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Bare Strength



Synopsis

Bare Strength is a photo book, a modern figure study of the male form - an edgy, artistic approach to the male nude with one chapter dedicated to United States Marine Veterans who lost limbs in the Middle East wars. This is Photographer Michael Stokes' second monogram followed by the success of his first photo book, Masculinity. With a social media following of over 250,000, his images have been shared and blogged by thousands of people around the world. His photos have appeared on The Today Show, Good Morning America, The View and The Tonight Show. He is best known for his work with nude, American soldier amputees, photos that have been banned by social media sites like Facebook and Instagram.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Michael Stokes earned a Fine Art degree from Cal State Long Beach with an emphasis in filmmaking. He graduated first in his class and Phi Beta Kappa. He sold real estate in the 1990's and by 2010, he had transitioned into photography as a full time vocation. His first photography book, Masculinity was published in 2012. "Michael Stokes' photographed men reveal images in BARE STRENGTH as fine as any of his prior collections. Stokes' work has been seen and lauded in his previous books Turnon: Sports and Turnon: Muscles, and Masculinity, but it is here, in this large and richly colorful collection, that he changes his stance a bit and pays homage to the men who are returning veterans from the endless wars in the Middle East, such as the established model - the colorfully tattooed Alex Minsky, Chris Van Etten, and Brad Ivanchan who lost a limbs in Afghanistan

- as well as once again offering brilliantly colored images that just adore the human body. Yet while honoring those who have fought for our country, also gives hope to all those who wear the scars of their lives that they too are seen as beautiful for what they have survived. Stokes' work focuses on the strength, sex appeal and the perfection of the male body--staged in brilliant pictures that focus on the essential without denying the artist's eye for details. Stokes' models/men are powerful and seem to be ready for any encounter of any kind, be that hostile or amorous. He knows that fine line between raw sex appeal and innocent reserve and that is one reason this cluster of men are so appealing to everyone. Michael Stokes creates stories with every image, stories we hope he continues to relate! Grady Harp, November 14

Michael Stokes has surely taken the lead in American photographers of the male nude with his newest book, Bare Strength. His subjects honor men of all colors and abilities. Indeed, he has an impressive portfolio of soldiers wounded in service to our democracy. While they have lost limbs and carry the scars of battle, Stokes' portraits of them are beautiful, sexual, powerful and engaging. He opens the book with a fine essay about male nude photography in late 20th Century and the present day, noting that many of the obstacles of early photographers remain a nuisance. Also, he includes a warm and thoughtful obituary to one of his most popular models, the dance music recording artist, DJ, and actor, Quentin Elias.

Michael Stokes has once again assembled an incredible collection of amazing photographs! Each photograph presents the male model and male body in a unique and beautiful way. Each photograph has its own story to tell, and the staging of the models and any background props etc., are minimal. The body relays a message or story through the camera lens. Michael's unique artistry brings that to life on still film prints. There is far more in Michael Stokes photographic books than bodies of hot men. There is art and artistry in abundance. Michael's photographic books are thought provoking and appeal to intellectual perusal in addition to presenting gorgeous male bodies to admire, that lend themselves to book covers. I think some of Michael's photographs are "important" artistic messages and I hope he is accorded that respect.

I got this book to support an artist. I was appalled by Facebook's treatment of Micheal's photography. He only posted his more modest works. So, I decided to support his works by getting his photography book and I don't regret getting it. The quality of the photos and the book itself is outstanding. His works are impressive. I recommend this book.

This is the most amazing photography book I've ever seen. Yes, there's nudity, but that's not the focus. It's so artistically done the nudity is not the focal point. The lighting, composition and background are outstanding. If your waffling about purchasing this book, don't. You won't be sorry. It's truly a book representing "bare strength" especially the chapter of USM vets. I can't wait for the next one. Way to go Michael.

This book is amazing. Pictures are artistic, intelligent and very beautiful. Hot men and nudity yes, but sensual and tasteful. Love pictures of Michael Stokes and I'm really waiting for the next book.

Way more prominently placed penises than I was expecting. The photographs are beautiful representations of the male form-- which does include a penis-- but in a few of them it seems like that's all I see. I admit I stuck post-it notes on a few so I could finally look at their faces.

I bought this book for a friend for Christmas and it was a HUGE hit! The photos are stunningly beautiful. Michael Stokes shows how man is beautiful and a true work of art. Plus he uses wounded vets as some of his models which is inspiring and wonderful.

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