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# Star-studded Bal de la Chasse honors Grace Catherine Cary on eve of winter solstice

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JAN 2, 2015 - 10:45 PM



Guests arrive at the after party at the Party honoring Grace Catherine Cary at the home of Cathy and Rivie Cary. Sunday, December 21, 2014. (Josh Brasted Photo)

It was the eve of the winter solstice, and for this longest night of the year, there was a party, one where it could truly be said was a feast for the senses.

**Bal de la Chasse**, honoring **Grace Catherine Cary**, hosted by parents **Cathy and Rivie Cary**, and grandparents **Beth and Dr. George Cary**, and **Mr. and Mrs. Prentiss Clement Havens**, evoked a feeling of being at an event like no other, a certain rare magical milieu.

The hosts called upon **Bronson van Wyck of Van Wyck & Van Wyck** to work with them in creating this sensory experience, one that had a definite French flair, with Versailles being a focus. (Versailles was originally constructed as a hunting lodge for Louis XIII.) The invitation created by **Scriptura** introduced the party motif to invitees: An original etching of stags holding a crest rendered in pen and ink, custom calligraphy and vintage typography was printed (letterpress) on handmade deckle-edge paper stained with coffee. The envelope liner featured an image from a painting of 17<sup>th</sup>-century Versailles by Pierre Patel and a custom wax seal -- a family monogram honoring three generations of Carys and Havens -- securing the envelope.

The evening started with guests approaching the Cary home, where the first half of the black-tie party was held, while listening to the sounds

of John Parker Jazz Band. Inside, a Christmas tree (an Alaskan Weeping Cedar) was a nod to the holiday season, and the home was filled with lavish floral arrangements indicative of the beauty that would reveal itself as guests moved through to the tented backyard and side areas. The main garden tent was inspired by the L'Orangerie at Versailles with trees, flowers and foliage placed among comfortable seating, where one could listen to the sounds of **Deacon John and the Ivories** (though many danced!). Smaller tents, adorned with foliage chandeliers, were the main areas for cuisine by **Margo Bouanchaud**. Offerings included crown racks of lamb, caviar, sea scallops meuniere, lobster tails (of which the lobsters were plucked from a "**lobster tree**" when needed), Louisiana oysters, seared foie gras, burgundy wine-braised short ribs, seared sea bass, and a dessert table loaded with macaroons, cakes and French pastries.

At 9:30 p.m., it was time to head across the street for the after party, where more sensory surprises awaited. Jugglers, fire breathers, acrobats dressed in period attire entertained partygoers as they walked the red carpet pathway between the house and the tent. Actors, also dressed in costume, stood

outside the tent (some mingling inside, as well), the front of which was hand-painted to replicate the facade of Versailles on the marble court, hinting at what was inside. The first room entered by guests was the **Gallery of Stags**, which was lined with oil paintings and 50 different taxidermy mounts. The faux green malachite walls, velvet couches, grey marbleized bars, cut-glass chandeliers and blood-red flowers in silver antique vases gave the room a regally surreal, Versailles meets bohemian feel. Period antiques also added an elegant touch. The main room was the **Hall of Mirrors**: it was centered with a parquet dance floor flanked by eight rooms (four on each side), each painted in a unique color palette such as teal, royal blue, green, yellow/orange, beach/grey, and red lacquer. One of the rooms was deemed the "Queen's Library," highlighted by a hand-painted perimeter canvas wall painted to look like the queen's library at Versailles. The rooms had seating, creating mini-lounges for guests to easily relax or to casually take in the music. Food was available throughout with sushi, suckling pig, caviar, beef tenderloin, and more desserts. **Simply Irresistible** was the opening band, followed by the much-rumored appearance of **Maroon 5**,

then **Wiz Khalifa**. Yet, the evening of delights had not ended: Champagne and sparklers were given to guests, and there was a laser light show accompanied by "**The Dolls**" (DJ Mia Moretti + Violinist Margot).

Many turned out for this special night for Grace Catherine -- who looked stunning in a dress by Suzanne Perron -- including **Rives and Havens Cary** (her brothers were joined by her father and grandfathers in wearing matching dinner jackets; her mother Cathy donned a dress by Georges Hobeika, grandmother Beth Cary in Yvonne Counce); out-of-town guests **Stevie Pitt** and Texas Longhorn friends (Grace Catherine matriculates at University of Texas) and multigenerational members of the **Havens, Patrick, Scoggin, Forman, Georges, Carbine, Whann, Hoefler, LeCorgne, White, Zimmermann** and **Kohnke** families.

"One of my most cherished memories is the *gaiete* and festivity among the multi-generational guests on this most glorious winter solstice evening," said Cathy Cary.

For Grace Catherine, "*Merci beaucoup* -- I am blessed to have enjoyed the evening with the most extraordinary friends and family."

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