

# FLORIDA FACES

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PHOTOGRAPHS BY GARY JAMES



## SCOTT ROTHSTEIN *Devoted to Philanthropy, Collecting and the Law*

**S**cott Rothstein describes himself in a few words: "I am completely *nuts!*" Although the Rothstein Rosenfeldt Adler chairman and CEO tries cases involving corporate espionage, personal injury and wrongful death, he maintains a lighthearted outlook on life. He also has trouble classifying his colleagues as *lawyers*. "We are more like a bunch of people who all just happen to practice law," he says. "In this business, people look at you in the strangest way. They'll tell you you're wonderful to your face and then say the most vile things behind your back." But he doesn't let that dynamic drag him down; instead, in addition to his devotion to his 63-person, 22-practice law firm, Rothstein is a dedicated philanthropist and avid collector.

The multitasking attorney measures success according to how many underprivileged people he can help. "My passion comes from making things better for other people," he says. Scott and his wife, Kimberly, created the Rothstein Family Foundation, a nonprofit organization that raises money for chil-

dren's charities and Jewish causes. In addition, Scott works closely with Alonzo Mourning's foundations, the Dan Marino Foundation, United Way and Boys & Girls Clubs of America, and still finds time to run 17 other companies. "There's no reason to do anything just a little bit," Rothstein says. "I always say, 'Get into the game or get outta the way!'"

And though his involvement in all of these activi-

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ties leaves little time for relaxation ("I'll sleep when I'm dead," he laughs), Rothstein finds joy in his favorite pastime: collecting. "My personality transmits into my collections. I get into how everything is made, spend hours watching people take watches apart—something you'd usually have to drop acid to enjoy." Rothstein's greatest treasures include his watch, car and guitar collections, and he can date each item back to

its original purchase.

The most extensive of these is Scott's 326-timepiece collection. The seed of interest was planted when his grandfather passed down a watch to him when he was young: Rothstein's fascination with it and his desire to learn more about the elements of art and science in watchmaking only grew from there. "There are hundreds of tiny pieces [inside a watch], and it ticks and keeps time accurately," he says. "If you just stop to think about it, it's really amazing."

Rothstein's collection has grown to include everything from a sleek, elegant Patek Philippe Nautilus to an intricate Urwerk, which, with the touch of a button, directs a teeny curtain to roll back and reveal a piece of hand-painted art. Another timepiece close to Scott's heart is one Franck Muller made for Rothstein's close friend Dan Marino, which boasts a black face adorned with the Miami Dolphins team colors and featuring the former Hall of Fame quarterback's iconic number 13 where the 12 usually goes.

## SCOTT ROTHSTEIN

"I have a lot of minute repeaters, which are basically watches that have a tone in it—like little bells—and by hitting a button, the chimes tell you what time it is," Rothstein says. "You're able to know the hour in the dark." Thanks to Rothstein's interest, a group of his friends have become watch fanatics, as well; the tight-knit posse hosts "watch dinners," where representatives from the likes of Piaget and International Watch Co. come to discuss some of the world's most sought-after brands and styles. When asked if he matches his wrist wear to his moods, Scott laughs, "Some days, I am feeling more conservative than others—and my friends wouldn't believe I just said that. I am really a little kid in an adult world."

Rothstein also has a musical side. In addition to singing opera and having played in a rock band, he has collected guitars since age 12. "My uncle Saul bought me my first guitar and I fell in love," he says. The self-taught musician built his skill to the point where he played guitar in multiple bands all the way through college at the University of Florida. Eventually, the skill became a passion. Now Scott has nearly 60



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guitars, both electric and acoustic, including a Paul Reed Smith Flying Dragon, a completely handmade double-neck guitar with a mother-of-pearl inlay of a dragon on both necks. Also timeless is the 1972 Stratocaster that mimics the sound of Eric Clapton. "I collect these based upon their sound," he says. "I have a Paul Reed Smith called a Santana—it sounds exactly like the one Santana plays. You can always pick up that sound and know it's him." Rothstein also has a Gibson J-185, a rounded jumbo guitar modeled after the Gibson L-5 from the '50s. And while Scott used to revel in playing in front of an audience, he says, "Now I just play for me."

While guitars and watches are fun to play and look at, they can't take you long distances or wow onlookers with their horsepower. That's why Rothstein boasts a remarkable car collection, with 10 luxury vehicles and three more on the way. But it wasn't always that way. "My first car was a green Chevy Vega with plaid green seats," he recalls. "My second was a gold Subaru with brown plaid interior and 100,000 miles on it that I drove until it caught on fire—literally." But Rothstein doesn't have to endure plaid seats anymore: His collection includes a 2008 Spyker, which is handmade in Holland with a roaring Audi racing engine and is one of just five in the U.S.—with antilock breaks and no air bags. Though the car doesn't have a radio, he says, "The engine's too loud—you couldn't hear the radio anyway."

His collection also includes a Rolls-Royce Extended Wheelbase Phantom, which is rare because of its metallic color, commemorating the Silver Ghost—there's only one in the United States, and he has it; a green Lamborghini that "looks like a piece of fruit"; a Ferrari 599; a Hummer H1 (which ceased production



in 2006); a two-door Drophead Rolls-Royce convertible; and a 1972 Ferrari (a 1967 Corvette is on the way).

But don't covet his collections, because Rothstein has no plans to sell any of his collectables. "Not

### JUST THE FACTS:

**Other hobbies:** "I am a psychotic clotheshorse, which I would classify as more of an obsession than a collection."

**Favorite weekend activity:** "Traveling—specifically to New York. We have an apartment in Manhattan. I always feel like I'm going home. Normally, I leave late on a Thursday, come back late on Sunday."

**Favorite hangout:** "Versace Mansion, South Beach. I got married there."

**Celebrity, dead or alive, you would love to meet:** "Luciano Pavarotti—I am a *huge* opera fan. I sang opera for years. His music moves me to tears. He translates music into such intense emotion. There's a real parallel between us. I really try to translate everything I do into an emotion."

**Motto:** "We're not here for a long time, but we're here for a good time."

an option," he says. "Every time I would sell them, I would feel weird that I was selling something I had taken care of and cared about. I want to keep the things I love so that when I am gone they will go to the people I love." 📷

**What's your ultimate thrill?:** "Seeing someone whom I have helped, whether directly or indirectly, succeed."

**Big night:** "I threw myself a birthday dinner and surprised my guests instead of them surprising me. I had hired limos and a private jet and we all went to dinner in New York."

**Describe the perfect date night with your wife:** "Home, romantic dinner, romance. We are in the middle of completing a brand-new house. We designed it so that it will become an ultimate getaway with a bar, movie theater, Moroccan room, etc. We love to spend time with friends and family, but I love spending time with her alone."

**Favorite scent:** "The way Manhattan streets smell early in the morning when no one else is up. And no, I don't mean garbage! Maybe it's the fumes."