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American Friends of the Louvre Hosts a Glittering Astronomer's Ball

APRIL 26, 2017 5:32 PM

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Kelli J. Bartlett and Deepica Mutyala

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The theme was The Astronomer's Ball and stars could be seen, despite the rain. The American Friends of the Louvre (AFL) hosted a gala for the Young Patrons Circle (YPC) Tuesday, specifically to benefit the growth and restoration of the Louvre. Guests arrived on a dark and rainy Manhattan night

to floating trays of Champagne and manchego with figs, shaking rain from their umbrellas and smoothing hemlines accordingly.

Notable beauty influencer Deepica Mutyala arrived in a navy structured gown and a glittery smokey eye while accompanied by her date, Kelli J. Bartlett, vice president of makeup at Glamsquad.

“The YPC gala always delivers on a masterpiece of an evening,” said Bartlett, dressed in an orange, black, and white printed Solace London dress, of her third year attending the gala. “Champagne, sparkly company, and delicious food!”

Indeed, guests dined on a first course of roasted asparagus, truffle aioli, and Marcona almonds following a gracious speech by AFL executive director Sue Devine on the the significance of *The Astronomer*—the 1668 painting by Dutch painter Johannes Vermeer.

“Tonight is in celebration of the Louvre’s current exhibition ‘Vermeer and the Masters of Genre Painting,’ ” noted Astrid Larson, director of programs and events, who sported a tiny pin of the painting on her white The Kooples blazer. “*The Astronomer* is not only a part of the blockbuster exhibition but is also of the Louvre’s permanent collection.”

The evening continued over a main course of broiled tournedos of salmon with ginger lemon beurre blanc, served with jasmine coconut rice cakes and charred string beans. In true French fashion, a third course of communal cheese plates was served before a decadent dessert of chocolate salted tarts.

After dinner, guests made their way to the silent auction to bid on gold-plated tea cups from the Ritz Paris and a Victorinox watch, among other finery.

While the night had waned, the rain had not; gentlemen in tuxedos peered out into the street, helping ladies with their trains.

“Well, at least it was worth it,” said one male guest as he straightened his bowtie for *la tempête*.

