



January 24, 2017

## Night Fever: The Bill Bernstein Photographs

By Jennifer Krasinski



Some revolutionaries take to the streets; others change the world from a dancefloor. In the late Seventies, thanks to an assignment from the Village Voice, photographer Bill Bernstein began documenting the roiling splendor of New York's now-legendary discotheques. Studio 54, Electric Circus, Crisco Disco, and Hurrah weren't just sites of revelry and excess, they were spaces of liberation, imagination, and pride, all propelled by a four-on-the-floor beat. For two years, Bernstein captured some of the most glorious creatures of the nightclubs: Larry Levan spinning at Paradise Garage, the Disco Bats swinging above the heads of revelers at GG's Barnum Room, the stunning trans performers, the glittering hedonists. Forty of his photographs are on view at the Museum of Sex in "Night Fever," an installation that re-creates some of the dazzle of yore with mirror balls, disco hits pumping through speakers, and Seventies-style cocktails on offer. It's all a delightful reminder that radical cultural acts are sometimes driven by the most radical condition of all: pure, unbridled joy.