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June 27, 2008 1:33 PM

PARTY ON!

Rogan vs. A/C: Stipe and Friends Get Hot

By Jason Wilson



Left to right: Rogan Gregory and friend, The Bouwerie Theater complete with cardboard VHS players.

Last night, Rogan set the stage at its new Bouwerie Theatre digs, for an epic confrontation between the namesake designer, Rogan Gregory (perhaps the most laid-back clothes-maker this side of Scott Sternberg) and R.E.M.'s Michael Stipe. Guests guzzled Barefoot Bubbly Champagne and Saporro beer before taking to the streets, spilling down the stairs away from the sauna-like interior and into a fashionable pile mimicking Stipe's cardboard radio facsimiles. Beastie Boy Mike D, Coldplay's Chris Martin (looking conspicuously inconspicuous) and Gregory himself, could be seen, escaping the sweltering gallery. "There is a fucking A/C in there," he said. "It's just the people, they give off so much heat." True that.

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Left to right: Matt Shuster (Thom Browne, duh), Steven Rojas and Molly Williams.

From now until the end of July, the store will host Stipe's stunning installation of steel-cast cassette tapes, Holga and Polaroid cameras, and cardboard VHS players. It's another surprising mix of retail and art, one that sits well with Rogan. "Your space is a true expression of who you are. I think the beauty of retail is that you can actually buy into an aesthetic." He continues, "Often with art, you can't afford it and it's very difficult to buy into it. But with this, I like to give people the opportunity to get involved, even if it is just buying a T-Shirt." The excellent cast 'relics' on display are emblematic of the infinite progression of technological and entertainment devices, and as was the case last night in the sweltering space, they double as excellent heat conductors.



Left to right: Mike D and Johnathan Lawhorne (Teen Vogue).

Stipe and Rogan have known each other for years, each feeding off the other's creativity. "A lot of people go for the obvious stuff we do, but he understands what I feel is the more fundamental product," Gregory remarks on the collaboration with friend. "I've always gone for that interdisciplinary approach—I do clothing, I make paintings, I do sculpture. He's been talking about making objects for a couple of years now. I really liked his stuff and I felt it just fit perfectly into the space."

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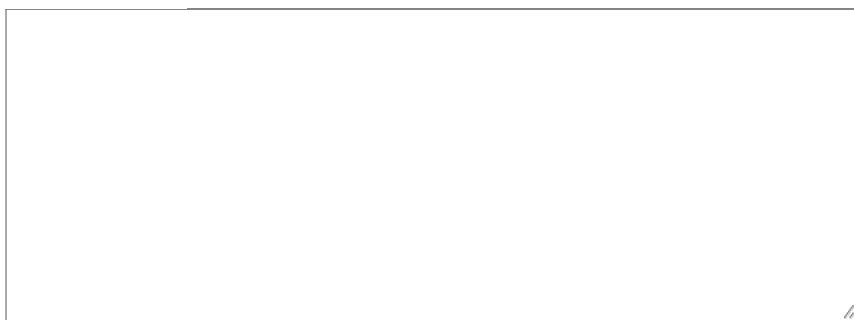
Left to right: *Rajni Lucienne (Nylon)* and *Lizzy Fortunato, jewelry designer*.

As for the festivities themselves, Rogan said, "I don't like to throw a party for party's sake. I like to do things that are more like, 'What The...?'" There was plenty of that to go around. However, we did pine for the **forty-ounce bottles he offered at his opening party the other month**. Quote the host, "It was a little different crowd this time, we wanted to keep it under control. The Forties weren't good for that. People drink a Forty and it's really a fucking party, you know? But I think we'll do it again, because I'm a *big* fan of Forties."

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