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Marilyn Monroe: Metamorphosis



Synopsis

At your fingertips is the most lavish and comprehensive collection of Marilyn Monroe photographs ever assembled—more than half of which have never been published before. Norma Jeane Baker's transformation into one of the most emulated and iconic Hollywood stars is an epic American story—one that careens from a troubled childhood into the bright national spotlight before descending into an irrevocable depression. In this stunning, one-of-a-kind volume, David Wills offers a captivating photographic journey through Monroe's meteoric rise and tragic downfall. Featuring the highest-quality images of Marilyn available anywhere in the world, from candid to film stills to modeling headshots, the images in *Marilyn Monroe: Metamorphosis* will reawaken casual fans and collectors alike to Marilyn Monroe at her living best.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Marilyn Monroe is one of the most enduring and widely seen images in the history of photography. This gorgeous new book will be a treasure to die hard Marilyn fans and the legions of newcomers that discover her each new generation. Many people have tried to analyze the strange hold Marilyn has had on people during her lifetime and way beyond her death and, obviously, the many photographs that cover the course of her life are a huge part of her lasting allure. But over the years the photos have been printed and reprinted—scanned and resized. So much so that many of the shots reproduced on posters, in books, on the internet and everywhere else, have lost much of the original detail and true colors. The magnificence of this book is that David Wills painstakingly

restored them to the way the photographer and model originally intended them to be seen. The more familiar photos almost feel as if you are seeing them for the first time. The rarer shots are stunningly presented and it's like making an exciting discovery. With each turn of the page Marilyn is gloriously alive--popping off the page. In many of the photographs you feel as if you can reach out and touch the radiance of her translucent skin. The theme of the book is chronicling the many looks Marilyn underwent through the years. Different hairstyles, wardrobe, makeup, various dress sizes--always preternaturally beautiful. But it also dispels the rumor that she was remodeled by plastic surgery. Some of the loveliest shots are her as a fresh-faced, reddish-brown-haired, very young, professional model. Even before her Hollywood transformation she had an undeniable glow. And to the very end she retained that extra special somethingness that can't be manufactured or duplicated. The quality of this hard covered book is superb.

"Metamorphosis" is the ultimate tribute to the classic and timeless Marilyn Monroe. The public's fascination and obsession with Marilyn refuses to wane, as evidenced by the new Marilyn biographies that compete for space on crowded bookstore shelves, coupled with what seems like an unending discovery of unearthed Marilyn images that continue to grab headlines. Not to mention the millions of dollars her image and memorabilia commands in contemporary art galleries and auction houses. To begin to maneuver through the mountains of mass media available on Monroe would seem like a challenging task. Luckily for us, author David Wills has done the homework and research and has presented the definitive Marilyn visual biography, in pictures (many previously unpublished) and words (by way of carefully selected quotes). For Marilyn aficionados and novices alike, "Metamorphosis" is a rare treat, the visual proof of her legend, and the most concise summary of what makes Marilyn so magical and haunting and seductive. The book is sleekly designed, and its size and weight encourages you to find the nearest comfortable sofa and devote an entire afternoon to enjoying its contents, in order to savor every detail of each page. As has been remarked on other customer reviews here, the quality of the photographs is amazingly life-like, miraculously and meticulously restored to high-gloss loveliness, in both crisp b&w and a color which recalls the Technicolor fantasies of 1950's Hollywood movies.

In *Metamorphosis*, David Wills has brought us arguably the greatest collection of Marilyn photos to date from as early as 1942. He has worked tirelessly sourcing transparencies and contact sheets to bring together a history of Marilyn's life from the early 1940's to 1962. What is striking about the book is the quality of the prints as they've been processed using the most up to date technology

giving them a sense of freshness and crisp newness with vibrant colors and life like clarity. David had access to 100s of files and found that the best of the images were the ones already chosen to be released at the time when they were first published and he felt that it was important to use these classic images that are now in some ways iconic, as they show Marilyn at her best. He felt it unnecessary to include shots that had been considered "out-takes," or that were slightly inferior. With this in mind he also thought about younger readers who don't have big collections of photos and are just discovering Marilyn with this book, which I would say easily replaces those published up until now and that are now out of print and hard to find. But there are some 'new' photos which have never been published in books before, so there's something for the die-hard fan to enjoy who has everything. When asked about her feelings regarding the millions of fans that followed her and supported her success, Marilyn said, "The least I can do is give them the best they can get from me. What's the good of drawing in the next breath if all you do is let it out and draw in another?" Indeed, as we see the proof here, Marilyn gave her best during a very short career.

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