houses—more specifically, by their preservation. The pair teamed up in 1997 when they purchased a furniture restoration company in Austin. But market trends led them elsewhere, and what started out as a side business blossomed into Alexander Marchant—Austin's and San Antonio's premier architectural, plumbing and fixture resource. Showrooms in both cities offer sought-after brands such as Bronzes de France, Frank Allart, Halliday + Baillie, Serie Rare and Formani. Alexander Marchant is also the exclusive Texas rep for Kreoo, the Italian furnishings brand renowned for bold marble products as well as plumbing for the bath, and for Boffi, the Italian bath and hardware company famous for its minimal, state-of-the-art style. 1114 W. Fifth St., Ste. A, Austin, 512.462.1444; 4335 McCullough Ave., Olmos Park, 210.320.2093; alexandermarchant.com

#### BEST TILE SHOWROOM La Nova

La Nova's motto, "In with the new," was especially fitting last October when the Texas tile importer, which recently expanded its reach to the Dallas market, debuted a shiny new showroom five minutes from downtown Houston. Working with a dream team of Houston design pros-including Content Architecture, RIMA Projects and Putterman Scharck & Associates—owner Erick Calderon created an interactive space that showcases the company's Europeaninspired tiles in innovative new ways. In addition to spacious design pods that offer interior designers and architects room to mix and match tile samples with decorative accents and other finishes, the showroom features specially designed racks that allow horizontal displays of large-format floor tiles, helping clients visualize how the surface will look in a space. A dedicated area for special events and a kegerator with Texas beers on tap round out the amenities at La Nova's sleek new digs. To the trade, 2325 Fannin St., Houston, 713.796.9050, lanovatile.com





#### Best Art Gallery

Laura Rathe Fine Art

With three revered Texas art galleries bearing her name, Laura Rathe attributes her predilection for fine art to her parents, who collect art and raised her "with the notion that taking risks and having dreams was an expectation." She continues to seek new creative talent while showcasing a variety of artists, from German installation artist Michael Laube to porcelain artist Lucrecia Waggoner. "The art world has been far too intimidating in the past when in fact it should be open to all, and a conduit between the artists and the collector," says Rathe, who has been in the art world for almost two decades. At the Houston Colquitt Street location, catch the gallery's first show of the year, which runs through Feb. 18 and showcases contemporary Chinese artist Zhuang Hong Yi and California-based Cassandria Blackmore, a reverse-style painter. 1130 Dragon St., Ste. 130, Dallas, 214.761.2000; 2707 Colquitt St., Houston, 713.527.7700; 1700 Post Oak Blvd., 1 BlVD Place, Houston, 713.527.7700; laurarathe.com



#### BEST BEDROOM Slovack-Bass

Together, Marjorie Slovack, Amy Lopez and Kathia De La Torre—a dream designer trio from Houston-based Slovack-Bass—turned this bayside master suite into a serene retreat. Because the bedroom offers plentiful views of Galveston Bay, the designers wanted to bring some of the outdoors in, choosing subtle blue hues to complement the ocean scenery and pecky cypress ceiling beams to add natural texture to the space. Custom bedding and a cream-colored king bed with metallic accents—combined with the muted colors of the walls, drapery and nightstands—help create a tranquil escape for the vacationing homeowners. 1325 Antoine Drive, Houston, 713.956.7240, slovack-bass.com

#### Best Living Room

Slaughter Design Studio

"Soulful" is how interior designer Amy Slaughter describes the Fredericksburg compound she worked on for more than three years. Situated on top of a bluff overlooking Enchanted Rock, the sprawling hacienda might be newly constructed, but it has the feel of a home from years ago. In addition to the antique American oak floors and reclaimed barn wood used throughout, including in the texture-filled living room, Slaughter furnished the residence with museum-quality Spanish Colonial antiques. 150 E. Main St., Ste. 301, Fredericksburg, 830.307.3397, slaughterdesignstudio.com



#### Best Home Office

Marie Flanigan Interiors

The classic look of tailored menswear was the inspiration for this handsome home office designed by Marie Flanigan. The Houston-based interior designer, whose roots are in architecture, focused on clean, structured lines and architectural detailing when revamping the previously charmless space. Opting for contemporary art paired with sleek furnishings and lighting—including a leather-paneled desk by Bernhardt and a

geometric pendant from Design
Within Reach—Flanigan
created an elegant, richly
textured study that
blends modern and
traditional elements.
In fact, the workspace
is so lovely, we can't
imagine that its owner
ever minds clocking
in. 2525 Driscoll St.,
Houston, 979.574.9686,

marieflanigan.com

#### BEST DINING ROOM R Brant Design

When Brant McFarlain's clients purchased two bare-boned condos on the 20th floor of the Residences at the Stoneleigh, they gave the Dallas-based designer a clean slate. Over the next two years, the fashion-loving founder of R Brant Design turned that blank canvas into a work of art. From the floor plan to the interior decorating, McFarlain envisioned every aspect of the interior design. In the dining room—one of the many standout spaces in the now-double unit—a steel and glass partition creates a barrier to the living room, but also lets in natural light and stunning downtown views through the home's expansive windows. A pair of Arteriors light fixtures adds even more illumination, accenting a custom dining table by Robert Wohlfeld and richly upholstered Bolier chairs. 3723 Greenville Ave., Dallas, 214.435.0698, rbrantdesign.com



# AWARDS

# **Ben** Johnston

Creative Director, Benjamin Johnston Design 713.300.9203, benjamin-johnston.com

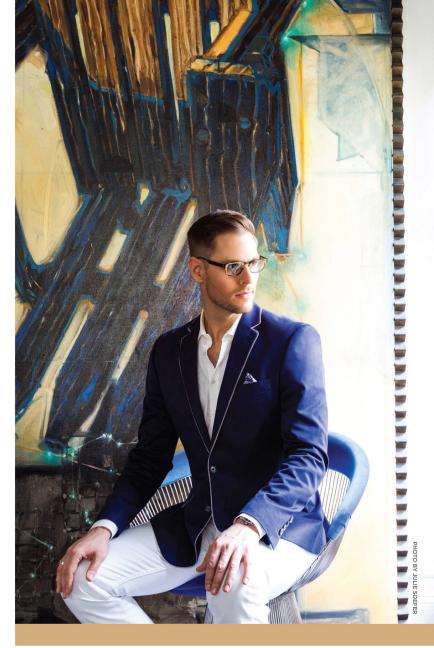
Benjamin Johnston is known for creating distinctive, layered spaces that are luxurious reflections of his clients' personal tastes and histories. Taking inspirational cues from a variety of cultures and time periods, Ben blends new and vintage pieces to create contemporary spaces that feel curated over a lifetime. He accomplishes this tasteful mix while adhering to the classic design principles of balance and simplicity, through the application of clean lines and tailored details—timeless sensibilities he credits to his previous study and practice of architecture.

Benjamin Johnston Design, launched in 2016, is the latest incarnation of Ben Johnston's interior design practice and lifestyle brand. He has spent a lifetime pursuing artistic expression as a designer, artist, teacher and tastemaker. From the cultural hotspot of Houston, Ben has pursued various endeavors focused on bringing beauty to the world around him and enabling others to do the same.

Today, Ben Johnston and his team bring tremendous knowledge and experience to designing exceptional spaces - from conception to construction, from styling to decoration. They believe that all good design begins with function, but great design requires quality and exceptional taste that can only come from experience and a finely honed instinct.

For more information about Benjamin Johnston Design, visit benjamin-johnston.com.





"Accents such as dynamic metallic wall sculptures and statement art pieces reflect his affinity for unexpected moments that both delight and surprise."