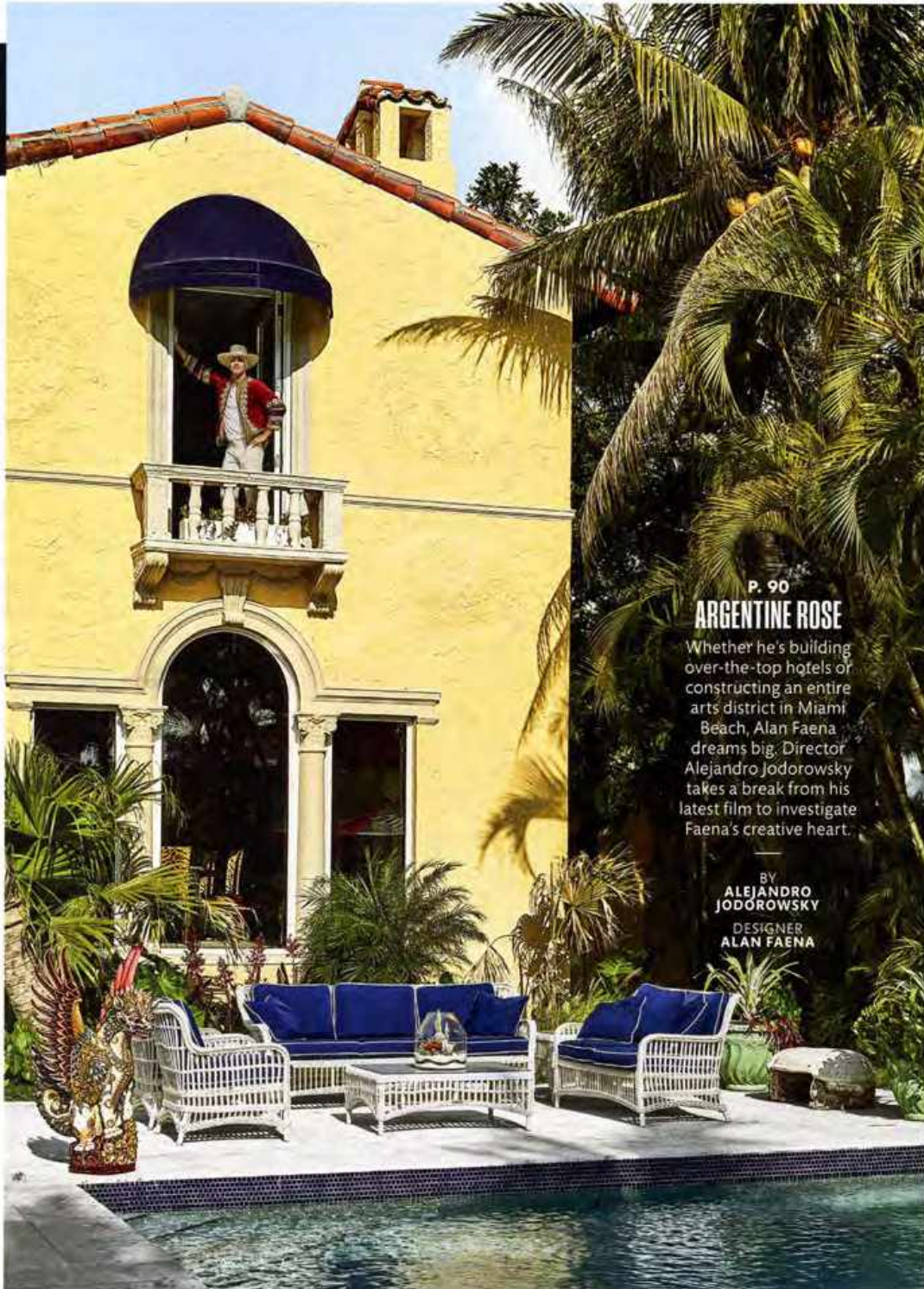

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Whether he's building over-the-top hotels or constructing an entire arts district in Miami Beach, Alan Faena dreams big. Director Alejandro Jodorowsky takes a break from his latest film to investigate Faena's creative heart.

BY
ALEJANDRO JODOROWSKY
DESIGNER
ALAN FAENA

DOUGLAS FRIEDMAN

ARGENTINE

Argentine hotelier and real estate developer Alan Faena, wearing his own designs, at the entrance to the circa-1910 Spanish-style Miami Beach home he designed with Diego Pereira Luchetta. The elephant is by artist Peter Tunney, the staghorn fern is from Plant the Future, and the banyan tree is 200 years old.

Whether he's building over-the-top hotels or constructing an entire arts district in Miami Beach, **Alan Faena** dreams big. Director Alejandro Jodorowsky takes a break from his latest film, *Psychomagic: An Art That Heals*, to investigate Faena's creative heart.

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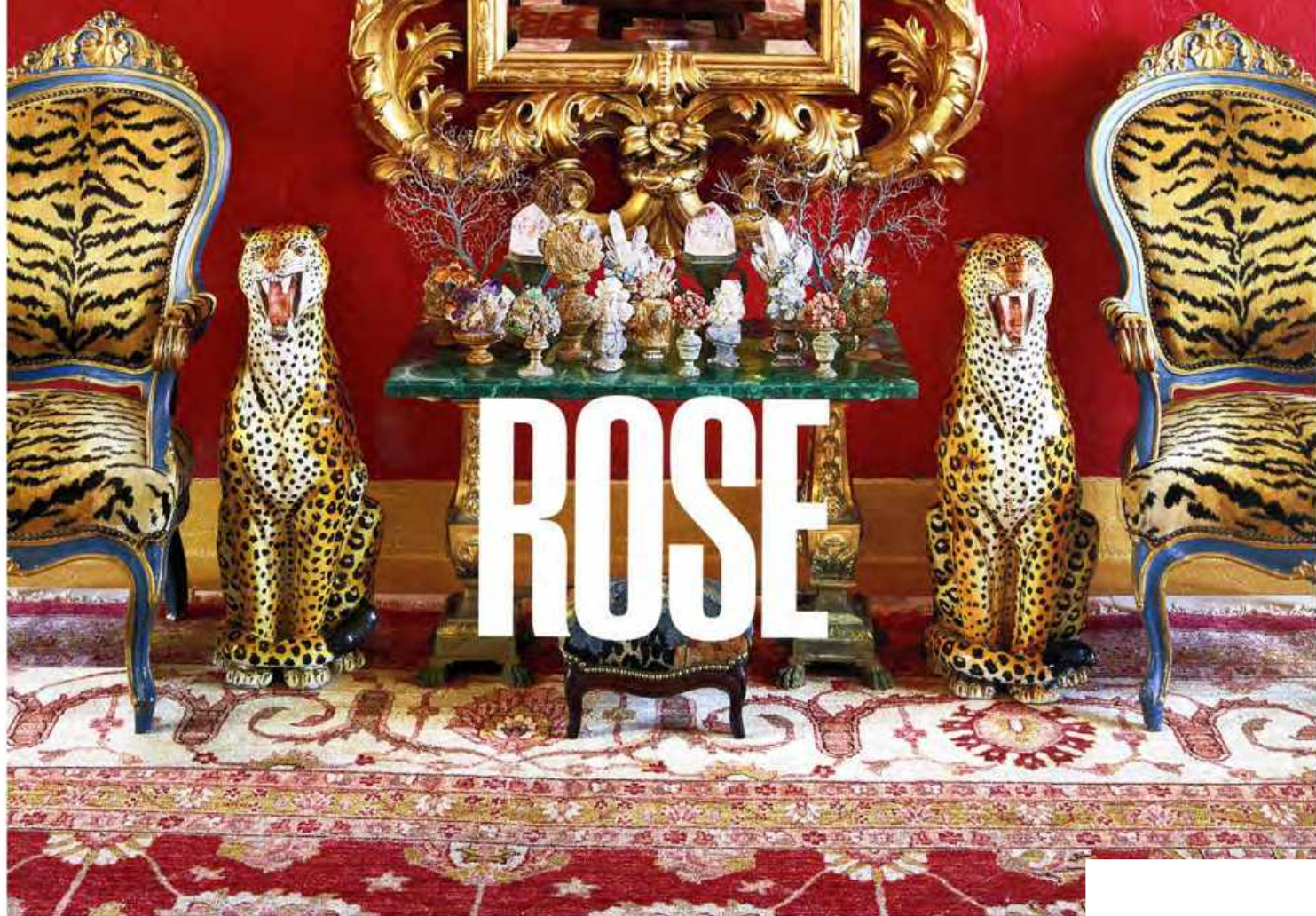
BY
**ALEJANDRO
JODOROWSKY**

PHOTOGRAPHS BY
DOUGLAS FRIEDMAN

PRODUCED BY
ROBERT RUFINO

In the living room, a 17th-century crystal collection is displayed on an imperial malachite table. The Louis XV armchairs are covered in a Clarence House velvet, the mirror is 12th-century Florentine, and the cheetahs are hand-painted German ceramic. The rug is Persian, and the paint is custom by Faena.

ROSE



IN A UNIVERSE WHERE EVERYTHING IS AN ILLUSION,

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where the imaginative individual finds himself confronting dreams that shift between horrific inferno and blissful paradise, there are those who admit defeat when faced with a crisis. Others, however, choose to seek out the most beautiful illusions. And nowhere is illusion more poignantly crystallized than in one's personal spaces: In a home, we create a finite universe, one whose structure and decoration reflect that reverent paradise of our dreams. That is what Alan Faena—a man who has created neighborhoods and art districts—has done in his gilded and rouged Miami Beach home.

Alan knew deep in his heart that getting close to a beautiful illusion was not the same as arriving. He bounded forward, surpassing the limits of some industries in his freehearted search. Alan is a creator who has not only lent his name to his singular territories but also resides in them. Witness him in his signature tropical whites (sometimes with a flash of red), a matching top hat or fedora perched jauntily on his head, as he fully inhabits the baroque, serenely exuberant rooms of his house. Or pay a visit to his Faena hotel nearby, a red-curtain fantasy of life that is a distillation of pure joy, with exquisite details. His presence transmits the alchemistic harmony of well-being and extreme elegance and transforms luxury into a sweetness of living.

My friend Alan's ambition is generous. By seeking the most beautiful of all illusions, he has constructed an expanding universe, overcoming the perpetual evanescence of things through incessant creation, brimming with art and beauty, without ever losing his profound sense of hospitality, his elegance, his courtesy, and his trueness to himself—all precious and rare qualities. Here, I welcome you into his most inner galaxy through a series of introspective questions.



A Balinese dragon anchors the swimming-pool area.

ALEJANDRO JODOROWSKY: **What guides you—your intellect or your intuition? Your body or your soul?**

ALAN FAENA: My entire life guides me—my instincts. I work on myself in order to be more discerning, to not deceive myself, to be transparent with others.

When you were little, what did you want to be as a grown-up?

I often imagined myself as an astronaut. I covered my wall with pictures of places that allowed me to travel to unknown worlds. Life has given me the tenacity and concentration to turn these dreams into reality—and to add magic to these realities. I've learned how important it is to nourish the dreams one has as a child, in order to create new realities as an adult.

What has been your greatest happiness, and your greatest sadness?

The birth of my son, Noa—the day-to-day of being with him, evolving alongside him—has been and remains a blessing. When I confront my creative limits, I feel a kind of sadness when I don't live up to my own ideas or standards. But these disappointments are inevitable, part of the process. If we are awake, we are always learning.

What's the end purpose of art?

For me, the purpose of art is to make the world more noble, deeply felt, sensitive, and discerning. To elevate us. Art is an offering, an eternal source for anyone willing to explore its depths.

What does home mean to you?

My houses are more than homes—they are temples. Wherever I go, I create them. I live in my own temple within my own time, my own music, my own art, my own loved ones. Each element that I select has an aesthetic power or spiritual significance that elevates me. I don't think in terms of design, but rather in a layering of my life experiences. Spaces have their own energies, ▷



▲ In the second living room, a Baker sofa and artworks by (from left) Juan Stoppani and Julian Schnabel.

◀ A guest bedroom has a Chippendale bed, a custom rug by Catherine Martin, and artworks by (from left) Daniel Basso and Gonzalo Fuenmayor.

➤ Faena's hat collection is on display in his master bedroom closet.





▼
A Philippe Starck chair, a Mexican ottoman, a Louis XV mirror, and a candelabra artwork by Peter Tunney in the master bathroom.

►
Faena, wearing a Katherine Grace kimono and Carolina K pants, on his balcony. The mask is vintage Indonesian, the lantern is Spanish colonial, and the paint is custom by Faena.

▼
In the master bedroom, the bed is Spanish colonial, the bedding and curtains are both custom by Faena, and the accent pillows are Mexican. The cocktail table is Regency-style, and the artworks are by Todd Eberle.



and each layer that is added changes and influences the energy of a place. My collection of crystals surrounds and fills my home, and they transmit their energies to me. Art that I select for my space is not based on the name or trajectory of the artist, but rather in terms of how a piece makes me think or see from a different perspective. I create my spaces in such a way that they fill me with energy, influence my creations, and give me peace to continue transforming. Ultimately, I am who I am because of the spaces that I create—they allow me to live in absolute peace with myself and the exterior world.

If you could make the world a better place, what's the first thing you would change?

I believe in a cosmic evolution and an eternal universal path. The universe can be perfect in its chaos—and I'm not interested in changing that, but rather changing myself. The world changes with the intelligent (or not so intelligent) movements set into motion by human beings.

What is your goal in life?

My goal is the transformative experience of the path itself. What matters most is not the end goal but rather my daily transformations along the way. ■



▲ The umbrellas and lounge chairs by the pool are custom by Faena. The grass is Zoysia.

◀ In the main living room, the tiger print sofa is custom by Faena, and the side tables and love seat are by Pollaro, the latter custom-made for Faena. The footstools are Louis XIV, the deer head is antique from Germany's Black Forest, and the Art Deco faux tusks are resin. The Spanish chandeliers are 19th century.

▶ A Michael Benisty Buddha sculpture in the main living room. The sconce is 20th-century French, the objects in the windowsill are French starburst reliquaries, and the marble tiled floor is original. For details, see Resources.



Holkham Hall.

Houghton Hall.

The table at Houghton Hall.

A bathroom at Houghton Hall.

Breakfast at Houghton Hall.

Sandringham House.

A scene from dinner.

LOVE AUTUMN IN ENGLAND. There's something about the slow lead-up to the holiday season that feels protracted and deliciously long. In New York, it's the opposite. One minute you're on holiday in Majorca, eating whole fish at Ca's Patro March, and then *bam!* You're racing to see the windows on Fifth Avenue and then you're on a plane again, this time to Miami for Art Basel (more on this later). Anyway, in September, I found myself with *ED* A-List designer Kathryn M. Ireland in a pink, silk-covered four-poster bed at Houghton Hall, one of the most beautiful houses in the Norfolk countryside. We were there for a dinner honoring its owners, Lord and Lady Cholmondeley, and their new exquisite collaboration with de Gournay. The next day, after a full English breakfast (black pudding and all), Kathryn took me on a whirlwind tour of other great English houses (check out my Instagram for more). And then it was back to London to reconvene with the crew at Annabel's and Loulou's.

That's autumn in England, but there's nothing better than Christmas in New York. Just ask Peter Marino, whose new Chanel megastore opens up in

time for the holidays (see "Truth in Decorating," page 70). As covetable as the goods are inside, so too is the art and superb furniture, which he handpicked—and some of which he made. His musings on the so-called death of retail are also of note (design can fix all!). Speaking of art, *ED* gives you exclusive access to Alan Faena's exotic and wonderful Miami Beach manse, filled with an eclectic array of tiger stripes, crystals, and a closet full of white capes just across the water from his eponymous hotel (sorry, we can't get you a reservation). Then it's back to Blighty for a very special *ED* Christmas. What's that look like? A splendid manor house, of course, and personal essays by the hilarious Paul Fortune and Israeli chef Yotam Ottolenghi. Because that is what the holidays—and design—mean to me: a global expedition between Georgian piles, Miesian malls, and a Deco drive down Collins Ave.

Whitney

Whitney Robinson, Editor in Chief
elledecor@hearst.com

Follow me on Instagram: @whowhatwhit