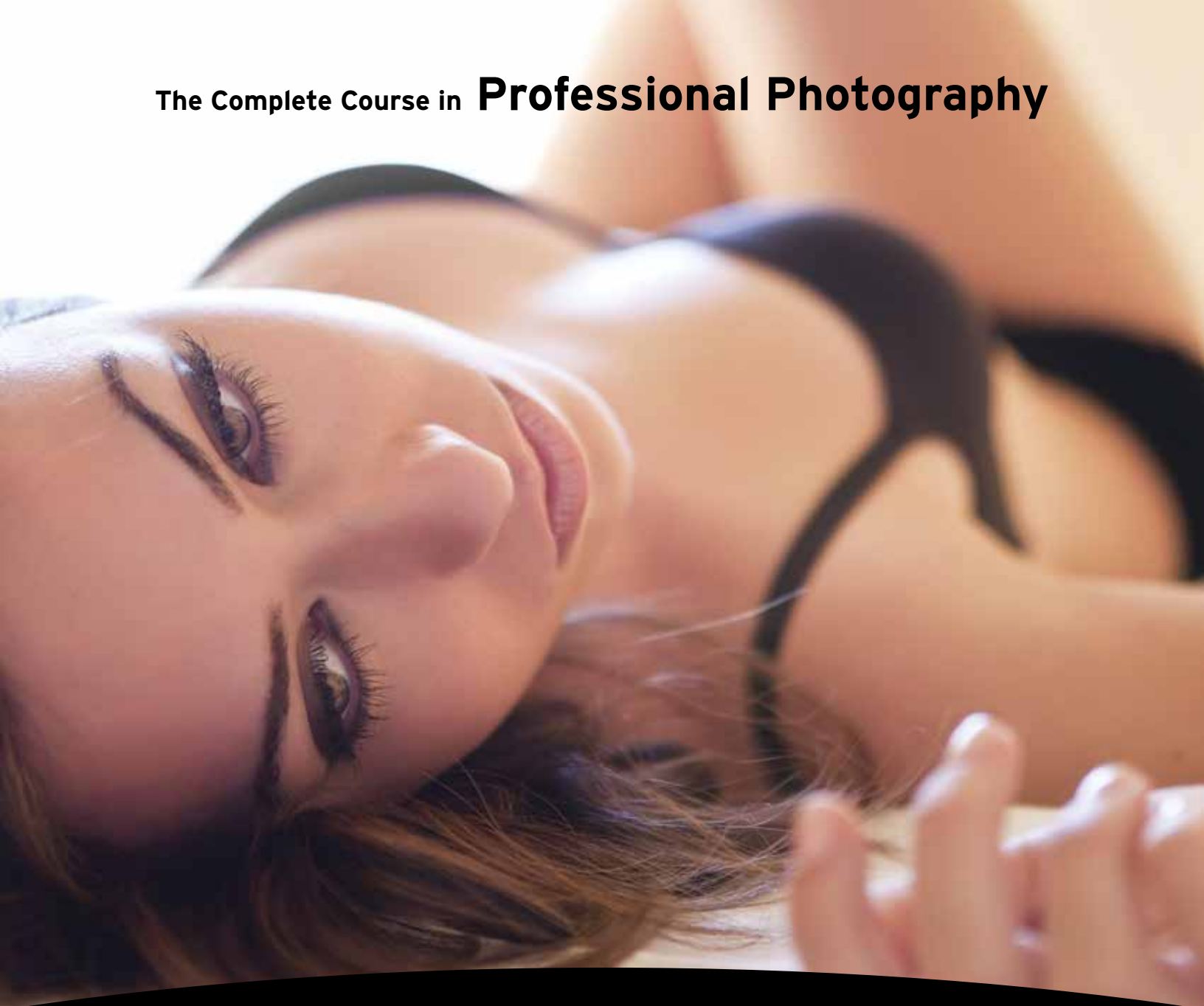


The Complete Course in **Professional Photography**



Unit Six
*Glamour and
Boudoir Photography*



New York Institute of
Photography

Educating Photographers Since 1910



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Unit Six

Glamour and Boudoir Photography



What is a Glamour Photograph?

Is it the raw sexuality of the female form posed in lingerie?

Is it the “partial” nudity of a model draped in a gown in a boudoir setting?

Is it the classic nude figure-study modeled after the great sculptors and painters of the ages?

Is it the sleek sensual figure of a fully-clad model in *Vogue* or *Cosmopolitan*?

Is it sensuous images of both women and men?

The answer is that all the preceding images can be correctly described as types of glamour photography.

Each specialty field in photography is concerned with a particular subject matter. Architectural photography depicts buildings. Theatrical photography features performers. Fashion photography highlights the clothes that models wear. The subject of glamour photography is the human body, the beauty, shape, and contours of the human figure, whether presented in a stark nude figure study or in an elaborate boudoir setting. Clothes, makeup, lighting, sets, and props may all be employed to enhance the sensuality of a glamour photograph, although none of these is required.



While male nudes have become more popular ever since Burt Reynolds posed as a centerfold for *Cosmopolitan* in 1972, the subject of glamour photography most often involves the female figure.

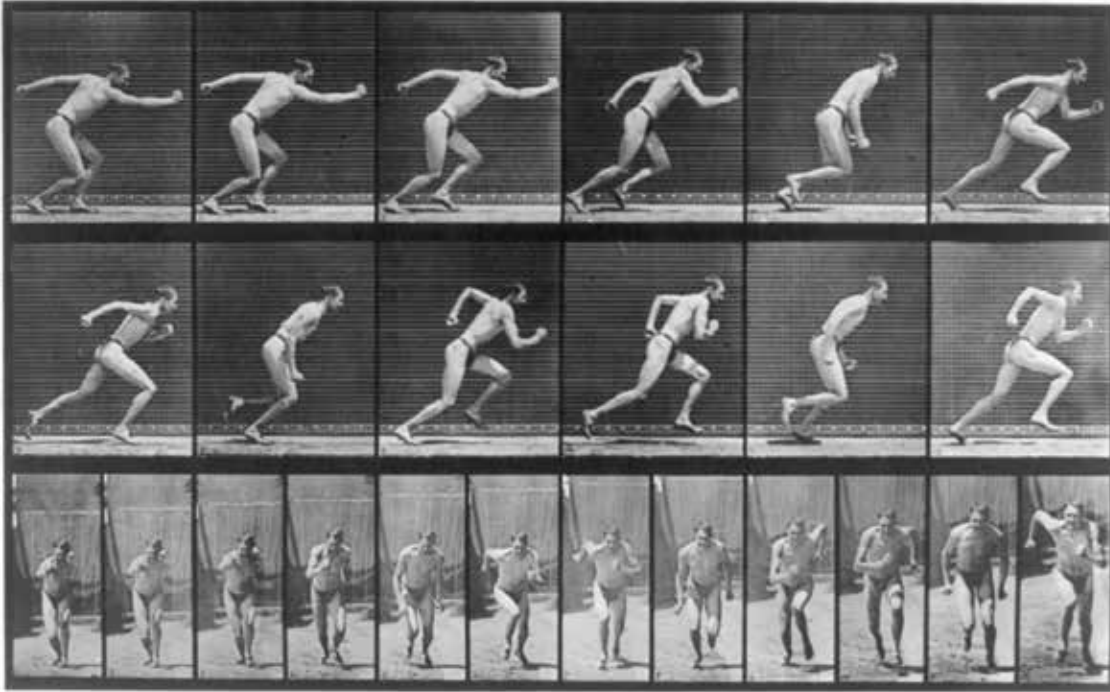
While the model is most often a woman, we do not presume that the photographer is a man. There are many very successful professional glamour, fashion, and boudoir photographers who are women. This can be an advantage, because some models will feel more at ease working with a female photographer.

The two images shown here represent two opposite poles of the wide range of possible glamour subject matter. The picture on the left represents a type of figure study that emphasizes the structural character of the human limbs. Personality and sensuality of the subject are not part of the photograph. The austere, single light from above and to the left of the figure emphasizes the role of shadow in modeling the figure. The picture on the right, taken by NYIP student Vitalijus Metrikis, features a look in which the model's appearance and personality are the key to the picture. Which is more glamorous? The nude or the bikini-clad woman? Each is glamorous in its own way. That's the point. Glamour depends upon how you as the photographer approach your subject. Your imagination will determine the result.



© Vitalijus Metrikis, NYIP Student

In this Lesson, we will show you how to use your imagination to produce glamour photographs. While we will describe and illustrate various types, the choice is up to you as to what type of glamour images are the most appealing. It is certainly true that many photographers have made a handsome living selling pictures that feature young women and men in suggestive or provocative poses, but there is a wide variety of images that can be included in our broadly defined category. You must find the style that is most comfortable and successful for you.



An Eadweard Muybridge series of an athlete running. © Eadweard Muybridge, Courtesy of Library of Congress

A Brief History.

Since the invention of photography, the human figure has been a natural subject for the eye of the photographer. Although the first daguerreotypes and other early photographs required very long exposure times, photographers found ways to encourage human subjects to hold still for a sufficient period of time to make the exposure.

As improved emulsions and mechanical devices enabled photographers to employ faster shutter speeds, the moving human body became a frequent subject for the camera. Eadweard Muybridge's famous studies of moving human figures featured nearly nude men and women performing gymnastic and athletic feats.

The ability of the camera's fast shutter speed to "freeze" motion was of particular interest to the painters and sculptors who had, for centuries, depicted moving figures in frozen positions without knowing exactly what those positions really looked like.

The human figure has also been a subject for photographers interested in sensual and erotic themes. The coyly posed women who received worldwide attention as the subjects of early 20th Century "French postcards" seem very tame by today's standards, but they were very controversial in an era when women wore ankle-length bathing suits!

Male nudes were also popular, but were generally presented under the guise of "physique" photography, featuring the musculature of body builders. Often they were shown in heroic poses, reenacting scenes from classical mythology or Bible stories.

Advertisers have always been aware of the ability of a glamorous model to draw attention to a product, regardless of whether or not the product has a direct relationship to the model.



Glamour models have been used to sell a wide variety of products for as long photography has existed. Notice how the pattern on the woman's dress in the photo above complements the wallpaper behind it, giving the illusion that she is almost growing like a flower out of the background. She leans on a giant bottle and offers up a dainty glass to an unknown person, perhaps a further reference to the strong roots of a flower leading up to its dainty petals.

Attractive women and handsome men have been used to sell toothpaste, cigarettes, liquor, automobiles, and every other kind of consumer good. Scantly clad women still adorn promotional calendars sent out at New Year's by many small businesses. For many years there has also been a market for magazines that celebrate the nude figure as a subject in its own right. *Playboy* and *Maxim* are the most successful. These magazines were once a big industry, but today, Internet sites have taken over their popularity.

The Internet has become a place where many glamour and boudoir photographers post their work. These photos of "Internet models" vary widely in terms of quality and taste. In fact, many pornographic sites are totally without quality or taste. Nevertheless, glamour websites are extremely popular and have all but replaced printed publications.

Nude photography is not limited to specific magazines and websites. Many venerated photographers have used the human form as subject matter for their cameras, often as almost abstract studies of mass and form. Edward Weston, Alfred Stieglitz, and Edward Steichen were all renowned for their artistic work with nudes. Andre Kertesz made a vivid series of nude portraits using nude female figures distorted by being reflected in warped mirrored surfaces. Helmut Newton and Duane Michals are well-known for their works that often include nude figures in dreamlike erotic situations. Robert Mapplethorpe explored the male and female nude and created controversy about public funding for such works of art. You should take a long look at the different approaches of all these masters.



One of many cabinet cards featuring Eugene Sandow, a famous vaudevillian strongman, taken in 1894. The fig leaf was a standard garment for the male “nude.”
© George Steckel, Courtesy Library of Congress



© Myrtle, automobile running board in bathing suit 1918,
Courtesy of Library of Congress



© William H. Rau, Courtesy Library of Congress

A Glimpse of the Past.

You can learn much from observing a few examples of the glamour and boudoir photography of yesteryear. Like any other product of photographic creativity, most images can be clearly identified as the product of a specific era. The elements that date a photograph do not in themselves detract from the photograph; some images show their age in a way that makes us prize them all the more.

You can tell in an instant that neither of the above pictures was made last year. They look and feel "old." The elements we detect as being dated, or that can be said to "date" each photograph, stem from a variety of technical and photographic considerations. Let's look at these.



One look at the picture at top right and you know that it is a product of the Victorian Age. The subject is a typical nude portrait of the time. Beautiful women sported heavier builds than are favored today. They were most frequently posed in bathing suits (covering them from their necks to their ankles, of course), chemise-type underwear, or draped with loose fabric, often in reclining poses.

The Victorian Era placed great value on public modesty. While the pictures on these pages may seem tame today, they were considered quite risqué in their time.

Remember that long exposure times were still the rule, so the pose at far left on the facing page was likely quite challenging for the model to hold. The reclining pose on the right of the facing page had the obvious advantage of being easy to maintain. Reclining nude *Odalisque* style portraits had been popular with painters for several centuries. These types of photographs just followed the style of the paintings of an earlier era.

Notice that the models on these pages appear quite uninterested in the whole proceeding. They make little effort to project a personality into the shot, and don't make eye contact with the camera (or, by extension, with the viewer). Much like a still life of fruit or flowers, these models were physical entities offered up for the visual enjoyment of the viewer.

We shall see that drapery and undergarments have always been elements in glamour studies. The material that covers the model can be arranged to create a compositional element that complements the pose of the model.

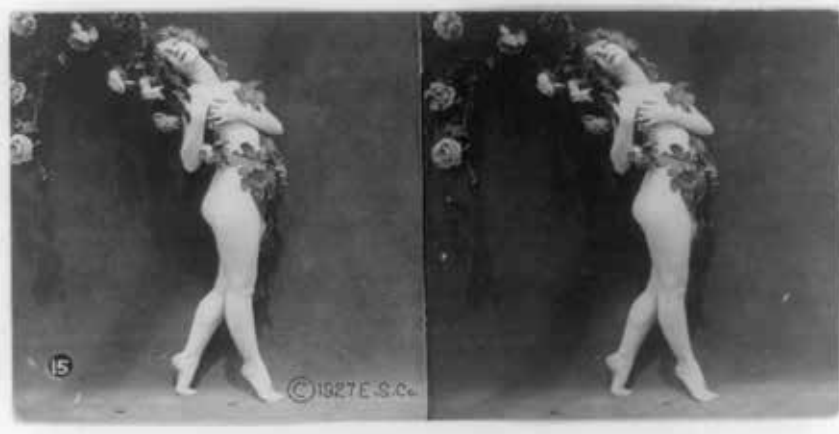
On the right, we again see an image of the muscle-bound model. Eugen Sandow was holding a more austere and contemplative pose characteristic of the great Greek era male statues.



© William H. Rau, Courtesy Library of Congress



"The Girl in the Moon," 1923. The photographs on this page are stereographs, which were viewed through a special set of fixed lenses to create a 3D effect.



"The Clinging Vine," 1927.



"The Flapperette," 1928.

All photos this page © Exhibit Supply Co., Courtesy of Library of Congress

The 1920s, an era which saw an increase in hedonism and sexual permissiveness, gave rise to a more playful type of glamour photograph. Elaborate sets often played a part in the images, and models made eye contact with the camera.

These images were meant to be viewed through stereoscopes, special fixed lenses that brought the two images together to create a 3D effect.

You will find that studying historical photographs such as these can be very inspiring as you develop your own ideas and tastes. The more you look at work from different periods and different styles, the more insight you will bring to your own work. Posing the human body is still subject to the same challenges as it was 150 years ago.

Today, boudoir photography is one of the fastest growing genres in the industry, along with scantily-clad and alluring photos of men—playfully nicknamed "dudeoir" photography. Weddings seem to be a big occasion for taking these photos. *Wedding Report* records U.S. industry statistics, and in 2009, 7% of brides who hired pro photographers (or 134,000 brides) also paid for boudoir services. By 2011, the number jumped to 230,00 brides, or 12% of the market. Images for both women and men are given to spouses or partners as gifts, and single men are using them on dating and social media websites.



A woman at her dressing table was a popular scene for glamour photographs of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

*© William H. Rau,
Courtesy of the
Library of Congress.*



The use of sexy lingerie in a bedroom setting is the hallmark of boudoir photography over the past 50 years.



How to Locate Models.

To get started in the field, you need photographic know-how. You need a disciplined, yet pleasant personality. And you need a willing model. These are the three basic requirements. Add your imagination and a sense of good taste, and you've got all the essentials for success.

By now you should possess the photographic know-how. In this Lesson, we will try to guide you with respect to finding the right models, working with them to bring out their best, and developing an awareness of how to use your imagination and good taste.

It's important to realize that glamour techniques can also be used in your regular portrait work. What model doesn't want to look her best in a photograph?

Many times, qualities that are described as "sex appeal" or "personality," are stock glamour techniques. We will show you methods you can use to help subjects emphasize those aspects of themselves that will elicit reactions from the viewer such as: "I'd like to meet her," or "It must be fun to photograph such a vivacious model."

Photos for Dating Websites.

A lot of the ideas that we're going to cover in this Lesson would be relevant for photographs for social media and dating websites. Clearly, people who post a picture of themselves on these sites want to appear as good-looking as possible. If you make portraits for people for this purpose, the key principles apply: work with a clean background, make sure your subject has a pleasant expression, and pay attention to hair and makeup.

What photographic equipment do you need? Just the regular equipment you use for any other type of portrait photography. The selection of the model, the costume, and the location are foremost. Equipment is a secondary consideration.

Locating models for your glamour photography is problem number one.

Professional Models.

If you are interested in commercial work, you are probably best off working with professional models right away, since you will find it hard to get results that meet professional standards without using professionals. Naturally, the precise definition of what constitutes “professional” will be determined partly by the intended marketplace and partly by your budget.

To locate the type of professional model needed for high fashion, glamour, and advertising photographs, you must usually contact a modeling agency. Typically, a top-quality model will only be available at agencies in larger cities.

But how do you get experience in glamour and boudoir photography before you can afford the high per-hour fee of a top professional model? There are a number of approaches.

If you do portrait work, you might ask some of your portrait subjects if they would be interested in working with you on a swimsuit project. Offer to supply a collection of images from the session and some free prints. It is a good idea to be as specific as possible about the nature of the project when making a proposal of this nature, as anything vague may be misunderstood as a romantic advance. This means that you need to have a specific plan, which should include a location, date, and overall concept.





Figure Study Models.

For nude photography, you might try locating people who work as models for art classes. The art department of a local college may be able to make suggestions. Typically, these models won't be appropriate for high-fashion or high-glamour pictures, but they may be just right for "arty" torso figure studies.

Amateur Models.

Many times a woman or a man who aspires to be a model may let you do test shots, including glamour portraits and swimsuit shots, because he or she needs them for a "book" of photographs to present to clients. If you have no direct commercial client lined up for the specific project that you're shooting, the model will sometimes work in exchange for a selection of the images taken and a few prints of the best shots from the

session. If you work well with any given model, it's an excellent idea to be generous when arranging this sort of exchange because a long-time relationship between photographer and subject can often lead to the best working situation. Make sure to get a written release that describes the terms of the arrangement.

A bountiful resource for finding local amateur models is the Internet. Finding a model who is reliable and possesses a professional manner can be tricky, however, and you should exercise caution when working with anyone who hasn't come to you through a direct recommendation from a friend, colleague, or reputable agency. Make sure you meet the model in a public place such as a local coffee shop prior to the shoot to discuss the terms, and have her or him sign a release before you take any pictures.



With this caveat in mind, feel free to explore sites like *ModelMayhem.com*, a free resource for aspiring models, photographers, make-up artists, stylists, and others to display their portfolios and communicate with people who may be interested in collaborating on photo projects.

There is also the “talent” section of *Craigslist.org*, on which you can advertise projects for local models in major cities throughout the world. However, be sure to use the same caution when meeting collaborators on Craigslist as you would on the rest of the Internet.

For the beginning photographer, the best source of potential models for glamour shots is the “girl next door” or the “boy next door.” You don’t know any attractive neighbors? In the earlier

Lesson, *Fashion Photography*, we described how to work with inexperienced models to relax them and bring out their best possibilities. Let’s take this one step further and discuss how you can transform an average looking person into an alluring photographic model.

It is possible to make virtually anyone look attractive in pictures with the proper makeup, hairdo, clothing and accessories, lighting, and direction before the camera. If you can afford it, enlist the support of a hairdresser and make-up artist. If you can’t afford professionals, you can pick up a lot of pointers by studying just a few issues of men’s and women’s magazines such as *Seventeen*, *Glamour*, *GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Vogue* if this area intrigues you. Take another look at NYIP’s *Portraiture* Lesson for a refresher on good lighting techniques.



Outdoor and Location Shooting.

Some photographers prefer to handle glamour and boudoir shoots in the studio, where they have close control over all factors. Others prefer outdoor or location shooting, where the setting is important to the theme or mood they want to express. Let's delve into both approaches, exploring different types of glamour pictures, ranging from attractive facial shots to full-figure nudes.

Once you've selected your model, your next decision is where to take the photos. If you don't have a studio, the obvious answer is outdoors. Outdoor shots provide a wide variety of possible locations from the beach and poolside to the forest and backyard. If you have access to a sturdy rooftop, the open sky can also be a beautiful backdrop. Since you can't control the clutter in an outdoor location the way you can in a studio, you must pay attention to all the techniques you have learned that enable you to eliminate or minimize unwanted distraction. In other words, pay careful attention to Guideline #3: *Simplify*.

In the top picture the photographer chose to keep the waterfall background in focus because he wanted to establish the environment. Remember: Pay attention to details in the viewfinder. This is especially important in outdoor settings where you can't plan every detail in advance.

In the bottom picture, the photographer chose to throw the background out of focus so that nothing distracts from the importance of the model. Either approach is valid, but if you include details of the environment be sure they don't distract. At all costs, avoid any appearance that the picture was shot in your backyard for lack of any better location. There's nothing wrong with shooting in your backyard, but watch out for distracting elements such as garbage cans, and unmown grass. Only include those elements that enhance the mood of your picture. Eliminate all others.



Silhouette.

In this shot, the photographer has made clever use of the harsh glare that can be found on the beach in the late afternoon. The model has been positioned in the sun's highlight on the water so that her figure is seen in silhouette. The sun's glow captured on the boardwalk adds light accents to the foreground. This kind of photograph has a ready market in today's greeting card and poster industry.

The use of an orange filter to darken both sky and water adds to the contrast that gives this picture a strong artistic feeling.



Available Light.

Obviously, the beach and pool are not the only locations available outside the studio. This candid shot was taken in front of a window, which provided the only source of light.

This photo has a sense of naturalness, a feeling that this is life as it really is. Every

visible detail is vital to the mood and message of the image. Because of the intensely personal “you-are-there” implication of such available-light images, nude and lingerie photographs shot in available light (and natural settings like this) must be handled with extreme delicacy. As always, let good taste be your guide.

Shooting In the Studio.

Many pros prefer to handle glamour and boudoir sessions in the studio where they have close control over all factors. Take this glamour portrait, for example. The lighting of the model's lips and hair had to be critically controlled. Outdoors, this would have been far more difficult. In the studio, it was easy. Let's look at this picture more closely.

Is this photo glamorous? You bet. There is an appealing sensuousness to every aspect of this picture from the attitude of the model to the way it was photographed. What particulars give it a look of sensuousness? First, the beauty of the model.

Second is her look: the tilt of her head, her eyes looking directly at you, the slight beginning of a smirk. She is appealing, inviting. She is seductive, even though she's clothed. Note that makeup has been used only on her eyelashes and lips to give her a look of natural attractiveness. The camera has been placed below the normal eye level. This enables her to bend her head down slightly and give a teasing look rather than a haughty one. The look of sensuality was maintained by using soft lighting from the left, producing some lovely highlights in her hair. A reflector board was used on the right to throw just a little light into the shadows on that side.

Indoor shoots can also be a good idea for the nervous amateur nude model, who might be hesitant to disrobe outdoors.



© Fabio Xavier, NYIP Student



Shooting in the Bedroom or Hotel Room.

Another viable option for shooting glamour and boudoir photography is to do so in either a bedroom or a hotel suite, where an amateur or model is likely to feel more comfortable disrobing in front of the camera. Obviously the arrangements should all be secured beforehand, including written consent of all models, payment for hotel rooms rented, and/or written permission from the owner of the residence.

In boudoir photography, there is now a sizeable market for couples who choose to hire a photographer to shoot their spouse or significant other (typically the female, although increasingly the male and sometimes the couple are featured together) in a series of seductive poses, known as *boudoir style*, to be presented as gifts or mementos. Boudoir style is

often characterized by a combination of posed and candid photos of the model partially clothed or wearing lingerie or underwear, and is commonly done as part of a wedding, birthday, anniversary, or Valentine's Day present or to commemorate any special occasion.

While these settings can be recreated in the studio, some potential clients will prefer the emotional resonance created by having the shoot take place in their own room or the freedom that a neutral setting allows them. Either way, it's important to make sure your subject is comfortable before you put him or her in front of the camera. Many provocative celebrity glamour spreads, from Marilyn Monroe to Beyonce Knowles, have been shot in such settings.



Working with the Model.

Whether you're shooting glamour portraits, fashion, bikini, or nude photographs, you've got to establish a smooth working rapport with your model. We've stressed this before, and in the *Fashion Lesson*, we provided you with guidelines on how to work with a model. In glamour photography, your ability to set the model at ease is most important. If he or she's not relaxed with the photographer, then your model won't appear relaxed to the viewer.

Glamour pictures must imply a strong sense of intimacy between the model and the viewer. Whereas contemporary tastes in fashion photography often call for models who project a cold, hard presence, the glamour model must usually project a personality that appeals as friendly, relaxed, and accessible.

The starting point for the right relationship is the professionalism of the photographer. If it's clear to the model that the photographer is going to cross boundaries, the model is going to be uncomfortable. The pictures will reflect the tension. So, step one is to make it clear from the start that your interest is in the photographs, not in the model. You're a pro.

Models must project an affectionate or seductive mood to the camera. You as the photographer are responsible for capturing that attitude. You must realize that the model's personality is part of the picture-making process and that it has no necessary bearing on your personal relationship with the subject. Always remain professional throughout the shoot.

Think of the situation as one of divided responsibility. The two (or three) of you are creating a fantasy mood, and this mood is intended to involve and entice the viewer.

The photographer has the key role in the creation of that fantasy. He or she selects the model, plans the photo session and location, and works to create the feeling that he or she wants to impart. He or she must plan the visual elements that will make the idea work most effectively. This involves decisions about lighting, the best way to pose a particular model, and the choice of props and costumes.

The model also has a definite responsibility. Principally, the model must project the proper attitude that will make the shot work. In other words, he or she must play out the given role to the best of their ability.

Some models are known for expressing themselves with such feeling that the photographer becomes convinced that their entreaties are really addressed to the photographer. We cannot stress the point enough: Don't flirt. The model is in a vulnerable position; if you behave in an unprofessional manner, the shoot will become uncomfortable, and it will show in the pictures. The pros who have the best working reputations are the ones who don't press the situation with models. And word spreads fast back at the agency!

Some photographers in the field are known for the elaborate effort they put into creating a mood and setting for the model. Many photographers have music playing throughout the session. It's important to provide good working conditions for the model. In addition to a private dressing area in which he or she can change and apply makeup, provide a nice robe to wear on the set. Have a convenient place to hang it just outside the shooting area. Light refreshments and beverages set out for the model are also a considerate touch.

As you interact with the model, remember that you are directing the situation. Do not start with the most revealing and erotic poses that you have planned. Begin with something that is more of an exercise, a warm-up that will enable you to work on developing your rapport with the model. Then, after the model is relaxed, you may go on to more direct and intimate shots later in the session.

Do not wait too long, however, as models cannot give their strongest projection when they start to tire. Modeling is hard work. Even the experienced professional model can only be "on" for so long. The amateur can handle it for a very short span under the best conditions. If your model appears to be fading or asks for a break, take a break. Have the model throw on the robe and relax over coffee or water. Much as you hate to break the rhythm, you've got to sense when the rhythm is about to break down. Call a halt. Relax. Then get back to it.

Aside from the occasional break, your goal is to move through a session without delay or interruption. This is especially true of a nude photo session. Once you've established a good working relationship, you don't want anything to interrupt it. As we also noted in the *Fashion Lesson*, a rhythm develops between you and the model. There's a flow as he or she becomes relaxed and gets more and more into the flow of things. You must bring out your model and show him or her at their best, without allowing anything to happen that will break the mood.

Turn off your mobile. Don't allow guests to drop in. Don't constantly interrupt the posing while you check the lighting and fiddle with the strobes. Be set up in advance. Plan the session. Have props in position. Be ready with accessories and garments. Prepare your lighting in advance. Use an assistant or dummy object as a stand-in for the model, and set up your lights. Of course, you'll have to adjust them slightly during the session, but you won't have to start from scratch.



Is he thinking about you? No, it's a pose. A true professional never makes a move on a model or does anything to make him or her uncomfortable during a session.

For a nude session, eliminate all unnecessary people from the set. You don't need any extra pairs of eyes in the studio. However, it's worth noting that many models will arrive at the shoot with a trusted friend who will oversee the proceedings. So, if the model isn't someone you already know well, be prepared to welcome a companion to the set.

Don't always wait for models to ask for something. Anticipate their needs. By doing so, you demonstrate that you are sensitive to their feelings and in control of the situation, thereby building their confidence in your professionalism. This is the quality you want to project. Not charm, but confidence: self-confidence. At all times during the session, exude an attitude that everything is going just fine, exactly as you planned it. Even if you think the session is not really going well, don't let the model know it. Better, call a break "to give both of us a chance to relax" while you reflect on how to improve the situation.

Setting the Mood.

In your very first Lesson, you learned Guideline #1: A good picture has a theme. You were taught to ask yourself a basic question before clicking the shutter: "What do I want this picture to express?" In creating a glamour photo, the same guideline pertains. You must decide in advance what mood you want your pictures to express. Are they meant to be coy and teasing—or direct and sensual? Innocently shy—or blatantly sexy?

Having decided on the objective, you then want to make every aspect of a picture contribute to the theme: The model and the expression, the background and setting, the model's clothing (or lack thereof), the camera angle, the lighting. There is one thing all four of these photos have in common: direct, unflinching eye contact with the camera, and—by extension—you, the viewer. Notice how far we've come from the Victorian Era of downcast eyes.



Look at these four pictures. The two on the top express a soft coyness not only in the way the models are posed, but also in the use of the whites and cool pastel colors and soft, diffused lighting. Compare the bottom two pictures, where the mood is obvious, blatant, bold, and sexy. But note how the sexiness of the image is emphasized by the choice of brazenly bright, warm colors, darker makeup, and “hotter” lighting.



Don’t misunderstand this to mean that every “sexy” shot you ever take requires a vivid background and warm-toned “hot” lighting, or that every subtle, suggestive picture requires a feminine background and soft lighting. No. Each picture must be planned in its own terms. Just be sure that you think through how all elements must work together to express your theme, not just the model’s clothing and pose, but also the background and the lighting. Everything should be appropriate.



Now look at the four numbered torso pictures on the opposite page. Each expresses a different level of eroticism ranging from suggestive to teasing to provocative to blatant. The point is that you, the photographer, should know in advance the mood you want to project, and then set up every detail of the scene to achieve this mood.

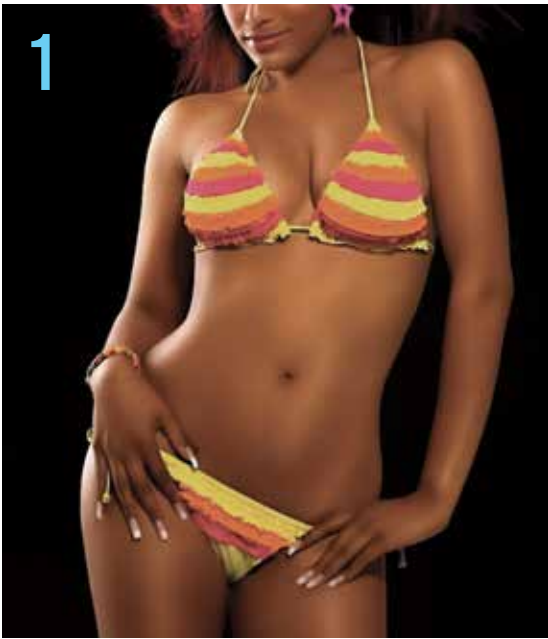
Let’s look at how each of these images is set up.



Number 1 features a stark, totally black background that puts emphasis on the model’s figure. Strong sidelighting from the left emphasizes the model’s right arm and the curvature of her torso. The tilt of her hips and placement of her hands give a rhythm to the photograph, almost as if she were swaying her body in a dance.

Number 2 has a dark background but there’s some texture visible. Is the model outdoors?

Her figure is lit by soft front lighting that could be natural light, window light, or



a flash in a softbox or bounced into an umbrella. The placement of her hands and the untied bikini top suggest a playful, almost teasing mood.

Number 3 uses a dark background, a touch of backlighting, and sidelighting to call attention to the model's powerful physique. This time the relatively harsh light comes from the right side. Notice the highlight on the model's left arm, leg, and pec. Again, sidelighting emphasizes his muscular figure. The placement of his arms and the squared-off shoulders is distinctly forceful and masculine, unlike the tilted hips of the women in Numbers 1 and 2. The model's hands over his genital area is of questionable taste, but

also reminiscent of the fig leaf that was used on both men and women in painting and drawing for hundreds of years.

Number 4 uses hard lighting from a source just above the model's eye level and slightly to the left. This emphasizes her chest, placing heavy shadows beneath the cupped arm. Shot in black and white with a stark background, this image exhibits a gritty style. The model's raised arm is the only thing covering her breasts, with her pelvic region tastefully cut off by the bottom of the frame. The model's long hair adds motion and drama to the composition, coyly obscuring her face.



Finally, look at this picture. At first glance, you might think this to be a location picture, but it was actually shot in a studio. The “water” background is a projected scene behind the model. Although this model is somewhat covered by her bikini, there is still a mood of raw sexiness about this picture. Let’s see what contributes to that mood.

Obviously, the model has a full figure that is emphasized by the briefness of her string bikini. But there’s more. Her body almost leaps off the page at you because it’s in such sharp focus compared to the background. Then there’s the model’s pose. Her body is turned to show her buttocks, adorned only by tiny gold thong strings. Her back is arched, her head is turned to face you, and she glances back at you with arched eyebrows and the beginning of a mischievous smile. The placement of her arm draws attention to the curve of her thigh and reinforces the sense of independent spirit and challenge that permeates this image. The lighting, coming from the left, casts a sharp shadow that is softened by fill light from a reflector or low-power fill flash. Clearly, we’re not at the beach!

Establishing an Environment.

You want the environment in which you place the model to appear appropriate to your theme. As we already recalled, NYIP's Guideline #3 is *Simplify*. This is particularly important in glamour and boudoir photography where the implication of every object in the picture can be highly suggestive because of the nature of your subject. So you must choose your props carefully.

Since good taste is always one of your objectives, you want to avoid any possible impression that the pictures were shot in a sleazy motel room.

Most successful glamour pictures are set up in an abstract environment in which only those props that will contribute to the theme are used. For example, look at the two pictures on this page. In the top left picture, metallic silver drapery is used as the background material, and a mirrored surface is used as the floor. The model wears gold lamé hotpants and boots, and to further reinforce the metallic, reflective mood, the photographer has added a disco ball—all of which are reflected by the mirrored floor. The mood is hot, dark, glamorous. Perhaps the woman is a go-go dancer in a chic discothèque.

That said, the mirrored floor, reflective background, and disco ball run the risk of making the model look (and feel) a little overwhelmed. Her facial expression looks a bit more like she's playing Twister rather than thinking sexy thoughts.

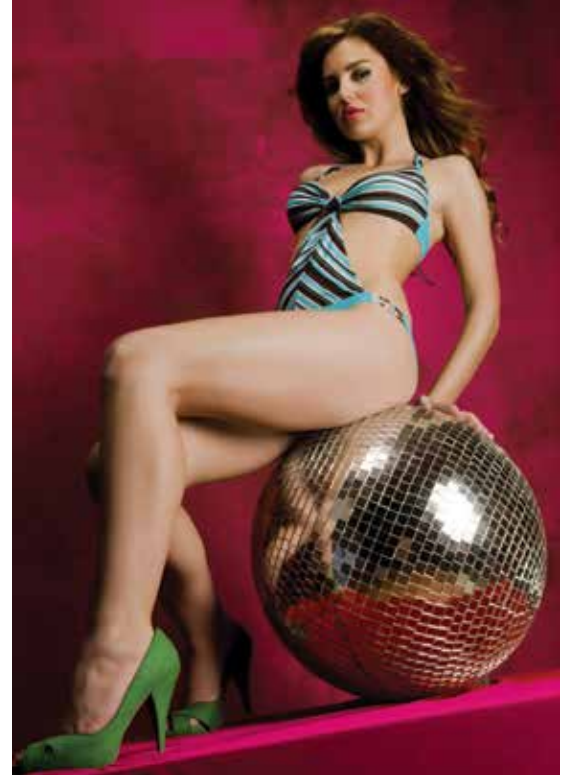
Compare this to the mood of the bottom picture, a provocative pose reinforced by the use of bright red rose petals that provide a vivid background and foreground, partially draping the model. The bed of roses simultaneously evokes purity and desire.





Now look at the two pictures at the top of this page. In these, the photographer has again used props to set the scene: another disco ball, and a background covered with magenta crushed velvet. These simple props create a vibrant atmosphere that is appropriate to the model's demeanor.

Watch how you position the model's legs when shooting a full-length body. If the legs are closer to the camera than the rest of her body, you risk perspective distortion. To avoid this distortion, either keep the legs and torso in one plane that is equidistant from the lens, or move farther back and use a longer lens. In the top left picture, the photographer has avoided distortion by keeping the legs and torso in one plane. But look at the top right picture: the model's legs appear disproportionately large. The legs are too close to the camera because the photographer shot from a very low position. Add in the slight tilt of the camera and it looks like she might fall off the ball.



Look at the opposite picture. How does the mood change when the photo is in black and white? Sometimes everything suddenly looks "classier" in black and white. The model looks much more comfortable standing up. But also notice what happens to the background. The vibrant crushed velvet now looks like a dirty, peeling wall. Pay attention to textures in costumes and backgrounds.





Adjusting the Pose.

These two photos show a bedroom setting. The bed upon which the model is placed is spare and unobtrusive, and the wall behind her evokes a cabin in the woods. With her legs folded one under the other, the soft curves of her thigh and calves are emphasized, and soft lighting eliminates most shadows.

Compare the specific small changes in the pose of the model. In both images, the model's legs were judged to be a good arrangement (although it would have been better had the photographer not cropped off her right foot so awkwardly). In the top picture, you can see that the position of the arm her head is leaning on is not particularly appealing. The fingers disappear into her hair. Her head appears stiff, as though she were only pretending to lean onto the cushion. Her left shoulder is raised to balance her torso; the position does not look relaxed.



In the second picture she has leaned back onto the green cushion, and her left hand now playfully holds a lock of hair. Her right hand gently touches the strap of her bra. Instead of leaning uncomfortably to the right, she now appears relaxed and coy. The model's head and neck are turned so she looks at you teasingly out of the corner of her eye. This pose is much more inviting.

We all have a tendency to pull up and tighten our shoulders in tense situations. Only dancers, performers, and models are usually sufficiently aware of this tendency to enable them to correct it without outside direction. As a photographer, particularly when working with friends or inexperienced models, pay particular attention to your model's shoulders. Frequently, your friendly reminder to "Relax your shoulders" will result in the entire body being relaxed, too.



Both pictures on the previous page are lit by a single flash bounced into an umbrella. This type of soft but strong lighting is often favored by pros who work regularly in glamour. The cool short flashes do not take as much out of the model as the hot, continual glare of tungsten lighting. Strobe lighting makes it easier for the model, and his or her makeup, to remain fresh during a photo session that may last for some time.

Again, note that there is no explicit nudity on the facing page. Yet every aspect of these pictures has been carefully planned by the photographer to produce a suggestive atmosphere.

Sensuality.

The photograph above shows the kind of strong formal arrangement that can be made in a picture that still depicts real people. The two figures appear almost sculptural as they sit on the reflective black surface. The single light produces a strong dramatic quality and emphasizes

the power that seems to emanate from the women. The inclusion of certain carefully chosen accessories, the gold swimwear, the jewelry, the high-heeled shoes, all provide dramatic accents to the figures in this provocative shot.

There is almost an available-light feeling here as the shadows have gone dark. Additional fill lighting would have changed the photograph considerably, providing detail to the shadows and bringing out the models' hair. The photographer in this case, however, chose to emphasize the way that these figures appear out of darkness.

The photograph provides a direct confrontation with the viewer as the photographer has directed the models to look straight into the camera. This provocative "forwardness" is further enhanced by the use of metallic gold swimwear and the low camera angle.



Sensual Skin.

The picture on these pages focus on the tactile quality of skin. The photographs produce a texture of skin that you can just about touch. The studio portrait of the young couple against a light wall is self-explanatory. Let's explore how the swimsuit picture was made.

The lighting accents the tanned figure of the model, whose skin has been oiled with glycerine before being sprayed with water. The combination makes for the glistening quality that suggests physical exertion or a recent dip in the pool, both with possible sensual implications.

This photo was shot on location at a pool. The model has been lit from the left, using direct light that produces shapely highlights on her glistening skin and dramatizes the droplets of water. This serves to draw our eye back to the subtle curves of her stomach. An excellent and sensual photograph!

Grouping Figures.

In many glamour photos used as advertisements, the relationship between a man and woman is depicted. The theory goes that if the picture imparts a romantic, intimate atmosphere between the male and female models, the viewer will be aroused by a longing to achieve similar romance and intimacy in his or her life. The reader will rush out to purchase the perfume, dress, shampoo, toothpaste, deodorant, life insurance, toilet tissue, or what-have-you that the ad promises will yield this fantasy to consumers. In planning such a photograph, therefore, the photographer must concentrate on producing an apparent relationship between the models. The product could be virtually anything.



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In the picture at bottom left, the intimate relationship between the two models is suggested by all the visible elements. They are lying on the ground in a fantasy woodland setting. The man's chest is bare, his arms behind his head, a far-off look of contentment in his eyes. Her shirt is low cut and untied, and she twirls a piece of grass teasingly between her lips as she makes direct, provocative eye contact with the viewer.

The picture at bottom right suggests a different relationship, more directly sexual, yet still playful. Both figures appear to be scantily clad in underwear, enjoying an intimate moment in bed. They project a mood of sensual closeness. Result: They could sell just about anything.

One point to remember when photographing models together: It's just as important as with an individual model (if not more so) to set a relaxed mood and try to make the models at ease with each other. If models feel awkward posing intimately with one another, it will be immediately apparent in the photos. If possible, it's good to use models who have worked together before and who are already comfortable with each other. Also remember to take it slow, just as you would do with an individual model. Don't go for a nude embrace right away—build up to that moment ... if at all. Never show impatience. Adopt the attitude that it will take as long as it takes to get the perfect shot. Projecting this positive attitude will give the models confidence in your professionalism and put them at ease.





Bodybuilders.

As we noted at the beginning of this Lessons, contemporary standards are rapidly changing, and male figure studies are very popular. From the photographer's viewpoint, there are no major technical differences between the requirements for handling a female or a male model.

A special area of glamour photography that deserves a separate note, however, is the bodybuilder or physique photograph. Here is one area where you will not have any problems directing the model. The people involved with this sport have a highly developed sense of the poses that work well with each aspect of their individual muscular development. Bodybuilders are gracious in their willingness to explain these particulars to the interested photographer. Listen to them. And, if you're interested in pursuing the subject further, we highly recommend Charles Gaines and George Butler's interesting and beautiful book, *Pumping Iron*.



Anointing the athlete's body with oil is an idea that originated with the early Greek Olympic Games and continues today, not only with the lotion crowd on the beach, but also with bodybuilders. The glistening texture of oiled skin can make for very special photo opportunities, so take full advantage of it.

In these shots, you can see that the main light has been used with no diffusion. The glistening highlights on the models' skin add a strong dimensional feeling that emphasizes their musculature.

Of course, where bodybuilding was once an exclusively male domain, many women now pursue it with equal fervor.

The main market for this type of photography is in "muscle magazines," such as *Muscle & Fitness*, *Men's Health*, *Self*, and many others, as well as countless health-and-fitness websites.

Tattoo Photography.

A special niche market within the glamour and boudoir field is tattoo photography. Tattoo artists often take their own close-up photos after their work is completed, but people with tattoos may commission a photographer to create a portrait to document their large-scale body art. *Skin & Ink*, *Skin Art*, and *Tattoo Savage* are among the many publications dedicated to the art of the tattoo. These magazines regularly feature studio shots of nude or semi-nude models displaying their body art. There is also a growing market for “pin-up” type photos of tattooed men and women. For a challenge, try a photo shoot with a model who has a large expanse of body tattoos, paying special attention to how the subject’s skin folds in different positions and the different angles at which the tattoo looks best.

Maternity Photography.

Another special type of artistic boudoir photography is dedicated to capturing the nude or softly-draped figure of a pregnant woman. Often shot backlit or with very soft portrait lighting, this type of photo is concerned with showing the shape of the woman’s belly and, usually, her facial expression while glancing at it. Many couples commission this type of photograph to document a special moment in their lives, and sometimes the pregnant woman’s partner is included in the photograph as well. As evidenced by the photo at the bottom of this page, this type of photo can also be very glamorous.

Special Effects.

Experimental techniques and special effects are often used in nude figure studies because even when the human figure is presented in an almost abstract image, it is usually recognizable. In the photo on the next page (top), some sort of translucent glass or plastic obscures our view of the model. Only her hand, which makes contact with the glass, is sharp.

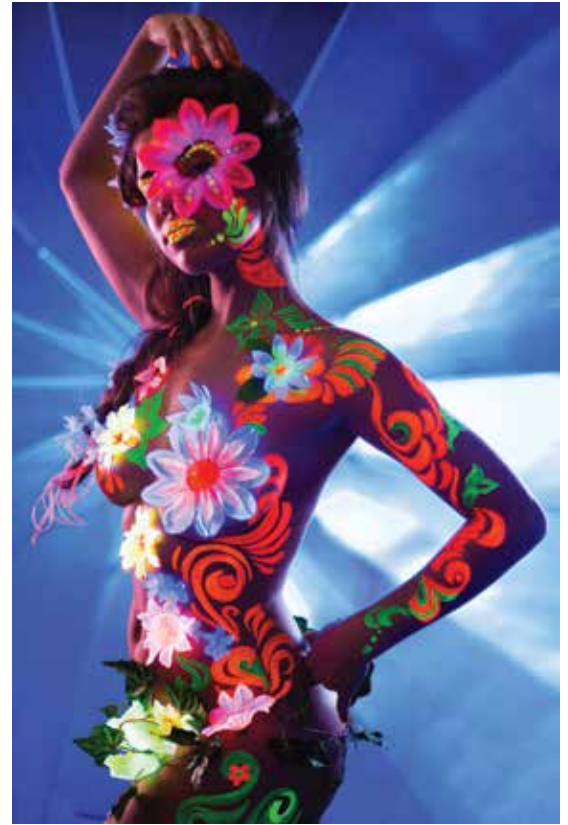




Another advantage of using a semi-abstract approach such as this is that often you will find a model who will pose in this type of picture, where she cannot be recognized, but who might not be willing to pose in a detailed nude figure study.

Lighting and Image Editing.

The bottom photo and the top photo on the next page are examples of the use of experimental lighting techniques within the studio setting. The nude model (opposite) is in a darkened studio that is partially filled with smoke from a fog machine. The model herself has her back to the camera, and is backlit by a spotlight carefully positioned directly in front of her that also illuminates the fog. In the left bottom photo, a nude model who is adorned in UV glowing makeup poses in the dark, before being illuminated by a powerful backlight. The lighting brings out vivid makeup details, further embellished in Photoshop.



Texture Effects.

In the days of film photography, texture screens were frequently added to a figure study to produce a semi-abstract appearance. Now that digital photography has become the standard, filters are often added later in Photoshop to achieve the same effect. You can create your own textures by photographing surfaces and then layering them over the image in various levels of transparency. What surfaces might you photograph to produce usable textures? Virtually anything. Sand. Wood. Tweed. Burlap. A wet windowpane. A spider's web. A fisherman's net. You name it.

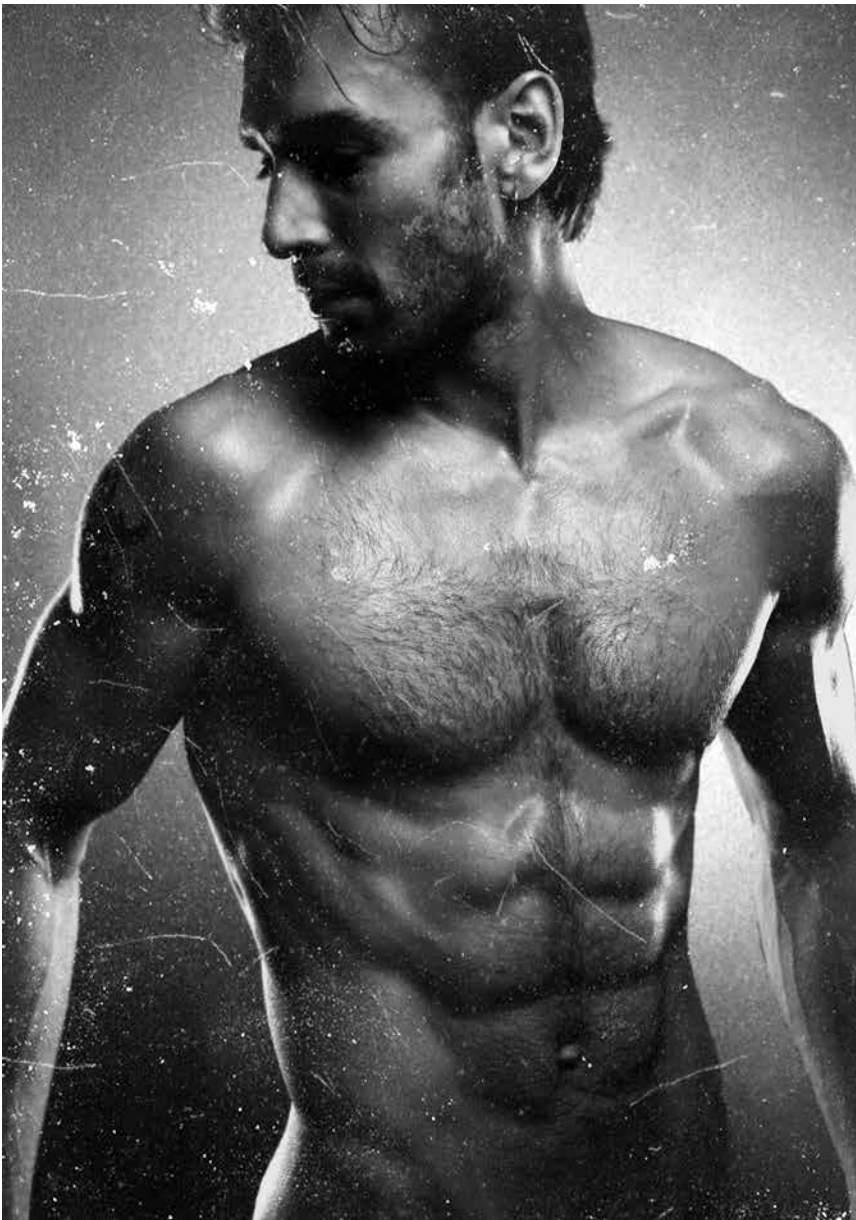
In the bottom two photos on the opposite page, we've applied two different texture "screens" to the same image. Notice how the mood changes with the color and pattern used.



This picture was made by layering a photo of a chrysanthemum at 25% opacity set to "Screen" mode on top of a black-and-white photo of a nude figure.



The same black-and-white photo with a layer of colorful fall leaves over it, with opacity set to 79% in "Overlay" mode.



Graininess.

The photos here are a variation on the use of a texture screen. These pictures have an overall texture pattern, but how was it produced? The pattern is the result of excessive graininess. It was produced by a careful adjustment of the *Textures> Grain* filter in Photoshop. No screen was used.

To get this effect using film, use a high-speed film such as Tri-X since, as you know, the faster the film, the grainer. Second, moderately overexpose the photo by one or two stops, since overexposure also contributes to graininess. Third, overdevelop the film by about 30% to add even more graininess. Finally, make the print on a very high-contrast paper to maximize the contrast and make the grain even more visible.

Result, top: a classical Grecian-style male nude.

Result, bottom: an avant-garde, mysterious-looking photo of a veiled woman.



Model's Release.

A release should be signed by the model before the session begins. Even if he or she is posing for a test situation or as a favor, have a release and state a "consideration" for services, that is, a payment of some kind. Pay your model a dollar, or include in the terms of the release the fact that you will be supplying the model with photographs. A sample form has been supplied, using the fictional photographer Jamie Stone's letterhead, and the model "Esther Newman" from the comp card on the next page. The parts in blue letters will change according to your name and the name of your model. It's wise to print out a supply of release forms on your letterhead so that they are always handy.

Most professionals discover that the simplest release is the best. If the model is reluctant to sign a release, this may lead to real problems in your ability to use the pictures. So you must be very clear before the beginning of every session that you will expect a signed release. Never sell a photograph of an identifiable model if you don't have a release, especially a nude photograph. You can be sued for all you're worth, and more! If the model objects to you using her name in conjunction with the pictures, have her write a note on the release form stating that wish.

If you are unsure about the age of a model, never assume or take her word for it—ask to see her (or his) driver's license or other form of government-issued I.D. The magic age is 18. It's best to take a close-up photo of the model holding the license or I.D. next to his or her face. Another word of caution: While nude portraits of minors can be done in an artistic way, there is the potential to get in a lot of trouble if someone else doesn't share your point of view, so we don't recommend it. But if you are taking any kind of photographs of a model who is a minor (for example, a makeover series), you must get the signature of a parent or legal guardian beforehand.

Jamie Stone Photography
5555 5th Ave. Ste. #5
New York, NY 10011

January 5, 20XX

In consideration of _____,

paid me by Jamie Stone, receipt of which is hereby acknowledged, I,

Esther Newman, consent that you, your customers, agents and assigns, may

use my name, portraits or pictures, for advertising or commercial purposes or

for the purposes of trade.

Esther Newman

Model's Signature

Esther Newman

Print Name

If model is under 18 years of age:

As parents or guardian of the above named person,

I consent to the above release and signature thereto and to the uses therein set forth.

Parent or Guardian's Signature

Print Name of Model



Front of card.



Back of comp card.

(Note: Images taken from stock, model is not actually named Esther Newman.)

Model's Composite.

Every professional model carries a portfolio. A portfolio is a collection of the best pictures a model has, displaying his or her range of poses in varying situations. Usually a portfolio consists of a leather or plastic briefcase that contains glassine loose-leaf sheets into which the pictures are placed for display. The portfolio-briefcase is, in effect, the model's "trademark," as he or she carries it from art director to photographer to client, from one end of town to another. And, of course, when physical portfolios aren't required, the agency or the model's website and gallery of work enables everyone to view the model's best photos.

A *composite* is a printed sheet of paper or card stock that the model uses as an advertising leaflet. On it are printed pictures displaying her various "looks," plus information concerning name, dimensions, specialties, agency, website, address, etc. She mails this to prospective clients and photographers to put herself "on file" with them, and she leaves it after interviews as a reminder. In the trade, composites are often referred to simply as "comps."

Actors and actresses also need composites, and they use them similarly to put themselves "on file" with prospective producers and theater groups. So the preparation of composites offers a double-opportunity for you as a photographer.

Composites come in a few different forms and shapes. Usually, they are either a single 8½ x 11 sheet printed on both sides or an 11 x 17 sheet folded in half to form a 4-page presentation that also measures 8½ x 11 per page. Both sizes are designed to be filed easily since they are the same size as a regular letter. A third type of composite is a smaller mailing-card-size, called a *zed card*. It's usually printed in larger quantity and used for larger-scale mailings.

After the photographs are taken, they are digitally put into a "layout." Once



they have been arranged in a professional-looking design, they may be printed on an inkjet printer, or if larger quantities are needed, by a stationery shop or commercial printer.

You, the photographer, can play a vital role in this sequence beyond simply taking the pictures. If you would like to aggressively pursue the composite business, then you might consider offering “full-service” composite preparation for models and actors. Offer to handle all steps, from photography through layout of the card to printing. To do this, you will have to learn some basic graphic design skills, and ally yourself with a small print shop.

Set up a package price. The price must be enough to cover your time for shooting and processing the photographs, plus the cost of the paper and printing. Add at least 20% to these charges as profit, and you’ve got your package price.

Naturally, the amount you should charge for your time varies depending upon your skills, experience, reputation, competition, and locality. If you are shooting a full set of pictures for

a composite, you will probably need more than one session. Remember, the model wants to display his or her different “looks,” the wider the variety and range of poses, the wider the ability to be hired for different jobs. So you don’t want the different pictures you shoot to look alike. It’s not enough to have the model just change poses. He or she’s got to change their “look.” This means they should wear different clothing in the different shots. Perhaps she should also change her makeup. You should change the props, background, and lighting so that they are appropriate to the different looks. If the model is interested in sportswear, casual wear, and bathing suits, you will probably want to schedule at least one outdoor location session. In addition, you will want to be sure to produce one good headshot plus some full-length shots. If the model has a specialty, for example, hand and glove modeling, you’ll want to take specific pictures relating to the specialty, too. And you’ll be taking many photographs, since you must make sure you capture the best possible look for each pose. Obviously, you can’t run through such a complex session in just an hour or two. It takes time, and time is what you are selling.



Very often, the model or actor will already have a number of good shots that they want to include in their composite. Only one or two poses to fill in or update the portfolio may be necessary. It then becomes a much easier job, and you will budget for much less time in your price.

Either way, the composite market can be lucrative if you go after it. How do you locate business? As Willie Sutton said about bank robbing, he went to where the money was. In your case, you must get your message to where the models and the actors are. Send a mailing or go to modeling agencies, modeling schools, drama schools and studios, theater groups, and the like. Announce your Composite Service. Show a composite you have produced as a sample of your work. How do you produce this first sample? Make a deal with an attractive model or actor to take the photographs for free if he or she will pay for the cost of the production and printing. It's a good deal all around.

Public relations can be important in promoting your composite service. If you are an adequate public speaker, call the modeling and acting schools and agencies in your area and suggest your availability to talk to their people. For example, you might suggest a talk on how to achieve the best working relationship between model and photographer, how to pose to show yourself best, how to put together the best possible composite, how to distribute composites for maximum effectiveness, etc. Be sure to be prepared with an effective presentation. Use plenty of pictures (taken by yourself, of course) to illustrate your talk, and have your sample composite (or at least a business card) ready for distribution. When properly handled, you can use these talks to acquire lots of business and a reputation as the photographer for composites. Another tactic is to insist that your photo credit be featured alongside any pictures you shoot for a composite. This is another source of good publicity.



Practice Makes Perfect.

Whether you are photographing a nude model as an artistic figure study or a risqué, lingerie-clad model in provocative poses, be sure you know beforehand the mood you intend to convey to the viewer. Nothing is worse than an unplanned shoot when it comes to a glamour or boudoir photograph. The goal of glamour, and to a certain extent, boudoir photography is to create an illusion of enhanced attractiveness and charm, whether it be intensely sensual or

playfully innocent. There are many ways to define glamour, and with practice, you will find out the type that appeals most to you. Don't count on a happy accident to inspire your theme at the last minute. And don't get discouraged if you and your first model don't have good chemistry. Think of it as practice—practice in photography, patience, and professionalism. And practice makes perfect, so shoot, and then shoot again! Good luck.



*“ In photography there is a reality so subtle that it
becomes more real than reality.”*

—Alfred Stieglitz
1864–1946