



Shelter Dogs

© Traer Scott from the book *Shelter Dogs*, Merrell Publishers of London & New York, 2006

Traer Scott is a photographer specialising in fine art and editorial portraiture. In the book *Shelter Dogs*, she captures the spirit of some of the many dogs that, through no fault of their own, have become Shelter Dogs. Some have been lost and found, some surrendered and some come with unimaginable backgrounds—these are the faces of just a few.

“For many years I hoped that I could make a difference in animal welfare issues without actually having to work in a shelter. I believe that there are many ways for people to use their particular strengths and talents to make a difference.”

“About three years ago, I received an assignment to write an article about behavioural work that a local woman was doing at a shelter. The aim of the program was to teach volunteers how to train dogs who were in shelters, and determine whether training affected the adoption and retention rate of those animals. It quickly became evident that those who received training, were socialised and received regular exercise, had a better chance at being adopted.”



Smokey

Ten-year-old female Border collie mix, turned in by her owners, who were moving. Smokey was found to have arthritis and was put on medication. During her spaying, the vet discovered that she had bladder stones. Despite her condition, Smokey was adopted after a month and a half. Her adopters have since called to thank the shelter for giving them such a great dog.

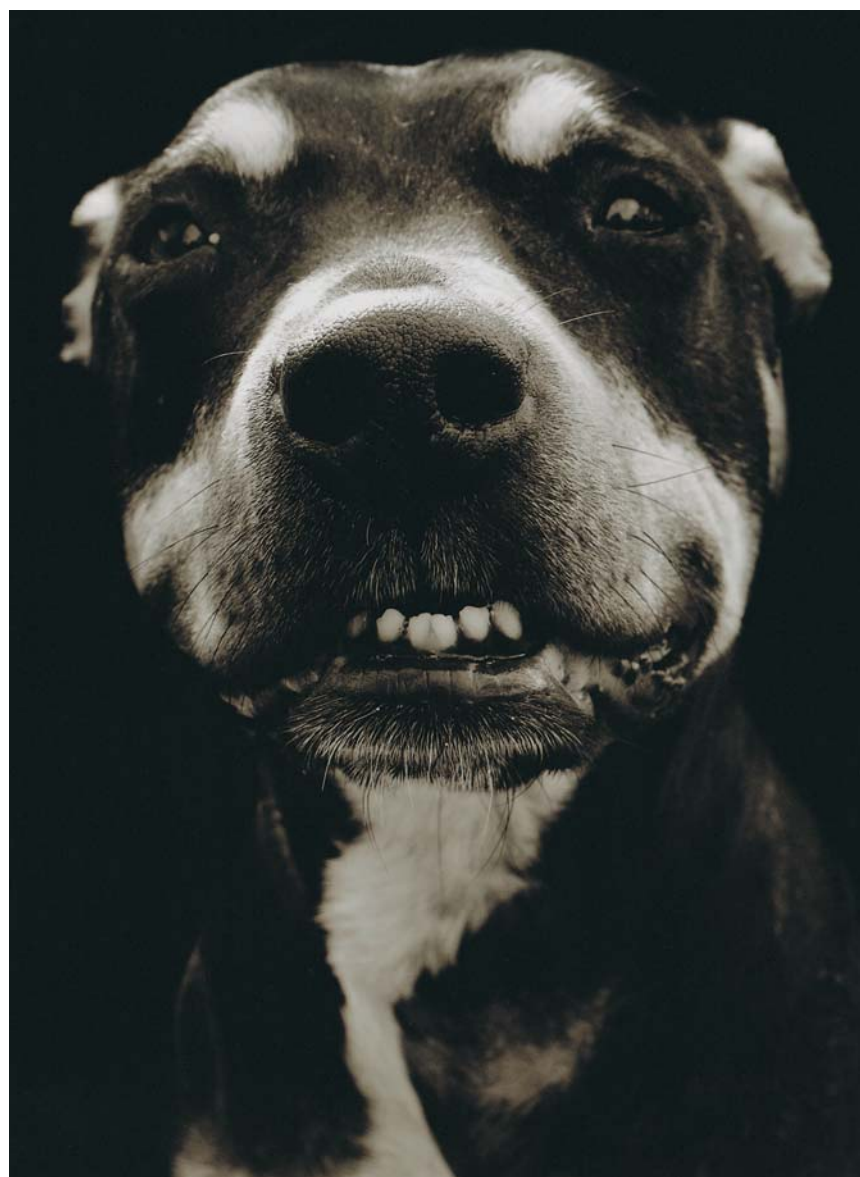
“After meeting her, I signed up to volunteer for one hour a week. It was just as hard as I had imagined but I kept coming back. Eventually, I was there three days a week and they decided to utilise my photographic skills. I began taking photos of every dog to use for various adoption sites and to make a record. Some of the dogs I worked with were put down, and months later, I could never bring myself to erase their photos.”

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DEALER/RESELLERS ENQUIRIES INVITED



Shady

Five-year-old female pit bull mix, turned in by her owners because they were moving. Shady was affectionate, playful and, best of all, seemed to flash a nervous, toothy smile when she was excited. She was adopted after two and a half months.



Frankie

Two-year-old un-neutered male American pit bull terrier, picked up as a stray. Frankie was one of the volunteers' all-time favourite dogs on account of his intelligence, amazing temperament, and playful, loving personality. After months at the shelter, however, he began going kennel-crazy. He was taken in by the Animal Farm Foundation in March 2005 and rehabilitated, and was then adopted after two months.

"In this book I have made a point of trying to accurately represent all the diverse breeds of ages and dogs who pass through U.S. shelters. There are purebreds, almost indeterminable mutts, five-week old-puppies, fourteen-year-olds with rotten teeth, and of course, pit bulls."

Traer believes the modern pit bull or pit bull cross is a much-maligned breed. "Unfortunately, most know the pit bull by its sensationalised media reputation, which I believe is biased and reactionary at best."

Shelter Dogs is a stunning collection of images that pays tribute to the true canine spirit, revealing the intense emotion, dignity, and even humour that Traer saw in each face, despite the dog's circumstances. "To me, these are portraits in the simplest and truest form. I had to do very little. My subjects were already beautiful, animated, and ready for their close-ups."

Shelter Dogs is available now in fine bookstores. Published by Merrell, distributed by Bookwise International RRP \$35.00. Photos and accompanying text kindly reproduced with permission from the publisher.

A portion of the proceeds from the sales of this book will be donated to animal welfare and rescue causes.



Minpin

Two-year-old un-neutered male miniature pinscher mix, picked up as a stray. He was adopted after one week.



Pandora

One-year-old unaltered female pit bull/Catahoula leopard dog mix, picked up as a stray. Despite Pandora's exceptional beauty and sweet temperament, she was very slow to find a home on account of her hyper, puppy-like behaviour. Weighing around 55lb. (25kg) she jumped on everyone, even toddlers, and scared away many potential adopters. She was finally adopted after three months.

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