

CLASSIC DRIVER

[Marilyn Monroe Nude Scandal Picture For Sale](#)

Lead

As modern celebrity scandals go, it's pretty tame - but when it emerged in 1952 that a hard-up Marilyn Monroe had posed nude for a calendar shoot three years earlier, her bosses at 20th Century Fox said: "Deny everything".

But the evidence was there for all to see in gas stations from coast to coast: the voluptuous blonde kneeling provocatively before a backdrop of crimson velvet was, indeed, the same Hollywood idol whose previously faltering career had forced her to resort to stripping-off for photographer Tom Kelley in 1949 in exchange for \$50 - the sum she needed in order to reclaim her impounded car.

The results of the shoot were used in a calendar which sold a staggering eight million copies across America, having only been released after Marilyn's 1950 appearances in *The Asphalt Jungle* and *All About Eve*, together with her marriage to baseball hero Joe DiMaggio, had sent her on a stratospheric path to stardom.

"I was broke and needed the money," she revealed in an interview with United Press International reporter Aline Mosby after the story emerged. "Why deny it? You can get one any place. Besides, I'm not ashamed of it. I've done nothing wrong."

Indeed, the result of her honesty was even greater international fame, compounded in early 1954 when Hugh Hefner paid \$500 for the rights to reproduce the so-called 'Golden Dreams' image in the inaugural issue of *Playboy* magazine, which featured Marilyn as its first 'Sweetheart of the Month' - a spread soon famously renamed 'Playmate of the Month'.

Now, the original Kodachrome photograph and the twenty-one 16in by 33in colour separations used to print it are being offered for sale by the Messenger Art Collection, which was bought in 2010 by Las Vegas art lover and businessman Albert Babbitt. The Marilyn images became part of the collection following a buy-out of an Indianapolis-based promotional products company which, in 1988, acquired the assets of the firm which produced the original calendar.

In December 2010, Christie's sold a set of six digital prints created from the Kelley shoot for \$13,750 direct from the *Playboy* archive - but the Messenger Collection's offering is believed to be many times more valuable, since it comprises an original Kodachrome image plus the unique colour separations required to make further top-quality prints.

As a result, Messenger is seeking offers of 'well in excess of \$1 million...'

Photos: Courtesy of the Messenger Art Collection

Gallery

Source URL: <https://www.classicdriver.com/en/article/classic-life/marylyn-monroe-nude-scandal-picture-sale>
© Classic Driver. All rights reserved.