

# Portfolio

SECTION C

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 3, 1975



Designer DiSant Angelo and model



Mr. and Mrs. Chris Von Wangenheim



Paloma Picasso, Karl Lagerfeld



Anna Canepa, designer Les Levine



Bikini with flowers, 1975

## Times Tough in N.Y. For Partygoers, Too

By Diana McLellan  
*Washington Star Staff Writer*

NEW YORK — They were clustered on the icy sidewalk by 8:30. The usual New York crowd of celeb-watchers, crazies, and plain passers-by, drawn by the red carpet and the black velvet ropes, the fidgeting corps of hardboiled-looking photographers, the general air of expectancy.

It was obvious. This was an Event, last night, at the super chic Rizzoli International bookstore and gallery on Fifth Avenue.

"Fashion as Fantasy" is the name of the show at the Rizzoli. And last night's \$50-a-head champagne opening, to benefit a psychiatric rehabilitation center called Fountain House promised to be a lulu.

FOR STARTERS, the gallery is run by Roberto Polo — the Cuban-born, handsome 34-year-old one-time teacher at the Corcoran Art School and current hyper-trendy Sutton Place socialite.

So at about 9 it began. The standard beautiful women with feathers in their

hair, the conventional surly young men with Joe D'Allesandro scowls. The usual exquisite young men with earrings and marvelously cut dinner jackets. In swept the skeletal lovely ones, with make-up straight out of *The Damned* and enormous frizzy hairdos, or with hair smarmed back Greaser style from their exquisite features.

There was the odd-shaven head. The tiny woman with a huge white Afro scattered with fresh parsley. The chain mail vest. The watchers didn't actually boo, but they had been told that they could expect at the very least Andy Warhol and Marisa Berenson, and this was small potatoes.

INSIDE, meanwhile, the gallery was becoming hideously packed. A life-size female torso made of chocolate with "Fashion as Fantasy" written on it in icing had begun to melt onto the floor of the ladies' room. The press, frustrated for celebrities, began taking pictures of each other and of the exhibit.

See PARTY, C-3

—Washington Star Photographer John Bowden



Two in floor dresses



It was a big crush and a big, mad party.



Rudi Gernreich, a bicycle-part costume and Roberto Polo

# PARTY

Continued From C-1

"Fashion as Fantasy," Polo had explained earlier "will try to make a statement about fashion. It will be an exhibit about fashion, not a fashion exhibit. All the works in the exhibit, will, of course, not be works of art, including some by so-called regular artists. It will not attempt to be elegant or beautiful, because those attributes have a very superficial relationship to art, to works created with or without a purpose in a moment of self-expression."

Well, that was easy for him to say. But some of the very social New York charity supporters were surprised by the results. It seems that to a lot of the artists invited to display their work, "Fashion as Fantasy" meant "Let it All Hang Out." Painter Lowell Nesbitt had contributed a series of extremely explicit male nudes heavily tattooed with flowers in peculiar places. Another artist offered handsomely drawn designs of clothing gaily printed with enormous genitalia, and hats modeled along the same line. Worst of all, "Thong" designer Rudi Gernreich had garbed a male model in a costume made of a bicycle seat and handlebars — and that's all — and a female model in a couple of red bike reflector pasties and handlebars.

"I'VE NEVER seen anything that disgusting!" cried a sable-swayed matron as she encountered the bicycle seat, and she turned on her heel to begin the long struggle through the hordes and out of the door. There were hundreds pouring in to replace her in a never ending flood. By 10 o'clock, Beautiful and Semi-Beautiful People were jammed among books and shelves and were crushing up and down a sweltering stairway that looked like some hideous purgatorial pit. Champagne glasses were crashing to the floor everywhere soaking expensive art books. Flash bulbs were flashing wildly. Drunks were weaving. The faint of heart were leaving if they could, muttering "God, what a zoo. What a terrible zoo."

Steven Varble, a young man with a large bedspring mounted on his shaven head topped with Ostrich plumes, wore an unusual costume of his own design. It included gigantic stuffed breasts of pink satin and three enormous turquoise-hued penises of the same fabric. He squirmed, writhed and mugged his way through the flashbulbs. When he had everyone's attention, he pulled the tassel that decorated one of his grotesque breasts. It opened like a purse. Hundreds of pennies crashed to the floor and rolled among the broken glasses, wet books and trampling feet around him.

Yet another charity supporter left in disgust.

**BUT NOW**, the big guns began piling in: Monique Van Vooren, swathed in multi-colored chiffon from head to toe, with designer Giorgio DiSant' Angelo, sweeping up the red carpet. There was artist Colette,

wearing a huge hat, old fashioned stays and drawers, most of her charms covered lightly with only fine veiling. She crushed her way through the throng, headed for a chair where she sat down and promptly fell asleep. "This is my art," she explained to someone who woke her up, and dropped off again.

In came British designer Zandra Rhodes, her royal blue forelock blazing. Multimillionaire Huntington Hartford shuffled through the crush in a grubby overcoat complaining "I've had my foot in a cast for three months and it's swollen up like a football."

**HE WOULD** have shuffled out again if a dazzling blaze of flashbulbs had not just then announced the presence of Andy Warhol escorting Barbara Allen.

"Peter Beard's ex," Warhol whispered. They were with the Truly Super Ones who had made that long wait at the red carpet worthwhile. Paloma Picasso, Diane Von Furstenburg and artist Antonio, the Oscar de la Rentas and long-time Vogue editor Diana Vreeland, along with Roberto Polo and his wife Rosa. They had just come from a madly chic dinner (sole bonne Femme, duck with cherries, Endive salad) at the Cote Basque Restaurant.

"I don't believe in fashion" said Andy Warhol.

"Nostalgia is the enemy of art," said Roberto Polo. "Now I've seen Andy, I'm leaving," said one of the Beautiful Ones.

And outside, the transistor radio clutched by a spectator was saying "New York City employees will probably get their salaries on Friday, but it will be a squeaker. Striking garbage collectors here say that they will pick up where garbage is known to be a health hazard. The bill to keep New York solvent passed in the House today."

Said a cabdriver afterward: "This is some city, isn't it?"