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Feeling For ... Malcolm McLaren

By **BRUCE PASK**



Malcolm McLaren, 1980 (Stuart Nicol/Evening Standard/Getty Images).

Bruce Pask, T Magazine's men's fashion director, writes on style every two weeks.

Last week I attended the unveiling of Tom Sachs's large-scale steel Hello Kitty sculptures and "crying" fountains in the courtyard-turned-party-space at Lever House, on what may have been the most beautiful springtime soiree of the season. It was the coming together of the fashion and art crowds, and everyone played nicely together while the champagne flowed and the Kittys cried.



Tom Sachs sculpture at the Lever House courtyard (AP).

A brief musical interlude by a live band segued into a deejay set with music that sounded vaguely familiar: it was mostly early house, sorta-kind-a-maybe world-music light and "Paris Is Burning" ballroom beats, with a bit of opera sampling mixed in for good measure. Everyone seemed to love the funky, happy dance vibe and we started talking about how great (albeit nostalgic) it sounded. My friend Frank and I ducked indoors to see who was behind the turntables, and found Malcolm McLaren himself huddled over his records and CDs! "Madame Butterfly," "Deep in Vogue,"

“Paris Paris” (with Catherine Deneuve breathily whispering “sing away”!)... all the famous McLaren hits. A deejay playing song after song of his own music could be mistaken for being hubristic, but instead it felt eccentric and fun and perfectly curated for this evening and crowd.

It’s kind of amazing that someone who popularized plaid bondage pants could be sporting a chic suit and spinning at an arty party decades later. And what a treat to be re-introduced to his music just in time for summer drives to the beach and country. I went home, jumped on Amazon (I prefer CDs for the car rather than downloading directly to my iPod), and ordered “Fans,” “Duck Rock,” “Paris” and “Waltz Darling.” They arrived a few days later and have been stuck on heavy rotation ever since — pity my poor Memorial Day weekend house guests. But I make no apologies: I’m definitely feeling for Malcolm McLaren.