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A Lexus LC 500 hand-painted by Atlanta artist R. Land sits on display at the Fox Theatre in Atlanta. Lexus sponsors the Marquee Club, which opened last year.

MARQUEE CLUB PRESENTED BY LEXUS AT ATLANTA'S FOX THEATRE MARKS SUCCESSFUL FIRST YEAR

BY LISA WHITE

SHELLING OUT \$10 million to create the Marquee Club presented by Lexus was an anomaly for Atlanta's Fox Theatre, which had not seen a capital outlay of this amount since the theater was built in 1929.

"That was significant for us," said Adina Erwin, Fox Theatre's vice president and chief operating officer. "We've done capital improvements of \$1 million to \$1.5 million over time, but a construction process like this had never been done here before."

With the city's bevy of entertainment spaces — including Mercedes-Benz Stadium, not 2 years old; newly renovated State Farm Arena; Cobb Energy Center; and the Sandy Springs Performing Arts Center, which opened last year — it can be difficult for a venue in this neck of the woods to set itself apart.

"We're in a very competitive market with terrific facilities and new ones coming online," said Allan Vella, Fox Theatre's CEO and vice president. "We couldn't let the architecture of our building do all the heavy lifting."

Originally designed as part of a Shrine Temple when it was built,

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MARQUEE CLUB

PRESENTED BY  LEXUS

For information on membership packages and
single-event access visit foxtheatre.org/marqueeclub



The image is a composite of two photographs. The top photograph shows a city skyline at dusk or night, with a prominent skyscraper in the center and other buildings on either side. The sky is a mix of deep blue and orange from the setting or rising sun. The bottom photograph shows a rooftop terrace with modern outdoor furniture, including sofas, armchairs, and tables. The terrace is lit up with warm lights, and a stone wall is visible in the background.

CHEERS TO ANOTHER YEAR UNDER THE STARS!

Thank you to those who have explored and indulged in our cherished space over the past year.
We look forward to entertaining guests for years to come!

GETTING IN

CORPORATE PACKAGES TO SINGLE-EVENT PASSES

TO ENSURE AS MANY guests as possible can take advantage of its amenities, which include early access to the club 90 minutes before events, complimentary food and nonalcoholic beverages, private restrooms and bars, and coat check, the Marquee Club presented by Lexus offers both membership and single-event pricing models.

Corporate annual membership packages are \$12,000, \$24,000, \$36,000 and \$48,000, which admit 10, 20, 30 or 40 guests, respectively. All include unlimited club pass transfers, priority access to premium tickets and no ticket transaction fees.

Individual membership packages are \$3,000 for two club passes or \$6,000 for four. Both include priority access to buy premium show tickets for all Fox events through a private ticketing concierge as well as waived ticket transaction fees and four club transfer passes a year.

Broadway subscriber packages range from \$250 to \$600 and include club access for all regular-season Broadway shows, one guest to the club and two transfers a year.

Single-event club access ranges from \$35 to \$115, depending on the ticket price

"The club also is used for private rentals as well as special events, such as bourbon and wine tastings and entertainment when the theater is not in use," said Allen Vella, theater CEO and vice president. "We also open it up for local parades and events on Peachtree Street. We're constantly looking for new ways to activate the space."

One example was a mixer held by Midtown Alliance, a nonprofit that works with businesses in the area that's home to the theater.

"We invited several hundred office workers to experience the club," Vell said. "We handed out free tickets and did giveaways. We're always doing civic-related events." — *Lisa White*

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the theater was described at the time of its opening as having "a picturesque and almost disturbing grandeur beyond imagination." Its architecture is heavily influenced by Spain's Alhambra and Egypt's Temple of Karnak in its ornateness. This is marked by soaring domes, minarets and sweeping archways on the interior and trompe l'oeil art creating realistic optical illusions on its exterior.

The goal of the club project was to elevate the guest experience at the Fox, adding a premium asset that had never existed at the venue.

"The project was driven around wanting to meet guest needs on a different level and maintain our competitive edge in a market saturated with entertainment venues," Erwin said. "This was a substantial decision on the part of our board and management from a financial and strategic perspective."

The Fox offers access to the club through a variety of seasonlong and single-event options (see related story).

A year later, it's evident that the nonprofit organization's self-funded project, which transformed a corner of the theater formerly rented to a jazz club into a premium space, is a success.

"We knew we'd have to put capital dollars into the space to get a new tenant, so we decided why don't we (use the space) as part of our business model instead," Erwin said.

The conversation began about five years ago, construction started in January 2017 and the Marquee Club opened in May 2018.

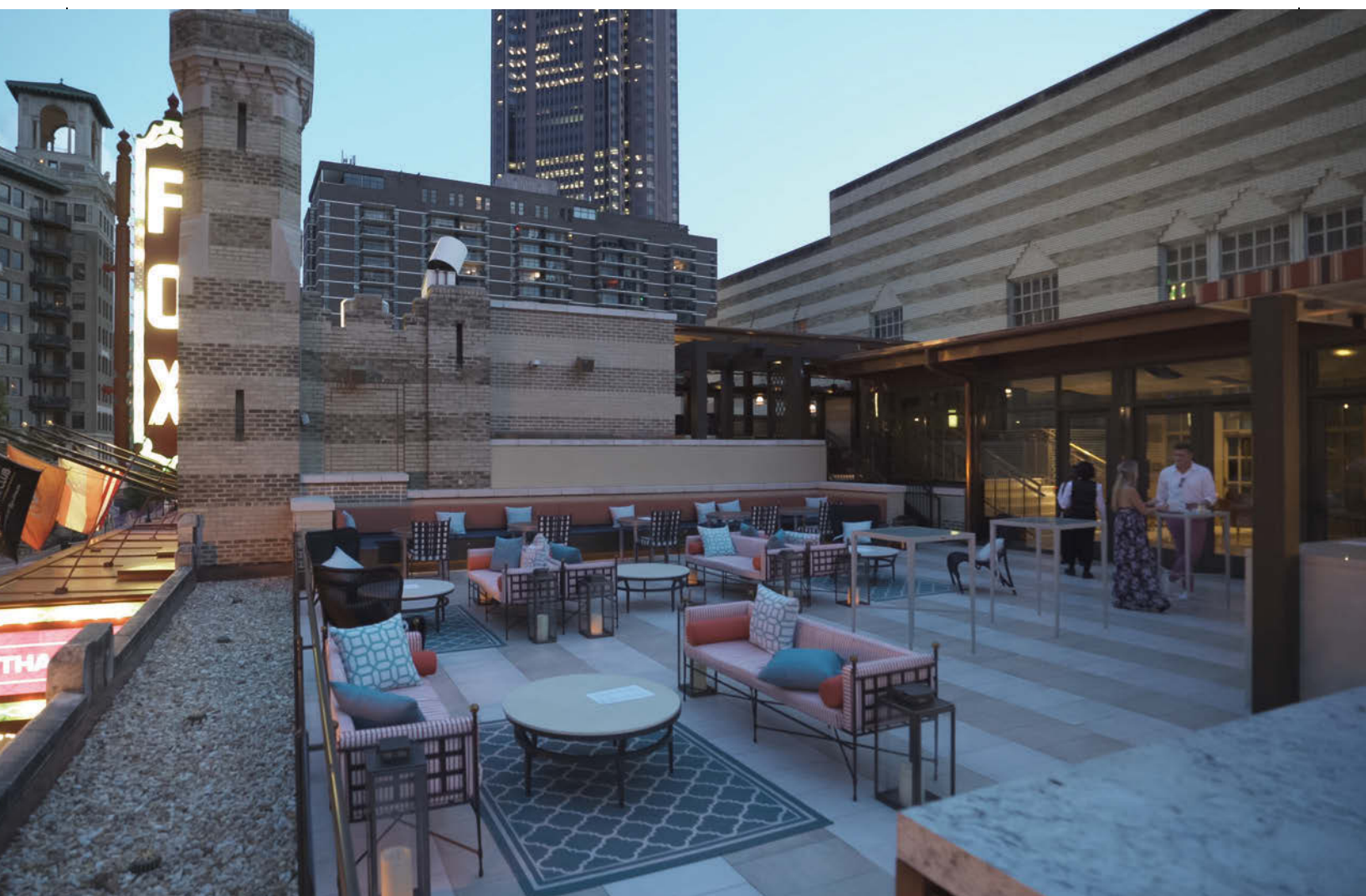
Designing the space while aligning the décor and the building's historic fabric was challenging, as it was important not to affect the venue's historic landmark status.

It was decided that the 14,000-square-foot Marquee Club would be built in the theater's northeast corner

The goal of design firm Lord Aeck Sargent was to connect the Marquee Club to the theater's architecture while creating a feel of its own.



FRONT SPREAD: ADAM DAVILA



and inside the existing building so it didn't disturb external walls. There is main-level access to the club from both the theater's main building entrance and the outside. In addition to seating, this area contains a bar and restrooms. The club's mezzanine level has a bar and overlooks the main level, given a cozier feel by its lower ceilings. A top level has three areas—an indoor rooftop location with a bar that's connected to one of the theater's ballrooms, an open rooftop space overlooking Peachtree Street that is fully furnished with a bar and fire/water feature, and another rooftop space adjacent to both areas that's covered with a pergola and open on the side. This section includes seating, a bar and restrooms. With all levels open, the club accommodates up to 500, or 300 without the rooftop.

Each club area has its own design, although all are cohesive and complement the theater's Moroccan/Egyptian motif. Rich colors are combined with luxurious materials, including leather, satin and wool. Seating is a mix of sofas, chairs, tables, banquettes and high tops.

"It was a puzzle to put together the elements between the bars, lounges, indoor and outdoor spaces," said Karen Gravel, principal at Atlanta's Lord Aeck Sargent, a Kattera Company, the club's architect and designer. "The club needed to be as accessible as possible but still maintain the historic fabric around the space."

She admitted it was fairly complicated organizing the

club spatially, but using cues from the existing building helped tie it all together.

"There's an Arabian Nights theme in the theater's main house, which we used in the club, yet this is reinterpreted in a modern way so it's not repeated," Gravel said. "The custom carpet has a radiating pattern, and we used studded leather and fabrics exclusive to the space. Other elements include a Far East mural, South American tile, Italian cut marble and Venetian plaster."

The club has mezze tables and action stations for buffet-style food service. Dishes vary, depending on the season and event, but generally artisanal meats and cheeses, vegetables, sides and desserts are available. Past offerings have included Tomahawk beef, potatoes, salmon, Chilean sea bass, shrimp, lobster tail and crab claws.

"We've created a food identity with a chef, sous chef and beverage manager for custom drinks," Vella said. "The club has a staff of about 20."

On the heels of positive guest feedback, the club will continue crafting food and beverage experiences as well as more engagement opportunities for its guests.

"It's the club's first-year anniversary, and our overall reasons for doing it have been fulfilled and then some," Erwin said. "I'd compare the club to getting a new car. It has a lot of bells and whistles, and a year later we're still exploring what it can do." 

The club extends to a rooftop space that overlooks Peachtree Street.