

# Interview

NIGHTLIFE

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## THE MUSEUM OF ARTS AND DESIGN'S 'BRING BACK THE BALL'

Photography  
WILL ROGOZZINO / BFANYC.COM



Bill Cunningham, Bettina Prentice



Atmosphere (dancers)

Looking down Central Park on East 91st Street last evening, something did not belong: a parked car in front of the James Burden Mansion—one that was decidedly not from our time. It was a 1929 Ford Phaeton, with tall, skinny tires and a black steel body. A glance around saw gaggles of women in fringed and dropped-waist dresses, fur stoles, and dripping in diamonds teetering towards the mansion's entrance. Among them were Lauren Santo Domingo, Arden Wohl, Lake Bell, Jacqueline Schnabel, Nicola Vassell, Bettina Prentice, and Mirabelle Marden. Of course, this was all leading to a 1920s themed bash dubbed “*Bring Back the Ball*” taking place in the mansion's ballroom, and benefitting the Museum of Arts and Design. The night was filled with dancing to the stylings of Dandy Wellington and His Band, a downtown group whose lead singer dons top hats and period garb, porcelain dinnerware and cigarette girls (carrying trays of cosmetics—but still, the gist is there).

As far as 1920s themed parties go, the flashback was more than an excuse to whip out old Halloween costumes. The golden age experience was created by honorees McDermott & McGough, an artist duo known in the 1980s as “the dandies of Avenue C” for their flamboyant turn-of-the-century fashions. For the celebration, decorations included a sliver “paper moon” painted with a cartoon face by Peter McGough. The pair's work still revolves around appropriating vintage ephemera from various decades; but who doesn't love a little Roaring '20s in the buzzing 2010s?

Some are, in fact, devout fans of the era. Dancer Sara Deckard, who interrupted cocktails with a spirited Josephine Baker homage performed in a golden brocade jumper, has long been a fan of the jazz age. “I've always been hooked on the decade, old movies, that kind of thing,” she described. “It really hit home as soon as I learned the dance.”

Former *Interview* contributor Bob Colacello arrived in a black tux. “I think the tuxedo was the same!” he said. Looking out at the sea of swaying silk gowns, we wondered what Andy Warhol would have thought of the scene. “He would just say ‘Oh, gee, God, there are so many beauties here.’” Some things are timeless.

—Rachel Small



Lake Bell



Arden Wohl, Peter McGough



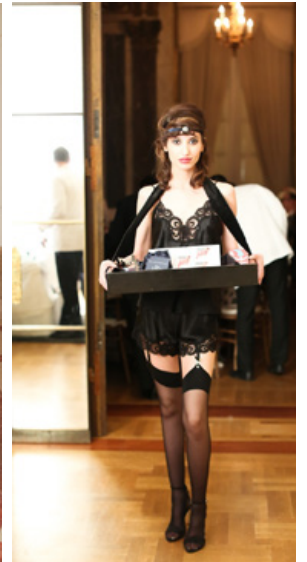
Lex Kendall, Natalie Joos



Sara Deckard (performance)



Nicola Vassell



Cigarette Girl