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A new side to the blonde gentlemen preferred

Lawrence Schiller –
photographer, *New York Times*
bestselling author...

Lawrence Schiller – photographer, *New York Times* bestselling author, close friend and collaborator of Norman Mailer, and multi-award-winning film director and producer – is a legend in his own lifetime. Focusing merely on his remarkable portfolio of photographic work, there are arresting portraits of Muhammad Ali, Bette Davis, Bobby Kennedy, Barbra Streisand, Richard Nixon and Madame Nhu – and work for august publications, including *Life*, *Newsweek*, *Time*, *Paris Match* and *The Sunday Times*. It's almost unbelievable, then, that the Brooklyn-born septuagenarian has never held a solo exhibition in the UK. Until now.

Schiller's show in London, from Thursday May 24, coincides with the publication of his new book, *Marilyn & Me*. In this, the 50th year since the death of the actress, Schiller's impressive Taschen volume charts his meeting with and photographing of perhaps the most famous of his subjects.

And what a story it is. A self-confessed “scared” Schiller first met Marilyn on the set of *Let's Make Love*. On the day he shot her from the dressing room, she advised him on the best place to stand and approved just one picture, leading him to say that “at that moment she knew more about photography than I did”.

But a subsequent assignment to shoot Monroe for *Paris Match* proved much more significant. Schiller was just 26 when Monroe was filming the never-completed

Something's Got to Give, just months before her death. Full of chutzpah, the young photographer declared, "You're already famous, now you're going to make me famous." She replied, "Don't be so cocky; photographers can be easily replaced." The vital connection was made, and the resulting images include the sensationally famous shots of the iconic beauty, naked in a swimming pool (second picture) – the idea of the canny Monroe herself.

According to the publisher, over two-thirds of the 100-plus photographs in the book "have never or rarely been published" – and the Schiller-penned text is a captivating read. Taschen's versions of the book come in very limited editions: one Collector's Edition of 1,712 numbered copies, signed by Schiller (£650), and two Art Editions of 125 copies, each with an original artwork (£1,250). There is also a regular, less pricey edition at £15, but to see a selection of the photographs in their full glory (and for free), get down to Walton Fine Arts before Saturday June 23.

And if you still can't get enough of Marilyn Monroe, Getty Images Gallery's *Marilyn* exhibition continues until Sunday June 3 at Westfield, Stratford City.