



Hands up who likes hats! 'Gold Diggers of 1933' (above) and 'Gone With The Wind' (below)

good solid mystery for dilettante detectives Nick and Nora Charles to solve, but sleuthing comes a very poor second to reckless boozing, endless partying and honed witticisms.

The 1930s ended in World War II, and while 1939 was an epic year for gaudy escapism – both 'Gone with the Wind' and 'The Wizard of Oz' were released – thereafter the film industry changed with the times, with *noir* and 'issues' movies coming to the fore. But it's Depression cinema that feels most relevant right now, for there we find grand stories of personal struggle cheerily done up in sparkling wrapping – just what we need in these troubled times. *TH*

## Reporter 'Say, is he working on a case?' Nora 'Yes, a case of Scotch' 'The Thin Man' (1934)

Times may have been tough in the 1930s, but it was an era of creative opportunity: when everything is in flux, anything goes. In December 1933, alcohol – banned since 1919 – became legal again. New York's bartenders could at last bring cocktail culture into the open and jazz, too, flourished, with big swing bands, fronted by the likes of Duke Ellington, Count Basie and Benny Goodman, encouraging newly receptive white audiences to feel sexy and daring in public. So – great music, great booze, risk and excitement: can credit crunch London live up to all this? As we wait to see what revolutions may occur, here's how to do Depression-era glitz and glamour without the benefit of a Tardis...

## 'I'll make 'em laugh at you starving to death: it'll be the funniest thing you ever did' 'Gold Diggers of 1933' (1933)

### Going out

If you've wisely prioritised your going-out budget over mere details such as eating and buying toilet paper, you can enter retro heaven. Prohibition (prohibition1920s.com, next party New Year's Eve) offers the fun of boozing out of teacups in an East End warehouse interspersed with regular police raids, while the Bourne & Hollingsworth bar on Rathbone Place (bourneandhollingsworth.com) supplies intimate cocktails in a space that's been decorated to resemble your grandmother's living room. And glam dress is obligatory at DJ El Nino's Black Cotton Club at Volupté in Clerkenwell (volupte-lounge.com; next one is on December 12) for a clientele who flock to dance to music from the 78rpm era.

### Staying in

When the month's a week too long and your overdraft is snapping from the strain, pawn your last gold tooth and invest in a few bottles of old-fashioned liquor; then you can mix your own martinis while smoking yourself into a stupor swapping Parker-style barbs with a coterie of sharp-tongued associates. There are more than 12,000 cocktail recipes at drinksmixer.com, and with a download of Cab Calloway's 'Minnie the Moocher' chuntering away in the background, it will only be a matter of time before your epigrams start flying and your morals give way.

### Books and DVDs

Dorothy Parker's 'Complete Stories' is published by Penguin; otherwise track down a DVD of 'A Star is Born', which she co-wrote with Robert Carson and her husband Alan Campbell. And let's give her, not for the first time, the last word: 'If you want to know what God thinks of money, just look at the people he gave it.'

## Party like it's 1929

It's not the tragedies that kill us; it's the messes,' said Dorothy Parker late in life. She might have been recalling the 1929 Wall Street Crash, which jolted New York's roaring '20s into silence.



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### Trannyshack

#### ✱ Wednesdays

A weekly celebration of all things tranny. Dusty O hosts and Prince Nelly spins gender-bending tunes. Plus live drag performances. Soho Revue Bar, 11 Walkers Court, W1F OED (020 7734



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0377). £5, £3 before 11pm; adm free in drag.

### Music

#### Lauren Dalrymple Quartet

##### ★ Sundays

Singer Dalrymple regularly features F-ire Collective alumni and London's

top new talent. Effra Hall Tavern, 38 Kellett Rd, SW2 1EB. 9pm.

#### Florence And The Machine

##### ★ Nov 24

Instore performance from the appealingly vicious and visceral blues-popstrel.

tinyurl.com/instore. Pure Groove, 6-7 West Smithfield, EC1A 9JX. 1.30pm.

#### Friendly Fires

##### ✱ Dec 12

Disco-rockers play a top venue, on a Friday, for peanuts. Koko (koko.uk.com). 7.30pm. £10.