

# The Transom

## Thurberizing Borowitz

Jon Stewart didn't show, but on Monday night his co-authors in *America (The Book): A Guide to Democracy Inaction* turned up at the Algonquin Hotel to pick up this year's Thurber Prize for American Humor and the check for five grand that came with it.

The duo, Ben Karlin and David Javerbaum, stressed the book's collaborative effort. "Everyone was chipping in," Mr. Karlin gushed. "I don't know how Andy does it," referring to fellow Thurber nominee Andy Borowitz.

"Oh, fuck you," Mr. Borowitz shouted from the audience. "I'll just take the check."

This was Mr. Borowitz's second loss at the Thurber Awards; in 2001, "David Sedaris won the Thurber, and he didn't even have to show up to kick my ass," said Mr. Borowitz. Losing to "*Me Talk Pretty Some Day* was like losing to *The Da Vinci Code*," he said.

"Well, the real reason Jon Stewart isn't here is, he's out with David Sedaris," said Mr. Karlin. Mr. Stewart had sent along his thanks, however: "Me thank you. Me so glad win Thurber," Mr. Stewart had scrawled, appending a doodle of a kitten.

While *The New Yorker's* Adam Gopnik, a judge of the contest, made comedy sound hard with a little speech on humor as the opposite of rhetoric, Mr. Borowitz made it sound easy. All he does is write "a daily fake news story—sort of like Judith Miller," he said. Mr. Javerbaum required fuel: With "Doritos and Mountain Dew," he said, he could get through anything. He'd better stock up: There'll be a sequel to *America (The Book)*, though the details are "top-secret," he said.

Let's hope that the sequel doesn't go head to head with Mr. Borowitz's next opus in a few years. "I don't like magnanimity," said Mr. Borowitz. "I felt like Don Cheadle when Jamie Foxx won."

As if to further his humiliation, a woman came up hoping for his autograph. She held out her copy of *America (The Book)*.

"I don't have anything else for you to write on," she apologized. So he wrote on its front page: "What a piece of shit, Andy Borowitz."

—Erin Coe

## The Perfume Heir

Erwin Creed claims he's not a party boy, but some *je ne sais quoi* in those big dreamy brown eyes of his seems to suggest otherwise.

On Monday morning at the Asiate restaurant in Columbus Circle, Mr. Creed was well scrubbed and suited up in a blue jacket and tie. His brown hair was slightly tousled, his lashes curled up, his smile dazzling. Not only does the seventh-generation, 25-year-old Creed perfume heir speak English with a heavy Parisian accent, he's just plain hot.

At first, Mr. Creed tried to branch out from the family biz by studying fashion and working with candles in Geneva, but he eventually relented and studied under a perfumer for six months. He has since agreed to take on the family business when his father

They want to push their advertising."

During his short stay in New York, Mr. Creed has stopped by Le Père Pinard, Pastis and the nightclub Cain. He admitted that while in Paris, he doesn't make the scene and spends much of his time with his girlfriend. *Le sigh*.

The Transom would like nothing better than for Mr. Creed to duck through a social oubliette's trapdoor to the Euro-Manhattan demi-world corridor of playboys and mini-heirs; he's got a face and a bank account just made for Page Six. Yet the wildest he gets is boxing twice a week; he's even

year's 100 list. "It's kinda hard to try to do something serious in the middle of an open bar."

So how has this year been for the guys? "This is the beginning of a lot of different things," said Hans Friedrichs, stylish, 36 and in theater.

"The election—except for Bloomberg—was very positive for our agenda. But it's ridiculous to think all is well—it's still total acceptance, we still need more visibility." So apparently it's 1992. Come on, guys, even a governor's gay! Of course, he resigned . . .

## Professor Montel

For Monday night's Angel Ball at the Marriott Marquis, Denise Rich's fourth biennial cancer fund-raiser, the red carpet was clogged; Patti LaBelle and Natalie Cole were expected to perform.

But who wants to talk about cancer on the red carpet?

"WHAT IS THE MOST EMBARRASSING SONG ON YOUR iPod?" a *People* magazine reporter asked every single guest.

"The theme from *Jaws*, by John Williams," said Kelly Ripa with a laugh.

"Show tunes," said a radiant Jamie-Lynn Sigler, looking resplendent in a gold empire-waist gown. "When I'm out with my friends, I have to skip those."

"HOW DO YOU PLAN TO KEEP OFF THOSE HOLIDAY POUNDS?" asked *Star* magazine. Repeatedly.

"Pfff! Are you kidding?" said Natalie Cole, who could eat all she wants and still be gorgeous, as far as *The Transom* is concerned. "Don't eat," she offered with a shrug.

No wonder Star Jones blew wordlessly past reporters after mugging for photographers.

A few celebs, including Nelly and TLC's Chilli, appeared willing to actually touch upon the evening's original purpose.

"I lost someone very dear to me," Nelly said, showing his diamond-studded hands into his pockets and speaking of his late sister. He continues to be inspired by "her fight. And her smile."

"I know we are gonna cure cancer someday," said Chilli optimistically. "I think there's a cure for the common cold."

Such gravity didn't last long. "BESIDES WORLD PEACE, OF COURSE, WHAT DO YOU WANT FOR CHRISTMAS?"

"Just to be home and enjoy everybody," Nelly said, rather endearingly.

"I don't know," said Chilli.

Montel Williams showed stamina in making one of the slowest crawls ever witnessed through the press gauntlet, posing for every photographer and stopping to speak with every broadcast and print reporter. He even took the time to educate a Kingsborough Community College student on working the red carpet.

"Oh, no!" Mr. Williams admonished cheerfully after

the eager cub opened his mouth and came out with, "Hi, I'm a journalism student!"

"You gotta come out BIG!" said Mr. Williams. "Come with something that digs DEEP. Go for the exclusive!"

Mr. Williams walked away and looked over his shoulder.

"O.K., now I'm gonna come back, and we're gonna start this again!"

Go, Montel! If only every interview could have been a do-over . . .

—Nicole Pesce

## the glass eye



**NO DIRTY LYRICS HERE!** Ashley Schiff and Tipper Gore cuddled up to jazz legend Wynton Marsalis on Nov. 14 as Lincoln Center celebrated 25 years of his expletive-free jazz at its 14th annual gala benefit. That same night, Gilles Bensimon, Carole King and Zac Posen got into it at the opening of the new Fashion and Textile History Gallery.

given up skiing and motocross, and presumably will never ever take up professional nightclubbing.

"I broke everything," he said. "I broke my legs two times. I broke my knuckles"—twice, in fact. "That's why I'm not skiing, because I was a bit more crazy. I don't want to take the risk," he concluded.

—E.C.

## McGreeving Down the Road

Jim McGreevey, on hand to present the Humanitarian of the Year award to Spanish Prime Minister Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero, put on a good show with his conservative suit, serious words and populist inflection at *Out* magazine's "Out 100" awards hoo-hah on Friday. It just wasn't his venue. After one full pause and a few impatient facial expressions, the ex-

Mandy Graves, 28, does music P.R. for Antony and the Johnsons. "I don't know—the whole thing, it's going backwards. It's not doing what it needs to be doing." She looked less than enthused, all wrapped in her thick winter jacket.

But sometimes politics and parties do mix: After half an hour waiting for a jacket at the coat check, *The Transom* was ready to vote against just about anything.

—Brad Tyltel

