



THE ARCHITECT

ALLAN SHULMAN

By Saxon Henry
Portrait by Moris Moreno



If architecture had a superhero, its name would be Allan Shulman. He has made it his mission to act as the memory for any city whose leaders have forgotten its intended verve. His talent for updating historical buildings and restating their contexts with modern additions is renowned. In many ways, his education primed him for the exercise, as he studied at Cornell University, where the philosophy of its leaders during his day was to allow the classical and modern to collide.

"It was well understood that there could be much more continuity between classical and modern architecture," explains Shulman, who left Cornell to become a citizen of the world, traveling to Tokyo, Paris and points beyond. Graduate school drew him to Miami, where he eventually set up shop and began making a name for himself as a practicing architect and thoughtful urban planner.

One of his strengths in each of these areas is his enjoyment of and steadfast ability to conduct research. "We always try to bring the building traditions of any particular community to bear on our designs," he explains. "But we're building in a different era, so we try to invent as well, creating buildings that are reflective of our time and place but that have some memory of what was."

To hear his grasp of South Florida architectural history, you'd think he grew up in one of the palm-studded cities for which he is designing buildings, but he knew nothing of the area before he landed at the University of Miami as a grad student. Though research can be cumbersome, the spin Shulman puts on his findings is downright entertaining. During his Miami Art Museum lecture earlier this year, entitled *Miami's Modern Masters*, he presented Lawrence Murray Dixon, his "evolutionary modernist"; Igor Polevitzky, his "tropical modernist"; and Morris Lapidus, his "sybaritic modernist," whom he pegged as architects who just want to have fun.

Shulman began teaching in 1992 and quickly realized that he felt passionate about it. "I believe that architecture is a culture — not just an art or a science," he says. "Any culture needs to be communicated, passed along, further explored and evolved." His penchant for preservation is a strong component of his teaching. "A question I ask my students is, 'in our process of invention and re-invention, how can we add a new layer to the city



1. Fairwind Hotel. 2. Banana Republic. 3. Browns Hotel. 4. 418 Meridian. 5. Belvedere House. 6. CollinsTwelve. 7. and 8. Belvedere House. 9. The Vitrine. 10. Soho Beach House. Opposite page: Shulman in the library of the Rubell Family Collection + Residence, which he designed.

while also being thememory of the city?"

The next two years will witness the completion of a number of Shulman + Associates buildings, among them a LEED-certified, or "green," residence in Coconut Grove; a list of boutique hotels, including the Soho Beach House; and the spa at the Greystone Hotel.

"What I love about architecture is that it has given me the tool to look at cities from different angles, whether it be historic preservation, urban planning or modern architecture, and to work within each of these areas creatively," says Shulman. "I see architecture as a portal into different design challenges." ☺