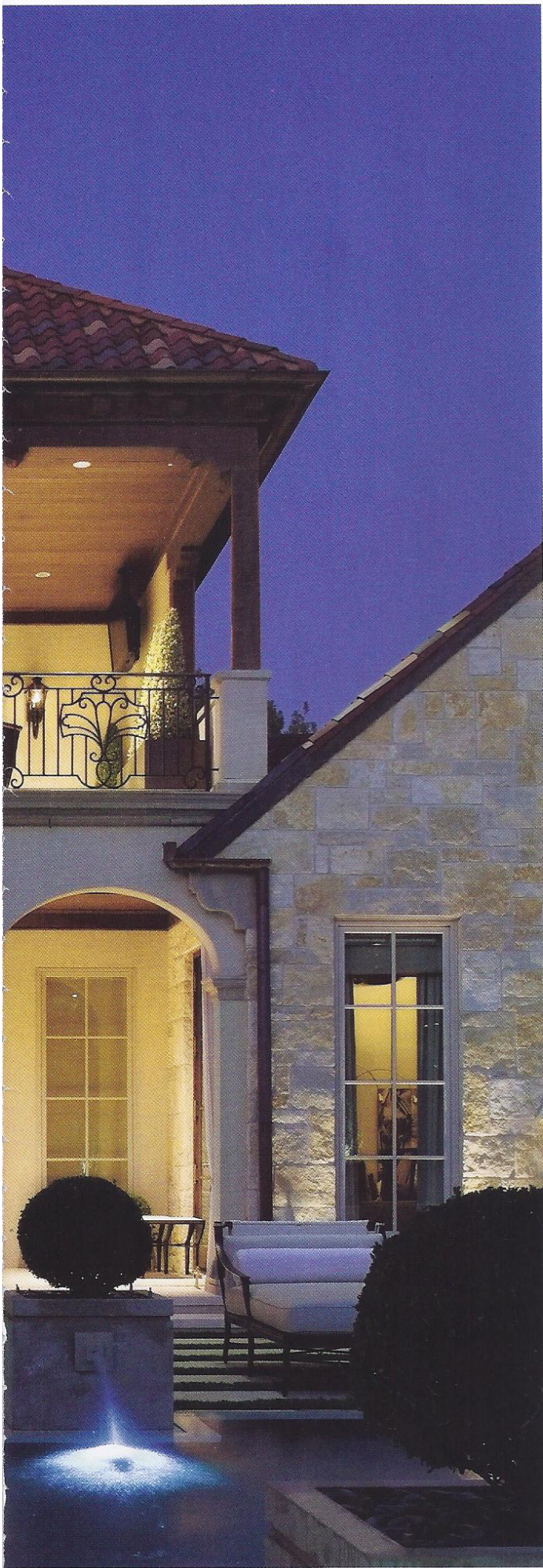






CREATIVE RULES

WRITTEN BY **LORI CONNER**

PHOTOGRAPHY BY **JOHN GRANEN**

DESIGNER **SOFIA JOELSSON** HAS WORKED WITH THIS DALLAS-BASED HOMEOWNER ON RESIDENCES ALL AROUND THE COUNTRY SINCE MUTUAL FRIENDS INTRODUCED THEM 10 YEARS AGO. All that time, he had his heart set on the Highland Park neighborhood where they drove together dozens of times, searching for a property that would afford lots of natural light. So, the day he called the Miami Beach-based office of Joelsson's SoJo Design, saying he'd found it and asking if she'd look at the floor plan, she was sure he was joking. But a foundation had just been poured on his "dream lot" by Chuck Stephenson, of Plano's Stephenson Custom Builders, for a Tuscan-inspired home designed by his firm in collaboration with Dallas architect Richard Davis. With Joelsson's blessing, the customization process began.

Joelsson describes the homeowner, who parlayed success in oil into music, Hollywood movies and economic development, as easygoing, with an innate sense of hospitality and showmanship—traits that inspired the estate's overall design. She envisioned iconic, masculine luxury with a clean, weightless edge—a world-class destination for him and his globetrotting business partners to work and to nurture their creativity. "He is all about comfort," says Joelsson. "We wanted down-to-earth elegance that was cozy enough to host all his friends and colleagues, and allow them to lounge and move around the rooms easily."

INTERIOR DESIGN	Sofia Joelsson, SoJo Design LLC	
ARCHITECTURE	Richard Davis, Richard Drummond Davis Architect	
HOME BUILDER	Chuck Stephenson, Stephenson Custom Builders, Inc.	
BEDROOMS 7	BATHROOMS 10	SQUARE FEET 11,500



ROMAN FORGE

The grand foyer celebrates classical Roman architecture with a groin-vaulted ceiling and grand stair with a custom anthemion motif. Craftspeople at Artistic Metal Fabricators in Dallas forged unique railings to the design team's specifications. The second level is dedicated to visitors' quarters, including a living room, midnight kitchen and seven unique guest suites—allowing returning callers to have their favorite room or an entirely new experience.



GALLANT INTENTIONS

Dallas-based landscape architect Harold Leidner mixed bold lines and thoughtful details outside with Tuscan-inspired hedges, plantings and topiaries. Artfully placed concrete slabs protect the lawn.

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The scale of the interior volumes is a refreshing surprise in this private, suburban setting, maintaining a human element of scope despite the home's large footprint. Uninterrupted limestone flooring flows throughout the piazza, living room, grand foyer and more than 700 square feet of covered porches. When the large French doors are open, 15-foot drapes sway between the living room and central courtyard. The piazza exudes a lavish modernism that recalls the luxury hotels of Las Vegas and South Beach. "It's sophisticated, for adults," says Joelsson, pointing to a cabana, whirlpool and sun bed, which faces a waterfall movie screen, cocktail bar with pizza oven, and a conversation area built around a fire pit.





DOWN TO EARTH

With its palette of walnut, leather and nail-head trim, the living room is a study in casual elegance. The star player is a tufted leather ottoman custom-designed by SoJo Design and manufactured by Amir Khamneipur Design in New York. Ralph Lauren armchairs from Webster & Company in Naples, Florida, mingle with a custom sectional sofa and throw pillows by Christian Liaigre for Holly Hunt, who also created the floor lamp with noir patina over solid bronze.

A photograph of a sophisticated kitchen interior. The space features white shaker-style cabinetry with brass hardware. A large, dark-stained wood island with a thick countertop is the central focus, with three dark leather bar stools tucked underneath. The floor is made of dark wood in a herringbone pattern. The ceiling has exposed dark wood beams. Two large, brass-colored dome pendant lights hang over the island. In the background, a wall of onyx travertine serves as a backsplash for a stainless steel range. To the left, a built-in oven and a refrigerator are visible. The overall aesthetic is one of classic elegance and robust craftsmanship.

SMOOTH ELEGANCE

Robust volumes and soft finishes define the well-outfitted kitchen used frequently during entertaining by celebrity and professional chefs. A massive wood-block island, timeless cabinetry by Christopher Peacock in Los Angeles, stainless-steel and glass-front Sub-Zero and Miele appliances, and barstools by Maxine Snider for Holly Hunt add even more iconic appeal. Spans of onyx travertine and hand-scraped walnut floor assembled in a herringbone pattern by Builders Carpet achieve understated embellishment.



GAME ON

Visitors have their own living room in the guest wing with intimate offshoots, like this light-hearted seating area. The four-drawer game table is by Thomas Pheasant, purchased from Baker Knapp & Tubbs. Retro chairs from Forty Five Ten are covered in eye-popping zebra leather. A collage of Italian movie posters by Mimmo Rotella, titled *due evasi* and purchased at Christie's London, contributes graphic appeal.

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Large ceiling beams and solid walnut doors echo the home's Tuscan style. Hand-scraped walnut floors laid in a variety of patterns add the perfect level of detail to the sizable rooms. Davis says every item—mantels, moldings, the custom anthemion motif for the grand stair, privacy alcoves buffering private and public areas, and a triple-vaulted ceiling in the master suite wing—received Joelsson's blessing. "The idea was to achieve elegant simplicity," he notes.



POP AND CIRCUMSTANCE

An artistic homage to femme fatales from the silver screen welcomes visitors to the guest wing. Tony Scherman's encaustic portrait of Marilyn Monroe from his *The Junkies* series was acquired from Runyon Fine Arts in Dallas. Andy Warhol's *Shoes* is an unpublished screen print created with diamond dust on cold-pressed paper; it was purchased from Wooster Projects in New York. The zebra leather bench by Hinson House is from Jones Walker in Dallas.





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In the study and dining room, the carefully curated furniture is arranged to draw attention to the pieces' magnificent silhouettes, thereby exuding a sense of drama and expectation. Sensuous leather, cashmere, silk and wax finishes add inviting softness. Walnut paneling makes the billiards room's 20-foot ceiling feel more intimate and is the perfect foil for antique candelabra. Joelsson discovered the vintage European billiard table in worn condition in New York. Its authenticity and character made it a must-have, so she acquired it and had it refurbished.

"I wish I had another project just like this!" exclaims Stephenson, who says he enjoyed working with Joelsson not only for her great personality, but because the collaboration resulted in aesthetic and material innovations, like the beautiful wood-and-tile floor design of the master bathroom.

SENSUAL PROJECTIONS

The T-shaped swimming pool by Harold Leidner is the focal point of the estate; every guest suite has a view. At night, LED lights change colors to fit any mood, while guests watch movies on the waterfall projection screen.



SCENE STEALER

A Kohler tub from Ferguson Enterprises in Dallas is positioned in the middle of the master bath and generously bedecked with a walnut surround and armrests of Alpaca Cream limestone. A vaulted ceiling, walnut paneling and a heated wood-and-limestone floor also give memorable performances. Mirrors are by Hejny Contracting in Ennis.

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Joelsson returns the compliment, and also credits the homeowner's faith in the design team and in its ingenuity. "When he trusts people, he lets them do their jobs and does not micromanage, which can kill a lot of creativity," she says, adding that the fire pit, where he now enjoys sharing stories and roasting marshmallows, has become one of his favorite places. "He's a gentleman," Joelsson reflects. "There is an ease about him that makes people want to relax and open up." And the house often has the same effect. **L**





BEST ENSEMBLE

A custom leather bed by SoJo Design is a fun, modern take on the traditional wing chair and was manufactured by Amir Khamneipur Design in New York. Bolster pillow fabric is by Spinneybeck and Nancy Corzine. The pillows were crafted by Interiors by Duran in Miami, which also made the custom silk-and-wool rug. Roman shades, a round side table and a larger-than-life mirror framed in lizard leather by Artefacto complete the look.