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Vinyl For Reals: Go See Meryl Meisler's Photos of '70s NYC

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Kissing in Black Leather Jackets During last Dead Boys Concert CBGB, New York, NY April 1977

We love Meryl Meisler, the New York-born photographer who documented Bushwick, Manhattan and Long Island [in the disco era](#). And HBO's new show, *Vinyl*, has [further whetted our appetite](#) for '70s NYC. So we're excited to hear that a selection of Meisler's earliest work will be on display at the [Steven Kasher Gallery](#) in Chelsea, starting next Thursday. The exhibition will include a large selection of black-and-white prints taken in some of Manhattan's mythical disco and punk clubs (CBGBs, Studio 54, Les Mouches, [Hurrah](#)) and in her hometown of Massapequa, affectionately coined "Matzo-

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Pizza” by the locals for its large Jewish and Italian population. It’s an urban-suburban milieu worthy of Richie Finestra himself.



Three Clowns in Monkey Suits at the Ringling Brothers Barnum and Bailey Circus, New York, NY April 1977

While the snapshots mark Meisler’s debut in the world of photography, she was already sharp-eyed when she captured Manhattan’s hedonistic club scene and all of its bountiful diversity and sexual freedom. “It was a transitional time,” said Cassandra Johnson, one of the show’s curators. “Things were happening across the board, no matter what category you wanted to put yourself into, whether you were a business man, a club kid, a gay man or a straight woman. Everybody was kind of participating.”

New York’s metamorphosis colluded with Meisler’s own coming of age. “It was not only a big moment of transition for the city itself, but for her personally,” said Johnson. “She

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was pinpointing her own identity as a gay woman, as an artist, as a working woman in this society.”



Ronda Winking With a Cigarette, The Mystery Club, Seaford, NY, June 1975

Meisler’s outlandish family is the artist’s other big topic of interest. She followed her parents in their monthly adventures with the “Mystery Club,” a group of 11 couples who organized surprise outings in locations as diverse as magic shows, recording studios or nudist colonies in New Jersey.

“It was quite an open-minded group. You wouldn’t exactly call them conservative,” said Anais Feyeux, the curatorial director at Steven Kasher. “There’s a strong connection

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between her family life in Long Island and her nightlife in Manhattan. Crazyness and humor link all these works together.”

“Meryl Meisler,” Feb. 25 to April 9 (opening reception Feb. 25 from 6pm to 8pm) at [Steven Kasher Gallery](#), 515 West 26th Street.