

Art on High

One eagerly anticipated sky-rise, **The River Oaks** at 3433 Westheimer Road, has an unexpected amenity that equals its Carrara Italian marble, Gaggenau appliances, and Poggenpohl cabinetry: museum-worthy art acquisitions. The first artworks were obtained at two of the world's priciest art fairs, **Art Basel Miami Beach** and **Untitled**, and from blue-chip Houston dealer **McClain Gallery**. As for the building itself ... Circa 1963–1965, it was designed by Houston architect Cameron Fairchild and will be reborn in time for October through December 2017 move-ins; more than 60 percent is sold. Developer **Arel Capital** tapped a veritable dream team for the project: architect **EDI International**,

interiors architect **Rottet Studio**, and landscape architect **McDugald-Steele**, rounded out by sales/marketing gurus **Sudhoff Companies**. Arel Capital managing partner **Richard Leibovitch**, a contemporary art collector himself, is curating the collection alongside **Lauren Rottet** of Rottet Studio and Houston-based art consultant **Lea Weingarten**. The trio began at the Miami fairs last December by selecting two senior masters, American born **Stanley Whitney**, and **Liliana Porter** from Argentina. Both are talents in their seventies who explore painting and drawing (Whitney) and conceptual photography (Porter), producing nuanced works that allude to issues of identity. Reportedly, the Whitney monotype and Porter photographs each were five-figure purchases. This spring, an important work on paper by the iconic **Alex Katz** was added: *White Roses*, 2014,



Alex Katz signs his *White Roses*, 2014, destined for The River Oaks

a small-edition silkscreen bearing 16 colors, acquired from **McClain Gallery**. Destined for the lobby, it winks at a signature feature: the alluring green spaces. “The goal is for the art to complement the elegance of the building,” Leibovitch says. These collecting jaunts are just the beginning. “We are actively looking — going to art fairs, galleries, and studios.” theriveroaks.com. Catherine D. Anspou

Meet Me at EVELYN'S PARK

When Bellaire's historic Teas Nursery shuttered after nearly 100 years in business, the site breathed new life as a green space that paid homage to the land's verdurous origins — as was the goal of brothers **Jerry** and **Maury Rubenstein**. Following Teas' sale in 2009, the brothers acquired the land and gifted it to the city of Bellaire, but with a catch: The space had to be

transformed into a park and named after their mother, Evelyn, a lifelong Bellaire resident and avid outdoorswoman. Nearly a decade later, the five-acre tract has been reincarnated as **Evelyn's Park**. With plush greenery and sleek architecture, the space channels the Teas spirit. Seating is fashioned from reclaimed wood from the land's original trees, and an insect wall functions as a community art project, joined together by the sprawling Great Lawn. An on-site restaurant, **The Ivy & James**, is modeled after Teas' original yellow house and is helmed by **Jamie** and

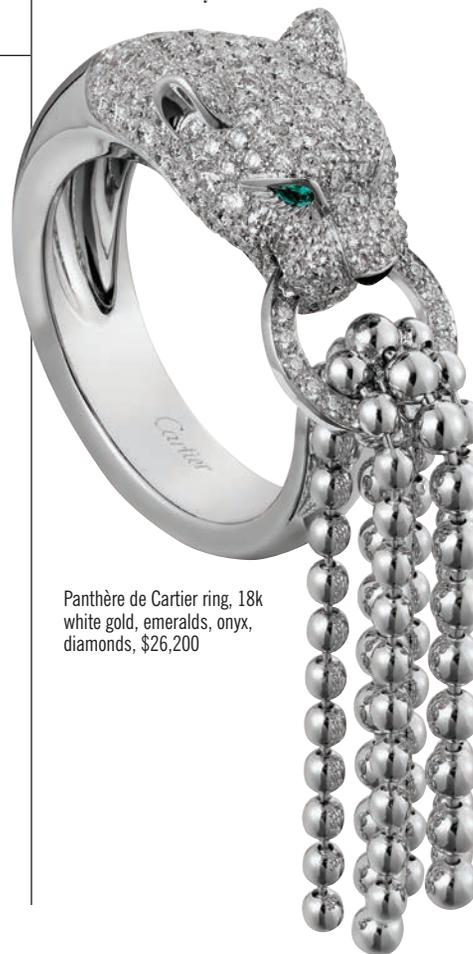


Event space at Evelyn's Park

Dalia Zelko (formerly Zelko Bistro). Green bonus: Evelyn's Park is poised to become one of the most sustainable parks in the country, thanks to a \$300,000-plus partnership with **Green Mountain Energy Sun Club**, which will outfit the park with renewable and sustainable technologies. *Evelyn's Park*, 4400 Bellaire Blvd., evelynspark.org. Jaily Marcel

Feline MYSTIQUE

Since 1914, the panther has been linked with **Cartier**. The first panther design was an opulent wristwatch, spotted with onyx and diamonds. Over the next 100-plus years, the panther became a symbol of femininity, strength, mystery, and beauty. Jeanne Toussaint, Louis Cartier's collaborator and muse, was the first to embody the panther spirit. In 1948, a 116.74-carat emerald cabochon brooch with an onyx-spotted panther was designed for the Duchess of Windsor. Retail heiress Barbara Hutton, fashion editor and social swan Daisy Fellowes, and Mexican actress and singer María de los Angeles Félix (nicknamed the Mexican Panther) would later become rare-air panther muses. Today, the **Panthère de Cartier** collection takes a modern spin with a new set of rings and bracelets, with playful tassels and that majestic cat — still displaying her onyx spots and sly emerald eyes. *Rings from \$13,700, bracelets from \$23,000, at the Cartier boutique.* Christina Geyer



Panthère de Cartier ring, 18k white gold, emeralds, onyx, diamonds, \$26,200