EUGENE
McCARTHY

LAWRENCE SCHILLER (b. 1936)
Robert Kennedy, San Diego
vintage silver gelatin photograph
11 x 14 in. (22 x 24 3/4 x 3/4 in.)
27.94 x 35.56 cm (55.88 x 62.87 x 1.91 cm)
1968

6115

PROVENANCE:
Heather James Fine Art

Lawrence Schiller only remembers the 60s in this way: Fast. As in: Blur. Which is, for those who lived through it, as accurate a description as one is likely to find about the decade that began with optimism and ended in chaos. It was ten years of turmoil and exploration. And through this turbulent and tumultuous decade, it often seemed that whenever a headline-making news event occurred, Lawrence Schiller was there. Schiller was not just lucky to be in the right place at the right time; he was prescient. He was there to cover the event, to add to it, to help us see it, to aid its meaning and its depth. "It was a time in which things happened awfully fast," Schiller says of the decade. "It was a wild, wild period; an uncontrolled period. I don't think you had any sense of perspective in the 60s. You had to wait and look back at it, because it was a period in which things were happening that had no rhyme or reason to it. But by the end of the '60s I had covered so many stories, had so many magazine covers, I had somehow become part of that decade's history. And I already had my eye on the future."

When Lawrence Schiller got the assignment from the French magazine, Paris Match to photograph Marilyn Monroe on the 20th Century Fox set of Something's Got to Give, he thought nothing of it. It wasn't to be a private, studio shoot. He wasn't going to set up lights, create backgrounds, or use a tripod. Just another assignment, he figured. Monroe by then was firmly established as a figment in the imagination of most young men. The orphan Norma Jean had recreated herself as the blonde bombshell Marilyn Monroe. She'd appeared in twenty-nine films by the time Schiller photographed her in black and white and color in May, 1962. The world was unprepared for the moment when Marilyn jumped in the swimming pool in a flesh-colored bikini and came up out of the water au natural. She was all smiles and in her element: the sex goddess posing for eternity. The film crew brought out a birthday cake on June 1, 1962, when she turned 36, and she gleefully sat before the sparkler candles as Schiller captured the moment- her last day on a movie set. Two months later she would be dead. Accidental overdose, suicide, or murder? We'll never know. But what we do know is that she welcomed Schiller's camera, and once again in the photographer's life, he was in the right place at the right time.

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