

GUIDO ARGENTINI

How do you think growing up in Florence affected your artistic taste?

Growing up in a city like Florence where you see art in every corner affects you. Often I wonder how my taste and my sensitivity would have been if I'd grown up in a different country or even in a different city in Italy, but I grew up in Florence and I'm happy with the gift this city gave me in terms of being sensitive to art.

At what point did women become the subject of your work?

I started taking pictures when I was about 16 years old and at 17 I fell in love, and my first love became my first muse. I've always loved women and you usually like to take pictures of what you love most. I also love challenges and to shoot women is a constant challenge.

Shooting nudes must be a challenge in terms of building up trust and intimacy?

To click the camera is the very last step of the process, as the relationship you establish with your subject is the key to a great picture. This is true for every picture you take with a human subject, be it a fashion shot, a wedding picture or a portrait. The connection between the photographer and the subject is everything, and when you shoot a woman naked this becomes even more extreme. A woman without clothes is more vulnerable and fragile, she needs to trust you in order for you to be able to get a good picture.

How do you choose your models?

It's the hardest part of the process and it's very difficult to find the right subject for my pictures. The way I see it, the creative process is a common effort between myself and my subject. I look for beautiful women but also women that are enthusiastic about creating something together with me. The personality and the enthusiasm of the model is the key that makes a pair of beautiful legs or an amazing mouth turn into a magical image.

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by Laura Bushell

The models in Argentum are very athletic, why did that kind of body suit the imagery you were trying to create?

The images were inspired by sculptures, mostly the work of Brancusi, who I consider one of the greatest artists of all time. With these silver images I wanted to show perfection, I wanted to make the human figure as abstract as possible, so that's why I used a metallic paint to hide the skin and make the surface of the body shiny, almost liquid-like. The choice of dancers and gymnasts was a necessity, as 'regular' models could never adopt these extreme positions of tension, fluidity and sensuality.

A lot of your work is on location, but Argentum was studio-based. What kind of equipment did you use and how does it differ to being on location?

I used a Hasselblad 503CW for my silver images. I started this project in 1995 when digital didn't exist and I decided to complete it using film. Also I love composing my shots in a square format. For lighting this project, most of the time I only used one flash or one tungsten light. When I shoot on location usually I don't use any light at all. And when I shoot for my personal book projects I'm always alone. It's harder on my body but I gain in terms of intimacy and connection with the model.

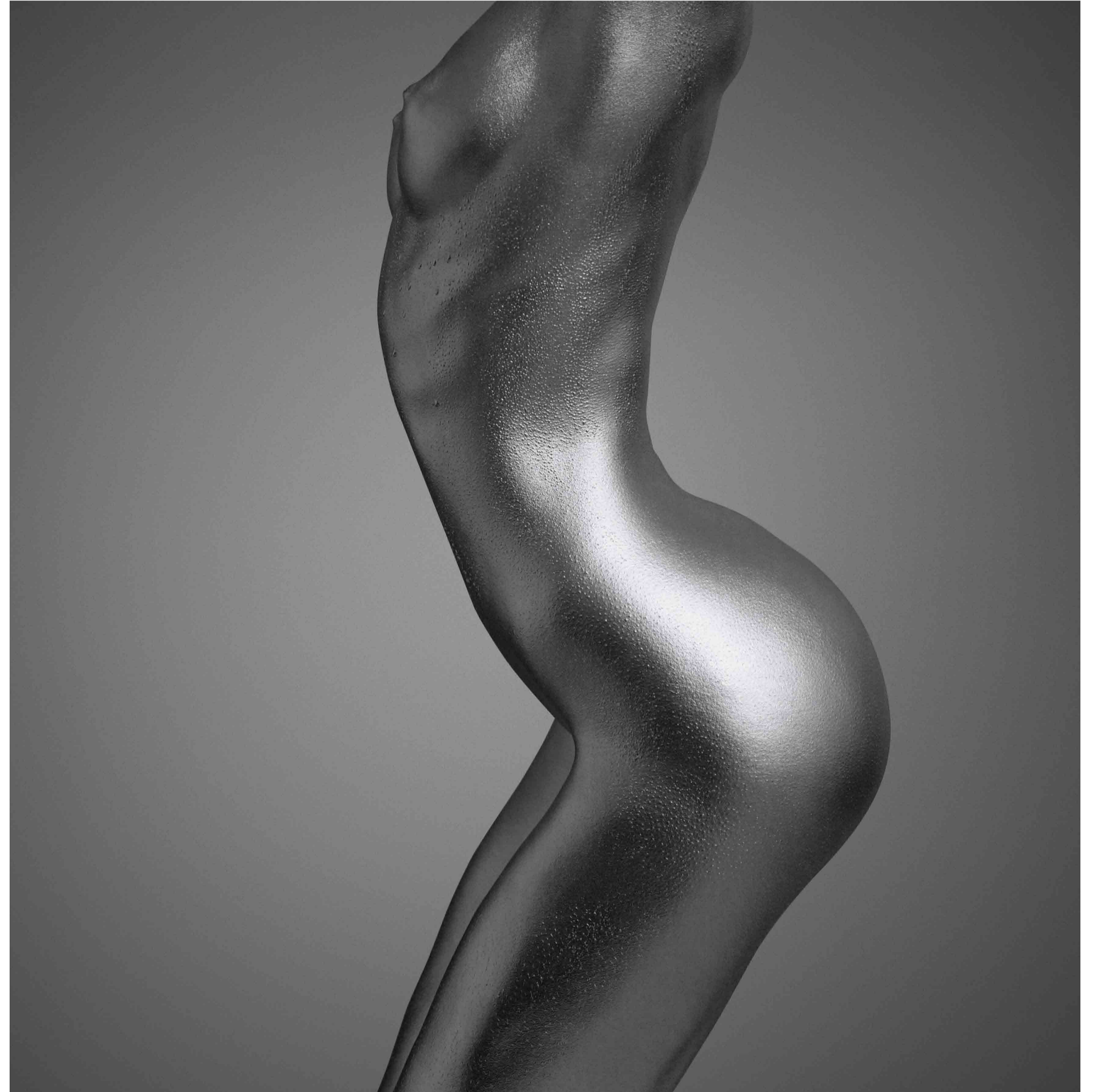
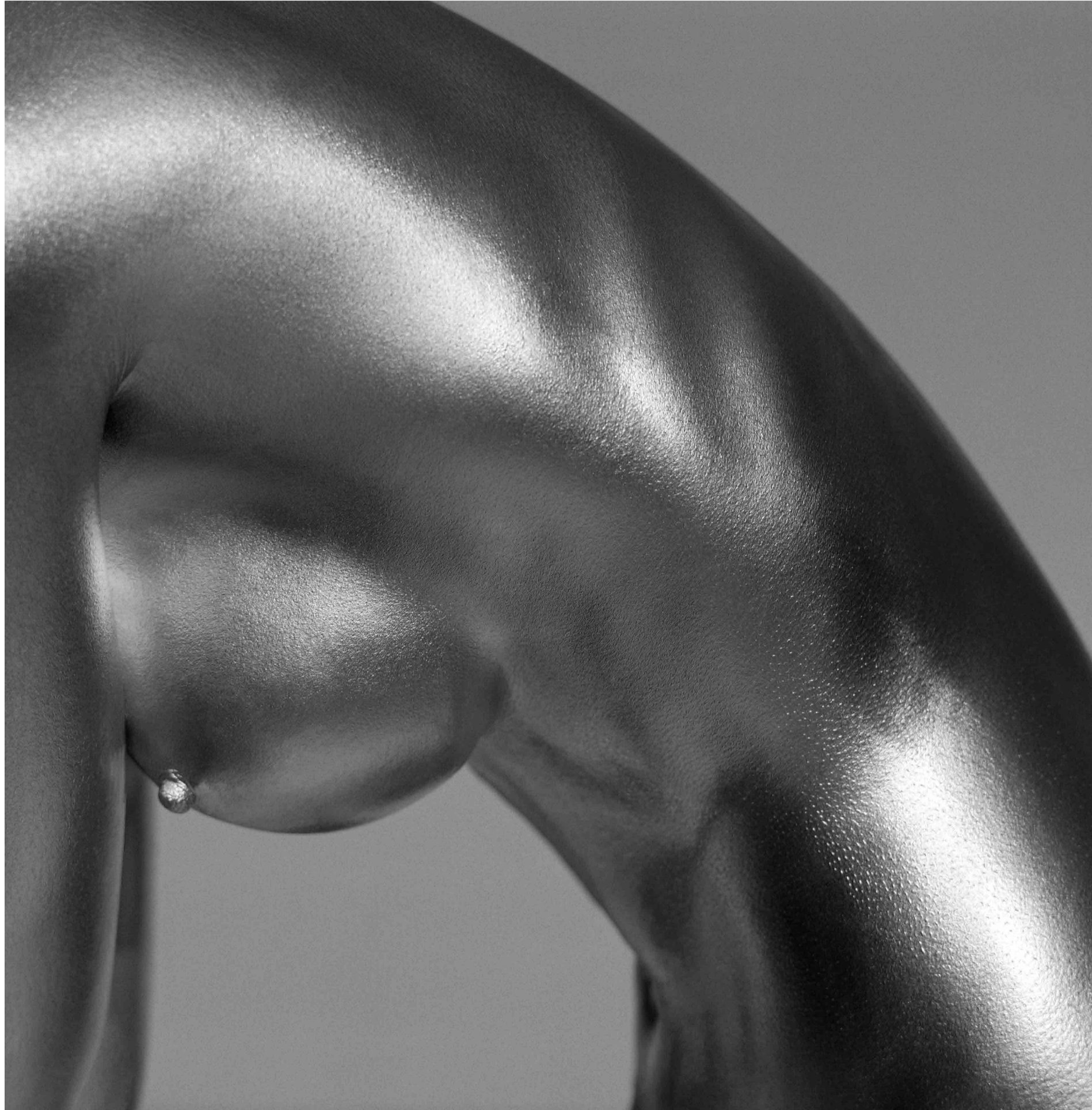
What's the attraction for you in producing books of your photographic work?

The process of making a book is very time consuming but I believe that art and beauty gain real meaning when shared with a viewer, otherwise they just please the artist and that's not enough. A book is not a magazine that will eventually end up in the trash, a book is forever and it tells who you are as an artist, at least in that historical moment. I will never get tired of saying how important it is for any artist to change. My style was different in my first book *Silvereye*, then changed in *Private Rooms and Reflections* and again in *Shades of a Woman*. My goal is to reinvent myself while still being faithful to who I am as an artist and as a man.

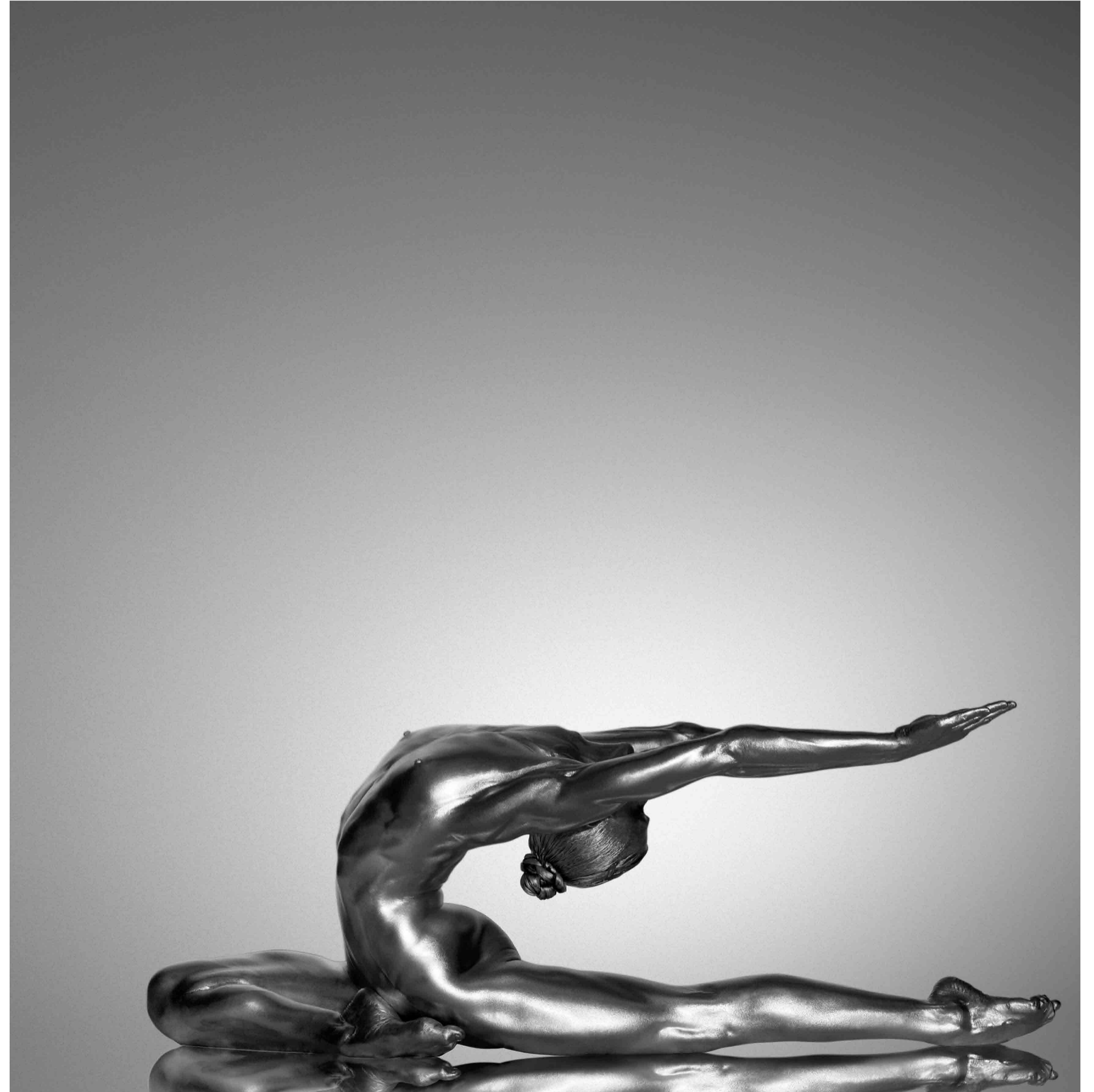
ARGENTUM

by Guido Argentini











ARGENTUM

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p.121
Cybele



p.122
Eos



p.123
Freya



p.124
Albion



p.125
Eirene



p.126
Abnoba



p.127
Anahita



p.128
Hathor

Guido Argentini uses 503CW, HC 80 mm, HC 120 mm

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