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Art on High

One eagerly anticipated skyscraper, **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,

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



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