

Cumshots & Cumberbunds

Dylan Jones reports on the wedding of century

Photos: Stuart Howart



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hen asked what they're doing at the weekend, most people respond with "Oh, my mate's having a barbecue then we're gonna go out for some drinks." Or maybe "Oh, I'm cat-sitting my friend's Siamese, she's called Helen Keller" or maybe even "ah, I'm reviewing XXL for QX Magazine."

But you do NOT expect them to say "Well, the guy who owns Sweatbox Sauna and his artist fiancé are having a post-heteronormative, avant-garde wedding celebration at an underground venue in London Fields, with conceptual semen art and waiters in jockstraps. So yeah, I'm going to that."

It was the extravagant, unapologetically insane, totally, wonderfully inappropriate wedding of Mark Ford and Jason Woodson (now Jason Ford), whose arrival on the back of a white horse in a shower of feathers, glitter, and muscular men, set the tone for the evening. It was like a Lady Gaga music video crossed with some sort of dystopic porn film, and it was EXACTLY the sort of ridiculousness we go in for. Being so pretentious that you're unpretentious is the pinnacle of cool these days. For all the fluff and foof and debauchery, there was a twinkle in the eyes and tongues firmly in cheeks of the beaming couple.



The theme was to go against social norms, a rebellion against everything the traditional wedding represents. Guests were greeted by a hilariously extravagant entrance leading into East London haunt The Laundry's underground performance space. An arc of rainbow balloons over a huge pink carpet, flanked by a host of photographers, not to mention security staff that looked like they'd fallen out of a Treasure Island Media DVD box set.

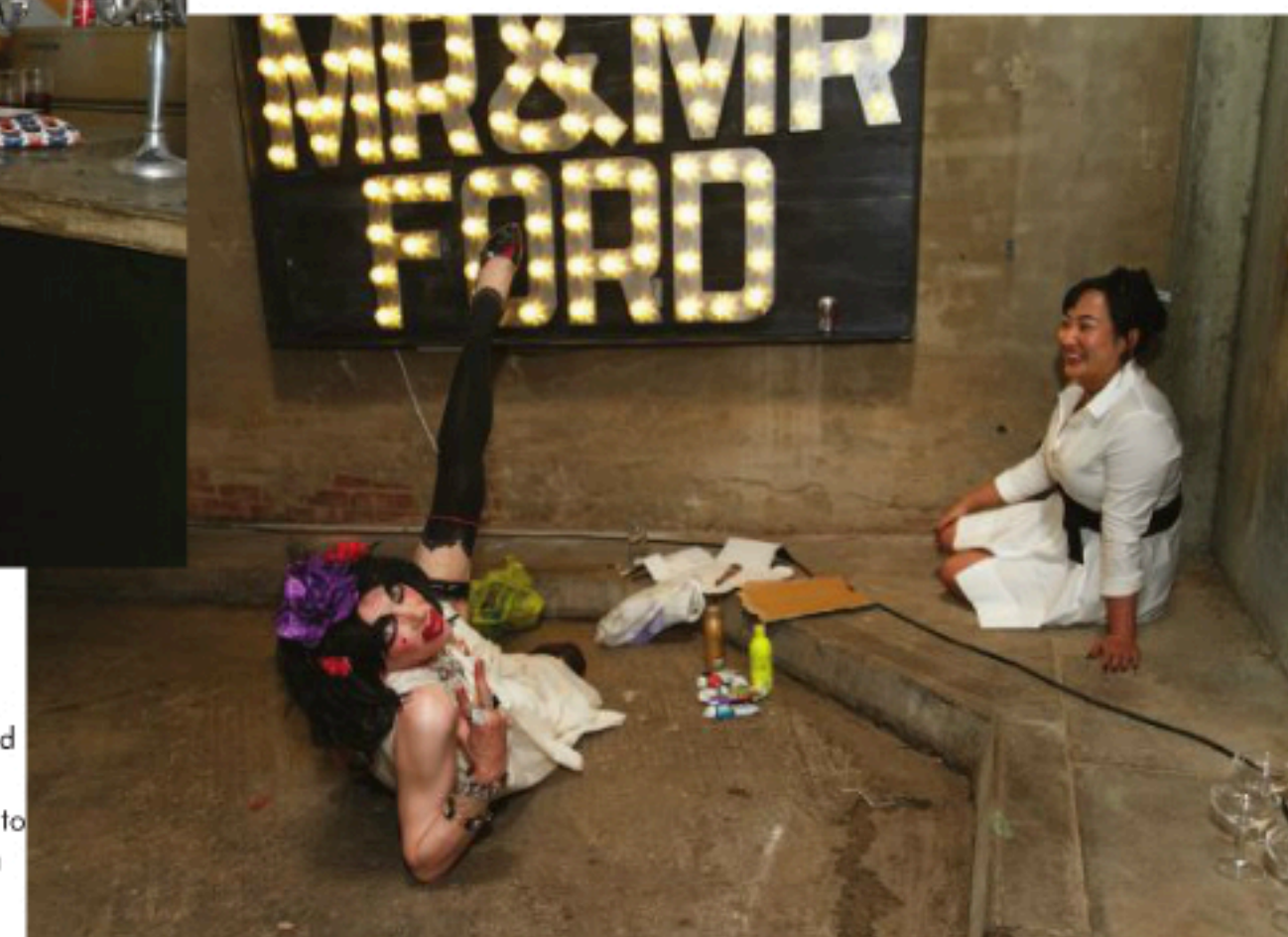
Artworks, posters and quotes plastered the concrete walls from pictures of the happily grinning couple to posters that said things like "Love is buying your crystal from John Lewis instead of Vauxhall."

Inside, performer and political purveyor of filth David Hoyle was perched demurely on a bar stool, champagne flute in one hand, cigarette holder in the other. I said hi, and told him I was there for QX Magazine. "Ah yes," he said distantly, taking a sip of champagne "QX...the people's publication." What an accolade!

Speaking of champagne, I just need to take a moment to emphasise the unrivalled, audacious amazingness of the free bar. It was the best free bar I've ever been to in my life. And that's coming from someone who's basically got a degree (BA Hons) in free bars. They had aforementioned lovely champers. They had a seemingly infinite supply of Absolut vodka. They had wine. Both red and white. And it was GOOD wine. Free bar wine almost always has a distinct bouquet of vinegar, but this, as my Northern friend Jake said, went down a RIGHT treat. We asked for a glass and had a bottle thrust at us.

We'd just perched ourselves next to David Hoyle when event organiser Cal Strode swept up to us with a clipboard and an earpiece, looking EXACTLY how a wedding organiser might look in a romcom starring Jennifer Lopez, e.g. amazing.

"Come on, I want to take you to see the cum sheet," he said, pushing long Jared Leto-esque hair out of his eyes. We thought it best just not to ask and go with it. He led us into a small concrete room, in which was suspended a bed sheet with hundreds of ejaculations on it. A criss-crossing, crusty pattern of white splooges, representing On the other side was printed a collage of Grindr messages from the ejaculatees (ejaculatees? Maybe ejaculators). It was either completely vulgar or complete genius. Perhaps vulgar genius! You never know with art do you.



After the cum-splattered bed sheet, it was time for the amuse-bouche (WHAT A SENTENCE!). It was scallops which were lovely and buttery. There was an initial moment of awkwardness as we didn't have a table to sit at. Luckily I'd wasted no time in befriending the beautiful in-house pole dancer, Nico. As soon as he saw we didn't have a table, he offered to find us one. And he did, literally. He found one, carried it over to us, plunked it down at the bar, flicked a table cloth across it and threw down some cutlery with a flourish. "There you go!"

The food was, of course, served by muscular waiters in sparkly red pants, called things like Javier and Brent. Serenading us through the main course was

Dusty Limits, who was a bit like a more engaging, SLIGHTLY older version of Taylor Swift. Whacking away at the piano and belting through salacious country numbers like her life depended on it! Lovely. There was also a play about Sweatbox, enacted by two men who spent their entire time on stage in the crab position, scuttling back and forth and talking about shit. It sounds absolutely horrible, but it wasn't, it was amazing. You had to be there really.

After the food had been polished off and speeches by various adoring friends and family members were made, it was time for the real party as music blared and everything descended into entirely appropriate debauchery.

The vibe for the whole evening was perfection. Beautifully laid out traditional white wedding banquet tables scattered around a shadily lit underground bar in East London. Genuinely beautiful romantic photography paired with insane homoerotic art. Cumberbunds and cum-splattered bed sheets. Anal and Absolut. Grindr and grenadine. It was a flawless and defiant statement on life as a gay man in twenty-first century London. The sleaze, the glamour, the insanity, the danger, the expense, the unrivalled, unequivocal FUN of it all.

Or maybe it wasn't. Maybe I'm just reading too much into it. Maybe gorgeous Mark and Jason just thought "fuck it. We want a bed sheet that loads of people have cum on, and we want to ride in on a big white horse, and we want champagne, and we want scallops, and we want hot waiters in jock straps. Why? Because we CAN goddamit!" And in a way that would make it all the more meaningful, and all the more amazing. CONGRATULATIONS BOYS.

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