

Marilyn, August 1953: The Lost LOOK Photos (Calla Editions)

By Brian Wallis Chief Curator

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Picture this: A master photographer shoots the most breathtaking movie star of her time high in the Canadian Rockies in the summer of 1953. And the negatives are filed away for nearly 60 years — most never seen until now!

It was yet another assignment for *LOOK* magazine staff photographer John Vachon. But when he arrived in Banff, Alberta, in mid-August of 1953 to shoot Marilyn Monroe on location making *River of No Return*, Vachon encountered an opportunity never afforded the many great photographers who took pictures of Marilyn during her short life. Due to an injured ankle that prevented her from filming, Vachon got access to Marilyn over a period of several days.

Vachon's lens captured her in a variety of contexts and countenances. Here is Marilyn the way we want to remember her: luminous, sexually charismatic, smiling radiantly — even on crutches. This extraordinary portfolio of revealing images ranges from her mugging poolside to riding high on a ski lift to nuzzling with her then-husband-to-be, the legendary Joe DiMaggio — the only time that the two posed formally together for a photographer.

In his ability to present her humanity without either idealization or guile, Vachon has given the legions of Marilyn fans worldwide a very rarely seen portrait of their idol. 102 duotone photos. Text by Brian Wallis.

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Editorial Review

About the Author

John Vachon (1914–75) worked as a documentary photojournalist with the renowned Farm Security Administration before shooting more than 450 assignments for *LOOK* magazine.

Editor Brian Wallis is Chief Curator and Director of Exhibitions at the International Center of Photography in New York.

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