

In the Living Room at Park House, a small private niche is sectioned off with a velvet curtain. Inside, a "Call for Service" button summons a cocktail.

IT'S ALL VERY HUSH, HUSH

SILENCE YOUR CELL PHONES AND LOG OUT OF INSTAGRAM (SOCIAL MEDIA IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED) AS WE TAKE YOU ON THE FIRST EXCLUSIVE TOUR OF PARK HOUSE, THE NEWLY OPENED PRIVATE SOCIAL CLUB IN HIGHLAND PARK VILLAGE — AND OUR CITY'S BRIGHTEST STATUS SYMBOL.

BY CHRISTINA GEYER. ART DIRECTION MICHELLE AVIÑA. INTERIOR PHOTOGRAPHY PÄR BENGTSSON.
PORTRAITS ANA HOP. STYLING AND WARDROBE REED ROBERTSON.



The entrance to the Vault Room includes a fortified bank door — a nod to the building's original function as a bank. Inside, the room serves as a small dining or meeting area.

A few days before Park House officially opened to its group of founding members in late December, co-founder Deborah Scott and a small group of her friends (early PH joiners, naturally) found themselves on the third floor at 100 Highland Park Village for an impromptu late-night rendezvous. Records were played. Cocktails were swilled. Dancing ensued. A wild time was had by all. Call it Park House's unofficial, devilishly chic baptism — a night that would serve as a sign of things to come. Next up was New Year's Eve: The first official party at Park House, which was a caviar and champagne-fueled bash designed by event maestro Todd Fiscus with tunes by DJ Lucy Wrubel. Who was there? We'll never tell.

You see, Park House has existed under a curtain of quiet mystique since May 2017, after it was publicly announced that a Soho House-style concept would debut in prime Highland Park real estate, on the third floor of 100 Highland Park Village, its entrance next door to Chanel. A year later, a rare-air group of founding members and investors began to sign up, and a small but mighty contingent of bright young things and business tycoons received invitations to join in the mail. A few Park House execs were hired, from communications and membership director Rachel Michell (a former member of the marketing and communications team at Highland Park Village) and programming director Josh Madans (former PR guru for Todd Events) to executive chef Andrea Rodella (formerly executive chef at Ojai Valley Inn's Olivella) and general manager Kenyon Price (formerly with Rosewood Hotels & Resorts and St. Regis Hotels & Resorts).

After an extensive renovation and construction of the entire building, the time came for the big reveal. As 2018 wound down, the club first opened for evening cocktails, dinner, and late-night pomp. Then, in January, brunch was added. This month, the full hours debut: from early morning until — simply stated by Park House top brass — *late*.

Chatter about Park House has rippled through every echelon of Dallas society. Would the club lean more towards the style

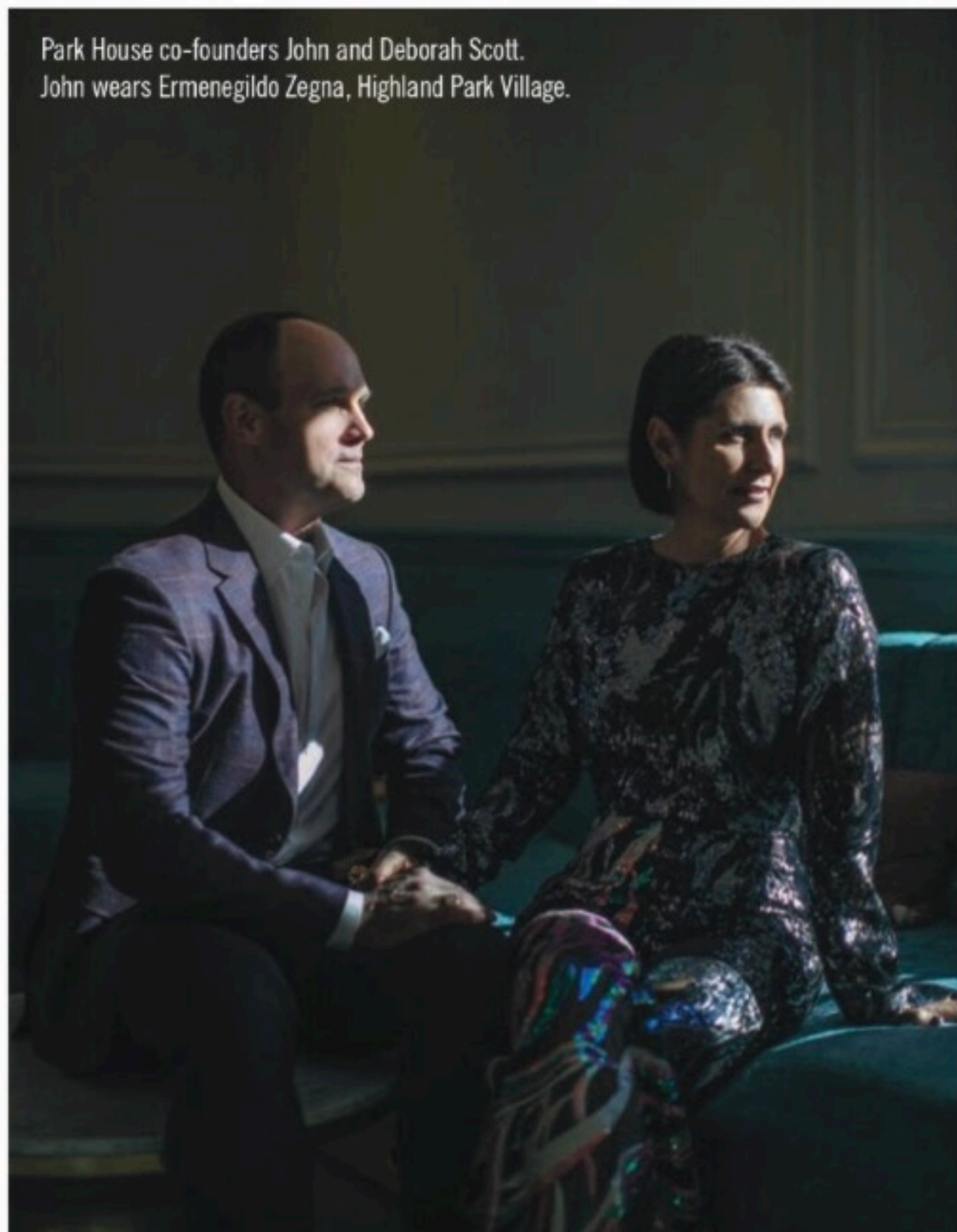
of London's fabled Annabel's? Or, would it have a youthful, creative-class vibe à la Soho House? Could the art program at Park House rival that of The Arts Club, also in London? And, of course, the most pressing questions: Who would join? What would it look like? And how could we get our name on the list? More on all that in a minute.

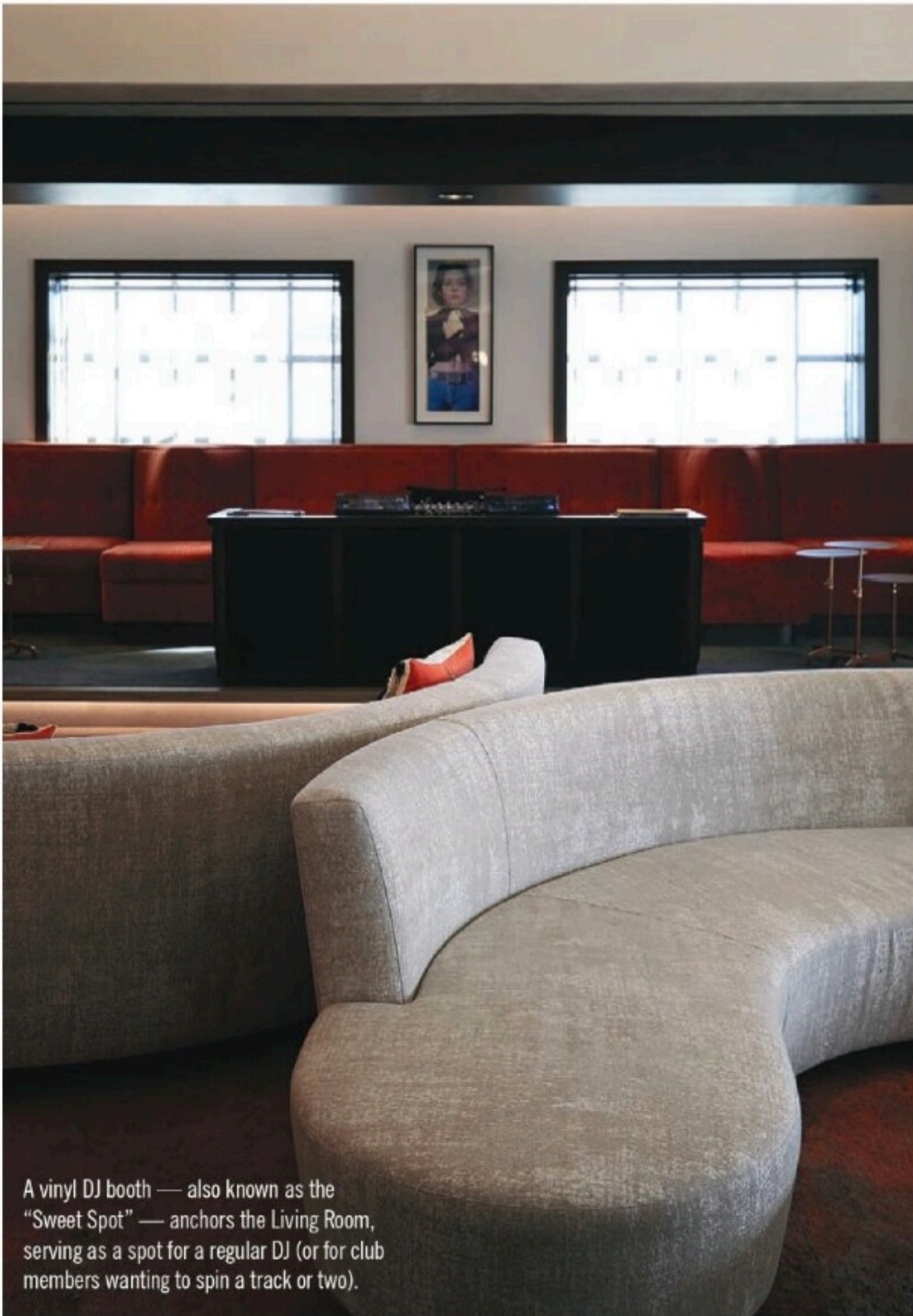
Park House has been eight years in the making. Long-time friends John Scott (Deborah's husband, former president of Rosewood Hotels & Resorts and CEO of Belmond Ltd., formerly Orient-Express Hotels) and Brady Wood (whose Dallas entertainment and hospitality company, Woodhouse, operates José restaurant and the Pilgrimage Music & Cultural Festival) were mountain-biking in Aspen. "They expressed the need for a comfortable, dynamic venue to gather, work, and dine," Deborah says. "Fast forward a couple of years. We moved to London, started to collect private-club memberships, and experienced first-hand why the private-social-club model is so successful in England. Brady started looking at locations around Dallas, then glanced up to the top floor of HPV." That dreamy look up happened about three years ago — and, from there, it was full speed ahead. Deborah and John moved back to Dallas. As for that top-floor space, it would indeed become Park House.

The Scotts' experiences in London, coupled with co-founders Megan and Brady Wood's extensive food, beverage, and entertainment portfolio, ultimately shaped Park House — but with a Dallas bent. "Up until now, there have been country clubs or business clubs in Dallas, but they were lacking a more cool or inclusive experience," Deborah says. "In the past six years, when we were away from Dallas, living in Aspen and London, this city has really evolved with new businesses and people flowing in. Many of our younger members belong to similar clubs in other cities and understood the concept before we opened Park House."

That model for Park House draws inspiration from the tony bits of Deborah and John's favorite clubs: lunch on The Arts Club patio; large group dinners and late-night dancing in Loulou's basement nightclub at 5 Hertford; over-the-top *everything* at the newly redesigned Annabel's; and the old-school mix of locals and billionaires at the Caribou Club in Aspen. At Park House, there is a strict dress code (no workout clothes, please), and children should be left at home, except for Sunday nights during family dinner. Programs and events, led by Madans, are

Park House co-founders John and Deborah Scott. John wears Ermenegildo Zegna, Highland Park Village.





A vinyl DJ booth — also known as the “Sweet Spot” — anchors the Living Room, serving as a spot for a regular DJ (or for club members wanting to spin a track or two).

ramping up across all categories, from wellness and wine to travel and design, fashion, and art. There’s even a Quiz Night, which Deborah says is all the rage right now in London’s most popular pubs.

Despite the buzz and mystique, some wondered: For a city anchored in genteel, old-school Southern country-club culture, could a vibrant social club that mixes business with pleasure — and perhaps the occasional late night dancing on tables — hold its own in Dallas. Barely two months since Park House opened, the answer is a definite “Yes,” with membership already a coveted status symbol. “We have been full since October, and we have a long wait list,” Deborah says. And the process of admittance is a discerning one. “All members are fully vetted by our membership team and go in front of the membership committee — which is made up of a diverse group of current members — for approval,” she says.

Then there are the dues, which are comparable to Soho House and other top clubs. For a resident membership (available to applicants older than 30), expect to pay \$5,000 for initiation and \$3,000 for annual dues. A discounted membership is offered to the 30-and-younger crowd and for out-of-towners living more than 100 miles from Park House. “We have tried to create a home away from home,” Deborah says. “We want our members to come often — breakfast, lunch, and dinner, late night — and share it with their friends.”

When you walk through the Gallery at Park House — an art space programmed by art advisor John Runyon, with rotating installations by renowned artists, including Charlie Billingham, the first to have his work on display — and into the Living Room, the first thing you notice is a massive taxidermy peacock. Call him the Park House mascot. “It was a vintage find in Dallas,” says Deborah of her favorite avian creature. “The feathers became the inspiration for many of our design elements, such as the menu covers and the embossed cocktail napkins.”

Enter Studio Collective, a boutique branding and design firm based in



In the Peacock Parlor, a ceiling mural by Dallas artist Francisco Moreno, and Ed Ruscha’s *News, Mews, Pews, Brews, Stews & Dues*, 1970.



At Park House, phone calls are only allowed in a few designated areas: Near reception, a pair of vintage London-style telephone booths stands at the ready for guests needing to take a call.

Venice, California. Led by principals Adam Goldstein, Leslie Kale, and Christian Schulz, Studio Collective has designed bold, unexpected interiors for the historic Hotel Figueroa in downtown Los Angeles, Santa Monica’s Jonathan Beach Club Restaurant, the Drunken Dragon restaurant in Miami, and the Spare Room in Hollywood’s infamous Roosevelt Hotel. With its focus on craft, history, and originality, Studio Collective was the right design team to lend its vision to Park House’s 15,000 square feet.

There was much to be done with a club that has multiple dining rooms and bars, two patios, and a massive space for work and play. Goldstein and Kale began to collaborate with Deborah, John, Megan, and Brady, including a trip to London — Deborah and John still lived there at the time — during which Goldstein



"That design could be its own little lounge," says Studio Collective's Adam Goldstein of the men's restroom.



Left: Indoor meets out in the Geen Room — a more relaxed alfresco dining room with custom banquettes, tropical greenery, and large windows. Right: Runyon Fine Arts has programmed the Gallery with a rotating exhibition of art. Currently on view is work by British artist Charlie Billingham.

toured all the top private clubs. "It's much different from anything I had seen in the states," he says. From there, a vision took shape. "The project developed into a space with contemporary European sensibilities blended with a sense of comfort and warmth, all injected with some personality of the four owners. We wanted a residential feel to the club."

The result is a bold pairing of color, shape, and rich textiles — a mood that evolves as you move through Park House's spaces. Most of the furniture, fabric, and carpets are custom designs by Studio Collective, while art installations and artisan-made pieces abound. In the Peacock Parlor (i.e., the moody bar with pool table and Ed Ruscha's *News, Mews, Pews, Brews, Stews & Dues*, 1970) is a ceiling mural by Dallas artist Francisco Moreno. The custom reception case in the lobby took six months to build, having first been hand-carved out of wood and then

cast in bronze. In the Living Room, a gallery wall dedicated to local artists holds a dozen or so works, including Nan Coulter's iconic photograph of the late Margaret McDermott viewing the total solar eclipse of 2017.

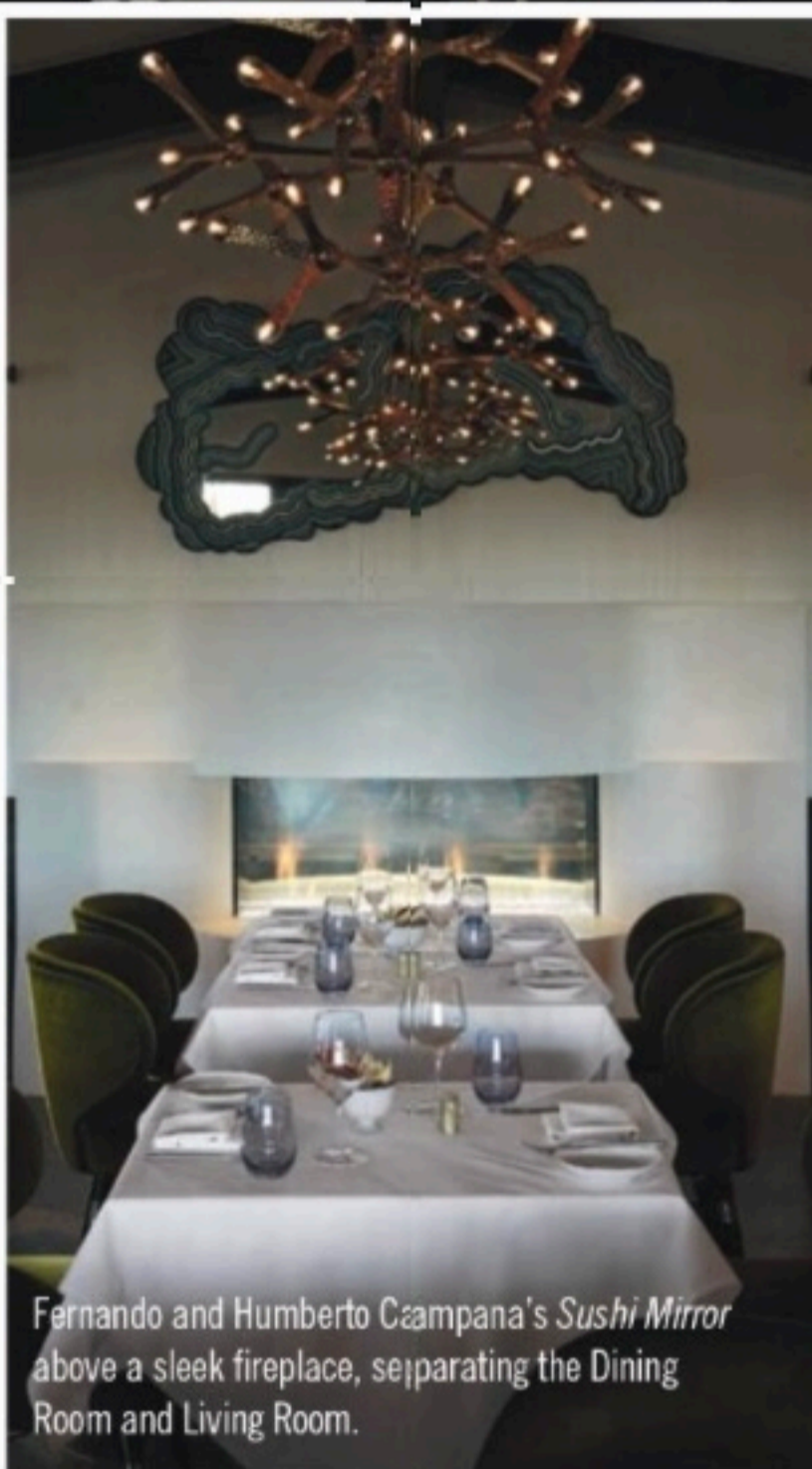
"One of our favorite moments happens in the cellar," says Kale of the small Wine Room. "We fell in love with an oversized, scaled floral wall covering with unconventional, bright, almost fluorescent tones ... We paired it with an incredible striae velvet for the upholstery on the backs of the dining chairs." Another standout moment comes in the photo booth — the only space in the club where social media is permitted, as long as you only publish the image snapped by the booth, of course. "The cheeky wall covering of faces was made by Flavor Paper," Kale says. "Then we hid the Park House owners' own photos within the many faces." Nearby are two vintage London-style phone



In the Living Room, one wall is dedicated to Texas artists including Matt Kleberg, Danielle Kimzey, Samantha McCurdy, John Pomara, Paul Winker, Maximilian Schubert, and Nan Coulter, whose portrait of the late Margaret McDermott commands attention.



Co-founder Brady Wood in Ermenegildo Zegna, Highland Park Village.



Fernando and Humberto Campana's *Sushi Mirror* above a sleek fireplace, separating the Dining Room and Living Room.



Co-founder Megan Wood in Frame, Highland Park Village.

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booths — small nooks intended for phone calls, which are not permitted throughout most areas inside Park House.

Unexpected details are a mainstay of the club. For Deborah, a preferred space in Park House is witty, sexy, and, well, tiny. Two opposing niches at the end of the Living Room contain two small, raised banquettes that can be closed off for privacy. “It’s the perfect spot to take a private call, have a romantic dinner, or squeeze in eight of your favorite people for late-night cocktails,” Deborah says. “Close the heavy velvet drape and ring the ‘Call for Service’ button when you need a refresh.”

Overall, Park House has the vibe of a swank supper club — all areas of the club are fit for wining and dining — with a dash

of practicality reserved for the daytime crowd that will come for work, high-powered meetings, and lower-key hangouts. Still, the goal here is simple: Have fun. “The owners all like to have a good time,” Goldstein says. “We didn’t want to create a space where you felt like you couldn’t let loose. We didn’t want the club to take itself too seriously, so there was both a casualness and lively vibe we were trying to achieve.” Consider it done — at least for now. According to Deborah, once things begin to calm after the opening flurry, the vision is to take Park House on the road. “We have registered the URLs for a handful of cities we would like to expand into,” she says. “Stay tuned.”