



BRUCE MUSEUM
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Through the Eyes of Magnum Photographers: Filming The Misfits

July 3, 2004 through October 17, 2004

**Bruce Museum of Arts and Science
1 Museum Drive, Greenwich, CT 06830**



The Misfits "family." From top, clockwise,
playwright Arthur Miller, director John Huston,
Clark Gable, Marilyn Monroe, Montgomery Clift,
Frank Taylor, and Eli Wallach.
Photo by Elliot Erwit, Magnum Photos

The 1961 film *The Misfits* was the haunting, final film of two screen legends, Marilyn Monroe and Clark Gable. ***Through the Eyes of Magnum Photographers: Filming The Misfits*** features photographs of the film's production documented by a group of nine photographers from the renowned agency Magnum Photos – including such acclaimed artists as Henri Cartier-Bresson, Bruce Davidson, Elliot Erwit, Cornell Capa, and Inge Morath. This provocative exhibition combines great photography, film history, and popular culture and will have its first American showing at the Bruce Museum of Arts and Science from July 5 through October 17, 2004. The photographs include shots not only of Monroe and Gable but also of actors Montgomery Clift and Eli Wallach, director John Huston, and playwright Arthur Miller, who wrote the screenplay for Monroe but found his marriage to her disintegrating during the film's production.

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Arthur Miller wrote *The Misfits* as a serious acting vehicle for his wife, the glamorous and sexy Marilyn Monroe. In the movie, shot in black-and-white, Monroe portrayed Roslyn Taber, a recent divorcee who became romantically involved with the cowboy Gay Langland, played by Clark Gable. In describing the film in the book *The Misfits* by Arthur Miller and Serge Toubiana, Miller wrote, "Even though it ends on a note of hopefulness, the story is basically tragic in its attitude.... *The Misfits'* characters are disconnected, and they represent a lot of people who have superficial connections but profoundly feel they are not connected."

The photographic documentation of *The Misfits* was itself unique. Major Hollywood films normally included one still photographer assigned to the production to capture stills of the cast and the action being filmed to be used for publicity. *The Misfits*, shot on location in the expansive Nevada desert, was photographed by nine photographers from the agency Magnum Photos working in shifts of two weeks, which sometimes overlapped with the previous photographer. This occasionally produced similar shots by two photographers of the same actors, the same scene, and the same backdrops. Each photographer had complete access to the day-to-day happenings on the set, resulting in powerfully intimate and emotionally compelling insights into this film and its glamorous stars.

The behind-the-scenes story captured by these still photographs was, arguably, even more fascinating than the film itself. Despite the star power of Gable and Monroe, and the strong supporting cast of Montgomery Clift, Eli Wallach, and Thelma Ritter, the personal problems of the team have sometimes overshadowed the movie. In addition to a difficult shooting location, the film involved an unruly director, an aging leading man and an unstable leading lady, whose marriage to Arthur Miller was crumbling and who survived an overdose during filming. *The Misfits* turned out to be both Marilyn Monroe's and Clark Gable's last film.

Though Monroe was able to finish the movie, the 36-year old actress was found dead in her home in Los Angeles one year later with an empty bottle of sleeping pills by her side. The 59 year-old Gable died of a heart attack soon after *The Misfits* was completed, and his death was often blamed on his insistence on performing many of the dangerous horse stunts himself. Co-star Montgomery Clift, who played the cowboy Perce Howland in the film, also died unexpectedly of coronary artery disease soon after the film was released.

The Bruce Museum of Arts and Science is located at 1 Museum Drive in Greenwich, Connecticut. It is situated near Interstate-95, Exit 3, and a short walk from the Greenwich, CT rail station. Museum hours are: Tuesday through Saturday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Sunday 1 p.m. to 5 p.m., and closed Mondays and major holidays. General admission: \$5 for adults, \$4 for seniors and students, and free for children under five and members. *Additional fee may be charged for select exhibitions.* Free admission to all on Tuesdays. Groups of twelve or more require advance reservations. Museum exhibition tours are held Fridays at 12:30 p.m. Free, on-site parking is available. The Bruce Museum is accessible to the handicapped. For information, call the Bruce Museum at (203) 869-0376 or visit the Bruce Museum of Arts and Science website at www.brucemuseum.org

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