

## After a Fashion

BY STEPHEN MACMILLAN MOSER



**Mark Sullivan, Lance Morgan, Carolyn Farb, little me, and Rita Garza at the divine Hotel Icon in Houston for *Brilliant* magazine's party honoring Mme. Farb**

*photo by Shelley Daly*

**THE SOCIAL CIRCUIT** Omigod, I've just had the most glamorous 24 hours of my life! So impossibly glam, I can hardly stand myself. *You'll* probably raise an objection, too, but for now, let's just snuggle up under my ermine lap robe and enjoy some delicious dish. **Lance Morgan** and **Phil Hudson**, publishers of *Brilliant*, invited me to a party they were throwing in Houston for their recent cover girl, **Carolyn Farb**. Well, you *know* how I feel about Carolyn: I think she's a goddess. Others can smirk, but I care not. I'm *deeply* impressed to know her. My frequent walker **Mark Sullivan** said, "I'll make you an offer you can't refuse; come down to Houston, and I'll put you up in my penthouse at the **Four Seasons**." *Well!* How *could* I refuse? Then, the lovely e-mail arrived from Carolyn (she who loathes e-mail), asking me to come down as well. I called Carolyn the next day, and when she asked if I'd like to come to her house, I swooned. Yes, indeedy, I would. My frequent consort **Rita Garza** *happened* to have a meeting in Houston that day, so I invited her to accompany me to the party, and invited myself to ride down in her brand new **350Z**. We arrived late on Tuesday at Mark's place, and it was heavenly – spacious and exquisitely appointed, with sweeping views to die for. He was the perfect host, and we stayed up and gossiped until all hours. After asking Carolyn's permission the next morning, I begged Mark to accompany me, afraid I might disgrace myself by passing out (or worse). Carolyn's River Oaks home is not especially grandiose from the outside, but it *is* a 1930s **John Staub** structure that had been redone in the Eighties, and the overwhelming quality from the outside is privacy. But inside? It's like an art museum where no alarms go off if you touch the art. The furnishings become inconsequential next

to the breathtaking displays of art that trail everywhere, from the garage, through both floors of the house, across the patio, around the pool, and into the pool house. Mark and I were giddy to stand in front of **Frida Kahlos, Jasper Johnses, Warhols, Rousseaus** – a staggering personal collection that perfectly described its owner. The full-length **Aaron Schickler** portrait of Carolyn hanging in the circular stairwell was among the many incredible portraits of her. When she suggested lunch at the **Grotto**, a high-society watering hole, we eagerly agreed (*I rode with Carolyn in her to-die-for **Aston Martin** convertible*). We were immediately seated at the center table, and the parade of society babes winding its way through the restaurant was straight out of **Dynasty**. Carolyn identified them for us, giving us brief background info on them: "She's number one on the best-dressed list," (I also met No. 2 later that night) or, "She used to be a newscaster," and Mark and I lapped it up. Suddenly I realized it wasn't *Dynasty*, it was the **La Cote Basque** section of **Truman Capote's Answered Prayers** – and I swooned all over again. Carolyn is not only witty and engaging, but she's as shrewd and clever as she is beautiful and gracious – *and* she behaved with *far* better manners than any of the pretenders to her throne who were present. We regretfully bade Carolyn goodbye and went on a whirlwind tour of Houston, after which we retired for a brief respite and then got ready for the party and made arrangements to meet Rita there. The party was at the drop-dead gorgeous new **Hotel Icon** – unquestionably the most chic hotel I've ever been in ([www.hotelicon.com](http://www.hotelicon.com)). Housing the **Balance Day Spa**; **Jean-Georges Vongerichten's** new restaurant, **Bank**; and the **Whiskey**, a **Rande Gerber** bar so plush I never wanted to leave, the rooms were magnificent, and I met the fab PR wizards behind the Icon magic, **Gail Rubin** and **Stuart Rosenberg** of **Studio Communications**, both riveting conversationalists and deeply talented. I intend to work hard to make them my **NBFs** (my *Next Best Friends*). Carolyn reigned over the entire affair wearing a dazzling suite of turquoise and diamond jewelry from the estate of **Merle Oberon**, and the chicest slice of the city turned out in force to pay homage. *Vive la reine*.

**ALLEYCATTING** Last Saturday night was a social-climber's wet dream – thank god I was wearing **Depends** under my new black suede jeans. My date, **Rita Garza**, and I started our night at **Brilliant** magazine's fab little soiree at **Oslo**, for their **Little Black Book** (in honor of **Mark Sullivan's** cover story by the same name). Oslo absolutely rules as the coolest, newest club around, and was the perfect setting for the handpicked crowd. Owner **Matt Lucky** graciously introduced himself to me at the door; he is a very nice and very successful gentleman who happens to co-own a string of stylish clubs. Rita and I greeted our hosts, **Brilliant** publishers **Phil Hudson** and **Lance Morgan**; grabbed a couple of cosmopolitans; and made a beeline for the Shag Room in back – a den of iniquity upholstered with brown shag carpeting. It was from there, with dim lighting and sunglasses, that I held court for the rest of the time. The ever-changing cast of characters included the delightful Mark Sullivan and his beau. I spent most of my time glued to the side of **Katy Gaffney**, who is in charge of the **Lucky Star Auction** for the **Texas Film Hall of Fame** that I'm helping with. She was there with *her* beau, the charming **Robert Walker**, board member of the **Austin Film Society**, which produces TFHOF, so there was lots of chatter about *that*. Also in attendance were **Award Modern's** (n/e

**UpCountry)** **Andrew Ward**, and **Paul Bradshaw** (who is on so many boards of directors I can't even begin to mention them). Regarding his listing as a "power single" in the *Little Black Book*, Paul said, "I've never been honored before for *not* getting laid." We *did* miss seeing **Joel Mozersky**, who designed Oslo's interiors. So we hopped in the limo (graciously provided by a friend of Mark Sullivan's), and went to *his* party, the **ArtErotica Ball**. ArtErotica was once again held at the **Blue Genie** studios, which were transformed into a fantasyland of fishnet and hot pink. The art donations were dazzling, with creations ranging from implicit to explicit; the shirtless waiters bearing trays of drinks added decoration of their own. The erotic desserts created by **2 Dine 4** were a highlight of the evening, arriving like **Cleopatra** on a litter borne on the shoulders of the waiters. A mad dash at 11:30pm for last-minute bids gave every reason to believe that the event would beat last year's total of \$16,000. Afterward, the limo loaded up our merry band of marauders and deposited us at the lovely home of a publicity-shy beauty who shall remain nameless. This party was distinctly more intimate, and a *lot* of fun (thanks, Pat). I hung out with my dear friend **Mark Ashby** and **By George's Scott Butler, Brandi Cowley**, and her friend **Vance**. I had a deep conversation with Mark Sullivan's sister **Lizzie** on the patio – she must have put some kind of hex on me to get me talking like that. Thinking we had time for just *one* more party before sunrise, we piled into the limo, arriving at our destination to find no fewer than five police cars in attendance. We opted to drive right past, and I decided to call it a night, stumbling from the limo to my bed. After all, I'll need my beauty sleep, you know... My schedule is full with the upcoming