

Night Moves

From sexual promiscuity to Studio 54, author Brad Gooch documents the evolution of New York nightlife.

BY MICHAEL GILTZ

"I love the idea of people peeking in," says author Brad Gooch. Well, he's certainly giving readers the chance to do so with *The Golden Age of Promiscuity*. From its suggestive cover to its vivid descriptions of purposefully decadent gay night spots like the Mineshaft and Flamingo, Gooch's second novel is bound to shock some and titillate others.

A one-time model—Gooch had published short stories and poems before succumbing to the easy money of the fashion world—the handsome, thoughtful writer is still flush with the success of *City Poet*, his critically acclaimed biography of Frank O'Hara.

His new novel's impressive reach (it's filled with details about Elton John's birthday party at Studio 54, Fassbinder's excursions to the Mineshaft, and countless dead-on descriptions of long forgotten hot spots) can be traced to the simple fact that Gooch can't stop researching. He spent countless hours at the Gay and Lesbian Archives of the New York Public Library. "It's kind of funny going into the reading room with those little yellow lamps where everyone else is looking at manuscripts from T.S. Eliot and they bring you boxes filled with *Mandate* and *Blue Boy*," he laughs.

So with the original site of Studio 54 being gutted to make way for a virtual reality center, and several movies about the disco in the works, Gooch is still watching the strange time he lived through become a part of history. "For the '70s, it happened faster than it would have because of AIDS, I suppose," he says. "Normally, all these things would still be in the back of someone's closet instead of in a library."

His main hope is that *Golden Age* will remind people of where clubs such as Studio 54 came from. "In the same way that there was a friendship between Robert Mapplethorpe and Patti Smith, there was an axis between downtown gay bars and the uptown places," Gooch says. "Studio 54 was just a gay bar that transcended the genre. The tambourines and the disco music and the drugs and the boys in shorts all appeared after straight people started sneaking into the Mineshaft. It was very chic to be gay at that time. So they took that, and made a Disneyworld version."

THE GOLDEN
AGE OF
PROMISCUITY



BRAD GOOCH

inside: Kiss and make-up with **D-Generation**...**Emma** takes Hollywood...artist **Paul Cadmus's** work comes out of the closet...**Marguery Grill's** all-American fare...and more...