

# Bahrain Confidential

123

Guide to Arabian life, luxury and fashion!

Issue



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# Marilyn Monroe, The Last Sitting

Legendary American photographer, **Bert Stern** talks to **Bahrain Confidential's** Pooja Rajpal Kasala about his famous work - *The Last Sitting*, the last photo shoot of Marilyn Monroe before her untimely death.

*In late June 1962, just six weeks before Marilyn Monroe's untimely death, Bert Stern took almost 2,600 photographs of the American star over three daily sessions at the Bel-Air Hotel in Los Angeles for the Vogue magazine; this photo shoot later became known as The Last Sitting.*

*Stern's photographs carry a rare sensual and human vibrancy. Never before had the star allowed a photographer such intimate access, and Stern's camera captures a revealing, portrait of Marilyn the person - a fragile, lonely, flawed woman who would die tragically a few weeks later.*

*JAMM, an independent art advisory, will host an exhibition of Bert Stern's (now in his 80's) photographs of Marilyn Monroe, which will open on Monday, 18th March 2013 at the JAMM art gallery located in Al Quoz, Dubai. The exhibition will feature twelve unique archival prints on paper and on canvas enhanced with crystals and jewels, which add new depth and energy to these iconic portraits of America's most famous actress.*

## Can you tell us when your interest in photography started?

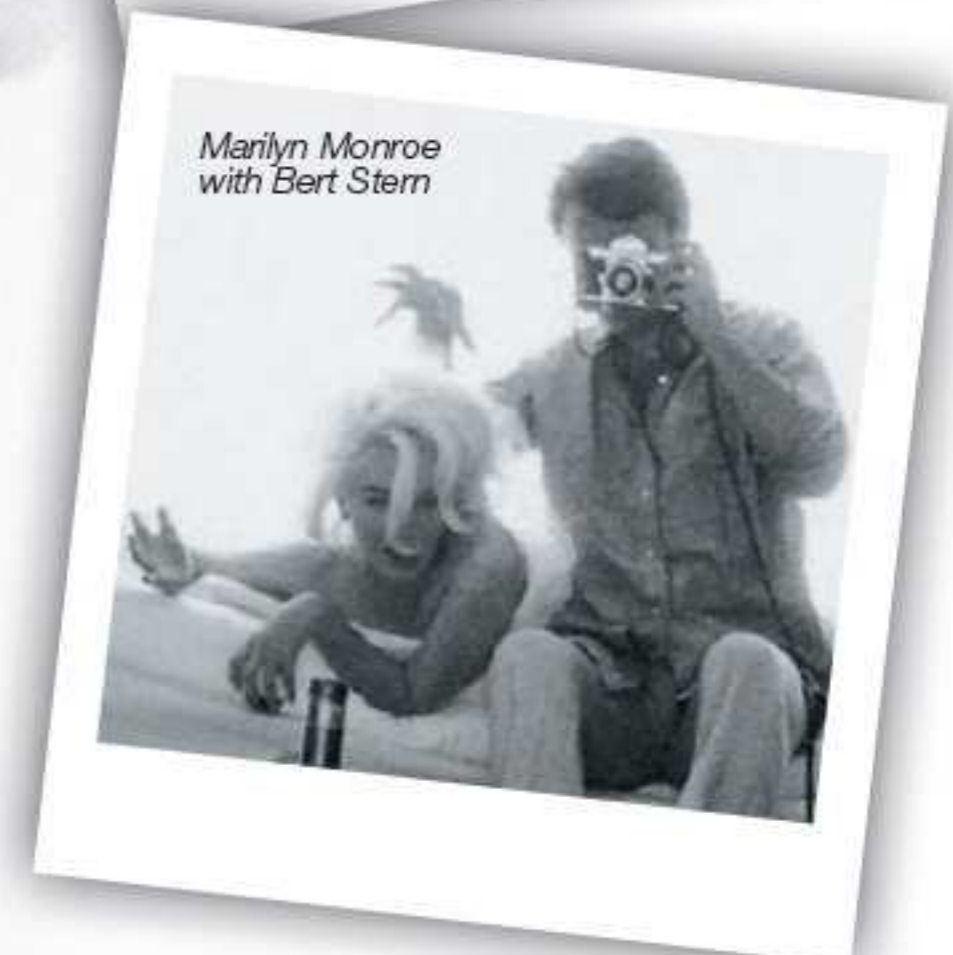
Well I first became interested in photography as an assistant at Look Magazine for the art director, when I saw an image in Vogue magazine by Irving Penn and fell in love with the image.

## What were some of the first things you learned about photography while you were developing your career in that field?

Photography was kind of new to me, you know, before I wanted to be a cartoonist but after I learned design I gravitated towards photography. And photography was easy for me. I was living at home in Brooklyn and I would take the train to New York and do my work, and go back to Brooklyn, but I liked having a little 35mm camera with me and took snap shots of my family and things like that.

## When did you get interested in portrait photography?

When I became an art director of this little magazine (Mayfair) that I began to think that I could do some of the pictures. ▶





“I’ve always loved woman. I think being a woman must be very difficult. After all, you’re always on the inside. Men look at the outside. It’s that illusion which is so delicious. Once you break that mask, then you in another world.” ~ Bert Stern

**How would describe your style in photography?**

I think that is for the viewer to decide. I don’t define myself. I guess you can say I’m a conceptual photographer.

**Is it a style you learnt or it just came about with experience and practice?**

Experience and practice.

**What was your relationship with Marilyn?**

It was very exciting to photograph Marilyn. She was a great subject to work with.

**At what stage did Marilyn Monroe spur your interest?**

The first time I saw her in person was at a party in New York City, around 1955.

**What was the attraction?**

She’s the American dream girl.

**You worked with many movie stars like Elizabeth Taylor and others, which one has had more impact on you as a person and as a photographer?**

Marilyn Monroe is always the most popular. Sophia Loren was interesting. I seem to like Italians.

**After all these years in photography, what would you like your legacy to be?**

That I made ideas into pictures.

**What:** Bert Stern’s Photographs of Marilyn Monroe  
**When:** 18th March – 18th April 2013  
**Where:** JAMM Art Gallery, Dubai  
**Contact:** +971 5 0228 8134  
**Email:** info@jamm-art.org  
**Website:** www.jamm-art.org



Shaikha Lulu Al Sabah

**Shaikha Lulu M Al Sabah, Founder and Director of JAMM Art**

*I have been in-love with Marilyn Monroe since the age of 5. In my early years, I was only attracted to her beauty and her talent as a singer and an actress. As I got older and learned more about her life and her complex character, I began to appreciate Marilyn for her resilience, her opinions and for so many different aspects that made her unique, not only in Hollywood but as a human being. I came across Bert Stern’s images of Marilyn in early adulthood and felt that he had captured her essence like no other photographer. His 1962 archival prints are exceptional, made more so by the hand-applied jewels he has recently incorporated onto these prints. Each print is unique. We chose a number of works from The Last Sitting to celebrate the life of this magnificent woman.*

Picture Courtesy Sueraya Shaheen