



Monday, May 08, 2006

Form-al Dinner

Fashion collectives are the new foodies

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(NEW YORK) Little known fact: Form's Eric Werner used to run Peasant, the Soho eatery.

"I stole him away from the restaurant life!" said designer Jerry Tam, gleeful and pouring extra champagne. "I said, food, fashion, what's the difference?"

"It's true," admitted Eric, "I managed the kitchen. Which is actually really similar to managing a fashion line. There's chaos everywhere, and you have to streamline it and figure out what's getting done, who's doing it, and when it's going to be just right. I still go into Peasant sometimes and see how things are going—it's like our label's official restaurant."

But not last night, when the design collective held court at Dominic's in Tribeca.

"All I eat is Italian food, really, so this place is perfect," said Eric. His guests included the rest of the Form crew—stylist Jamie Rosenthal, marketing director Kelly Andrews, and newly hired designer Mignonette Gavigan—plus *Vogue's* Suzanne Karotkin, *WWD's* Venessa Lau, colorist Kathy Galotti, writer Mark Jacobs, *Flaunt* fashion editor Markus Steptoe, and Kelly Cutrone, who produced Form's first fashion show last year.

"I was definitely nervous about the debut," said Jerry, "but we knew it was going to work out. It was like fate."

Fate, like the rumor that Form's three founders (Jerry, Eric, and Jamie) met on a street corner one day, and booked tickets to Paris together the next?

"It's true!" insisted newly brunette Jamie, as her first course—roasted veggie salad with goat cheese—sailed onto the table. "We decided instantly that we needed to work together... oh, and we ate a lot in Paris too. Like, all the time. It was the best."



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Apparently, Paris was magical for most at the table.

"Paco Rabanne taught me to meditate in Paris," Kelly told her guests. "He was like, 'A fashion show should be very happy, with no stress!' And he really believed that, so he kept everyone incredibly calm before the entire show; it was one of the most fun and best fashion shows I've ever worked in my life."

Suzanne agreed. "When I was a sittings assistant, I used to travel with Joe Zee to Paris for shoots, and there was one hairstylist—Odile Gilbert—who was just amazing. One morning, we had this whole conversation about hot rollers; I'm from Texas and I really love them. The next day, Odile came into our studio with this giant box of hot rollers for me! And she said, 'Suzanne, we're going to make you a princess today,' and she did up my hair. It was really special."

"Well I've been doing hair for 20 years," chimed in Kathy. "And once, Katie Couric..."

Kelly interrupted.

"Do you know, Katie Couric's people wanted me to be her stylist? Can you imagine? I'd be like, Katie, you're going to wear a black Margiella jumper, with some Jeremy Scott pants, okay? Only black and gray!"

The entire table burst into giggles, until a braised beef rib, the size of a Flintstone's dinner, hit the table.

"That looks gorgeous," smiled Mignonne, who was hired the day of Form's fashion show after several months as their design intern. "I don't understand the fashion rules about not eating though. I'm from North Carolina; we love big dinners there."

"Everything on this table looks gorgeous," affirmed Kelly Andrews, as salmon, cod, and shrimp risotto came steaming from the kitchen. "And I don't know about the rest of you, but in our office, I feel like all we do is eat."

"And make clothes!" cried Jerry. "We eat and we also make great clothes!"

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