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The Faux Force

The Humane Society's Cool vs. Cruel bash

Wednesday, November 22, 2006

(NEW YORK) In some instances, faking it can be better than the real thing. Or so the Humane Society set out to prove with its Cool vs. Cruel contest, toasting the winners with a bash at Sol Thursday night.

Supporters-turned-judges, including *Paper's* Mickey Boardman, Jay McCarroll (with the bag he designed for the Humane Society in tow), *Survivor's* Jenna Morasca, Daniel Silver and Steven Cox of Duckie Brown, and Atom Cianfarani of Gaelyn & Cianfarani all showed up to congratulate the winners of fashion-forward contest, which started when Art Institute students from around the country were challenged to design cruelty-free evening wear.



The Humane Society's Annie Judah and Mickey Boardman © Patrick McMullan

"It's sick, not cool, to fall back on fur," said Boardman, wearing Marc Jacobs rain boots so he could party-hop despite the weather. "It's a sad, rainy night—just for the animals." Contestants celebrated the designs with veggie-licious sandwiches and p.i.n.k. vodka cocktails. DJ Tommie Hotpants set the party mood from the overhead, while guests, including artist Peter Max and *Dancing with the Stars'* Cheryl Burke, mingled downstairs.

Finalists' designs were displayed on the dance floor. Marisa Widjojo's took first place with a layered strapless dress with faux seal fur wrap; the other two winners included a regal purple dress with velvet fringe and a tweed suit with a grand faux-fur collar.

As for the designers, Silver said he couldn't agree more with the mission, explaining, "After we bought some fox fur while in Alaska we felt so guilty, we couldn't use it—it was incorrect creative judgment." McCarroll added he had liked seeing how the students reinterpreted trends, but was more secretive when it came to revealing details about his own designs. "We have nice things planned, but can't talk about it yet," he winked.

ALINA DIZIK



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