

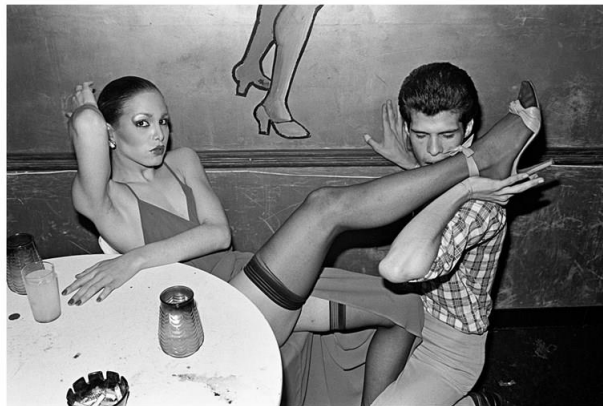
# DAZED

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## Capturing the euphoric disco club culture of 1970s New York

*Bill Bernstein's photos show how night fever transgressed social boundaries and brought people together on the dance floor*

By Ella Wills



GGs Barnum Room, Ava #2, 1979, Photography Bill Bernstein

While London continues to fight for its nightlife, these images of disco clubs in the late 70s show the euphoria of the early clubbing scene. Specifically the late 1970s New York club scene, which embraced sexual and social multiculturalism.

Bill Bernstein's photographs capture disco at its peak, when the music topped the charts and all-disco radio stations were in most major cities. In December 1977, Bernstein, originally from New Rochelle, was sent by *The Village Voice* to photograph an awards presentation for President Carter's mother at Studio 54. He stayed on to photograph the regular dances in the first installment of a series that would record disco in the time of CHIC and the YMCA through to its ultimate death in 1979.

An exhibition of 40 photographs at the Museum of Sex shows the radical social impact of New York disco. Images from clubs including *Le Clique*, *Paradise Garage* and *The Fun House* reveal social classes, sexualities and races coming together to the hedonistic beat.

In a film for his 2015 book *DISCO: The Bill Bernstein Photographs*, Bernstein remembers how "just being in that room gave you a physical high". On the disco era, he said: "It was a 'sneak-peak' at a world of inclusion that we are just beginning to see in our culture today."

"Night Fever: New York Disco 1977-1979, The Bill Bernstein Photographs" is showing now at the Museum of Sex, New York. The exhibition runs until 19 February