

S a n d r o



John as Hitler.
Photo: Sandro

American photographer Sandro Miller – better known as Sandro – talks to Yes & No about life and death, and transi-
tioning his muse, John Malkovich, into Marilyn Monroe and
back again. All photos by Sandro.

YES & NO You're currently touring your show, *Malkovich, Malkovich, Malkovich: Homage to Photographic Masters*. How's it going?

SANDROMILLER I was in Amsterdam, Russia and Poland, opening the exhibit, we just got back yesterday. It was a long, two-week trip.

Y&N Where in Russia were you?

SM In Moscow. We really enjoyed it. They have such respect and love for their artists; everything was first class. The Lumiere Brothers is the gallery there, and they did a fantastic job with the exhibition. I was happy with it, with everything there; huge crowds it was awesome. We're headed to Spain in September. We're headed to Aachen, Germany; and we're in talks with Croatia and Lisbon. There's a show coming up in Italy and I've got to get a show in London! I can't understand why that hasn't happened yet. You know, London is like the place I want a show!

Y&N Well, it's probably just a matter of time.

SM I hope so because I love London first of all. I was just over there shooting, about a month and a half ago. I'm working on another film with John Malkovich.

Y&N What's the film?

SM "Psychogenic Figure". I can't talk a whole lot about it, only because it's going to launch 1 July. It actually has to do with John Malkovich and David Lynch. I also have one that we sent over to Cannes, with John Malkovich, and it's called "Hell". It's about eight minutes of film and it's very powerful. We haven't heard yet whether it's making it in the Cannes Lion [International Festival of Creativity], we're hoping to hear in the next week or two.

Y&N Is "Hell" related to "Butterflies" and "Ecstasy"?

SM Well, it's sort of in the same vein; it's an art film, also a short, and there's a deep message in it. It's basically – I can tell you a little about it. It's John in army regalia, and he's reciting Plato's "Allegory of a Cave" that was written in 390 BC, which is about darkness and shadow and ignorance and people who really can't figure things out for themselves; they listen to voices or there's

"I had a dark upbringing myself, you know, I lost my father when I was four, raised by a single mom, very poor..."

something driving negative messages into their minds. But that's my interpretation of it; it's people not learning, people not getting out of their little spaces, which causes bigotry, which causes hatred, which causes people not to be able to coexist with each other, which causes violence, murder. With what we have going on in the US it's a heavy film, it's really heavy. It has these really powerful illustrations, and it also includes some of the most graphic images that we know: humans that have done terrible things to humans.

Y&N Right.

SM Today in the States we have, over the last years, just a terrible run of policemen shooting young black boys. Just for the reason that they're black. And getting away with it! And my film ends with a really terrible shooting that happened here in Chicago with Laquan McDonald; the boy was walking away from the police! Not running, he was walking and they put sixteen bullets in him. I'm just – it's shameful to be from Chicago, to be white. I just feel like, I don't know what, where does this hatred comes from? I married an African American woman myself and it's difficult for us to watch this.

Y&N I've only seen the photos of "Hell" in "The Malkovich Sessions". I thought it was interesting because years ago I read "The Fire and the Sun" which is Iris Murdoch's interpretation of "The Cave". I was delighted to see Plato's idea at the heart of that particular film.

SM I'm happy with it; like "Butterflies" it's got an unbelievable, fantastic sound design.

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SM "Butterflies" is truly about – you know, again, in America, men turn fifty years old, fifty-one, fifty-two, and they get let go from their jobs. It's happening all over the country. It's like, "The younger generation, guys earn a third, a quarter of the price of what we had to pay this guy with all this experience," and there's nothing for them to look forward to. They're heartbroken. It brings financial difficulties which ends up in divorce, and it leads to alcoholism, drug abuse. This is the big problem; essentially we have a huge number of men in that age group who die because they lose their jobs. That's where "Butterflies" came from.

Y&N The imagery in "Butterflies" is extraordinary because of the layering effects, and the way the central character, Malkovich's character, is so connected to the TV.

SM Exactly! That's almost our door to the outside world. You're on lock down, you know, and you drink, you do drugs. Right at the beginning of that film, you'll see a picture fall off the wall; that's the wife, you know they got divorced. And it's just a big mess. These are all films with little hidden messages. And we did wonderful with "Butterflies"; in 2011 it won the Best Director Award for a short film at Cannes.

Y&N I understand that was your first film? You hadn't made any moving image before then?

SM That was 2011. I'm an ambassador for Nikon, so they'll have me do some short films for them. I introduce their new cameras to the world; I did one for the D800 called "Joy Ride". But now I do quite a bit more TV commercials, and short films, short docs. I did some art films. We have this wonderful artist here in the United States by the name of Nick Cave. He's a monster. In fact, he's doing what they call MASS MoCa, in Massachusetts. Every two years they give one artist 8,000 square feet to fill with his art.

Nick's definitely a tour de force, just a wonderful man. They say here in Chicago we've got five of the greatest artists in the country – and they're all black! They say if you're black and you live in Chicago, you're it!

Y&N How does something like that happen? How can black artists be so...?

SM I think it comes from the anger. Apart from Nick, we've got Kerry James Marshall, Theastar Gates, Rashid Johnson, and Davoud Bey – there are five. You know, what happened here during the Civil Rights and Martin Luther King was here. And the '68 Democratic National Convention. We've had a tremendous amount of violence towards blacks and it's – they say it's the most segregated city still in the United States. But I think that's why these great black artists are coming out of here, because of the anger and the pain and all that they're going through. I think so often it's what great art is drawn from – the dark side, you know. And I know that Nick's work can, Kerry James Marshall's work can, get pretty dark. So, I think that's where it comes from.

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Y&N Your work can get pretty dark as well, if I may say.

SM Yes it can. I had a dark upbringing myself. You know, I lost my father when I was four, raised by a single mom, very poor. There were definitely people who were poorer, but we lived off the government check they gave us when my dad was killed. But, you know, it's all part of life, you deal with it, and then you try to find yourself in your teenage years, and you go through the terrible drug years. You almost die a couple of times and, finally, you grow up and, thank God, you make it through. And I had a bout with cancer.



The Miller family with baby Sandro
Photographer unknown

Y&N What period of your life did you have cancer?

SM I had stage four cancer four years ago. It was neck and throat cancer. I was never a smoker, never a hard drinker which are usually the two things the doctors ask first. So, unfortunately it was neither one of those, it was just kind of a bad-luck cancer.

Y&N How long was the treatment? What sort of treatment did you have?

SM Actually, it was pretty close to a year because you're four months with chemotherapy at this stage. It takes everything out





of you, and then – they say it takes years to recover. I mean, I was back at work within four or five months, but it was almost a year even to start to begin to feel normal because it hits you so hard with the radiotherapy. Because it was so far along, they had to go hard at me; it was two bits of radiation every day. They basically just toasted my insides.

YAN Right.

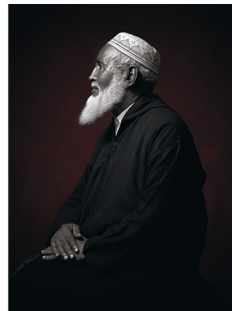
SM They don't want this cancer to come back a second time because none of us can handle it a hundred per cent if it comes back. So they hit it hard. It was tough, but I guess it wasn't my time. After that, a lot of great work came out of that illness. I just decided that I have no time to do anything that's mediocre. I've really got to do great work here. That's what the Malkovich work came out of, and this work in Morocco that was awarded really well: the International Photographer of the Year award for those two projects. So, great things came out of my cancer. I believe that I'm a changed person because of it.

YAN I'm fascinated. If you have something like a near death experience. Or if you're gravely ill and you come through. How does that change you? How can you characterise that change: how has it affected your work?

SM I was always – I felt like a morally good person. I had a spiritual life, I loved to care. But, I just think that the love radar went way up; the love of life, the love of people, the love of peace – everything for others. I look at every single day here and I feel like I've got a second chance. I can't believe how beautiful life is. I always try to keep a light side and help people through their tough days because it's so important to me especially here in the States. I mean, depression is everywhere. I don't know what the heck is going on, but today everybody falls to depression. So I try to keep everything really light, try to help people out, but I just think you realise just how fragile we are, that we're not supermen and that life is really short and it can be taken away from you in an instant.

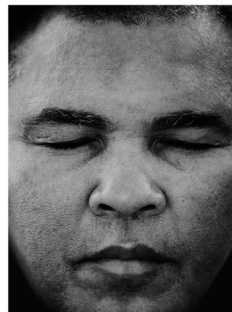
YAN Can you tell me something about how you felt when your father died?

SM I honestly believe that that was one of the pivotal moments that probably I understood I needed to be a photographer because I witnessed the effect of my father being killed in an auto accident; I remember, so closely, my mom just pacing. I remember her wearing her robe – she couldn't understand why he wasn't home yet, because he's always home at five, six o'clock. I remember her just pacing. And I'm four years old, I'm the oldest of three children, and I'm still up and I was there with my mom, so I get to see this distress. Something's going on and I just watch her pacing, pacing; look out the window; go to the couch, look out the window again. And I remember this car pulled up into our driveway, and two men in black coats and black fedoras got out. I'm behind my mother, holding on to her robe, I remember. "We have some very bad news. Your husband was in an automobile accident tonight and he was killed." And then I heard this unbelievable scream from my mother that would generally be something any child would remember for the rest of their life. So when things like that happen to you it's all part of this very dysfunctional thing. If you grasp those dysfunctional things, you can turn them into positive energy; They can become a creative force. I do a lot of very emotional portraits with people; I do a lot of emotion – crying, laughing, screaming, whatever it might be. I'm able to work with people, and go to places with them, and draw out the emotion I'm looking for. I can go there so easily myself. I always look back at when my father died; one of the moments that probably helped me to become a photographer.



The Moroccan portfolio.
International Photographer of the Year 2014,
Lucie Foundation

"The shot when [Malkovich] is doing Marilyn – You can see he's got that blonde wig on, and he's not Marilyn and he's not John. I love that image right there!"



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Y&N In “The Malkovich Sessions” there are a lot of rage-type pictures. I’m thinking particularly of the...

SM “The Skull”, Malkovich with the skull. And the other one where he’s wrapped in that gauze? He’s tied up and he’s screaming. I mean, that feels like me. That’s truly me, in a dark place, tied down, trying to get out. I know that feeling. I remember the first thirty years of my life trying to escape: drugs and alcohol. Finally, I got into a programme that was called “Warriors”. It’s where you do this Native American Indian work and you’re reborn. You go through this process. We leave all of this dark stuff that we carry around behind, we bury that, and we’re able to move forward; and I think that up until I did this work with Warriors, I was always trying to escape something. All the deaths, my father, the cruelties. The man my mom brought into the house who just beat us all terribly. You have all this stuff that you’re holding onto; and that shot of Malkovich in the gauze is really me. It just happened to be that Malkovich was my muse that day. He went there for me.

Y&N Does the picture called “The Scream” come out of that place you’re describing?

SM It’s not me anymore, a screamer, but I still think it’s an emotion that I love to bring out of people. I do it with John Malkovich, Gary Sinise. I’ve done it with Michael Jordan; I’ve done it with Kevin Barnett Garnett. When I get athletes, or celebrities, for some reason, I always have to have them scream. I think a scream is very powerful.

Y&N It could also be quite a cathartic thing to let that rage out?

SM You get it out of your system. It’s like beating a pillow or whatever lets your aggression out some place. And then you go out into the world and you’re this very peaceful person. I think it’s so much like boxers. Boxers go into the ring, when they fight, they’re just these barbaric animals. They’re trying to kill the guy in the ring. But then I’ve done so much work with boxers; they’re the most peaceful, beautiful people outside of the ring. Hopefully we can tap into the light ninety-five per cent of the time of our life. And the dark comes out as minimally as possible. But we all have it.

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Y&N Talking of boxers – you photographed Muhammad Ali.

SM I sure did. That was probably one of the most beautiful moments of my whole career. I remember doing this, it was very quick – when you have a megastar like Ali you got to be ready to set up and shoot. You’re probably going to get two minutes, three minutes, and I did this session with him. I’d watched Muhammad his whole career and I just loved him in the ring, but I continued to follow him outside of the ring, and he was such an ambassador for human beings, he was just a great guy. I went up to him and said, “I really love you so much, Muhammad, for what you’ve done outside of the ring; I love you more for what you’ve done outside the ring than what you did in the ring, and I wanted to thank you for that.” It was very simple, it was twenty seconds. I got up to turn around to leave, because there were four hundred people in the studio where we were shooting and they were all trying to get to him. And he got out of his chair, put his big hand on my shoulder, turned me around, put both of his hands around my face, around my head, and he kissed me on my lips and he said, “Thank you for those very beautiful words, I really appreciate them.” And I turned around and I started to cry. It was just like, Wow!

Y&N That presence of mind.

SM He had a presence of mind, yeah. So, it was hard when he died. We got a beautiful portrait of him. It will be a memory that I’ll never forget.

Y&N That’s beautiful. And talking of hands, I see you have a thing for hands. Muhammad Ali had quite big hands.

“Muhammad Ali got out of his chair, put his big hand on my shoulder, turned me around, put both of his hands around my face, and kissed me.”

SM Yes, he did. He had big beautiful hands.

Y&N You’ve done quite a lot of work with hands. Can you speak a bit about that, please?

SM Well, there’s two things you can look at in a person and probably write novels. You could write novels about people’s faces, because they tell so many stories, and then a person’s hands tell so many stories. The other thing about hands is they deliver messages to other humans, such great messages. I don’t care if you’re the greatest living – if you’re Michael Jordan, or Muhammad Ali, or if you’re some kid that I saw in the street and I want to photograph, I handle you when you walk into my studio the same way. No matter who, everybody brings a bit of anxiety into the studio because they’re ready to do a sitting. We all put on faces when we’re sitting down to do a portrait. So I have this method where I hold hands with my subject. Even when I lecture and I tell people how I shoot, I find someone in the audience and I go over and just put my hands around them and I ask, “Do you feel something that just happened between me and you?” Sometimes you only have minutes to do this. I did this practice in Morocco and I was working with a lot of Muslim women. And I was touching their hands, and touching their cheeks, and it was a way for me to communicate to them because I couldn’t speak Berber or Arabic. And somebody tells me, “You know you’re not supposed to touch the women here.” I go “Well, yes, so I’ve heard, but I haven’t seen any one of these women pull away from me.” Actually the women were reacting in a really wonderful way.

Y&N You describe John Malkovich as your muse. How does that work? With an artist like Malkovich, and an artist like yourself, I don’t think you could have come together and collaborated in this way, over so many years, if you didn’t have that base communication? But that communication – and correct me if I’m wrong – is probably beyond words.

SM Absolutely. John and I are very similar. I think that both of us are very in touch with our feminine sides. It’s easy. Whenever we send emails to each other, very often they’re signed off with something like, “Much love”, “Hugs”, “Love to all”. We both share this loving sensibility. Our friendship is deep, beautiful. There’s a huge misconception because in the films he’s always this villain, or a tough guy, or a madman, or mentally ill or something, and so, I think, a first inclination is that he’s a bad ass.

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Bert Stern / Marilyn Monroe With Pink Roses
(From “The Last Sitting” 1962) 2014



Bert Stern / Marilyn Monroe, Crucifix II
(From “The Last Sitting” 1962), 2014

Sandro

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SM But then Malkovich walks into the studio and he has this extremely soft, loving, caring side to him. And with me I have that same thing. And also, I think that we both know our parts, you know? John understood from the beginning that he was a muse, that he was, you know—I loved photographing him. He gave me everything that I could have possibly asked for, and I think I give him everything that he could have possibly asked for from a photographer. Mediocrity just isn't in my vocabulary when it comes to work; and I'm prepared and I take care of him and he likes that. I think from the very first time we shot together twenty years ago, it was solidified and the relationship was going to go on for many, many years.

XSN You've captured such a range of the man through your works there? So many different John Malkovichs, he's the man of a thousand faces!

SM Yeah, he really is. He's a genius. He's a chameleon that's not afraid to go there, you know? When you ask a sixty-something year-old male to become Marilyn Monroe and he goes into it so deeply that he actually feels, and actually believes he is Marilyn Monroe—for that five minutes of shooting, he gets so deep into it. I don't think many men can do that, you know, that aren't extremely effeminate or gay; and John is not gay, he just has a soft side. I think he really believes in himself, and has this tremendous conflict about himself, but he also takes every character seriously. In "Homage to the Masters", he described it so well, he said, "It's like Sandro and I just go on stage in this little theatre and we're just acting out these characters." Because I become the photographer, and I talk about that evening or that day when we were shooting whatever shot it was. I'd become David Bailey, I'd become Bert Stern, I'd become Arthur Sasse, and I'd direct him to go deeper, deeper into character, so he is Ernest Hemingway, he is Alfred Hitchcock, and that's what you see, where John just goes for it. It's really powerful. There's actually an image in the book, I believe it might be right after the Adolf Hitler shot, and it's John on white and he's not posing as Marilyn, but it was a moment that was caught. So, John was Marilyn Monroe, he was no longer John, he was Marilyn Monroe—he was a reduction of her energy—and, it was like, "Marilyn, you can come back to John now," and there's like thirty seconds—what happens is he's coming out of Marilyn and he's trying to find John, to go back into John, and he is just in this other place, and my camera just kept on going. It's a shot when he's doing Marilyn with the roses on his breast, but you don't see those—you can see he's got that blonde wig on, and he's not Marilyn and he's not John; the decisive moment, right when he was coming out of Marilyn and trying to find John, and he's just really not anywhere yet—I love that image right there!

XSN I like how you didn't decide on Marilyn in her prime, as it were, that glamour Marilyn. You chose a period when she was coming to the end of her life.

SM Well, it was a week later and she was dead. It was a shoot with Bert Stern, and they were drinking martinis. I had dinner with Bert a couple of times, and he let me know a little bit. He didn't go into full detail, but something happened there between the two of them. They were very flirty, and they'd been drinking. And so, when I'm shooting John, you know, I try to let John know; we were drinking martinis, and we were flirting, or Marilyn, and you're feeling—and I'd love to see your breasts, you know? That's when the piece of material comes out, when she's hiding behind that material. So, it was very interesting, very, very interesting to produce that shot; but, again, you're looking at John, thinking,

"Do you know me?" We didn't want to, or I didn't want us to be a parody. If my intention was to make people laugh, I would have shot clearly different images. I've pooled inspiration and influence from all of these photographers; every single one of those images is so embedded in my brain. I wrote down a list when I was laying in bed, sick. I have a collection of nine hundred books! I didn't have to get up and look at books to decide what images I wanted to recreate. I see them, they're embedded. And then I got on an airplane and went to the South of France, and talked to John about the idea. He fell in love with it.

XSN So, it was coming out of your illness that you caught the idea to do this project?

SM I said to myself, "If I get better, I wonder if there's something that I can do." Then again, it's about being grateful for being alive; grateful to have been in the presence of many of these photographers. Just to know how much they had changed the way I thought about portraiture, and the importance of portraiture; but also how difficult I knew it was to create an iconic image like they had created.

XSN Again, thinking about Plato's metaphor in "The Cave," it's as if the images have been etched on your mind, in your memory. But then, in a way, through the illness, you were able to break free from the shackles, as it were, and see the light.

SM Absolutely. I feel deeply that, besides the love for my family, truly my second biggest love is photography and it's been my lifetime. I think when the idea of this project came into my head, and I thought about the possibilities of what we might be able to do, I truly believe that there was a light that was at the end of this tunnel, follow was the project. It gave me something even more to fight for, and to hope and pray that I was still going to be here. But it gave me more. I have kids, and I have a beautiful wife, and I've got beautiful family members, and there was love coming in from all over the world. You know, on Facebook, and people I don't even know they found out, but I was touched. I was moved. But I think that the addition of the prospect of fulfilling this idea gave me even more hope to be able to make it through.

XSN It's interesting hearing you describe the love that was shown by your family, and beyond through social media. But then, it sounds to me like there was something else going on, something that was actually coming out of you, this other love, if you like, the love of something else that became manifest through this project.

SM It's truly the love of photography, you know? I'm self-taught, and when I lecture to art students at universities or wherever it might be, I tell people if you really want to be a photographer, you have to live it; every single day you have to do something in that field. Whether it's going to a gallery, a museum, opening up a new magazine. Dissecting a book, dissecting an image, creating imagery, looking at movies, or documentaries. Every single day you should be somehow involved in this passion that you have for photography, if you want to succeed. I personally did that. I think that's why I was able to get to where I got to; it was because I was dedicated. I had a love for photography. I still, to this day, go listen to photography lectures, you know, and I walk out of these lectures just moved, like I was this new high school kid that just found this camera for the first time. I'm so inspired. I just think it's important, if you're going to succeed in one of the most competitive, difficult fields, whether you're a commercial photographer or an artist, to really succeed it takes a lot.

XSN You mentioned you're an ambassador for Nikon. Do you also use other types of cameras?

SM I do, and Nikon's very aware of that. My portraits are almost a hundred per cent shot on Hasselblad. It's a format that just fits my style of portraiture so much better. But I use my Nikons all the time, you know, action stuff, photojournalism, editorial-type work, documentary, like travelling to Papua New Guinea and shooting indigenous tribes. So, I take my 35mm and my Nikon's very important in that process.

XSN Can photography as an art-form survive the imaging revolution via smartphones and digital manipulation? Do you use camera phones as well?

SM I really don't you know. My wife uses them a little on social media. I don't have an Instagram account, it's just not who I am. I think we've become a society of wanting such quick gratification. We can go on our phones and take these pictures that have very little idea behind them. We can manipulate them and make them look like an image that so many of us pros have spent ten, fifteen, twenty years perfecting in a dark room. You can do it on your iPhone, and send it out for ten, twenty, fifty, a hundred likes, you know? But where does that go? The next day it's gone. What about doing a project? Maybe something just to set up and probably do like twenty, twenty-five images, thirty images? How about giving a year, two years, three years, four years to fulfill that idea, and re-ally make it important work that you can exhibit and have people come to a gallery or museum and have first-hand experience of it? So many of our younger generation unfortunately are experiencing everything on cell phones, and they're not going to the ballet, they're not going to the theatre, they're not going to the gallery, they're not even going to the movies because they can watch a movie on their iPhones. They're losing out on that experience—the smell, running into people, the discussion about that piece of art, sculpture or whatever it is. It's kind of a demise of what really could be happening because there's so much great art, so much great things, but you got to get off your ass, put down the cell phone, and go out there and experience it!

XSN I think for a lot of people the problem is that that sounds too much like hard work.

SM Don't get me wrong, I love my iPhone. I mean, you know, I'm travelling constantly and I can read the newspaper. I can read a story, a book. But probably the biggest compliment I got from people who've gone to see my exhibition is, "I thought this was interesting work, but I never knew how great it was until I came and saw it!" Because they had experienced it on their computers and iPhones which automatically tends to make them believe that I did the work digitally in the computer and not old school where you actually shoot it right in the camera. So, people come out now and they see the grain on the photograph and they see the detail and see that. Oh, I didn't just drop Malkovich's face in the thing. It's mind-blowing to me how much of a different outlook they have.

XSN "The Malkovich Sessions" is a large-format book—are the actual photographs the same size as the images in the book?

SM Every print is a different size. I called the galleries which represented their work and pretended I was a buyer and I would ask them what size does that Andy Warhol "Self Portrait Friglit Wig" come in? What size do those Annie Leibovitz images come in? And they would tell me exactly the size that the photographer exhibited that piece in. Most were only exhibited in one size, but in probably about ten cases in my exhibition they were exhibited in two different sizes. So we chose the size that we wanted to exhibit in, but it was the exact same. I mean, down to a sixteenth of an inch. If it was nineteen, three eighths, that was going to be the size

of our image; and I found that to be important, to truly pay respect to the original.

XSN The way you've used the black and white image with the colour detail in the "Marilyn With Pink Roses" and "Marilyn Monroe, Crucifix II", can you talk a bit about that?

SM I think that that's something Bert Stern did later on in his career. It began as straight black and white, but as he started to reproduce that image himself—your own actually find that shot with I, believe, two or three different colored roses. And the crucifix—of course it was a famous story that Marilyn didn't like that shot of her. She took something out of her purse which, I believe, was some type of a makeup, or panned that crucifix "X" over it herself. Bert then reshot it, and scanned it, and printed the image with her marking of the "X". Now, I went through about thirty different types of liquids to find, first, the color that's on the original, but also the consistency. So, I don't know exactly what she used. It wasn't a lipstick, it was something that had a little bit more fluidity to it. We researched and researched and researched and finally found something that was as close as I could get to whatever Marilyn used; it's almost transparent.

XSN And it has a kind of sheen to it, like a gloss.

SM Believe it or not, I own a Bert Stern; it's up in my bedroom, of the crucifix. It's a big one, four foot by four foot. So, I thought, if I really studied that image and I actually looked at the liquid, you know, the actual flow of it. We dissected every single shot. I felt like a surgeon going so deep, blowing them up so big on my computers. We always went into the eyes; they told me so much, because the eyes are mirrors. If you blow them up big enough, you can begin to work out how light was used, where the light came from. In many you can see the photographer and camera, that's how close they work with these portraits. So, I learned a lot about every image, in the eyes.

XSN Separating the different sections of the book, you have the blow-ups of eyes and mouths; they remind me of Roy Lichtenstein's screen print dots.

SM They sure do, and that was a design element that me and my designer talked about; you know, like what we want to do to separate each section. We wanted there to be a breather in between each one and we would take an image from wherever the next section would be, in this gold tint on the image, how it way, way, up, give it a bit of a Lichtenstein-type feel to it. But it was just to help the reader or the viewer to breathe for a moment or two, not putting image after image after image.

XSN The contrast of scale works really well—it adds a dimension that's quite surprising.

SM Glitterati Incorporated really did a beautiful job. I'm extremely happy with what they did with that book.

XSN Did they approach you or did you approach them? How did it work with Marta [Hallett, Glitterati Founder]?

SM We got a really quick introduction at the Lucie Awards in 2014. I'd just won the International Photographer of the Year Award, and she'd won Book Publisher of the Year. So, we set up a meeting, and I visited her at Glitterati [in New York]. Marta had been with Rizzoli for twenty-five years and [she's] just a sweetheart, a wonderful person; I knew we were going to have a great relationship.

& END