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GREATER NEW YORK

Oh! A Society Flap

Reliving the 1920s **MARSHALL HEYMAN A21**



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John Rappert for WSJ

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Wednesday, May 21, 2014 | **A21**

HEARD & SCENE



Clockwise from left: Sarah Deckard performs at the Young Patrons Gala for the Museum of Arts and Design; Andrew Bevan; Alex and Olivia Chantecaille; Horst Rosenberg, Laura Kimsey and Darlene Elkanick; and Maggie Betts with Topaz Page-Green.

Shooting for the Moon With 1920s Theme

By **MARSHALL HEYMAN**



To be part of the segment of New Yorkers who enjoy hitting the benefit circuit, one must have a certain predilection for dressing up.

And to be given a task such as dressing to a specific period? Ah! This is a challenge many of these women—and certainly a few good men—are more than up for the taking, if an event on Monday night was any indication.

At the Burden Mansion on East 91st Street, otherwise known as the lower school for Sacred Heart, the Museum of Arts and Design resurrected its Young Patrons Gala. The theme was “Bring Back the Ball,” and the idea was a “time immersion experience” that brought everyone back 96 years to May 19, 1928, “the frenzied luxury

of the months preceding Black Tuesday.”

This was the year to which honorees Peter McGough and David McDermott, both artists, chose to “time travel,” but other guests who grew up in the neighborhood were doing their own version of time traveling.

“We used to have lunch in this room,” the beauty executive Alex Chantecaille said of her early kindergarten days at the school, before her family moved to New Jersey.

A vintage car and a playful cutout half-moon that guests could pose on greeted them as they walked in. Once they reached the top of two floors of some very vintage staircases, they found a cigarette girl passing out cosmetics from Chantecaille, one of the evening’s sponsors.

In one room with exquisite ceilings, there were old-school cocktails provided by Tan-

queray Ten. In another, Dandy Wellington and his band provided live jazz and were soon joined by Sara Deckard, who performed a Josephine Bakeresque routine.

Dinner was served on period Haviland Limoges porcelain dishes that had been rented for the occasion. The meal was very 1928: asparagus salad,

‘I’m giving us kudos for dressing up like this on a Monday night.’

beef Stroganoff and pineapple upside-down cake for dessert.

The only thing really missing was an excerpt from that terrific Broadway show, “After Midnight”—perhaps a little Duke Ellington’s “Freeze and Melt” was in order?—but it’s rare that young philanthropy

and musical theater intersect in this town.

There were, of course, anachronisms. Not that we know our history backwards and forwards, but it’s a pretty realistic guess that hosts didn’t serve miniature grilled-cheese sandwiches in 1928.

“And yeah, I’m sure people were swanning around with their iPhones and Instagramming, too,” said Alexandra Chemla, the founder of Art-Binder.com, who said she’d used the opportunity of the evening to wear as much jewelry as possible.

“I like this edgy decadence,” she added.

The enthusiasm with which the attendees, including Lake Bell and Scott Campbell, Lauren Santo Domingo, Bettina Prentice, Indre Rockefeller, Vanessa Traina, Lauren Remington Platt, Hassan Pierre, Alexia Leuschen, Sofia Sanchez Barrenechea, and Alex de Be-



Jacqueline and Vito Schnabel

tak and Zani Gugelmann, tackled the evening’s 1920s moment was both impressive and inspiring.

“I’m giving us kudos for dressing up like this on a Monday night,” said Lara Meiland-Shaw, who, like many of the evening’s attendees, works in the fashion business. (The other large percentage consisted of art-world types.)

Getting prepared for an event like this can involve being friends with the appropriate people. “I borrowed this

dress from a friend,” said Topaz Page-Green, the founder of the Lunchbox Fund. “It wasn’t hard. I just knew the right person to ask.”

Or it can mean years of collecting accessories. “I have about 800 headbands,” said Arden Wohl, who now designs a line of vegan shoes. “No, actually, maybe 900. And I just put my hand in my drawer and went, ‘Wooh! That’s why I’m wearing this one.’”

Or it can involve a simple, no-nonsense approach, as befitted the filmmaker Maggie Betts. “When I walked in, someone told me my dress looked more turn-of-the-century than 1920s,” she said of her long flowing gown. “If you can show me a picture of every single person who lived in 1928, then you can tell me my look isn’t right. Not everyone was hanging with Jay Gatsby. Some people in 1928 were rocking the retro look.”

Angela Pham/BSA

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