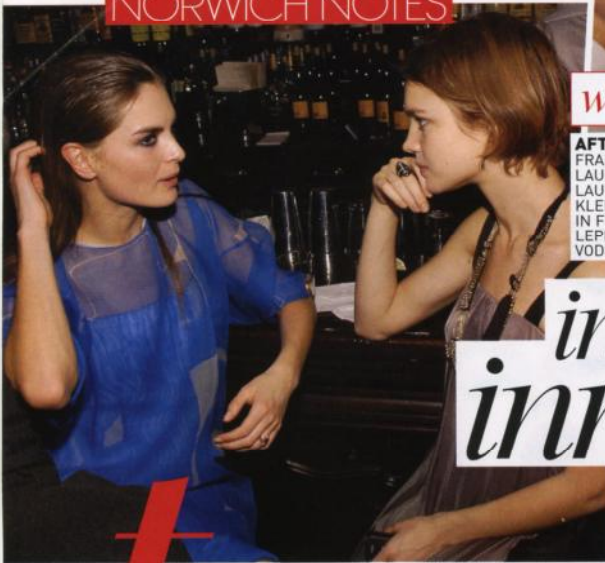


TALKING FASHION

NORWICH NOTES



waverly inn

AFTER HOURS
FRANCISCO COSTA WITH LAUREN DUPONT AND AERIN LAUDER (RIGHT) AT CALVIN KLEIN'S POST-SHOW DINNER IN FEBRUARY. LEFT: ANOUCK LEPERE AND NATALIA VODIANOVA AT THE SAME EVENT.

in with the inn crowd

William Norwich cozies up and dresses down in New York's current nightspots of choice.

casual dressing," says **Melissa Bent**, cofounder of Rivington Arms gallery, where work by artist **Shara Hughes** is on view this month. "I love getting dressed up," she says, mentioning an elaborate vintage silk wedding coat she bought recently.

At the Box this evening, few are dressed up. Correction: They do not look obviously dressed up. The edges of night fashion have softened. High style now is channeling one's inner artist, with subtle embellishments and discreet dazzle—JAR jewelry, if you can get it. "I call it 'the New Smoking,'" says **Lauren Davis**. "A little blazer or satin jacket by Proenza Schouler, or maybe one from Balenciaga's fall collection, a skinny jean, denim or satin, longish over the heel" of a very high shoe.

The look works for New York's trendy new watering holes, cozy destinations in landmark, or nearly landmark, renovated venues. Most of these places have "inn" in their name. The Waverly Inn, the Algonquin Round Table reincarnated with macaroni and cheese; the low-key but deeply chic Beatrice Inn—a former speakeasy—on a cobblestoned street in the West Village where the art-and-fashion crowd assembles for unfussy cocktails and socializing, plus dancing upstairs; the Inn LW12, an Anglo-Canadian-style pub where food guru **Daniel Boulud** consulted on the menu. More amiable places of this type are still to come—for instance, Norwood, described as an upscale, private arts-and-literature club for young people, courtesy of a former manager at Black's in London's Soho and under way now with interior design by **Simon Costin** in the historic Andrew Norwood House on West Fourteenth Street. It is a five-story Greek Revival town house with thirteen wood-burning fireplaces. *talking fashion > 100*

BELLE FLEUR
MELISSA BENT, HERE AT ART BASEL MIAMI, IS LESS THAN OVERJOYED ABOUT THE LOW-KEY DRESSING SEASON.

This is just like my living room," documentarian **Jamie Johnson** is saying, maybe just a little tongue-in-cheek, before our conversation is interrupted by pounding drums. The show has begun: Handsome young Brazilians feverishly commence performing capoeira, in what looks like a mad mix of flamenco and martial arts. A crowd pushes closer to the rickety stage.

With its decor of a Babar wall collage, red velvet, and white lace curtains, what country club is this? It is the Box, of course, **Simon Hammerstein's** happening nightspot on Chrystie Street. (Not all the neighbors are thrilled by the gentrification on the Lower East Side.) The grandson of theater legend **Oscar Hammerstein II**, Simon has entertaining in his genes. I'm on the town tonight—dinner at Pastis, then the comfortable Beatrice Inn, and now here way past midnight with a coed group, including Mr. Johnson and the actor and musician **Nick Hoge**.

Manhattan social life reinvents itself every five years or so. The city's mood shifts, fresh styles and fashion emerge, tastes in cuisine change, new clubs open. During the *Sex and the City* years, pleasure domes designed by expensive architects were the "bling" destinations of choice. Dressing was competitive—even going to a restaurant was like a long walk on a short red carpet. But these days, "fabulous" is so last year.

"I get it, it's cool, but I am sad about the current



the box

IN GOOD COMPANY
ACTOR JOSH LUCAS, FAR LEFT, WITH SIMON HAMMERSTEIN, OWNER OF THE BOX, RIGHT.

Clockwise from top left: BILLY PARRELL/PatrickMcMullan.com (2); JEAN BAPTISTE LACROIX/WireImage.com; CHRIS GRIFFITH; THEO WARGO/WireImage.com

TALKING FASHION

NORWICH NOTES



the inn LW12

FASHION FETE
TABLES SET FOR A
RODARTE DINNER
AT THE INN LW12
(BELOW LEFT) AND
ITS MENU (ABOVE).



Another new destination is the Gramercy Park Hotel Private Roof Club, with evocative gardens designed by **Madison Cox** (under a retractable glass roof). Among other opening events is **Jacquetta Wheeler's** second "Quiz Night" on May 30, a Trivial Pursuit-type evening of games and cocktails to benefit Darna, a nonprofit

organization that raises money for cultural and social causes in Morocco, where Wheeler's family has a home. (For more information about this amusing event, inspired by game nights in English pubs, go to darnamaroc.org.) Jacquetta's host committee includes **Damon Dash, Rachel Roy, Sarah Jessica Parker, Helena Christensen, Sienna Miller, and Oscar de la Renta**, the sponsor of the benefit.

The current social arbiter, to borrow a word from the Gawker Web site, is the "antisocialite." Filmmaker **Arden Wohl** and actress **Byrdie Bell** are prime examples. "I prefer that things seem a little more serious now. I was never really into that oversexed, shiny glamour of the bling days," says Wohl. Having recently organized a benefit for the Nest Foundation, which works to prevent sex trafficking in the United States, Arden begins shooting an as-yet-untitled film this month "exploring one night in New York as experienced by two young women," she says.

If, as Bell observes, "people want to feel like they're partying in their best friend's



beatrice inn

INN-SIDERS
ROHINI SINGH
AND BYRDIE BELL
AT THE PURPLE
MAGAZINE PARTY AT
THE BEATRICE INN.

living room, but their very hip best friend," then what else besides "the New Smoking" might you wear?

"The look you want is all about dressing for going out for cocktails and conversation you can hear," observes **Matt Abramcyk**, one of the founding partners of the Beatrice Inn.

Suggests **Alexis Bryan**: "A Nina Ricci tank, straight-leg Earnest Sewn jeans, some heels." Says Valentino muse **Anneliese Peterson**, "Think lady first, downtown diva second, especially at the



TOP MODEL
JACQUETTA
WHEELER, WHO
CHOSE THE
GRAMERCY
ROOFTOP FOR
HER "QUIZ
NIGHT" GALA
IN MAY.



**LADY FIRST,
DIVA SECOND**
BRIAN ATWOOD
CLUTCH AND
CHRISTIAN
LOUBOUTIN HEELS.

PAT BUCKLEY 1927-2007

As I write, this just in: word that Pat Buckley has died, age 80. Philanthropist, fashion plate, Vassar alumna, devoted wife, loving mother and grandmother, hostess, gin player, friend; madcap, vulnerable, stubborn, beautiful, so funny . . . her charitable work for the Metropolitan Museum's Costume Institute and the Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center made those institutions what they are today.

After all this talk about nightlife, I remember our first "date," time spent together somewhere other than at an eighties charity ball. We saw Liberace at Radio City Music Hall, and then the two of us went for drinks with the great sequined number at his apartment in Trump Tower. He wore a dressing gown, shimmering brocade; she wore Bill Blass, magnificent red evening pajamas. Wasn't it only yesterday?

Good night, Mrs. Buckley.—w.n.



LADY IN RED
MRS. BUCKLEY
AT A COSTUME
INSTITUTE
BENEFIT IN 1993.

Box. The idea is to be a voyeur in the audience and not part of the show." Byrdie Bell's thinking is "Seattle grunge with luxe accents, extrahigh heels or Balenciaga platforms. Avoid gold jewelry; move toward silver or mix the two." Wohl suggests fashion with fine-art influences from designers like Proenza Schouler, "wearable art that is graphic and detailed, that induces a progressive mood."

In other words, sophisticatedly mellow dressing. "I admit I am having to forgo my idyllic notions that people would come to the Box dressed for a night on the town à la Stork Club," says Simon Hammerstein, laughing. "More theatrical," he wishes, "like a drag queen on stilts mixing with someone in a white tuxedo." Well, maybe next year. □

Clockwise from far left: CHANCE YEHL/PatrickMcMullan.com; BILLY FARRELL/PatrickMcMullan.com; JOE SCHILDORF/PatrickMcMullan.com; Pat Buckley; RON GALELLA/WireImage.com; still lifes: CHRISTOPHER COPPOLA. Details, see in This Issue.