

Interview

ARTWALK NY BENEFIT FOR THE COALITION FOR THE HOMELESS SPONSORED BY DOLCE & GABBANA

What would Alec Baldwin do for charity?

Definitely not an Irish dance. Definitely not with Coco Rocha.

"I'm not going to *do* an Irish dance," Baldwin yelled at Rocha last night at the Artwalk's charity auction, sponsored by Dolce & Gabbana and benefiting Coalition for the Homeless. Rocha was briefly playing auctioneer. She had taken the podium between artwork sales to garner bids for the CFTH's program Camp Homeward Bound, which sends homeless children to summer camp. Addressing the audience, which was packed with art, film, and fashion luminaries like Chuck Close, Jennifer Connelly, Dustin Yelling, Max Snow, Hannah Bronfman, Hillary Rhoda, Ryan McGinness, and Lisa Perry, she had proclaimed an ultimatum: if 20 people donated a lot of \$5,000, for a total of \$100,000, Baldwin would do an Irish jig, an art that she has studied, and Baldwin has not.

"C'moon!" implored Rocha. "That is never happening. Never," retorted Baldwin. But Rocha had only gotten to 13. The room got quiet. The supermodel looked crestfallen.

"But I want you to give us the goddamned money anyway." Potential bidders erupted in laughter, then applause. Baldwin leapt up, leaving his wife Hilaria's side for the first moment since they arrived. "Do we have another one? Where?" Baldwin started counting up. "Fifteen! Sixteen!" It seemed like they were going to make it. Baldwin began to give in. "Maybe I'll do the dance, maybe I'll do the dance," he consented, joining Rocha on auction stage, possibly soon to be the stage for less formal, more choreographed display.

"We've got it covered between the two of us on this Irish dancing thing. She: young, beautiful, looks like a dancer. And her drunken uncle. Who is accompanying her to the tavern."

Finally, they made it to 20. The promised Irish dance was delivered, and the crowd went wild. The momentum lasted—with art sales, the evening generated \$1 million for CFTH.

But there had been plenty of merriment before that pinnacle of the night. Prior to the auction, guests strolled through a separate space for a chance to silently bid on dozens of works, including ones by Wade Guyton and Chuck Close, which Jennifer Connolly lingered on for several moments with her son, Kai, at her side. Catered food from Michael's, David Burke Kitchen, Indochine, The National, The Lion, The Odeon, and City Diner kept up everyone's energy, while drinks by Absolut, City Winery and Peroni gave bidders just enough liquid courage to raise the stakes.

The night's honoree, Roxy Paine, an American artist known for his organically inspired monumental sculptures, was a tad thrown off by the hubbub. "Usually, I'm a bit of a hermit in my studio. It's not my natural place, standing at the podium." How does it feel to be honored? "I feel honored. It feels honorable," he said with a chuckle. With the success of the affair, his feelings were more than justified.—*Rachel Small*