

Marilyn on the set of "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes" (1953)



DOLORES HOPE MASI



and now presenting . . .

"THE MARILYN COLLECTION"

A new top-level jewelry line is created, based on the private treasures of Hollywood's biggest legend.

BY LORRAINE DePASQUE, EDITOR IN CHIEF

IDEALLY, EACH OF US HAS SOME SWEET MEMORIES FROM YOUTH THAT STAY with us throughout our adult life. For Dolores Hope Masi, one of her most pleasant girlhood recollections is unparalleled: When Dolores was eight years old, legendary movie star, Marilyn Monroe, lived for awhile with Dolores and her family. It was during the time back in 1954 that the renowned Hollywood icon was married to Yankees baseball legend, Joe DiMaggio. Because her father, Chic Masi, was one of the Yankee Clipper's closest friends, the Masi home in Sherman Oaks, California, served as a safe haven for the celebrity couple—even more sought-after by paparazzi than Brad and Angelina are today.

During the couple's stay in the Masi home, Marilyn became a de facto "big sister" to the tender-aged Dolores, often giving the younger girl gifts of jewelry and clothing from her personal wardrobe—and always letting her "rummage around in her closet and play dress-up," remembers Masi today.

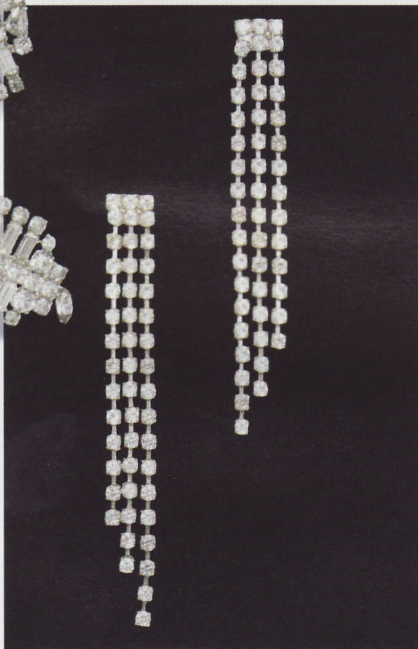




Dolores's father, Chic Masi, with Marilyn Monroe, teaching her how to roller skate for her movie role in "Monkey Business" (1952)



"Inspiration" necklace, often worn by Marilyn to Hollywood premieres, and "Pleasures" earrings, worn by Marilyn in several movies, including "How to Marry A Millionaire" (1953)



"Dazzling" earrings, worn by Marilyn in "Don't Bother to Knock" (1952)

"Temptations" earrings, worn by Marilyn to the premiere of "The Seven Year Itch" (1955)



"Romance" bracelet, worn by Marilyn in "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes" (1953)

After decades of cherishing those gifts, Masi has decided to recreate the original pieces of jewelry from her own private collection. She hired a jeweler to replicate the original earrings, necklaces, and bracelets in precious metal and gemstones. And, thus, this holiday, for the first time, consumers can purchase jewelry from the Dolores Hope Masi "Marilyn Collection"—and all the glamour and history that it represents.

Without question, this is a jewelry collection for the affluent consumer. Available in platinum or 18k gold and mostly diamonds, it's priced primarily from \$5,000 to \$350,000 retail. But beyond that, it's a collection for customers looking to capture some of the style and allure of the woman *People* magazine named in 1999 "Sexiest Woman of the Century."

Masi's timing couldn't be more perfect. David Wolfe, creative director of The Doneger Group, New York City, which, among other things, tracks trends in popular culture, points to a return to "old time" glamour:

"Marilyn Monroe's image may have been that of 'sexy pinup' back then," Wolfe says, "but she has now been immortalized as 'glamorous icon.' Remember, in her movies she was in costume but, in her private life, she was dressed like a lady, not a floozy. She was a style icon and she has eternal appeal. At this point in time, after a decade of our culture being over-saturated with vulgar, trashy kind of glamour; the sophisticated, classy glamour—a la Marilyn Monroe—is what's in vogue. And we have such a celebrity driven society that a product associated with celebrity—in this case, Marilyn's jewelry—will get an enthusiastic response from consumers. I think this new jewelry collection should do well."

Dolores Hope Masi is counting on that. Her company is carefully qualifying "the right jewelers" and planning co-op advertising, all for a holiday launch to consumers. For the initial collection, only ten designs recreated from the original jewelry are available and then, the following year, ten more pieces, and so on. By the time all pieces are unveiled over a five-year period, some 50 items of jewelry will comprise the complete "Marilyn Collection."

Simultaneously, Dolores Hope Masi is busy working on an autobiography—perhaps available by December—that will recall her personal memories of the precious pre-adolescent years when she shared a home with the legendary Monroe. "I just want to share with people the side of Marilyn that I knew. It's time."