

# Gallery-Close Exhibits 'Naked Britain'

*Images from Amelia Allen's book, Naked Britain, on show*



Fashion photographer, Amelia Allen works in an industry obsessed with body image, one that focuses on the most flattering way of covering bodies. It was therefore an unusual and refreshing step for her to move into a world where the body is completely liberated, devoid of styling and stripped of fabric and fashion.

People are no longer defined by appearance and are free to connect as equals, regardless of wealth, occupation or social standing. In her book, Amelia explores the reasons behind the unique and controversial status of naturism in today's society that often associates nudity with sex. To Allen that association is a harmful misconception.

She says: "It is interesting that the sight of a naked child

is perfectly innocent, but from puberty onwards nudity becomes somehow indecent. In my book I want to share with you the liberation and empowerment that naturism can provide in a completely non-sexual way. The sense of fun and freedom that naturism seems to bestow on its followers is extraordinarily infectious and I like to think I have captured the raw beauty of that.”

“There are four million naturists in the UK and nine thousand members of the British Naturism club. Social nudity gained popularity in the UK in the late 1930s and soon after, a number of ‘sun clubs’ sprang up. Naturism is not against the law. In fact, the Sexual Offences Act of 2003 specifically excludes it. However, intending to cause alarm or distress to somebody by being naked, in some circumstances, can be a criminal offence. UK law is definitely a grey area, but naturism is legal in a larger range of circumstances than most people assume.”

“Naturists go to discos, dinner parties, tennis matches and bike rides all naked. They go to naked theme park events and there is even a naked holiday village where people shop, dine, explore, and enjoy their vacation, all completely nude.”

Born in 1995 in the South West of England, Amelia Allen is a fashion, portrait, and documentary photographer living and working in London. Having made the decision not to go to university, she moved there at the age of eighteen and started an internship in fashion PR and photography. She has been photographing shows, clothes, models, celebrities, and Fashion Week every season since she was eighteen and has also had work published in magazines such as Vogue, Vanity Fair, Tatler, and Harper’s Bazaar.

*The exhibition is open from Saturday 3rd March to Wednesday 4th April 2018. Gallery opening times are Wed-Sat 10:00am-6:00pm, or by appointment on 07740 870579.*