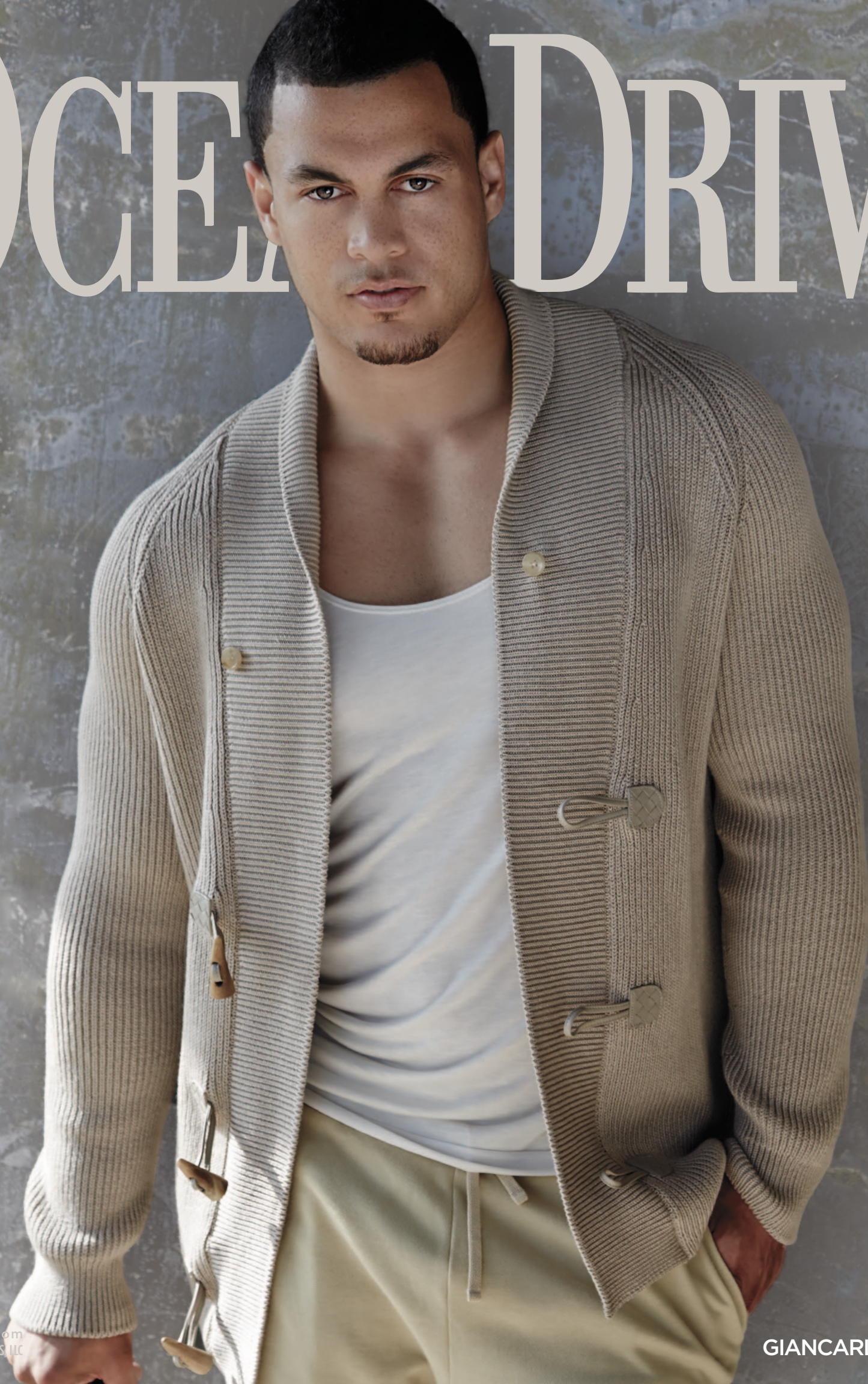


OCEAN DRIVE





Lou La Vie founder John Temerian behind the wheel of his 700-horsepower Lamborghini Aventador LP 700-4, in front of The James Royal Palm.

HAIR AND MAKEUP BY PAOLA PLANDO FOR ABTROOM



the CONNECTORS

These five behind-the-scenes players help make this town tick, delivering everything from courtside seats and souped-up sports cars to investor funds or permits for billion-dollar projects.

BY JON WARÉCH

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JENNIFER ROBBINS

SPEED RACER
JOHN TEMERIAN:
Founder, Lou La Vie

As founder of exotic car rental company Lou La Vie, John Temerian is living life in the fast lane, providing the world's elite with the ride of a lifetime, right here in Miami. Justin Bieber's notorious January 2014 Lamborghini joyride? Thank Lou La Vie. Rick Ross, Jason Derulo, The Game, Ace Hood, and Deadmau5 are all clients. If you want to cruise around town in a \$500K Lamborghini or one-of-a-kind Ferrari, Temerian holds the keys.

Who are you hooking up with exotic rides?

CEOs, entrepreneurs, celebrities, and icons have come into our showroom; by building on the relationships of my family, friends, and colleagues, I have been able to amass an amazing Rolodex of who's who. **What mix of personality versus business savvy does it take to do your job?** My passion is the main reason why I have been able to achieve my greatest goals. First and foremost, I am a car nerd. I have an encyclopedia-like knowledge of postwar European sports cars, and I love meeting new people.

What's a typical workday like for you? I am on the phone from 9 AM to 6 PM, buying and selling Lou La Vie fleet vehicles, planning events, marketing campaigns, or networking. In between machine-gun-like text messaging and conference calls, I try to get behind the wheel of our cars. I find that the quality, maintenance, and condition of our fleet vehicles are so important. Having grown up working on cars, I like to check everything myself.

What's a "connection" you've made recently that you're most proud of? Our partnership with Formula One driver Felipe Massa and our association with [Italian car design firm] Pininfarina have been two of the most exciting connections I have made. **What's the craziest thing someone has asked for?** We imported the last production Ferrari Enzo [only 400 were ever made] in the world from Milan last year. Clients and friends ask [us] about everything from nightclubs, hotels, investments, watches.... It is really quite amazing. 1444 Biscayne Blvd., Ste. 113, Miami, 305-974-1914; loulavie.com

LEGAL EAGLE
ALFREDO J. GONZALEZ:

Shareholder, Greenberg Traurig

Land development and government lawyer Alfredo J. Gonzalez is the go-to guy in Miami when developers are building a new hotel or residential community. The permits, the boards, the neighbors—he deals with them all. A master of navigating Miami real estate regulations, he's wined and dined by some of the most important players in town, often brokering that all-important compromise.

Your job starts from a project's very beginning, but never really ends. While a lot of my work is on the front end, getting the project approved and guiding them through permitting issues during construction, once they open I'm still involved in getting special permits or dealing with overcrowding or noise issues. [Before] the Thompson Hotel could open, I took them through their conditional use permit, and we were able to [open] Seagrape, the secondary restaurant, their outdoor pool venue, the [1930s House] bar, and their inside club. On all those components, we have to work with the board to get the authority to have the venues. **Does that make this an around-the-clock job?** You have to become accessible. The problems don't occur Monday through Friday during business hours. One time, under the former owners of The Raleigh hotel, the general manager called me at home on a Sunday, back when they had a lot of problems with noise violations, and said, "I need you to come to the hotel tonight." I ended up spending part of the evening down there to make sure [that] if code compliance showed, they wouldn't be in violation. **What's a "connection" you've made recently that you're most proud of?** The projects that continue to evolve Miami Beach into a world-class city, including the Thompson Hotel, One Ocean, The James Royal Palm, and the ongoing redevelopment of the iconic Shore Club. One I am particularly proud of is 321 Ocean, a project by renowned architect Enrique Norten. The former hotel on the site consistently had the most annual calls to the police, and today the location, almost completed, is a world-class condominium. **It sounds like a rewarding job.** To take a blighted site and watch it become one of our crown jewels of Miami Beach after dealing with the city, the neighbors, the boards, the structural realities, it's the type of law practice that does give you a lot of satisfaction because you see the impact that you're having. I get to admire all the connections I have helped facilitate as I drive throughout Miami Beach. *333 SE Second Ave., Ste. 4400, Miami, 305-579-0500; gtlaw.com*

Alfredo Gonzalez at The James Royal Palm, one of the many properties in Miami he's had a hand in shaping.

"To take a blighted site and watch it become one of our crown jewels of Miami Beach does give you a lot of satisfaction."—ALFREDO GONZALEZ

YOUR BEST FRIEND

JIMMY VARGAS:

*Vice President of Marketing,
MMG-SFX Nighlife*

As part of the elite company that operates LIV at the Fontainebleau and Sun Life Stadium, as well as Story, Jimmy Vargas can get you beyond the velvet ropes, but his connections are what make the brand the best in the business. Tables at his venues (depending on the night) can go for anywhere from \$10,000 to \$100,000, and while there's probably no such access that money can't buy, it's always good to know Jimmy.

Beyond throwing some of the world's best parties, how do you market your nightclubs on a global scale? The best way to reach a global audience is through the Internet and social media marketing. We put a lot of emphasis on creating unique content, such as our ESPN spoof of the LIV headquarters, which brings the DJ out of his element with a scripted video piece. We had Michael Bay work on a promo for Cedric Gervais, which definitely had people talking. **And you've used the power of the LIV name at events around the country?** Bigger festivals and calendar events, like All-Star weekend and the Super Bowl, where the brand makes the most sense, that's where we'll be. Recently the producers of TomorrowWorld were looking for the right team to run their VIP Skylofts, so we packed our bags and hit the road to Atlanta. We re-created the LIV experience in the hills of Chattahoochee where we had VIPs helicoptered in and transported in custom LIV golf carts to the best seat in the house. **What's the craziest thing someone has asked for?** Things happen every day around here, but an old memory that stands out was when we were asked to help pull off Joaquin Phoenix's debut performance as a hip-hop artist. It turned into quite a spectacle with him vomiting before he went onstage and then jumping into the crowd to fight with a heckler. We pulled off the performance, but I haven't seen him at LIV on Sunday, so maybe his hip-hop cred never took off. **What makes Miami the perfect city for your job?** Miami is a gateway for so many cities in the world; then, once you're here, the mind-set is very much about having a good time and letting loose. What people don't realize, though, is all the work that it takes during the day to make the night fun. But we have a strong team that are amazing at what they do, so I just make sure all the pieces fit the puzzle. 305-534-7101; miami-mg.com



“What people don't realize is all the work that it takes during the day to make the night fun.”—JIMMY VARGAS

*Jimmy Vargas shot
on location at LIV.*

FRONT ROW TICKET
CHANTEL CHRISTOPHER:
CEO, Flip Flop Management

Need playoff tickets? How about a star running back to attend your charity event? As the CEO of Flip Flop Management, Chantel Christopher's list of VIP contacts in the sports and entertainment world reads like an all-star team, making her the go-to person in town for connecting athletes and entertainers with marketing, promotional, and charity opportunities. Look closely at the person standing next to some of Miami's premier talents—it's probably Chantel.

You've worked with everyone from Heat star Dwyane Wade and actress Gabrielle Union to retired NFL stars Jim Brown and Marshall Faulk. What type of personality does it take to do your job?

People want to deal with someone who is cool and who understands who they are and their needs, but they also need someone who is business savvy to get things done. **What's the difference between working with athletes and entertainers?**

Athletes are hungrier; they're not asking for the dollar sign first—they're trying to get their name out there. If they need to do an appearance for 45 minutes for \$1,500, they'll do it because their face is going to be out there. An entertainer will be like, "Forty five minutes? That will be \$10,000."

Why is Miami good for business? When I got here, I started working with Drama Sports. They dealt with nearly every athlete who came through Miami, and I realized this was the sports hub. I fell in love with the city—the weather, the people—and it made it easy for work. When I was doing a football camp or a charity golf tournament, it was just easy to get the athletes here. No one turns down coming to Miami. **What's a "connection" you've made recently that you are most proud of?** Recently a friend of mine built a gym in Midtown, and he was looking for someone who does graffiti art. I told him to go look at a friend's Instagram, and he hit me right back and said, "Can you get him?" Long story short, I connected them and they made magic happen. **What's the craziest thing someone has asked for?**

One of my clients wanted a zebra and monkeys at their event. **Did they get what they wanted?** Why, yes, they did. *flipflopmanagement.com*





**“No one turns down
coming to Miami.”**
—CHANTEL CHRISTOPHER

Chantel Christopher
taking a call at LIV.





THE GAME CHANGER
LESLIE WOLFSON:
CEO, Connect The Dots

A Miami native, Leslie Wolfson has been connecting people for more than 20 years—first in fashion and retail, then in publishing, and now with her business development and strategic partnerships company Connect The Dots, where she’s making things happen for lifestyle, technology, and real estate companies on a national scale. Part consultant, part adviser, full-time team player and partner, Wolfson is currently advising everyone from burgeoning tech giants Rokk3r Labs to hot products like the Miami Cocktail Company.

What’s a typical workday like for you? I have never had a typical day, whether [it’s] a conference call with a real estate investor in the Middle East or working on creating strategic partnerships for University of Miami Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center or helping someone get a table at Prime 112. **You spent time in New York but moved back to Miami in 2012 to start your company—why?** It was just a natural progression for me to be here. I never would have pulled off what I pulled off so quickly if I had stayed in New York. I came back to Miami, and I had five clients within a month. I was doing everything nontraditionally, which is how I built my career. I didn’t have a business plan, and I just took everything that felt right and only with people I liked. **What’s a “connection” you’ve made recently that you are most proud of?** I attended a conference in Dublin with my client Realconnex.com and received a call from Google asking us to come present the platform to their marketing team to be included in an amazing opportunity that only 40 companies a year are chosen for. From the initial phone call to being in Google’s inspirational offices presenting to their team, I will always remember this connection.

What’s the craziest thing someone has asked for? A friend at *Elle Decor* called me in a panic because their Modern Life Concept House location for Art Basel 2013 fell through four months before the opening and she needed a perfect location—fast. I found them a \$16.5 million house on Sunset Islands in 24 hours, and it ended up being the most successful show house *Elle Decor* had on record. *The Wynwood Building, 2750 NW Third Ave., Ste. 14, Miami* **OD**

Leslie Wolfson shot on location at The James Royal Palm.