

EVENT REPORTS



Lunch at Five

On February 23, *Essence* marked the fifth anniversary of its “Black Women in Hollywood” luncheon, taking over the Beverly Hills Hotel with a black, white, and purple look produced by Caravents. For more Oscar-week events, turn the page.



Governors Ball

An oversize Oscar statuette stood sentry at the Governors Ball, produced and designed by Cheryl Cecchetto of Sequoia Productions with ball chair Jeffrey Kurland. This year's event at the Grand Ballroom on the top level of Hollywood & Highland got a revamp, abandoning the traditional sit-down dinner for a format Cecchetto described as "energized," with a meal of more than 50 mostly tray-passed dishes by Wolfgang Puck. Entertainment included Dave Koz (pictured), Tony Bennett, and Gregg Field and his band.



Golden Boys

LOS ANGELES *The stars of this year's Oscar night parties include two new players as well as a fresh dining concept for the Academy's Governors Ball.*

By ALESANDRA DUBIN



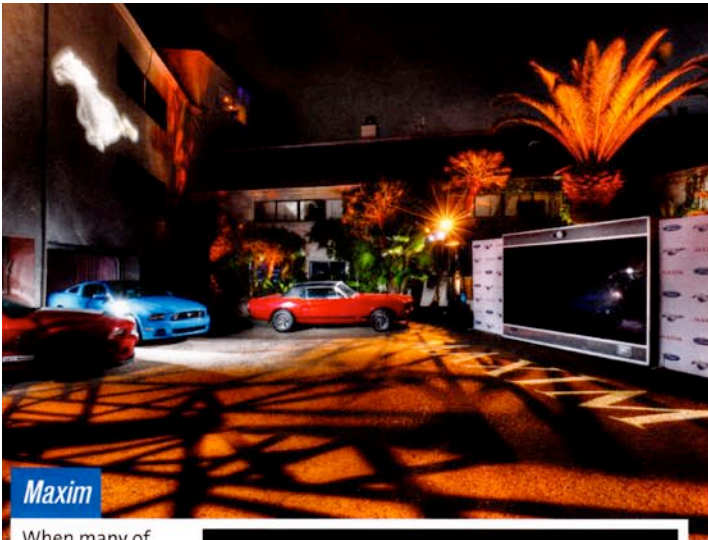
Vanity Fair

Vanity Fair took its annual A-list event back to the Sunset Tower hotel, which was bathed in colorful lighting that matched the host's brand. The arrivals carpet was decorated with logos; inside, the viewing dinner got an understated look.



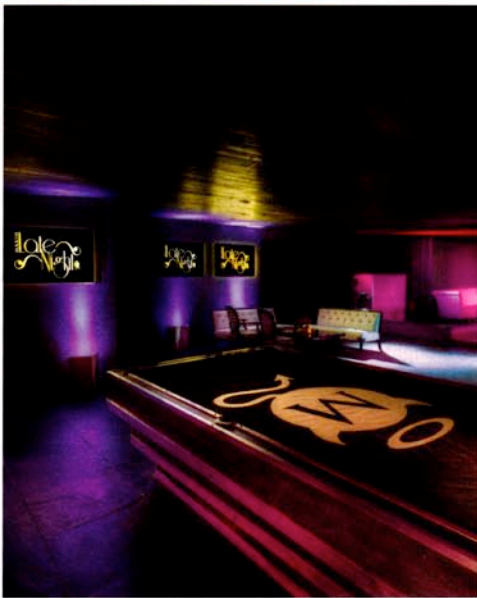
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PHOTOS: LINE & PHOTOGRAPHY (GOVERNORS BALL); COURTESY OF WOLFGANG PUCK (TRAY-PASSED DISHES); ADRIAN PAWLEY (VANITY FAIR); GETTY IMAGES (FRANKLIN); PHOTOPHILIP POLK/VIZ/IREIMAGE (VANITY FAIR)



Maxim

When many of the night's parties were wrapping up, *Maxim* was just getting started at a residence way up in the hills over West Hollywood. About 750 guests came through the doors for a performance by Ludacris and sweeping city views. The Visionary Group produced the authentic-feeling party, which also included a branded pool table and racing-style chairs using actual Ford car seats.



Elton John

The Elton John AIDS Foundation celebrated its 20th annual viewing party at the newly redesigned West Hollywood Park, a change of venue from its usual haunt, the Pacific Design Center. Virginia Fout of V Productions produced the event, which this year got a blue, nautical-inspired look with design by Antony Todd. The fundraising event took in \$5.25 million, thanks in part to auction items like the opportunity to join John and husband David Furnish at the *Vanity Fair* Oscar party, which sold for \$230,000. After dinner, Foster the People performed.



Weinstein

The Weinstein Company took to the Mondrian for its viewing and after-party, which got a celebratory feel thanks to huge wins for the company, including best picture for *The Artist*. Maggie Swisher produced the event, which got a clean look in white and metallic tones. A clear-top tent and decking covered the pool to make room for the crowd.

