



## Press release

Vaduz, 25th March 2015

Special Exhibition Liechtenstein National Museum , Vaduz

### **MARILYN – THE STRENGTH BEHIND THE LEGENDARY MONROE**

#### **About the person Marilyn Monroe**

Norma Jeane Mortenson, also known as Marilyn Monroe is born on June 1, 1926 in Los Angeles and baptized with the name Norma Jeane Baker. A few weeks after her birth, her mother gives her to different foster families, which continues until her teens. This significantly impacts the young girl, resulting in her feeling that she is missing true love in her life. As an unhappy child in Hollywood, she finds refuge in the world of cinema. She develops the desire to become an actress and discovers her idol *Jean Harlow*, the most successful Hollywood actress of the 1930s. Grace Goddard, a friend of her biological mother and later the legal guardian for the young girl, strongly supports her acting dreams.

With the onset of puberty, her life changes abruptly. Norma Jeane first discovers her charisma and effect on her environment, which teaches her specifically to confidently use her early, developed female attributes. In late 1944 she is discovered as a model, which paves the way to her desired model and acting career. She succeeds in stepping into the film industry and she takes the stage name Marilyn Monroe, a name that is recognized later as the most famous film star of all time. With the comedies *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* and *How to Marry a Millionaire*, she reaches her international breakthrough in 1953. At the zenith of her film career, she rebels against the male-dominated film industry in Hollywood. Based on years of poor pay as an actress with her contracts and the lack of challenging roles, she turns her back on Hollywood at the end of 1954. She moves to New York and starts her own production company with her friend and photographer Milton Greene. She seeks demanding roles that make better use of her acting talent and she starts, though she has long been a star, with professional acting lessons. More and more she

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distances herself from the once imposed and specifically employed role of a sex symbol, to change to character roles that she desires.

As a producer in her own film production company, she creates the films *Bus Stop* (1956) and *The Prince and the Showgirl* (1957). For her acting performances in these productions, she receives international film awards and a Golden Globe nomination. For her starring role in the next film classic *Some Like It Hot* she finally receives the Golden Globe Award in the category *Best Actress in a Comedy 1959*. In March 1962 she receives her second Golden Globe Award, this time in the category *World film favorite: Female 1961*. In that same year, she receives an interesting offer to perform for the President of the United States John F. Kennedy at Madison Square Garden in New York and rises to the highest social circles. Her most breathy birthday song stirs rumors about an affair between the president and the actress, which are never confirmed.

Marilyn Monroe's pronounced perfectionism and ambition bring her the desired results occupationally, although privately, however, they lead to the failure of her three marriages, including with the baseball star Joe DiMaggio and the writer Arthur Miller. Her desire to have children remains unfulfilled after several miscarriages. With the beginning of the fears of failure on the set, she also becomes more dependent on tranquilizers and sleeping pills in her last years. A new beginning marks the last few weeks of Marilyn Monroe's life. She gets new film offers and successfully negotiates better terms with the film company she works for. In private, she is planning a renewed marriage to Joe DiMaggio, her former second husband, who she divorced in 1954.

Marilyn Monroe dies unexpectedly on the night of August 4 to August 5, 1962 in her home in Los Angeles from an overdose of different medications. The circumstances of her death are still not clear. She was 36 years old.