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[SOCIAL CIRCLES]











SCENE

By Phebe Wahl

Restoration Project

RH Atlanta, The Gallery at the Estate opens up with a blowout bash.

THE SCENE

Atlanta's smart set gathered to fete the opening of the six-story flagship RH Atlanta, The Gallery at the Estate in Buckhead. Guests noshed eats courtesy of chef Billy Allin of Cakes & Ale as executed by Dennis Dean Catering, as they enjoyed live performances by RH Music artists Edei and Larkin Poe punctuated by DJ Chelsea Leyland, who spun between sets.

THE PLAYERS

Host committee members Radcliffe Bailey, Cinda and Mark Boomershine, Michel Boyd, Emily Giffin, Jada Loveless, Keisha Noel, Christina Oh, William Peace, Danielle Rollins, Kathryn Stockett, Beth Webb and Mark Williams

THE HIGHLIGHTS

Flown in from New York for the grand occasion, bartender JZ from Cipriani served up fresh bellinis to the crowd of 2,200 tastemakers and notables. A calm settled over the buzzing party as RH Music singer-songwriter Edei glided down the staircase and through the crowd before getting onstage. The British beauty, known for her distinctive funk-laden, hip-hop sound and spectacularly soulful voice, wowed Atlanta's A-list with an evocative rendition of her chart-topping single "Loved."

HOTOS BY BEN ROSE PHOTOGRAPHY



HOUSE PROUD

RESTORATION HARDWARE REINVENTS ITSELF ONCE AGAIN WITH ITS LARGEST SHOWROOM EVER IN BUCKHEAD.

By Travis Neighbor Ward



Driving by Restoration Hardware's new showroom on Peachtree Road, it's easy to mistake it for a hotel. Six stories tall, charcoal gray and adorned with an endless series of balconies and 12-foot-tall French doors (there are 220 doors total), the building announces itself with a simple "RH" on the facade—the company's rebranding of its name.

[DESIGN]

The fact that it doesn't scream showroom is no mistake—and the store,

which was built on the land where ESPN Zone used to be and was designed by California architect James Gillam, is officially called RH Atlanta: The Gallery at the Estate in Buckhead. "It's probably more like a home than it is a store," says RH's CEO Gary Friedman, who flew in for the ribbon-cutting ceremony from his Marin County headquarters.

If you're a fan of RH's elegant assortment of furniture, CONTINUED...

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... CONTINUED lighting and other home goods, it will. As soon as you walk through the castle-like doors and into the enormous central lobby, you're hit with a dreamy sensation that never existed in RH's previous Atlanta stores, which are both now closed. RH inhabits an entire universe of its own, with its own rules of style. Spanning 70,000 square feet indoors and out, The Gallery includes an abundance of natural light, seating areas where customers are encouraged to lounge, lush gardens and price tags so discreet they're often hard to find. Rooms spill into more rooms endlessly, making the atmosphere deliciously decadent.

As you ascend one of the winding staircases past strings of jellyfish chandeliers with a breeze blowing around you (the staff leaves the doors open on warm days), it's like traveling upward through levels of an RH Paradiso, where neutral Belgian linens, lime-rubbed wood and butter-soft leather are continuously reinterpreted to accommodate houses, apartments and even the baby nursery.

Having met Friedman, who easily talks about things like "heart and soul" at length, it makes sense that it's so different from other stores this size. "What RH means to me is the rebel's home," he says, comfortably adding that he never lived in a house growing up, and that his single mom used to redecorate their coffee table by switching out contact paper on top. "At Gallery also has separate ... CONTINUED

RH, we're not good at following rules that don't make sense to us. We want to be true to ourselves and to do something real and authentic."

The rules he's referring to are ones he thinks have dominated department stores and shopping malls for decades. "They're archaic windowless boxes lacking any sense of humanity," he says bluntly. "Would we want to live there? No. At RH, we're selling a feeling, and people want to create that feeling."

Atlanta, he thinks, is the perfect place to do it. Friedman has been coming here for 28 years, since his early days of retail when he revamped Williams-Sonoma and Pottery Barn. "Atlanta is a city that has a feeling of creativity and energy, and it's going somewhere."

The largest of its showrooms to date, The Gallery at The Estate in Buckhead offers customers the first chance to see things in person that were only visible online, or in the company's behemoth Source Books, until now. These include the Ben Soleimani Vintage Rugs collection and RH Small Spaces, where iconic, large-scale pieces have been made petite. It also includes RH Baby and Child, a magical kingdom where kids can hide inside the velvet-lined Orbit chair (\$1,499) and teepee tents (starting at \$229), lie on the Aviator bed (\$1,499 for twin) and drool over faux fur-lined beanbag chairs (\$249). The

howcase billowing shade canopies, alimmering chandeliers and ntimate RH outdoor collection settings; the RH Baby and Child callery occupies the entire fifth floo phisticated children's furnishing are designed to blend seamlessly with the rest of the home.



"It's probably more like a home than it is a store."

-RH'S CEO, GARY FRIEDMAN









.. CONTINUED in-house design centers for adult and child spaces. (But, no, you won't see everything from the Source Books in here; Friedman says that would require a space three times this size.)

The RH experience extends outside as well. On the 8,000-square-foot rooftop park and conservatory, customers can take in stunning views of downtown Atlanta and Stone Mountain just past the potted boxwoods and trees. Soon they will also be able to sample wine from the Ma(i)sonry Napa Valley wine bar.

Out back—where valets offer complimentary parking, and lush gated gardens are centered around a 50-foot infinity reflecting pool—customers can recline on chaise lounges in front of a fireplace or trickling fountains.

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Like the company, RH Atlanta is evolving. Someday, Friedman says, it may offer small concerts in the garden as part of RH Music, the company's music venture, although it will not be rented out

> for parties. Also in the incubator: RH Kitchen and RH Atelier, a collection of apparel, footwear, jewelry and accessories.

Overall, The Gallery is a glittering, glamorous domain where you feel that the owner may have left to search the world for new wares to bring home. Everywhere you turn, there are mirrors and twinkling

chandeliers, Palladian arches, antique looking maps and sprawling white Cloud sofas that make you want to kick back and rest your weary feet.

If you're there when Friedman happens to be visiting, chances are he'll join you.

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