



Norman Mailer/Bert Stern: Marilyn Monroe

By Norman Mailer

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Three legends: Monroe by Mailer and Stern

“This book is really two books. It is a biography, and it is also a pictorial retrospective of an actress whose greatest love affair was conceivably with the camera,” wrote Norman Mailer in his 1973 biography, *Marilyn*.

Now TASCHEN has paired Mailer’s original text with Bert Stern’s photographs from the legendary *Last Sitting*—widely considered the most intimate photographs of Monroe ever taken—to create a fitting tribute to the woman who, at the time of her death in 1962, was the world’s most famous, a symbol of glamour and eroticism for an entire generation. But though she was feted and adored by her public, her private life was that of a little girl lost, desperate to find love and security. Mailer’s Marilyn is beautiful, tragic, and complex. As Mailer reflects upon her life—from her bleak childhood through to the mysterious circumstances of her death—she emerges as a symbol of the bizarre decade during which she reigned as Hollywood’s greatest female star.

This book, conceived by Lawrence Schiller, Mailer’s collaborator on five works, combines the author’s masterful text with Stern’s penetrating images of the 36-year-old Marilyn. **Photographed for Vogue magazine over three days at the Bel-Air Hotel, Marilyn had never allowed such unfettered access, nor had she looked so breathtakingly beautiful.** Six weeks later, mysteriously, she was dead. In this bold synthesis of literary classic and legendary portrait sitting, Mailer and Stern lift the veils of confusion surrounding Monroe—the woman, the star, the sex symbol—and offer profound insight into an iconic figure whose true personality remains an enigma even today.

First published as a TASCHEN limited collector’s edition, this book is now available in a standard hardcover version, published on 50th anniversary of Bert Stern’s Last Sitting and of Marilyn Monroe’s death, August 5, 1962.



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Editorial Review

Review

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About the Author

Norman Mailer (1923–2007) was one of the 20th century's greatest and most influential writers, as well as one of America's most renowned and controversial literary figures. The best-selling author of a dozen novels and 20 works of nonfiction, he also wrote stage plays, screenplays, television miniseries, hundreds of essays, two books of poetry, and a collection of short stories. A two-time Pulitzer Prize winner, he lived in Brooklyn, New York, and Provincetown, Massachusetts.

Bert Stern (1929–2013) was one of America's greatest portrait photographers, who during the 1960s produced 200 pages annually for *Vogue*, as well as many of the most important print and television advertising campaigns. He is best known for his revolutionary print ads for Smirnoff and for his portrait series of Marilyn Monroe, taken just six weeks before her death. Stern lived and worked in New York City.

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