CONTENTS

ABOUT THIS BOOK 6

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK
8

GLOSSARY OF LIGHTING TERMS
10

NUDES
13

CHAPTER ONE
APPROACHING NUDITY
16
CHAPTER TWO
CLASSICAL NUDES
36
CHAPTER THREE
THE SEMI-DOMESTIC NUDE
58
CHAPTER FOUR
FANTASIES
74
CHAPTER FIVE
MALE NUDES AND COUPLES
96
CHAPTER SIX
THE OUTDOOR NUDE
114
CHAPTER SEVEN
SYMBOLS AND EXPERIMENTS
130
EROTICA
150
CHAPTER EIGHT
EROTIC FANTASY
154
CHAPTER NINE
ABSTRACTS AND BODY PARTS
176
CHAPTER TEN
ACCESSORIES AND PROPS
194
CHAPTER ELEVEN
TEXTURES, PATTERNS AND FORMS
212
CHAPTER TWELVE
FETISH APPEAL
232
CHAPTER THIRTEEN
THE ROMANTIC LOOK
250
CHAPTER FOURTEEN
PUSHING THE BOUNDARIES
274
PROVOCATIVE SHOTS
292
CHAPTER FIFTEEN
SIMPLY NAKED
296
CHAPTER SIXTEEN
HAIR AND MAKE-UP
314
CHAPTER SEVENTEEN
STRIKING A POSE
330
CHAPTER EIGHTEEN
PROPS
352
CHAPTER NINETEEN
EFFECTS AND FINISHING
372
CHAPTER TWENTY
DRESSING UP
394
CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE
VOYEURISTIC SHOTS
412
DIRECTORY OF PHOTOGRAPHERS
434
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS
448

www.ruforum.de

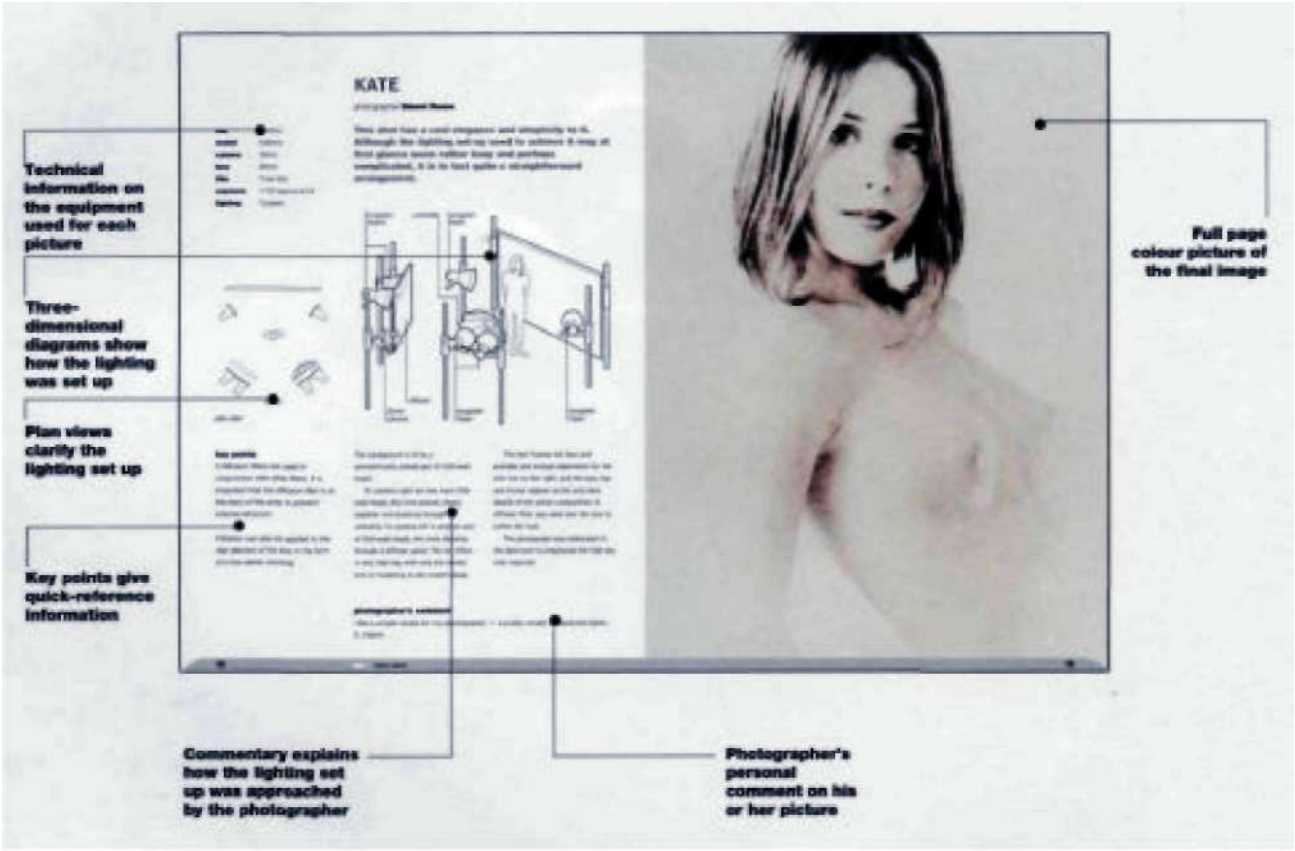
nitrogen14

ABOUT THIS BOOK

The most common response from the photographers who contributed to this book, when the concept was explained to them, was "I'd buy that". The aim is simple: to create a library of books, illustrated with first-class photography from all around the world, which show exactly how each individual photograph in each book was lit.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

The lighting drawings in this book are intended as a guide to the lighting set-up rather than as absolutely accurate diagrams. Part of this is due to the variation in the photographers' own drawings, but part of it is also due to the need to represent complex set-ups in a way which would not be needlessly confusing.



Distances and even sizes have been compressed and expanded: and because of the vast variety of sizes of soft boxes, reflectors, bounces and the like, we have settled on a limited range of conventionalized symbols. Sometimes, too, we have reduced the size of big bounces, just to simplify the drawing.

None of this should really matter, however. After all, no photographer works strictly according to rules and preconceptions: there is always room to move this light a little to the left or right, to move that light closer or further away, and so forth, according to the needs of the shot. Likewise, the precise power of the individual lighting heads or (more important) the lighting ratios are not always given; but again, this is something which can be "finetuned" by any photographer wishing to reproduce the lighting set-ups in here. We are however confident that there is more than enough information given about every single shot to merit its inclusion in the book: as well as purely lighting techniques, there are also all kinds of hints and tips about commercial realities, photographic practicalities, and the way of the world in general.

The book can therefore be used in a number of ways. The most basic, and perhaps the most useful for the beginner, is to study all the technical information concerning a picture which he or she particularly admires, together with the lighting diagrams, and to try to duplicate that shot as far as possible with the equipment available.

A more advanced use for the book is as a problem solver for difficulties you have already encountered: a

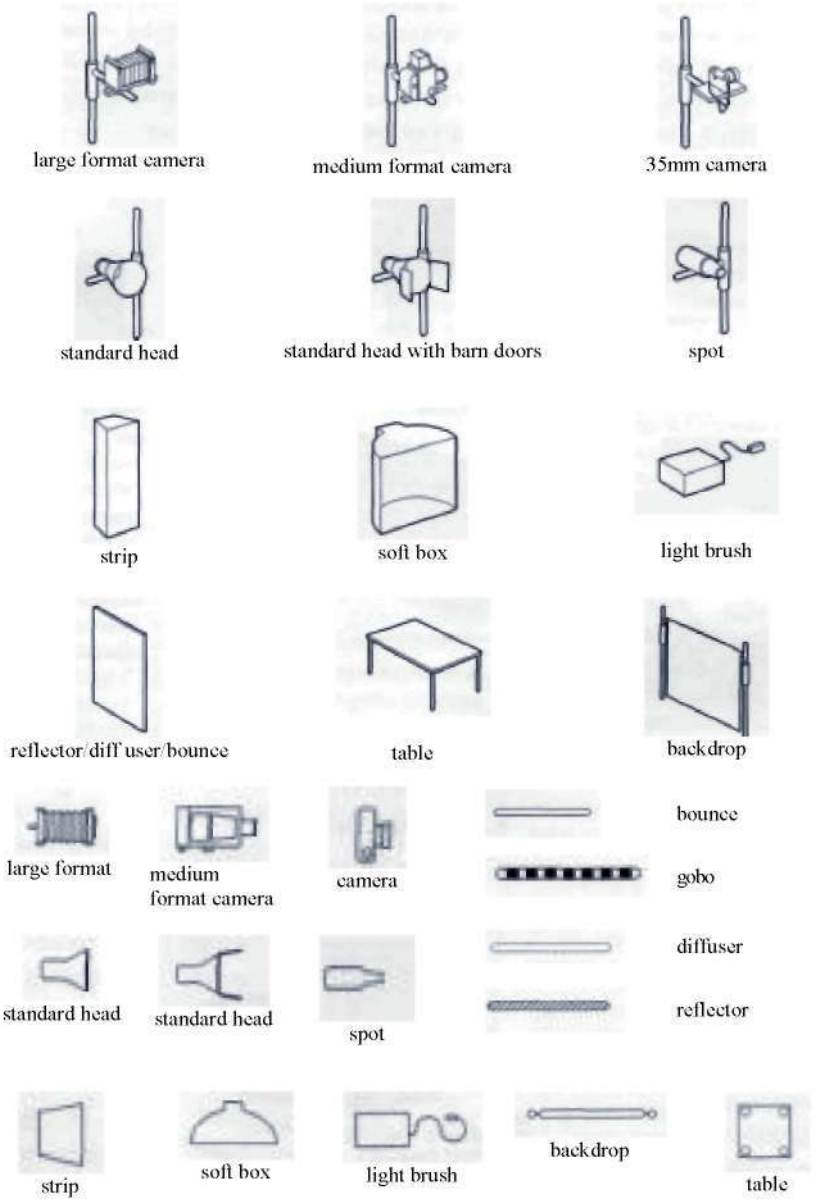
particular technique of back-lighting, say, or of creating a feeling of light and space. And, of course, it can always be used simply as a source of inspiration.

The information for each picture follows the same plan, though some individual headings may be omitted if they were irrelevant or unavailable. The photographer is credited first, then the client, together with the use for which the picture was taken. Next come the other members of the team who worked on the picture: stylists, models, art directors, whoever. Camera and lens come next, followed by film. With film, we have named brands and types, because different films have very different ways of rendering colours and tonal values. Exposure comes next: where the lighting is electronic flash, only the aperture is given, as illumination is of course independent of shutter speed. Next, the lighting equipment is briefly summarised — whether tungsten or flash, and what sort of heads — and finally there is a brief note on props and backgrounds. Often, this last will be obvious from the picture, but in other cases you may be surprised at what has been pressed into service, and how different it looks from its normal role.

The most important part of the book is, however, the pictures themselves. By studying these, and referring to the lighting diagrams and the text, you can work out how they were done.

The following is a key to the symbols used in the three-dimensional and plan view diagrams. All commonly used elements such as standard heads, reflectors etc., are listed. Any special or unusual elements involved will be shown on the relevant diagrams themselves.

THREE-DIMENSIONAL DIAGRAMS



NUDES

From the very earliest days of photography, and indeed from the earliest days of representational art, the portrayal of the nude and partially nude human form has exercised an enduring fascination. By the early 1850s there were numerous daguerreotypists in Paris in particular who were noted for their photography of the nude: Auguste Bellocq, Bruno Braquehais, Jean-Louis-Marie-Eugene Durieu, F. Jacques Moulin, Louis Camille d'Olivier and more.

Some of this early work was nothing more nor less than pornography, but co-existing with this was an artistic tradition which stretched back hundreds or even thousands of years: a representation of a nude can after all be attractive without being erotic, or erotic without being pornographic. What is surprising, to the modern eye, is how many of the early photographers seem to have made no particular distinction: Moulin, in particular, produced some quite charming pictures, and others which even his most ardent admirers would be hard pressed to defend on aesthetic grounds.

This is the central problem in all nude photography: which pictures are "acceptable", and to whom. There are no doubt many who would like to see even this book burned, while there are others who will be unable to see why a single image in here could upset anyone. Art, like depravity, is something which is easier to recognize than to define.

This is not, however, the place for such a debate. Nor is it the place for a discussion of why individual photographers take pictures of nudes. You have presumably bought the book, or you are contemplating buying it, and so it is our job to give you as much guidance as possible on how to photograph the nude - which for our purpose includes the partially nude, as a book containing nothing but total nudity would be more use as an anatomy book than as a book on photography. We have drawn work from photographers from numerous countries, all with their own unique styles and ways of working. Our job has been merely to learn from them how they work, to organize that information, and to make it as useful and informative as possible.

Studios and Settings

It might have been useful -though, unfortunately, it would not have been practical - to include a chapter of historical images in this book. It could have begun with the static nineteenthcentury nudes in their stuffy studios; moved on to the Edwardians, with their naturalistic studio sets and locations; then gone on to the period between World War One and World War Two, the heyday of the geometrical nude and the semiabstract "figure study"; taken in the 1950s, with their emphasis on the outdoors, and the 1960s with their gritty photo-realism; and the selfindulgence which characterized so much of the 1970s...

Of course, as we come nearer to our own times it becomes harder and harder to recognize underlying trends. There also seems to be more diversity than ever before. In this book there are very simple studio nudes, shorn of context or with only the simplest of backdrops, but there are also nudes in natural (or naturalistic) settings; in abandoned buildings; out of doors and indoors; photographed with the utmost in romanticism, or in the grittiest of realism. Unlike the case of some other books in the PRO LIGHTING series, generalizations are very hard to make: photographing the nude is one of the most intensely personal forms of photography.

Photography and Painting

More than in almost any other area of photography, the link between the photographed nude and the painted nude is abundantly clear, and the photographer who looks only at the works of other photographers and ignores the works of painters is making a serious mistake. There are pictures in these pages which are reminiscent of Alma-Tadema, Balthus, Hockney and even Liechtenstein. A tour of any art gallery, or a few books on painting, can be worth as much as a visit to a photographic gallery, even if it is showing the works of an

acknowledged master such as Bill Brandt, Helmut Newton, or Jock Sturges.

Clothes, Props and Make-up

As already remarked, the totally unclothed nude is unusual; and there is quite a lot of fashion and personal originality in what he or she may be clothed with. Diaphanous draperies were always popular with the painters of yore, and, within the bounds imposed by the greater literalness of photography, the same may also be found in these pages: lengths of fabric, and even sheets, are pressed into service on a regular basis. More conventional clothes may be partially undone, or underwear may be revealed, or clothes normally regarded as essential for decency may be omitted.

When it comes to props and backgrounds, there is a long tradition of geometrical or semi-abstract nudes, where props normally look out of place; but there is no doubt that in the vast majority of nude studies props are an essential part of the picture. This is true whether you are considering the irreverent humour of Michele Francken or the almost apocalyptic intensity of some of Stu Williamson's pictures; and in one of Struan's most notable pictures, the model herself is essentially a prop because the picture was commissioned as an advertising photograph for a shoe.

As for hair and make-up, this is something which dates far faster than most people (especially most men) realize. Examples like the old "beehive" hairdo are obvious, but compare the heavy eye make-up and often unnatural but often dramatic lipsticks of the 1960s with the more naturalistic eye-make-up and washed-out lipsticks of the late 1970s and early 1980s. This is one reason why timeless-looking young girls with long hair are often preferred by photographers. Another is that gravity has taken less of a toll of their figures.

Cameras, Lenses and Film for Nudes

Commercially, roll-film cameras have it all: they offer a bigger image than 35mm, with commensurately better quality, and the old argument of "big fee - big camera" has a certain logic to it.

What is interesting, though, is how many photographers choose 35mm for their personal work. In particular, even when Struan has been shooting commercially with his Hasselblad, he may switch to 35mm for his personal shots, several of which appear in here. Likewise, Julia Martinez said of one set of pictures (of which two appear in this book), "I was just working with 35mm, and the freedom was wonderful; no big, heavy cameras and no lights to move around. The model felt more relaxed, too."

Going in the other direction, very few photographers shoot large format nudes any more, although there is a handful of 4x5in shots in this book. Longer-than-standard lenses are very much the norm, although there are also plenty of wide-angle shots in the book: Struan with 35mm and even 28mm on 35mm, Guido Paterno Castello with 50mm on 6x6cm, Peter Goodrum with 90mm on 4x5in.

As for films, a surprisingly high proportion of pictures in this book were shot on black and white – or perhaps it is not quite such a surprise, given the way in which so many photographers shoot nudes for fun, rather than for profit. Many photographers still have a sneaking suspicion that monochrome is more "real" than colour, while others simply maintain that it gives them more control and better enables them to realize their personal photographic vision. There seems to be no overall preference for a particular type or even brand of black and white film, and Stu Williamson makes a particular point of using a wide range of monochrome films for different tonal effects.

Lighting Equipment for Nudes

Yet again, generalizations are impossible: unlike (for example) food or pack shots, there are not even any particularly common lighting set-ups. In these pages you will find everything from available light to monster soft boxes to on-camera flash, taking in a number of quite complex lighting setups on the way. A basic kit would probably consist of three heads, two of which would be used for lighting the background, though everything from single-light pictures to those using four or five lights will be found in this book. It is also worth mentioning Stu Williamson's ingenious Tri-Flector, which is described more fully on page 24.

And, of course, many photographers shoot nudes only by available light; you will find plenty of examples of these, too.

The Team

Most photographers of the nude work on their own most of the time. There are two main reasons for this. The first is simple economics: a lot of nude photography is done for personal or portfolio work, and the budget simply does not stretch to an assistant. There are exceptions, as when a personal shot is grafted onto a commissioned shoot, but this is the exception rather than the rule. The other reason is that nude

photography requires a certain rapport between the subject and the model, and it is often difficult to establish that rapport if a third person is present. On the one hand, the third person may reassure the model – this is especially true if the third person is of the same sex as the model - on the other, he or she may seem like an intrusion: the photographer is, as it were, licensed to see the model in the nude, but other people are not.

The Nude Photography Session

Because nude photography is so intensely personal, and because models vary so widely in temperament and attitude, only a few general remarks are appropriate.

The most important ones concern the facilities for the model. She should be able to dress and undress in privacy, because nude modelling is not the same as doing a strip-tease. This privacy can be a changing room, or a car with a sheet draped over the windows and weighted or taped down at the corners. She should be able to keep warm between shots: a clean, soft blanket is a useful thing to have to hand. She should of course have been warned beforehand not to wear tight clothing, as marks on the skin can take hours to disappear. Other people should be xcluded as far as possible, though a few models seem to be born exhibitionists and deliver their best work in front of a large and appreciative audience. In some countries, or in some locations, there may be a problem with public nudity. At the very least, this can make a shoot awkward, and at the worst it may involve arrest or assault or both. If you are in an unfamiliar country, check local mores as far as possible - and remember, what goes in San Francisco may not go in Kansas, and what goes at the Cap d'Antibes most certainly does not go in the Bois de Boulogne. Finally, remember this. More than most kinds of photography, taking pictures of nudes is a matter of mood. That mood may be timeless, or deliberately confrontational, or erotic, or innocent, or a hundred other things; but if the mood you want is not the same as the mood you are getting, this more than anything else will stop you taking the pictures you envisioned.

Scan by Anton KlimoFF

1 approaching nudity

A perennial problem, particularly with inexperienced models, is getting them to feel relaxed about nudity. The first chapter in this book therefore deals with "almost nude" pictures - a means of easing models into nudity gently. If you can show them Polaroids as you go along, this can still further reassure them that they are not being represented in a way which would make them unhappy. Of course, this is not the only reason to take "almost nude" pictures, and (to be fair) it is not the reason why most of the pictures in this chapter were taken. There are portraits here, taken (in the photographer's words) to be "revealing but not too revealing"; there are advertising shots; and there are portfolio and personal shots.

Lighting ranges from outdoor through natural indoor light and single-light pictures to a complex four-head set-up. The majority were shot using MF cameras ranging from 645 to 6x7cm, though there are two 35mm shots here. The beginner would be well advised to use medium format, not least because it looks more professional and may well reassure the model; but from a purely technical point of view it does not necessarily matter very much which format you use. There are five monochrome pictures, three in conventional colour, and one cross-processed.

Photographer: **Michele Francken**

Client: **Mac 3 Company**

Use**: Advertising**

Camera: **6x6cm**

Lens: **110mm with Softar screen**

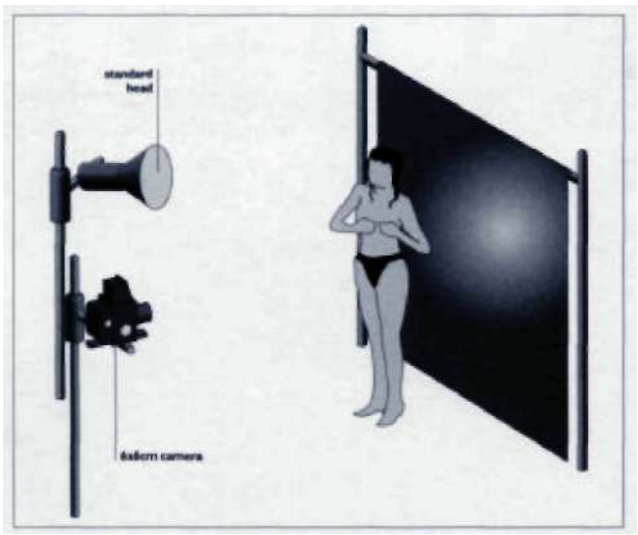
Film: **Kodak Ektachrome EPP 100**

Exposure: **f/8**

Lighting: **Electronic flash: I head**

Props and set: **Hand-painted backdrop**

N U D E



Plan View

LIGHTING IS SUBJECT TO OCKHAM'S RAZOR: LIGHTS (LIKE LOGICAL ENTITIES) SHOULD NOT BE MULTIPLIED WITHOUT REASON. HERE A SINGLE LIGHT SUFFICES TO CREATE A MEMORABLE PICTURE. NOT EVEN A BOUNCE IS USED TO SUPPLEMENT THE LIGHTING PLOT.

- *Pointed backdrops can be graded,or may give the impression of being spotlit Some photographers paint their own, but there are manufacturers who specialize in custom or unusual backdrops*

- *The effects obtainable with a ainted backdrop can vary widely depending on the subject's distance from the backdrop, the lighting of the backdrop, and the aperture employed*

The backdrop is however a little unusual. more variation in tone. The apparent The model's shadow is just about visible drawback to such a background is that it to the lower left, yet the background is monotonous - but this is only the case seems brightly spotlighted. This is for the photographer, because the normally achieved with additional lighting, subjects normally see only their own but another way to do it is to have a picture against that ground. Also, backdrop which is painted as if it were considerable differences can be effected, spotlit: in other words, it is painted in depending on where the subject is somewhat the same way as a graded placed against the "hot spot." background, but less smoothly and with more variation in tone. The apparent drawback to such a background is that it is monotonous - but this is only the case for the photographer, because the subjects normally see only their own picture against that ground. Also, considerable differences can be effected, depending on where the subject is placed against the "hot spot."

Photographer's comment:

This sort of lighting is used to create a more sensuous express/on. A Softar filter is used to soften the skin.

Photographer: **Bob Shell**

Use: **Personal work**

Model: **Audra Fregia**

Camera: **645**

Lens: **80mm**

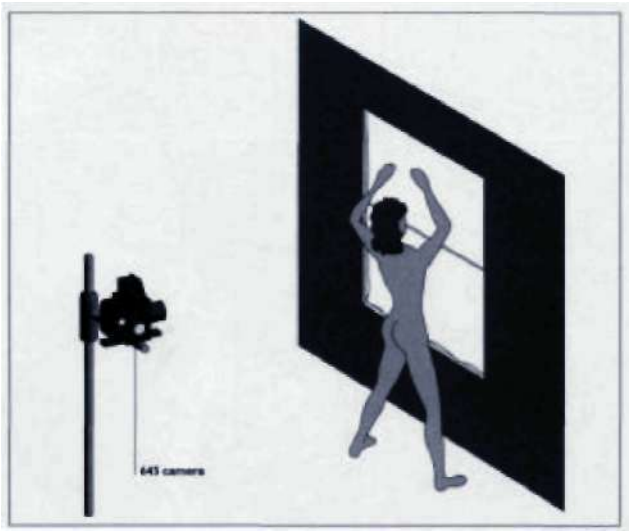
Film: **Ilford FP4**

Exposure: **1/60 sec at f/8**

Lighting: **Available light**

Plan View

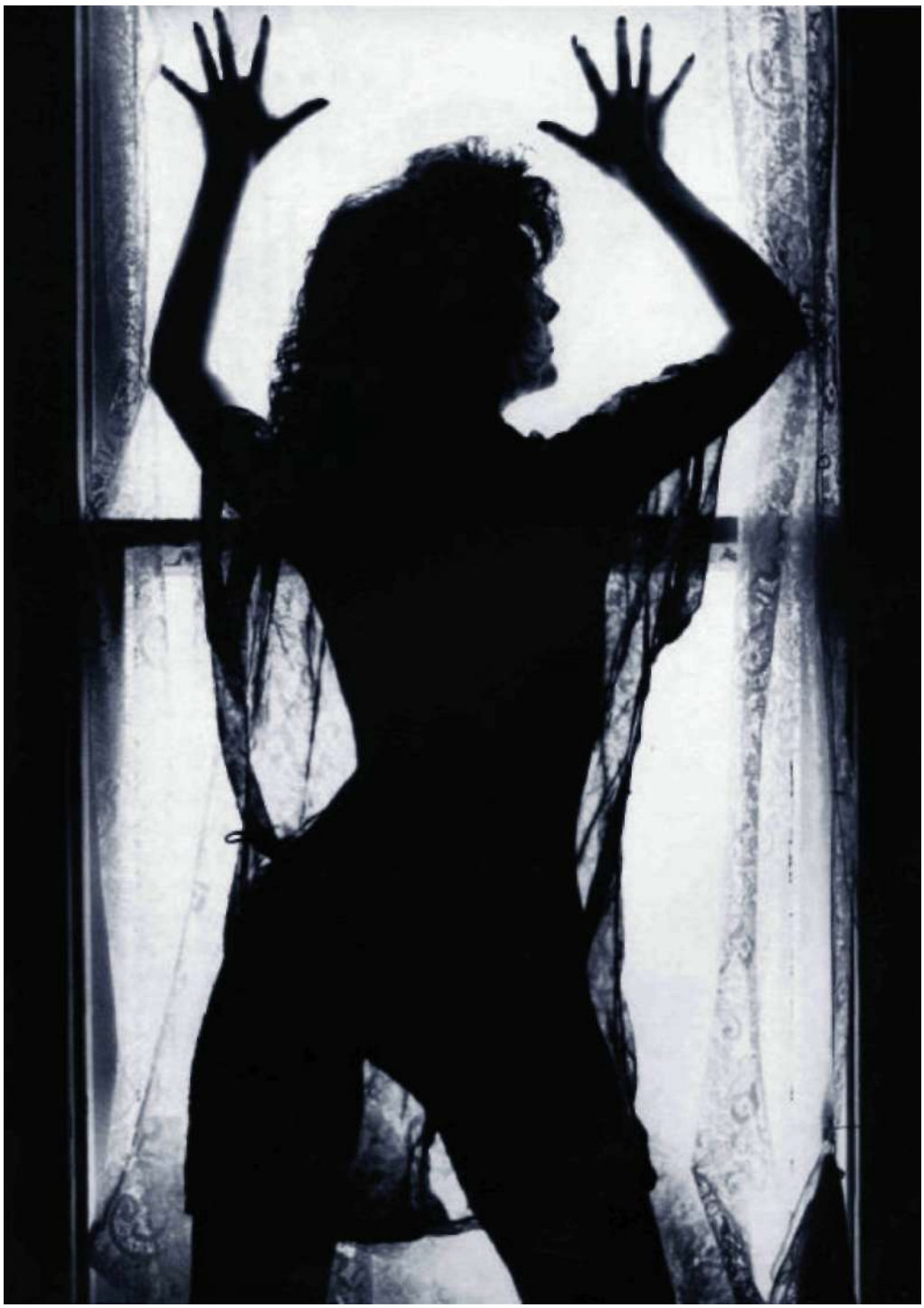
AUDRA AT THE WINDOW



PERHAPS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING TO NOTE HERE IS THAT THE WINDOW IS COVERED WITH FROSTED MYLAR, MAKING IT A NATURAL SOFT BOX AND ALSO MAKING IT OPAQUE SO THAT THE MODEL CANNOT BE SEEN FROM THE STREET.

This sort of silhouette, combined with transillumination of the peignoir, can be extremely effective while still showing remarkably little that could offend any but the most prudish viewer. The shape of the model is beautifully illustrated, and the contrast between the lace of the curtains and the lace of the peignoir is doubly effective. Flare is of course a potential problem and unless the intention is to make a feature of it, the lens must be scrupulously clean; even then, there is some evidence of flare around the model's fingers.

- *Frosted Mylar and Kodatrace re bot/l superb diffusion materials, but in colour Kodatrace introduces a very slight green Cast*
- *There is a significant difference between a window receiving direct sun (like this one, which faces north-west) and a window which is illuminated only by skylight*



Photographer: **Ron McMillan**

Client: **Beauty Products Catalogue**

Use: **Catalogue**

Model; **Emma Noble**

Assistant: **Paul Cromey**

Camera: **6x6cm**

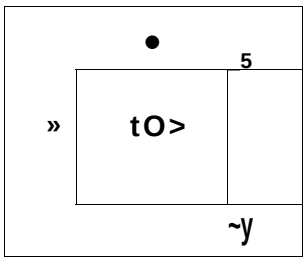
Lens: **120mm + Softar II soft-focus**

Film: **Kodak Panther XI00**

Exposure: **f/16**

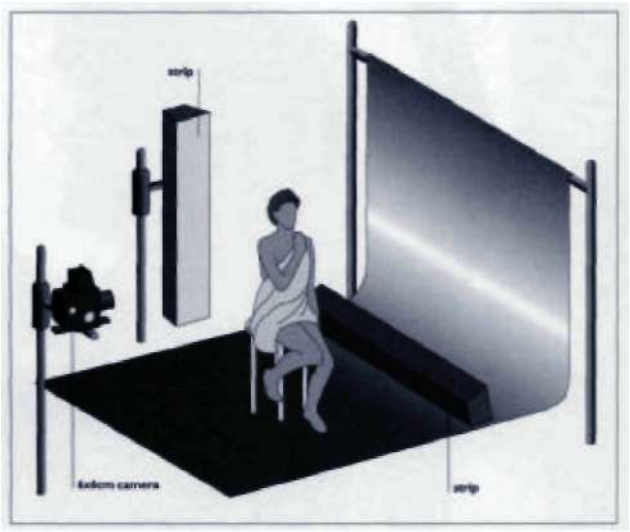
Lighting: **Electronic flash: 2 striplights**

Props and set: **Seamless background**



Plan View

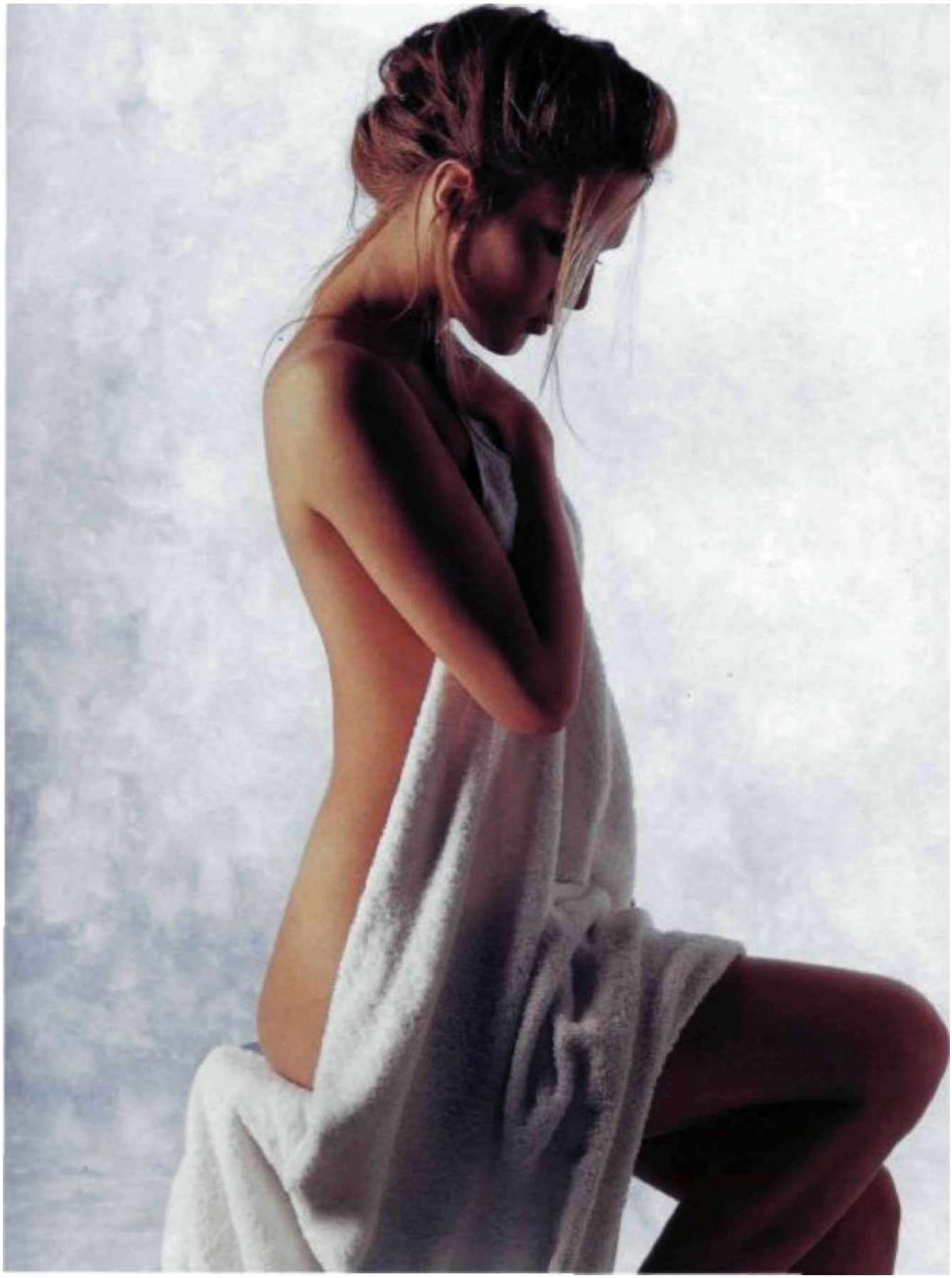
E M M A



OFTEN, A NUDE SHOT FOR ADVERTISING MUST REVEAL VERY LITTLE; IT MUST LOOK NATURAL AND CHARMING, BUT NOT REVEALING. THIS IS A TIMELESS PICTURE WHICH MIGHT ONCE HAVE SEEMED RISQUE BUT WHICH IS ENTIRELY ACCEPTABLE IN THE LATE 20TH CENTURY.

- *Strip lights are more directional than soft boxes, at least in the short axis*
- *This is on interesting example of white-onwhite; the towel is lighter than the background on the left, and darker than the background on the right*

The lighting is certainly simple: a vertical strip light to camera left, illuminating the model's back and a horizontal strip light on the floor behind the model, illuminating the background and in the process providing a modest amount of fill on the model's arm and on the towel. Compared with the model, the vertical light is very slightly nearer the camera, to provide a glancing light rather than a pure side-light. As so often, it is not the complexity of the lighting which is important, but its appropriateness; and analyzed more carefully, this profile semi-high-key approach is unusual and effective. The use of a white towel on the dark side of the model, away from the light, saves it from being too dark as well as suggesting natural, unaffected beauty.



Photographer: **Stu Williamson**

Client: **Andrea (model)**

Use: **Portrait**

Camera: **6x7cm**

Lens: **140mm**

Film: **Word FP4**

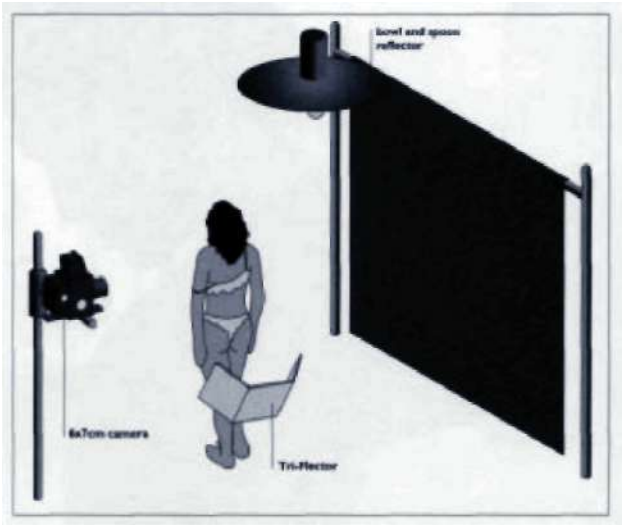
Exposure: **f/11**

Lighting: **Electronic flash: one head**

Props and set: **Lastolite "Thunder" painted backdrop**

Plan View

A N D R E A



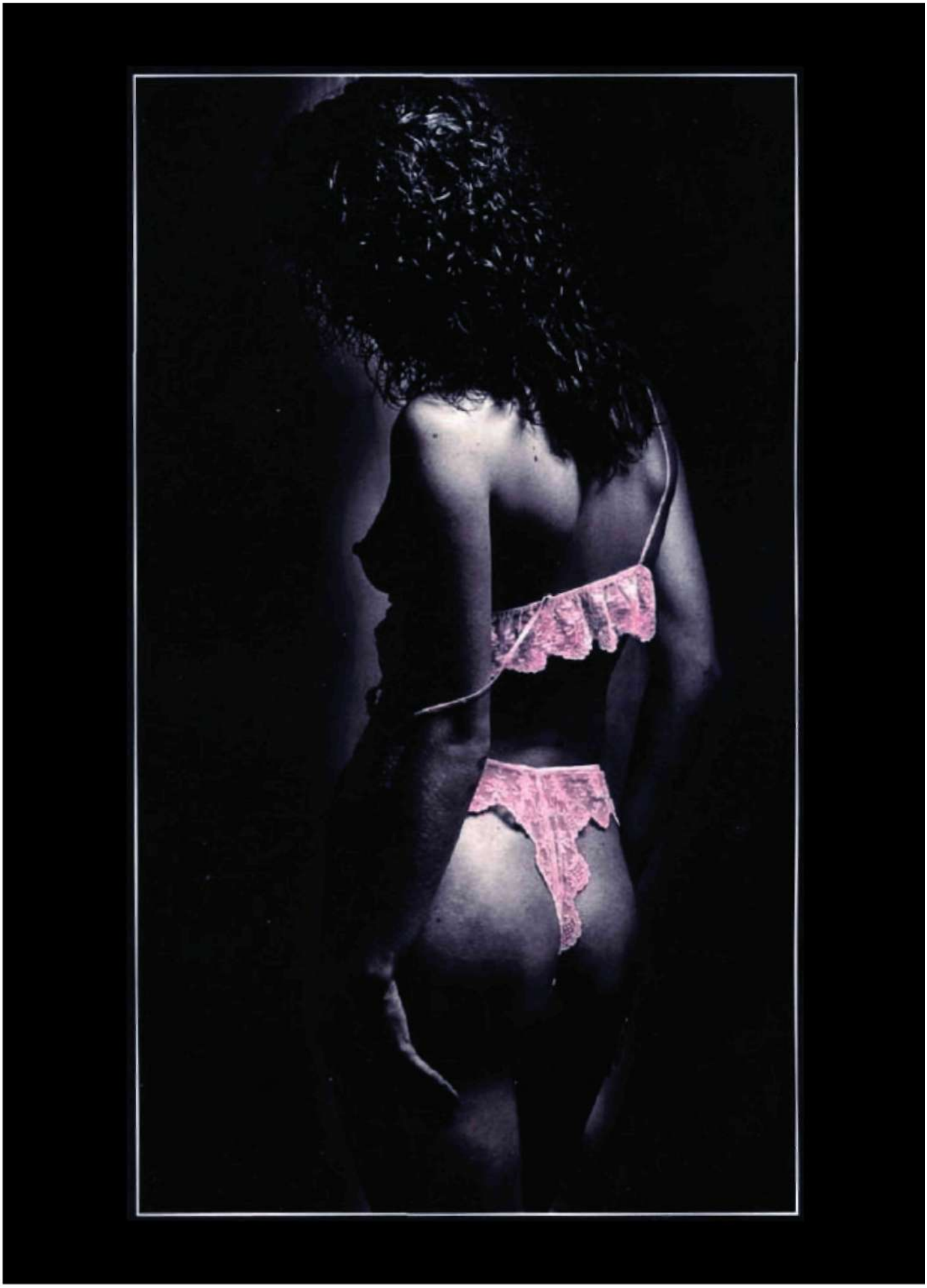
OFTEN, A NUDE SHOT FOR ADVERTISING MUST REVEAL VERY LITTLE; IT MUST LOOK NATURAL AND CHARMING, BUT NOT REVEALING. THIS IS A TIMELESS PICTURE WHICH MIGHT ONCE HAVE SEEMED RISQUE BUT WHICH IS ENTIRELY ACCEPTABLE IN THE LATE 20TH CENTURY.

This light is well above the model and to camera right, as may be seen from the shadows; but Stu also used his trademark "Tri-Flector" (which he invented and which is manufactured by Lastolite). This has a central panel flanked by two "wings" which allow the light to be directed with considerable precision. The picture was then printed with dramatic dodging - Stu prints all his own work -and the pink colour was added with Fotospeed dyes. The shaped background is more an effect of printing than of lighting.

- *Large reflectors give a different quality of light from soft boxes*
- *Hand colouring can add impact to a monochrome nude*
- *The contrast between tanned and untanned areas (if the model has not got an overall tan) can be used to good effect in some shots*

Photographer's comment:

The model wanted a picture for her boyfriend. It had to be intimate and revealing without being too revealing



Photographer: **Stu Williamson**

Client: **Tanya**

Use: **Portrait**

Camera: **6x7cm**

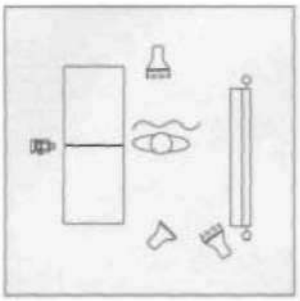
Lens: **90mm**

Film: **Ilford Pan F**

Exposure: **f/11**

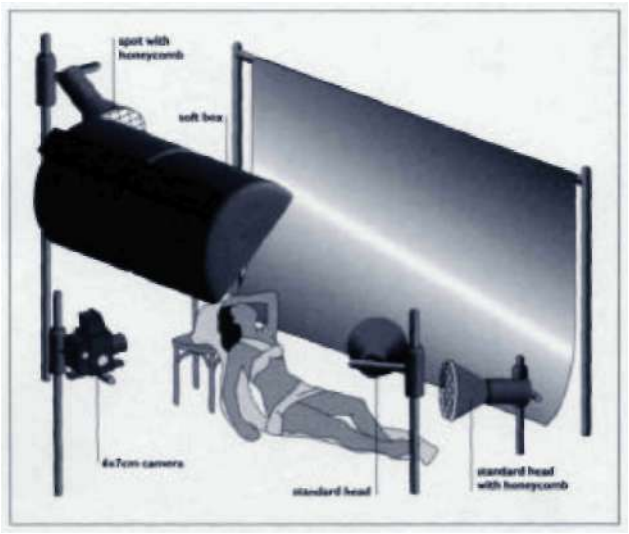
Lighting: **Electronic flash: 4 heads**

Props and set: **Colorama hand-painted b/g; crown by Terry English, armourer**



Plan View

T A N Y A



THE MODEL IS SURPRISINGLY FULLY CLOTHED, BUT BECAUSE OF THE WAY THE "CLOTHES" ARE ARRANGED, SHE LOOKS LESS DRESSED THAN SHE IS. THE SEMI-CLASSICAL POSE AND BACKDROP CONTRIBUTE STILL MORE TO THE OVERALL AURA OF SENSUALITY.

- *If a single light will not do what you wont, ask yourself what it would illuminate if it were doing what you want*
- *Painted backdrops can have more than one centre of interest - or two backdrops can sometimes be combined*

The lighting is of course important too. The key is the honeycombed spot to camera left, above the model's head, illuminating (in particular) her face and chest. This is supplemented by another honeycombed head to camera right, rimlighting the model's legs. A large soft box, just above the camera, acts as a general fill and provides some of the illumination of the background, which is also lit with a fourth head coming in from camera right.

This is a good example of a second light being added to the key to create the illusion of one light: the key and the rimlight combine flawlessly, creating the impression of *a.* single light source.

Photographer's comment:

I use o wide variety of different black and white films for different tonalities.

Photographer: **Julia Martinez**

Use: **Personal work**

Model: **Becky**

Camera: **645**

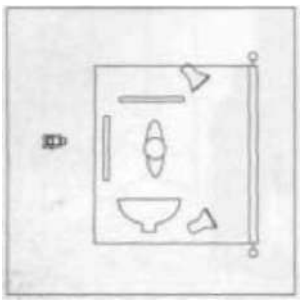
Lens: **300mm**

Film: **Kodak T-Max 100**

Exposure: **f/11**

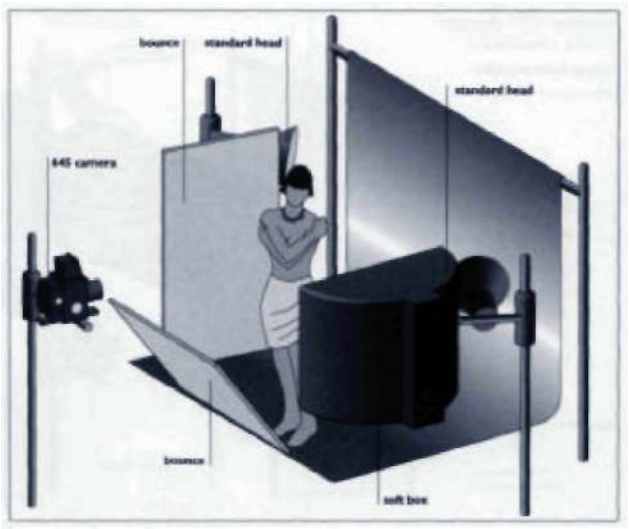
Lighting: **Electronic flash: 3 heads**

Props and set: **White background - and see**



Plan View

R E C E S S I O N D R E S S I N G



JULIA MARTINEZ WAS AT FIRST BEST KNOWN FOR HER GENTLE AVAILABLE-LIGHT PICTURES BUT, AS THE PHOTOGRAPHS IN THIS BOOK SHOW, SHE IS ALSO QUITE AT HOME WITH OTHER LIGHT SOURCES - IN THIS CASE STUDIO FLASH.

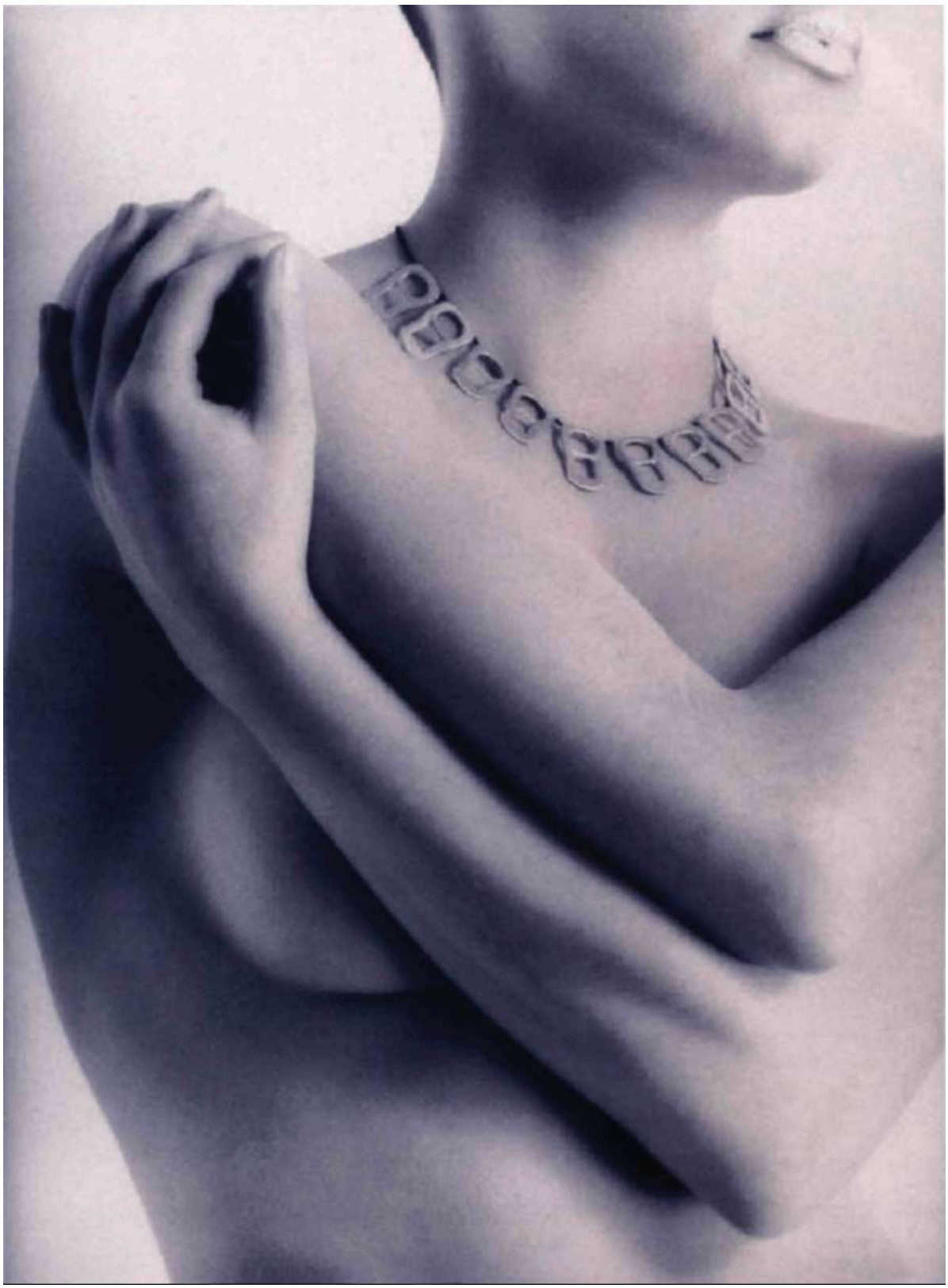
- *Chiaroscuro and high key are less incompatible than they might seem*
- *Some photographers' style is intimately bound up with their lighting technique; others are more recognizable from their compositional approach*

The key and indeed only light on the subject is a 120x 120cm (4x4ft) soft box to camera right, beside the model. Two bounces, one to camera left and the other below the camera's line of sight, even out the light considerably while still maintaining strong modelling. Finally, a couple of lights on the background create a classic high-key effect. The printed mage was toned blue using Fotospeed materials.

The overall effect is classical and simple. It illustrates, as do most good pictures, that the single most important thing is the photographer's eye. Why is the image framed this way? Would you have framed it this way? And why does it "work" so well?

Photographer's comment:

This was shot for a college assignment on "recession dressing". The necklace is made of Coca-Cola can pulls....



Photographer: **Frank P. Wartenberg**

Use: **Portfolio**

Camera: **35mm**

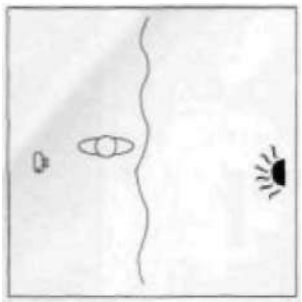
Lens: **85mm**

Film: **Polaroid Polagraph**

Exposure: **Not recorded**

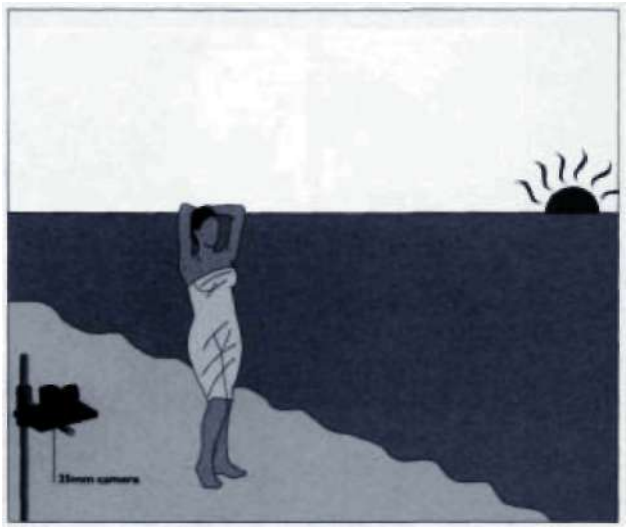
Lighting: **Late sun**

Props and set: **Location (beach)**



Plan View

LATE SUN



MANY PHOTOGRAPHERS USE POLAROID POLAPAN FOR ITS UNIQUE AND RATHER OLD-FASHIONED TONALITY - WHICH IS OFTEN MORE IMPORTANT THAN "INSTANT" PROCESSING -BUT THE MORE EXPERIMENTALLY MINDED HAVE DISCOVERED JUST WHAT ITS HIGHER-CONTRAST COUSIN, POLAROID POLAGRAPH, CAN DO.

Frank Wartenberg is particularly fond of this film and as he demonstrates here, there is no need to take seriously the warning that it is not intended for general-purpose photography. Even in the relatively contrasty conditions of direct sunlight, it can deliver an excellent tonal range and remarkable subtlety.

Exposure must however be very precise if the highlights are not to be "blown" or the shadows too extensive. Like any high-contrast product, it can be used to expand any part of the tonal range at the expense of both lighter and darker areas; and this is what has been done here

- *With a high-contrast material, the important thing is to know exactly which tones to expand*
- *Polaroid instant-process 35mm films have very tender emulsions and should only be sent out as dupes*