

MARILYN'S FINAL CURTAIN CALL



When Bert Stern was commissioned to photograph Marilyn Monroe in later 1962, he could not have known that his shoot would come to be known as *The Last Sitting*. Just six weeks later she was dead, but her astonishing legacy lives on thanks to the treasure trove of material left behind

DAY ONE

Location: Suite #261, Hotel Bel-Air, Los Angeles

Date: late June, 1962

Wardrobe: Sheer silk scarves, chiffon roses, and costume jewellery provided by *Vogue*

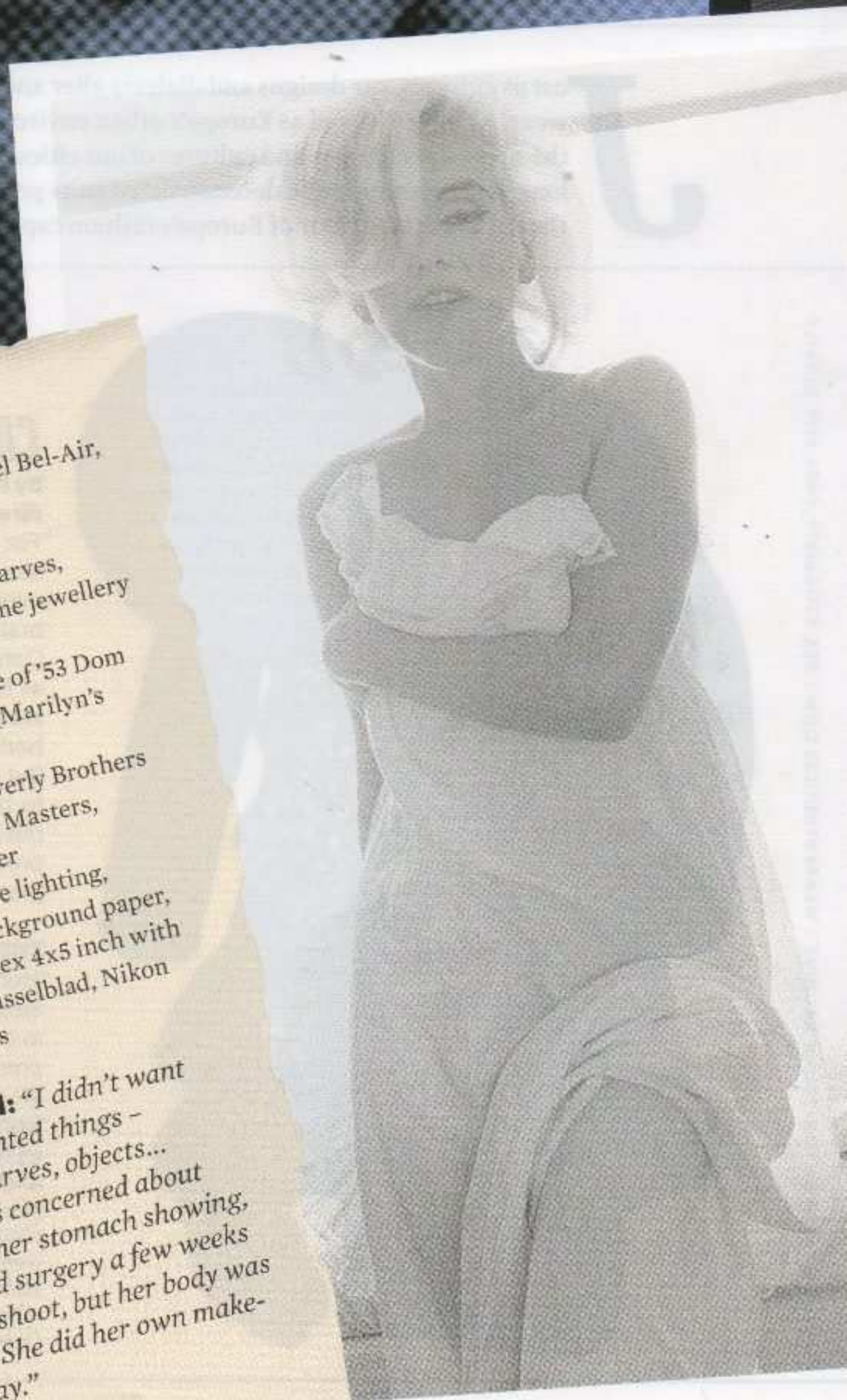
Refreshments: A case of '53 Dom Perignon champagne (Marilyn's favourite)

Soundtrack: The Everly Brothers

Entourage: George Masters, Marilyn's hairdresser

Equipment: Strobe lighting, seamless white background paper, 3 cameras: Graphlex 4x5 inch with Polaroid back, Hasselblad, Nikon with 105 mm lens

BERT STERN: "I didn't want clothes. I wanted things - jewellery, scarves, objects... Marilyn was concerned about the scar on her stomach showing, as she'd had surgery a few weeks before the shoot, but her body was beautiful. She did her own make-up that day."





DAY TWO

Location: Bungalow #96, Hotel Bel-Air, Los Angeles

Date: June, 1962

Wardrobe: Dior haute couture, Pucci, Norel, furs, veils, hats provided by *Vogue*

Refreshments: A of case of '53 Dom Perignon champagne, case of '55 Chateau Lafite-Rothschild wine, vodka

Soundtrack: variety

Entourage: Babs Simpson (*Vogue* sittings editor), Kenneth (hairstylist), Whitey Snyder (make-up), Pat Newcomb (Marilyn's publicist), Pete (photo assistant)

Equipment: Strobe lighting, seamless white background paper, 3 cameras: Graphlex 4x5 inch with Polaroid back, Hasselblad, Nikon with 105 mm lens

BERT STERN: "Vogue wanted more fashion shots using a lot of different dresses, including the black Dior. The chinchilla coat was great; the veil was Vogue's idea. Then she got fed up with the clothes and wanted to go back to less things. The toga shot was taken at the end of the night, just Marilyn and I. There was great energy and lots of champagne."



The exhibition of Bert Stern's photographs of Marilyn Monroe runs from March 18-April 18 at the JAMM art gallery, Al Quoz, Dubai, info@jamm-art.org

DAY THREE

Location: Bungalow #96, Hotel Bel-Air, Los Angeles

Date: June, 1962

Wardrobe: casual dresses, glitter, costume jewellery

Refreshments: none

Soundtrack: variety

Entourage: Babs Simpson (*Vogue* sittings editor), Kenneth (hairstylist), Whitey Snyder (make-up), Pat Newcomb (Marilyn's publicist), Pete (photo assistant)

Equipment: Strobe lighting, 3 cameras: Graphlex 4x5 inch with Polaroid back, Hasselblad, Nikon with 105 mm lens, makeshift scaffolding

BERT STERN: "The pictures of her with the Nikon were playful, she took pictures of me, and I took pictures of her holding my camera. The diamond and pearl headshots were the last ones we took - my attempt at Steichen's Garbo. I shot her on the floor with sparkle and necklaces and I was standing on a chair on top of a table. Her PR girl was making her laugh. I think the closest I got was the one they published in *Vogue*."