

I BARK AT DOGS. That is why the little dog in one of my photographs has jumped straight up into the air. A lot of people ask about that. Well, I barked. He jumped. I barked. He jumped... Once I was walking down a narrow street in Kyoto behind a lady who was walking a dog that looked interesting. Just to see, I barked. Immediately, the lady turned and kicked her bewildered dog. I guess we had the same kind of bark.

My first published dog picture was taken in 1946. I don't remember the circumstances or what I had in mind. Probably nothing special. The dog looked funny. Every so often, I would go over my contact sheets to see what was on them, and I noticed that there were a lot of dogs. That's how the dog business started. One of the first dog-related jobs was for a New York Times Sunday Magazine fashion assignment about women's shoes. I decided to photograph them from a dog's point of view because dogs see more shoes than anybody.

One of my wives thought I saw myself in the dog pictures. She thought I identified with them. Maybe. Maybe. She was a very clever lady.

The dog pictures work on two levels. Dogs are simply funny when you catch them in certain situations, so some people like my pictures just because they like dogs. But dogs have human qualities, and I think my pictures have an anthropomorphic appeal. Essentially, they have nothing to do with dogs... I mean, I hope what they're about is the human condition. But people can take them as they like.

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