

Presentation House Gallery Goes To the Dogs



To the Dogs is an exhibition of historic and contemporary photographs of dogs which looks at the relationships between humans and canines and includes Eadweard Muybridge's motion studies from the late 1800s, the famous French photographer Jacques-Henri Lartigue from the early 20th century, well-known contemporary photographers Elliott Erwitt and William Wegman, and many others.

These classic images are augmented by historic photographs culled from several local archives as well as vernacular

dog portraits revealing how these animals have been an integral part of everyday life as well as a favourite subject of the camera. *To the Dogs* reveals the diverse ways that dogs as domestic pets and wilder animals are part of society – as companions, helpers, labourers, even performers.

“Some of my best leading men have been horses and dogs.” – Elizabeth Taylor

Many of the images reveal the physical strength and prowess of the canine species from Eadweard Muybridge's stop action

studies of animal locomotion to John Divola's recent series *Dogs Chasing My Car in the Desert*. There are many versions of “man and his best friend” and collaborative exercises before the camera enacting a persona such as with William Wegman's ongoing series of photographs and videos of his Weimeraners in a variety of guises.

Featured in this exhibition will be a temporary dog portrait studio operated by Shari Hatt. This award-winning Canadian artist has photographed celebrity dogs owned by, for example, the Duke and Duchess of York and British fashion designer Alexander McQueen. She will be available for dog portrait sessions for the first week of the exhibition. If you want your dog immortalized, call 604.986.1351 to set up an appointment. A series of Hatt's dog portraits, many of which are in major museum collections, will also be in the exhibition.

And don't miss the film series Saturday, July 28, beginning at dusk. Dog movies will be screened outdoors at Presentation House. And of course, dogs are welcome!



Adams – Chester with Hounds



Custer

WHAT: *To the Dogs*
WHERE: Presentation House Gallery
WHEN: June 30 – August 5. Opening reception, Saturday, June 30, 2 pm. Dogs Welcome!
INFO: www.presentationhousegall.com

north shore news

pulse
Drew Burnham
Page 13



look
Perfect Blo on the go
Page 33



rev
Saturn Outlook
Page 39



Friday, July 13, 2007

West Van: 208 pages North Van: 176 pages

Voted Canada's Best Community Newspaper www.nsnews.com

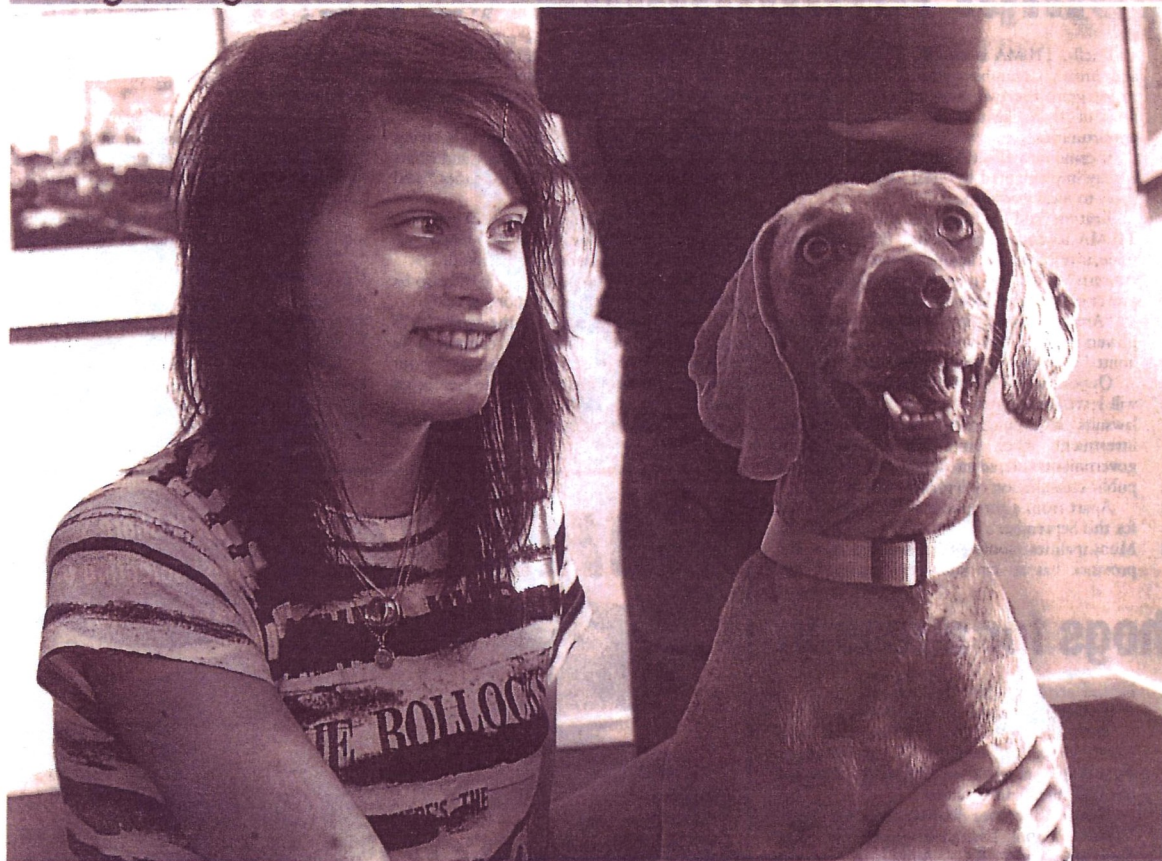


0¢

12 - North Shore News - Friday, July 13, 2007

bright lights *by Paul McGrath*

To the Dogs exhibition opening



Julia Bendtson checks out the festivities with Gemma, a very interested gallery goer.

Presentation House Gallery has "gone to the dogs," literally. The North Vancouver gallery is presenting To the Dogs, an exhibit that explores the long-standing relationship between humans and canines. The exhibit's opening reception was held June 30. Throughout the exhibition's first week, photographer Shari Hatt ran a temporary dog portrait studio capturing numerous furry friends. At the opening reception, hot dogs were barbecued for two-legged individuals and doggie cookies were munched merrily by four-legged guests under sunny skies. In conjunction with the exhibition, a series of classic dog movies will be presented Saturday, July 28 at dusk on Presentation House's lawn. Dogs are welcome. To the Dogs runs until Aug. 5.



Geoff Rigby brings Blossom to the reception.



Tove Lowe and Chiquita enjoy the reception.



Miriam Gil and **Anna Materna** pose by a William Wegman dog portrait.



Michael Tvaner serves up some hot dogs.



Gallery goers **Julie Andreyev** and Tom sit for a spell.



Rowan Wadsley checks in with pal Scamper.



Stephen Anderson and Cato are all smiles.

Please direct requests for event coverage to Bright Lights c/o North Shore News.
E-mail: emcphce@nsnews.com Fax: 604-985-2104

AVENUE

Arts, Culture & Society



A complex cliché

You don't have to be a fresh-from-the-slammer socialite to know the comfort that canine friends — pursebound or otherwise — can bring. Dog ownership is a huge trend, with smush-faced pugs and Marmadukesque mastiffs taking over greenspaces from coast to coast. Now, a Vancouver exhibition turns the lens of avant-garde photographers on this mainstream phenom. Here, curator Helga Pakasaar trains Leah Sandals in the lore of dog photo.

Q Do you own a dog?

A I don't have dog. But I did when I was younger, and I love them. I do own a cat.

Q How did this show come about, then?

A We were looking for something fun for a summer show but that still had cultural relevance. And our culture is hugely concerned with the canine species right now. In major urban centres, it's a prominent activity not just to walk your dog, but to get involved with dog activism, go to dog coiffure places, dog restaurants, dog dating, you name it.

Q Some art school profs have strict rules: no photos of babies, boyfriends or girlfriends and pets! Was it hard for you to do this show given its academically maligned subject?

A Sure, there's a cliché there. When you take on any encompassing topic like dogs or flowers or children you risk being too pat. So, we were careful to balance cute dog pictures — like classic Elliott Erwitts — with more serious works.

For example, cliché is part of the challenge Shari Hatt takes on. She has studied the traditional clichéd form of dog portraiture for years, and she now goes beyond the cliché by bringing out a dog's character. She surpasses the idea of man's best friend and instead raises questions about the experience of the dog. And Hatt says that things we find repugnant in people, we are usually quite willing to embrace in dogs. Even straightforward imagery can raise questions about that complex relationship.

Q Pet photo sites like cuteoverload.com and picturesdog.com can make it seem like dog photography is a 21st-century phenomenon. How far back does it go?

A The earliest image in our show is from 1862. It's from a glass plate negative of [then-Lieutenant George] Custer and his dog. Dogs were often recorded as being parts of battlefield events. We also have tintsypes and stereocards that became popular near the end of the 1800s for pictures of families with their dogs. Now, because of technology, everybody can wield a camera. So artists take different approaches to subject matter.

Q What kinds of approaches?

A Well, William Wegman is a key artist who's worked with dogs in a very studied way over time — for more than 20 years. Besides those well-known photos of his Weimaraners dressed up in human clothes, he did performance art with them in the '70s.

Mark Joseph also focused deeply on one aspect of dogs, spending many years photographing the owners of American pit bulls. He kind of embedded himself in that society and hung out with them and learned a lot. Pit bulls are of ill repute in many ways, not even accepted by breeding associations. But they are very powerful creatures, as are their owners.

Q In a different vein, Francis Alys's artworks juxtapose pictures of dogs on the street with pictures of people sleeping on the street. It prompts the perennial question of why it is that we often treat dogs



COURTESY THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, LC-DIG-CWFP-01553

Above, Anonymous, *The Peninsula*, Va. Lt. George A. Custer with dog, May-August 1862. Top, Elliott Erwitt, New York City, 2000.

better than we treat humans.

A That's a big question. I'm not sure why that is, but I guess there's a sense of not being able to control social conditions, so we allow people to fall by the wayside. And inability to feel in control of society might partially explain why we're eager to become infatuated with a pet. There's a sense of being able to control an animal and experience their friendship simply; it's easier to deal with their needs than those of human beings.

Q Speaking of pet needs, Presentation House has set out to meet some aesthetic ones: You're allowing dogs in the gallery for this show. How's that going?

A Well, they've shown general excitement and pleasure. First, the

owners are extremely pleased to be bringing their animals to something special. Second, the dogs love to meet one another, more in fact than meeting the artwork. Enjoyment is the point, though: We stock treats, too.

Q And do you have a little doggy guest book for canines to sign or paw print?

A Well, not officially. But we do count them as visitors in our admission stats.

■ To the Dogs runs to Aug. 5 at Presentation House Gallery in Vancouver. An outdoor dog film screening will be held on July 28. For details, visit www.presentationhousegall.com.

National Post

Work Diplomacy for sale: Swanky embassy parties give way to the power lunch **L3** ➤

Timothy Taylor Vancouver explores man's best friend in a gallery gone to the dogs **L5** ➤

SECTION L MONDAY, JULY 30, 2007

GLOBEANDMAIL.COM

Globe Life

The Globe and Mail, Monday, July 30, 2007

Life

THE CITY » A BIWEEKLY LOOK AT THE IDEAS THAT ARE SHAPING VANCOUVER

What man's best friend really says about you

A photo exhibition in this pooch-crazy town explores that very special connection



TIMOTHY TAYLOR
ttaylor@globeandmail.com

I took my dog over to North Vancouver last week to check out the Presentation House Gallery show *To the Dogs*.

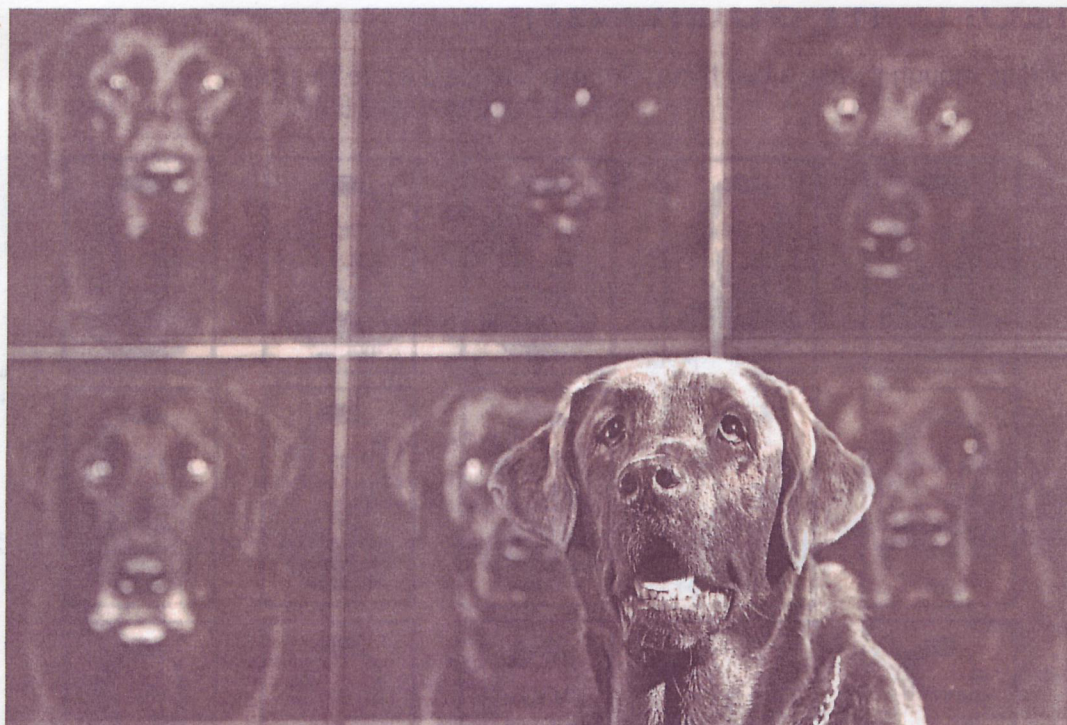
The exhibition, to which dogs are welcome, has generated a lot of press. A "quite astounding" amount, according to assistant curator Jordan Strom, who has been on *Breakfast Television* and Fanny Kiefer's show in the past month, exposure that I gather is more or less unheard of in the curatorial community.

My dog, Buster, is a chocolate Lab. He's altogether more interested in the beach, things that stink and objects that may be retrieved. But he is a good boy and has learned to play his role in the urban scheme of things. So off we went.

I carried with me a shred of skepticism, I'll confess. Presentation House has a heavy reputation in contemporary photography, so I assumed the work would be interesting. But it has occurred to me with increasing frequency lately that our popular dog fixation has hit a consumerist apogee of kinds and, like anything else that has grown hyper-fashionable, is about to crash back to earth.

It hasn't happened yet, of course. Vancouver remains a dog city, something for which we're getting a reputation. DogFriendly.com rated us the second best city in North America to visit with a dog, just behind Boston. And it's easy enough to see why.

Five years ago, when I wrote a story about dog mania for a travel magazine, I had to go to New York to see the real pinnacle of expression of this variety of consumption. That's



Timothy Taylor's chocolate Lab, Buster, stands before Shari Hatt's Black Dogs, a series of 39 dog portraits. LYLE STAFFORD FOR THE GLOBE AND MAIL



You can hardly get up the elevator at my office building without a dog confab of some variety.

where the dog hotels and dog reiki spas could be found. That's where you could go to the dog park and see rappers trading tips with bond traders on the grooming idiosyncrasies of the Portuguese water dog.

Vancouver has all that now. We have the Rex Dog Hotel + Spa. We have dog grooming boutiques and dog designer accessories. We've built the necessary infrastructure for world-class dog pampering insanity. And I can illustrate this economy anecdotally merely by pointing out that I count as personal friends a woman who knits dog sweaters, another woman who massages dogs for a living, and a fellow who has a Kevin House portrait of his Vizsla in his living room.

I'm not snickering here.

Maybe I don't buy Buster sweaters with little skull-and-bones patterns. But I contribute to the overall phenomenon by having Buster with me all the time, something that is increasingly common and is animating our city in a new way.

You can hardly get up the elevator at my office building without a dog confab of some variety, and I know people whose colleagues bring their English sheepdogs to meetings or whose lawyers have a Pomeranian snoring on a pillow in the corner. Near my wife's office, there's a construction site where one of the guys directing traffic is accompanied every day by a border collie wearing its own little reflective vest.

As it turned out, this exact theme is played out in the

Presentation House show. One of the things the show does extremely well is highlight the continuing proximity between people and dogs. There are images of familiar dog indulgence. The famous David Seymour portrait of Peggy Guggenheim on Venice's Grand Canal with her lap dogs. Or the Martin Parr photograph of Valentino with his pugs.

Other familiar relationships are explored as well. The dog as companion. The dog as highly specialized competition piece. The dog as (somewhat) controlled wild animal, which is captured with real tension in John Divola's *Dogs Chasing My Car* in the Desert series and more sensationally in Marc Joseph's stills and digital videos of pit-bull culture. In these photos, we're re-

minded of ways the human dog partnership has tended to structure itself. In each case, that relationship has been signed to meet a specific human need: for affection, for protection, for fashionable or macho status as the case may be.

But one part of the show, Shari Hatt's *Black Dogs* (Series One), illustrated perfectly more poignant human need and gave beautiful evidence of how it is met by our dogs. The piece consists of 39 dog portraits, each about a foot square. That the dogs are black and emerge directly from the dark backdrop the artist used no doubt contributes to the haunting effect of the work. But that wasn't what struck me most.

Instead, confronted by so many sets of doggy eyes, so many jowls and wrinkled heads, it occurred to me how difficult it was to see the human at all. How easy it was to get lost in these faces — configured in their infinite expressions, staring back in their multi-faceted, as virtually human.

Peter Culley, in a wonderful essay in the exhibition catalogue, writes how "every photograph of a dog is a self-portrait." And I think effect is what he was driving at. Just as we occasionally look at other things we buy, use our dogs to speak to the world on the topic of who we think we are. And occasionally, when we look into their faces, we receive a reminder back on that topic.

It's a bigger job than putting a sled or chasing a weasel. And in that respect, no wonder we spoil them.

As for Buster, I can report that he didn't pay much attention to the exhibition other than to the crazy early-seventies film footage of William Wegman growling and grinning into the camera.

My dog likes early Wegman. Am I sophisticated or what? Timothy Taylor is a novelist-journalist based in Vancouver; latest book is the novel *Story House*.

24 hours

24hrs.ca

PEOPLE Fergie says make it

■ Fergie says she's all right with her boyfriend makin' out with other women. P. 2



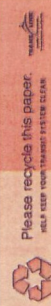
SPORTS Secondary to none

■ Note to Ti-Cats: B.C. Lions' backfield is feasting on interceptions this season P. 17



Ingledew's
your STYLE • your SIZE • your SHOES

SALE IS ON NOW!
At All Locations



entertainment

24HRS.CA • JULY 19, 2007

13



Anonymous, *The Peninsula, Va. Lt. George A. Custer with dog*, May-August 1862. Courtesy of the Library of Congress, LC-DIG-cwpb-01553.



Elliott Erwitt, *New York City*, 2000 Courtesy of Elliott Erwitt / Magnum Photos.

to the DOGS

You could say it's an art exhibition that's gone to the dogs.

The relationship with man's best friend stretches back to the beginning of human history. And why not? A dog's love is unconditional, their loyalty knows no bounds.

When we've had a bad day, they're always at the door to greet us, tail wagging like a furry magic wand, waving away whatever problems we have, at least for the moment.

We like to dress them up and take pictures. We find this amusing. They put up with it because they know it makes us smile.

Dogs could live without us. Luckily, we don't have to live without them.

To *The Dogs*, which runs through Aug. 5 at the Presentation House Gallery in North Vancouver (333 Chesterfield Ave.), looks at the countless ways dogs – and other domestic and wild animals – are woven into the fabric of our society, through classic images, contemporary art works, vernacular portraits and historic photographs culled from several local archives.

You never know, the exhibition might just make you paws for thought. And, yes, dogs are welcome. Visit www.presentation-housegall.com for more information.

— Graeme McRanor, 24 hours



David Heath, *Central Park*, New York City, 1957.



Shelby Lee Adams, *Chester with Hounds*, 1992. Courtesy of the artist and the Stephen Bulger Gallery.



New York City, 2000, by Elliott Erwitt of Magnum Photos.

PHOTOS FROM THE SHOW TO THE DOGS AT PRESENTATION HOUSE GALLERY

Picture-perfect companions on display

■ **ART** Bring your pooch along for treats and a portrait taken by Canadian photographer who has a series of works in the exhibition

It's a dog lover's paradise this summer at Presentation House Gallery with an art exhibition, *To The Dogs*, which examines the relationship between humans and canines through a variety of photographic, video and film works.

By all means, bring the dog: Chet will wag to the bowls of dog treats upon entry, and while the historic to contemporary art photographs may be above his head, he'll be content checking out other pups on the scene.

Part of the exhibition will be a temporary dog portrait studio operated by Shari Hatt, an award-winning Canadian artist who has photographed dogs owned by the Duke and Duchess of York and British fashion designer Alexander McQueen. A series of Hatt's dog portraits will also be featured in the exhibition.

AT A GLANCE

TO THE DOGS

Presentation House Gallery,
333 Chesterfield Ave.,
North Vancouver

To Aug. 5 (Wednesday to Sunday,
12 noon to 5 p.m.,
Thursday 12-8 p.m.)

604-986-1351

DOG PORTRAITS

By Shari Hatt

Ends Sunday

To book an appointment call the
gallery at 604-986-1351

Cost of one 16x16-inch print in an
edition of one: \$550



Chester with Hounds, 1992 (above), by Shelby Lee Adams; U.S. Gen. George Armstrong Custer with a dog, circa 1860 (top right); Man and Dog, Liguria, Portofino (Italy), 1936, by Herbert List of Magnum Photos (bottom right).

