



LYNN WYATT, Y'ALL

The mother of all hostesses has long been Texas's most GLAMOROUS DIPLOMAT. So when her state needed her, she came to its rescue in high style.

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LONE STAR
Lynn Wyatt isn't just involved with causes like the Houston Ballet and Rothko Chapel. She has also been instrumental in raising millions in the months since Hurricane Harvey.





COMMAND CENTER
Wyatt's bedroom in her River Oaks home, where she has lived since 1999, does double duty as her office.

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On a sunny morning in Houston, Lynn Wyatt descends the staircase of her River Oaks residence, a red brick colonial she has called home for 19 years. “Well, hello there,” she says in her husky Southern drawl. “The phone rang and it was Elton John. I thought I was late.” There’s no need to worry: Wyatt is right on time.

Despite casual phone calls from pop stars and her seeming ubiquity at the world’s most glamorous events, Wyatt is, deep down, a homebody. And ever since Hurricane Harvey struck Houston in August 2017, home has been where her focus is. “I’ve always believed that Houstonians are resilient,” she says. After the floors of the Houston Ballet were warped by flooding, Wyatt stepped in to underwrite a portable model of floor. “I remember when Nureyev came to Houston and asked about the floor,” she says. “It’s the most important component of the ballet.”

She’s also a leading donor to the Alley Theatre and Houston Grand Opera, a force behind the Star of Hope Mission, which aids Houston’s homeless population, and a cultural ambassador for the Rothko Chapel. She and her oil tycoon husband Oscar recently gave \$10 million to the Museum of Fine Arts Houston, and when an expansion is unveiled in 2020 it will include the 202-seat Lynn and Oscar Wyatt Theater.

In 1999 the Wyatts downsized from their storied estate (dubbed the “Wyatt Hyatt” thanks to its stream of notable visitors) to their current five-bedroom home. “I had fun decorating,” Wyatt says, which is something of an understatement about a house with a foyer outfitted with a bold Dubuffet painting, a carved wood candelabra, a Gustavo Vélaz marble sculpture, and a recently acquired Picasso linocut. “It’s a portrait of his favorite

wife, Jacqueline,” she says. “I just love it.”

Fittingly, her home also serves as an homage to family and friends. “Truman Capote gave me this,” she says, cradling a black and white box that is decorated with a collage of photos of prison inmates, with SNAKEBITE FREEZE scribbled on the side. “It’s gruesome,” she says, “but that’s Truman.” In the library, in addition to Asian prints and African collectibles, there’s a shrine to Andy Warhol, with earmarked passages from his diaries. Wyatt erupts in laughter while reading a 1980 entry: “Lynn couldn’t come downstairs to see her portrait. She was going to Paris the next day.” Of course, that portrait now hangs in her living room, among Louis XIV–style furnishings, artworks by Kenneth Noland and Helen Frankenthaler, and a jewel box by David Linley carved to look like their old estate.

There are also other collections: ivory and porcupine quill boxes, antique clocks, and Yves Saint Laurent’s handcrafted “Love” posters—which the designer sent every New Year’s. “I sold 14 and gave the money to the Rothko Chapel,” Wyatt says. Perhaps the most notorious room is the leopard-print bathroom covered in Helmut Newton photographs—including Elsa Peretti in a bunny costume. “People go in and stay in for 20 minutes,” she says.

Upstairs, Wyatt spends most of her time in her blue and white bedroom, which doubles as an office. “Really, my desk is my bed, but then I always have to clean it up,” she says with a laugh.

As the morning turns to afternoon, the rapper Bun B, a friend of Wyatt’s whose star-studded telethon last September raised more than \$44 million for hurricane relief, arrives to brainstorm more fundraising efforts. “Does anyone want some tea or champagne?” Wyatt asks. A cork is popped. “My theory is, when you do something for the first time, you have to hit it out of the park,” Wyatt says. “Otherwise, they don’t come back.” «



Wyatt's collection of miniature clocks.

New Year's “Love” cards by Yves Saint Laurent.



A gift made by Truman Capote.



Tortoiseshell boxes in the library.



Quill boxes purchased in India.



Makeup by Lauren Falls at Hues by Heather. Floral arrangement by In Bloom Inc.



Wyatt's bedside table.



As a T&C cover girl, 1985.



A sculpture by Gustavo Vélaz.