

## BOOK DIANA PRINCESS OF WALES BY MARIO TESTINO AT KENSINGTON PALACE

Flipping through photographs of a doe-eyed Diana, draped in her favourite dresses, lolling languidly on a heavenly white sofa holds something of a morbid fascination. Consider that these photographs of the world's most-pursued princess were taken only months before her untimely death kicks that morbid fascination up a notch or two. Peruvian-born photographer Mario Testino shot the Princess of Wales in one afternoon for *Vanity Fair* to coincide with a charity auction of her gowns. These relaxed, informal portraits – a contrast to the usual buttoned-up royal portraiture of Lord Snowdon – proved an international crowd-pleaser, with that particular issue of the magazine selling out. Sixty photographs have, consequently, been selected for this hardcover release, which, apart from introductions by the people involved with this sitting, concentrates almost solely on the photos themselves; each one is given its own page, faced often by just a blank white sheet. Clean and serene in his presentation, *Testino* – a photographer renowned for only photographing attractive people – gives Diana the perfect swan song. In his Foreword to the book, Graydon Carter, editor of *Vanity Fair*, comments: "Who knew she even had it in her to be so happy? Alas, how terribly tragic to think that Diana – one of the most tragic celebrities of the 20th century – could have found happiness so close to her death? What were we saying about morbid fascination...?"

*Diana Princess Of Wales By Mario Testino At Kensington Palace is published by Taschen.*

*- Emma Westwood*