



# NUDE PHOTOGRAPHY

Finding Inspiration. The work of Allan Jenkins by Eddie Ephraums

*Notebook*



# NUDE PHOTOGRAPHY NOTEBOOK

*A notebook is the source of my creativity -  
a place to find inspiration and develop ideas.  
Within its pages I also explore my photography  
and refine my technique.*

*A.J.*



江苏技术师范学院图书馆



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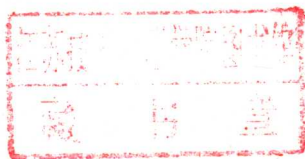
Some eight years after the idea of collaborating on a project was first mentioned, Allan and I happened to occupy adjoining studios. Finding inspiration in each other's work...the Notebook began.

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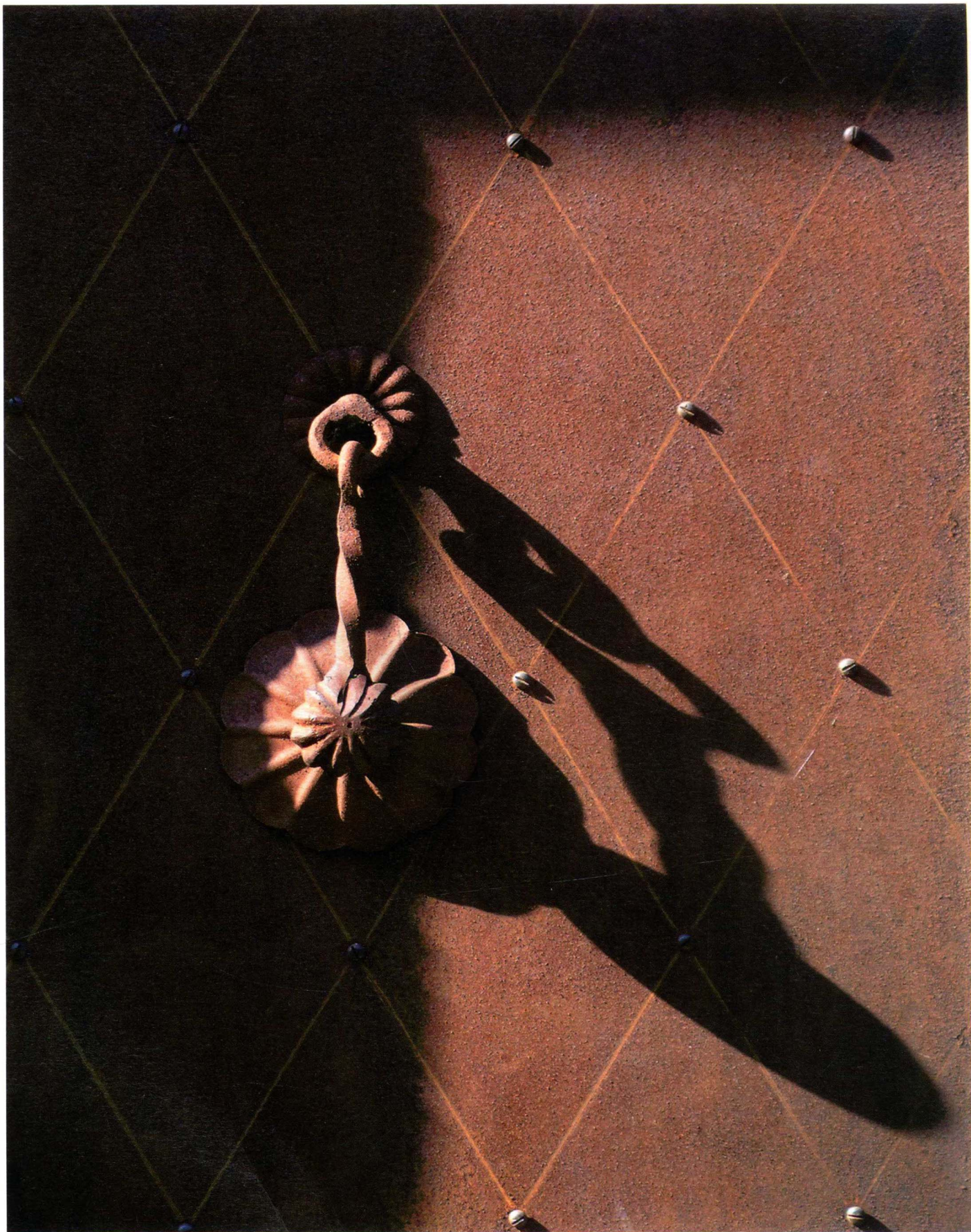


# NUDE PHOTOGRAPHY NOTEBOOK

Finding inspiration. The work of Allan Jenkins by Eddie Ephraums

ARGENTUM







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# A NOTEBOOK...

*...must write it all down, where is my notebook? If I don't sketch the idea visually I might forget it! Quick, store it. Bottle it! I need to capture these thoughts, this feeling, this freedom... A.J*



## **An invitation to look within**

The Notebook aims to get inside the process of making fine-art photographs, exploring the essence of inspiration.

A notebook follows no rules. It can be whatever we want: self-expressed, free from constraint and with no commercial need to satisfy. Not an indulgence, but an opportunity to explore, reveal and bring to life the creativity that lies within all of us. What artist – *what photographer* – would be without one?

Notebooks are rarely published. Yet, go to any exhibition where the artist's notebooks are also on show and visitors will congregate there, looking for clues, hoping to connect with the very essence of the artist's creativity (as the artist in all of us wants to). This raw source may sometimes be inadvertently concealed in a more conventional, planned and edited book or curated exhibition.

The *Nude Photography Notebook* aims to be both a notebook (an intimate source) and a book (something shared), that reaches out to that wider audience – hoping to inspire and stimulate thought. By opening his personal notebooks and studio to the scrutiny of my camera and now the enquiring eyes of this published book, Allan Jenkins holds up a mirror to his work. He and I hope it may inspire others to do the same, thus helping to reveal more of what individual creativity is about.

Allan is equally well known for his still-life, portrait and travel photography as he is for his nudes. Because this book focuses on his photography of the female form, it does not exclude lovers of, say, landscape or reportage (like myself) from sharing what the Notebook is about – *Finding Inspiration*.

It is Allan's way of 'Being' that inspires subjects to sit for him and which also initiated the making of this book. He recalls our very first meeting some eight years ago, when (in a very understated way) he suggested that one day we make a book together. What are such utterances other than verbal jottings and one's subconscious *being* unselfconscious, making-notebook-like declarations of intent? Now, eight years on, as I write this, I am close to filling up the pages of that very book.

## **Linear path or circular journey?**

Traditional books on the process of photography tend to follow a logical sequence: subject, camerawork, exposure, processing and printing. In *Nude Photography Notebook*, the aim is to follow a less prescriptive route that advocates creative photography as an on-going journey – one of continual departure and arrival.



# Capturing the image.

shoot - lens - body's in lens - slow music

① abstract body shots.



Sketches -



② more body shots.



dark room and studio



③ more body shots.



prints being printed



④ photograph to present



subject and process joined

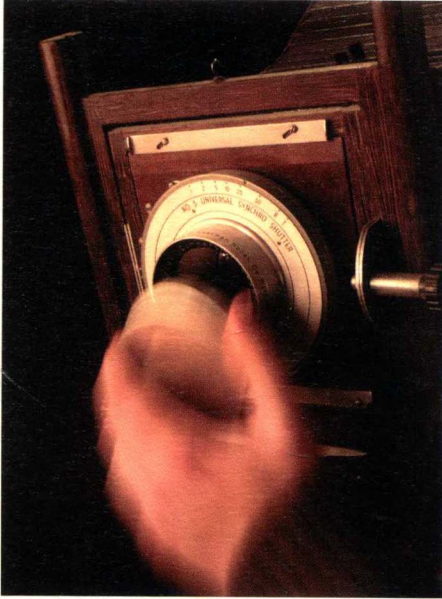


result - message - memory - story.

coating  
washing  
pressing  
spotting.



## Finding Inspiration



### Beyond camera technique

Allan's approach is deliberately simple. Mostly he works with an old, shutterless 10x8, removing the lens cap to make the exposure, and counting for a few seconds. His focus – and that of the Notebook – is on creative expression, as seen through his toned cyanotype prints.

We all have different photographic styles, yet the goal is shared: to find inspiration and to develop our own unique way of working.

Allan works with large format and, to date, I've worked mainly with 35mm, in black and white. In further contrast, this is the first book for which I've photographed in colour: experimenting with a little, hand-held digital camera and Photoshop – a very different experience and still rather new. My thinking was that colour imagery would contrast well with Allan's grain-free, 'real' photography. For a book, maintaining variety is as important a factor in retaining a viewer's interest as the images themselves.

Taking pictures in Allan's studio has been very different to making my more usual black and white landscapes. There were no shadows to chase and, though the studio is artificially lit, there was very little light to play with. It's an atmospheric place and flash was not an option; I wanted my pictures to be natural – to appear effortless. In the context of the Notebook, I saw the need to make them, in a sense, invisible – to act as the 'glue' that held the overall picture of the book together. I wouldn't be putting myself down if I said that the function of some of them was to be the wallpaper on which Allan's images were to hang. (A challenge to any photographer more used to trying to create images that speak for themselves, rather than those that quietly help to reveal hidden truths). After all, the Notebook does use Allan as the subject for exploring something of the nature of creativity, through its chapters on Inspiration, Ideas, Photographs and Technique.

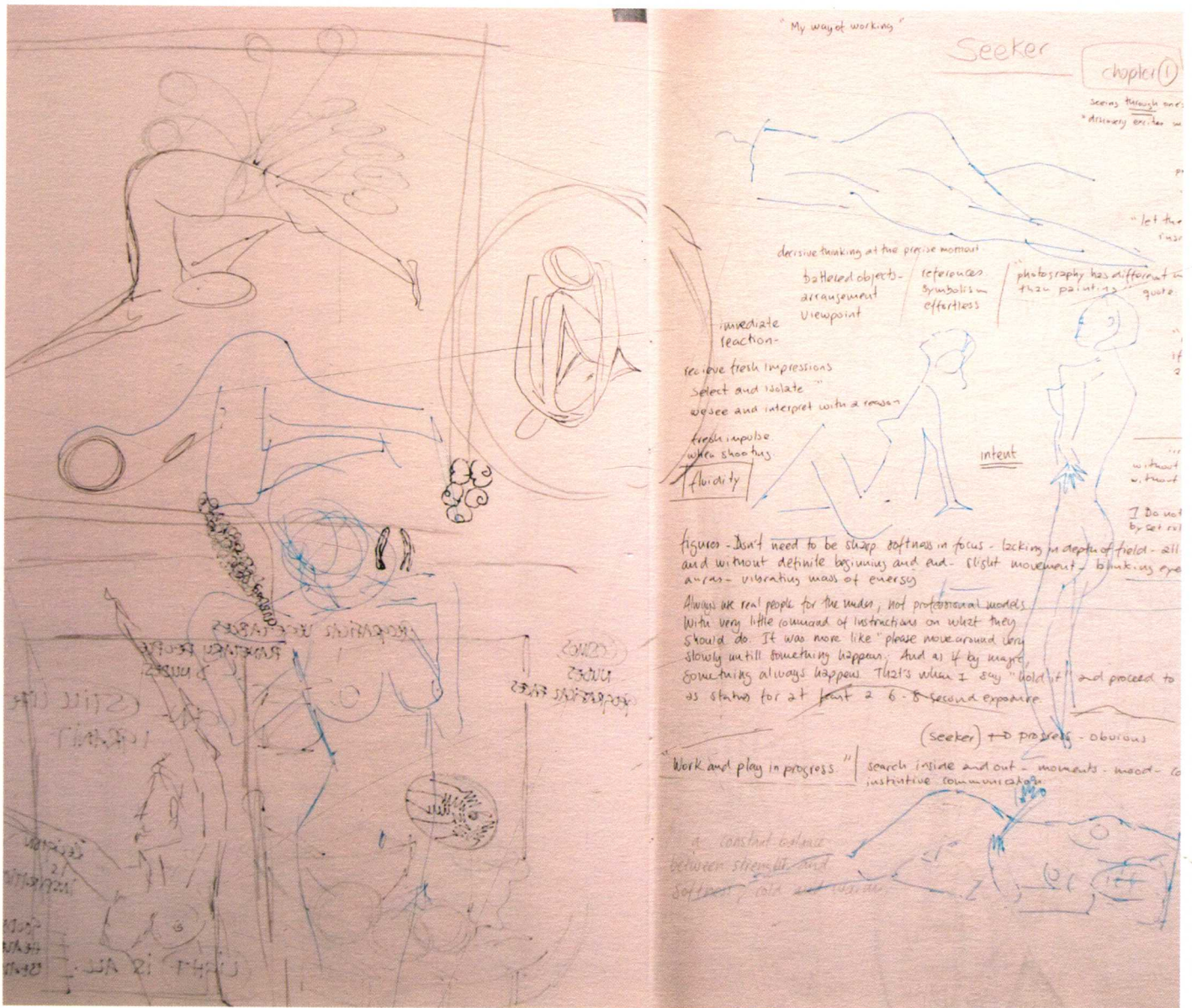
Working within the physical confines of a studio environment was surprisingly liberating. This sense of freedom encouraged me to work spontaneously, without either a tripod or hesitation, framing images instinctively. Hence my choice of a simple digital camera. The result is that many of my one-to-two second exposure pictures are somewhat unsharp and, when enlarged, these tiny jpegs also exhibit digital noise.

Photographic convention considers both of these attributes far from ideal. But as there are no rules for illustrating a notebook, why should the Notebook conform?

**Eddie Ephraums**

2006





I find myself working towards expressing an overall sentiment, often without a pre-determined outcome, just a few guidelines and a series of unspoken rules.



1

## Inspiration

I'm inspired by the way light  
makes objects look magical  
and ethereal.



Light falls upon the skin, reflecting and absorbing its glow.  
Eye lids like almonds covering and concealing the gaze.

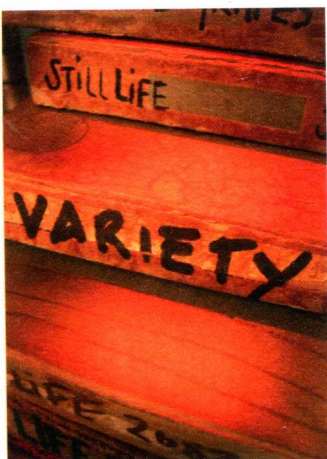
Always shadows for me.

Eye lids, lips, hand and wrist - overall direction.

Dark velvety shadows that divide the shape with depth.  
The hand is leaning left and slightly away from  
the shadow, underfoot, motion blur. Pulling shape  
him. Fresh and pure in the sense of simplicity.  
Uncomplicated and full of simplicity, yet deeper meaning  
than we are able to see. The moment and the  
expression are a small part of a process that creates  
the obvious. Curves, lines and tones, breathing and pulsing  
tonalities, widest of colors. The fine balance of white.  
Neck, wrists, ankles and knees connecting, yet dividing  
A simultaneous action that creates change in direction.



# ORIGINS AND INFLUENCES



Inspiration is photography's driving force – the source that motivated us to take our first ever photograph. It has led to that never-to-be-forgotten thrill of watching the image appear in the developer and now to the buzz of seeing it in an instant, on an LCD screen. How connected do we remain to that influence – our original desire to create? Time, perhaps, to re-connect with our origins and to re-discover our photographic influences.

## Keeping inspiration alive

Reference points remind us of who we are and what our work is about. Allan has an ever-growing collage of prints above his light-table. Above that is a bookcase, to which are pinned numerous cards. An equally powerful reminder might be 'Variety', the label on a negative storage box.

